

Sanctuary Advisory Council

CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Members / Alternates

Tourism

Michael Cohen / Amanda Allen

Business

Giles Pettifor / Jaime Diamond

Non-Consumptive Recreation

Kaia Kabbabik / Molly Troup

Commercial Fishing

Mike Nelson / John Hoadley

Recreational Fishing

David Lopez / Kevin Brannon

Education

Michael Yorke / Andrea Mills

Research

Phyllis Grifman / Robert Miller, Ph.D.

Conservation

Samantha Macks Franz / Christina Tombach Wright

Public At-Large 1

Kenneth Owen / Chris Ragland

Public At-Large 2

Stuart Kasdin, Ph.D. / Blake Thomas

Chumash Community

Alicia Cordero / Eva Pagaling

National Marine Fisheries Service

Daniel Studt / vacant

National Park Service

Ken Convery / vacant

U.S. Coast Guard

CDR Ariel Berrios / LTJG Nazere Jones

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Donna Schroeder / Jeremy Potter

U.S. Department of Defense

Adam Melerski / Stephen Duboyce

California Department of Fish & Wildlife

Carlos Mireles / Armand Barloti

California Resources Agency

Jenn Eckerle / Pike Spector

California Coastal Commission

Cassidy Teufel / Jacqueline Phelps

County of Santa Barbara

Erin Briggs / David Villalobos

County of Ventura

Jed Chemabaeff / vacant

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Chris Mobley / Mike Murray [non-voting]

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Lisa Woonnick / Karen Grimmer [non-voting]

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Maria Brown / Brian Johnson [non-voting]

Chair: Michael Cohen

Vice Chair: Phyllis Grifman

Secretary: Ken Owen

March 25, 2024

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District
Tyler Harris, Manager – Planning, Rules and Incentives
4567 Telephone Road, 2nd Floor
Ventura, CA 93003

Re: Letter of Commitment for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Opportunity “Reducing Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds - Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS)”

Dear Mr. Harris:

On behalf of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (Sanctuary Advisory Council) I am submitting this letter of commitment in respect to the **Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds - Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS)** implementation grant application for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. We strongly support the continuation and expansion of this program through the CPRG implementation grant application.

The CINMS Advisory Council’s 21-member body brings together community members and representatives from government agencies to advise the CINMS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Sanctuaries Program¹.

The BWBS program engages and enrolls large global shipping lines to motivate them to reduce speeds to 10 knots in key areas off the California coast to reduce air pollutant emissions, underwater noise, and the risk of fatal ship strikes to endangered and threatened whales. Since 2014, the program has achieved more than 150,000 metric tons of regional greenhouse gas emission reductions, over 4,400 tons of harmful oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) emission reductions, and an estimated 50+% percent decreased risk of fatal whale strikes in the vessel speed reduction zones off California.

The Sanctuary Advisory Council has actively participated in vessel speed reduction (VSR) efforts since 2007, and served as the public policy forum for the genesis of the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies VSR program. In addition, in 2015 the Sanctuary Advisory Council convened a Marine Shipping Working Group subcommittee composed of representatives of the Sanctuary Advisory Council, shipping interests,

environmental groups, whale researchers, port specialists, and technical experts to explore methods to reduce the incidence of fatal ship strikes on whale populations in the Santa Barbara Channel. The continuation of BWBS Voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction program was one of the recommendations of that subcommittee deemed most vital and with the highest prospects for success². The CINMS

Advisory Council sees the value Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies has had since 2014 and the monumental positive impacts it has had on our climate and wildlife, including protected and endangered large whale species.

The BWBS program is readily expandable to other parts of the California coastal waters given the resources and local partners. A statewide vessel speed reduction program could cut greenhouse gas emissions significantly as part of a comprehensive effort to reduce emissions from ocean-going vessels. CPRG funding will allow the BWBS program to expand statewide and provide funds to increase the positive public relations campaign and the health of whales and coastal communities and develop partnerships with interested state and local agencies outside of California.

The Sanctuary Advisory Council is pleased to support the **Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds - Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS)** application and requests federal assistance to continue and expand the successful operation of this program and further reduce harmful air pollutants and impacts to wildlife along the California coast. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sean Hastings, (sean.hastings@noaa.gov, (805) 705-1790).

Sincerely,



Michael Cohen, Chair
CINMS Advisory Council

Enclosures:

- A. Sanctuary Advisory Council voting record on the motion to approve this letter
- B. Sanctuary Advisory Council ShipStrike Reports
(<https://channelislands.noaa.gov/manage/resource/ship-strikes.html>)
- C. Reducing Ship Strikes on Large Cetaceans in the Santa Barbara Channel and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (2008)
(<https://channelislands.noaa.gov/media/docs/2008-reducing-ship-strikes.pdf>)
- D. Sanctuary Advisory Council Marine Shipping Working Group Final Report (2016)
(<https://channelislands.noaa.gov/media/docs/2016-sac-marine-shipping-working-group-final-report.pdf>)

¹The council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent, and as such the opinions and findings of this letter do not necessarily reflect the position of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.

²Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Marine Shipping Working Group Final Report, 2016

Enclosure A. CINMS Advisory Council voting record on motion to approve this letter (3/15/24)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Advisory Council Seat</i>	<i>Vote</i>
Michael Cohen (Chair)	Tourism member	Yes
Amanda Allen	Tourism alternate	
Kaia Kababik	Non-Consumptive Recreation member	Yes
Molly Troup	Non-Consumptive Recreation alternate	
Giles Pettifor	Business member	
Jaime Diamond	Business alternate	Yes
Sam Macks Franz	Conservation member	Yes
Christina Tombach Wright	Conservation alternate	
Mike Nelson	Commercial Fishing member	Yes
John Hoadley	Commercial Fishing alternate	
David Lopez	Recreational Fishing member	
Kevin Brannon	Recreational Fishing alternate	Yes
Michael Yorke	Education member	Yes
Andrea Mills	Education alternate	
Phyllis Grifman (Vice Chair)	Research member	Yes
Robert Miller, Ph.D.	Research alternate	
Kenneth Owen (Secretary)	Public-At-Large member	Yes
Chris Ragland	Public At-Large alternate	
Stuart Kasdin, Ph.D.	Public-At-Large member	Yes
Blake Thomas	Public At-Large alternate	
Alicia Cordero	Chumash Community member	
Eva Pagaling	Chumash Community alternate	Yes
Daniel Studt	NOAA Fisheries member	Absent
<vacant>	NOAA Fisheries alternate	–
Ken Convery	National Park Service member	
<vacant>	National Park Service alternate	Yes
CDR Ariel Berrios	U.S. Coast Guard member	Yes
LTJG Nazere Jones	U.S. Coast Guard alternate	
Donna Schroeder	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management member	Yes
Jeremy Potter	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management alternate	
Adam Melerski	Dept. of Defense member	
Steve Duboyce	Dept. of Defense alternate	Abstain
Carlos Mireles	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife member	Abstain
Armand Barilotti	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife alternate	
Jenn Eckerle	CA Natural Resources Agency member	
Pike Spector	CA Natural Resources Agency alternate	Abstain
Cassidy Teufel	CA Coastal Commission member	
Jacqueline Phelps	CA Coastal Commission alternate	Yes
Errin Briggs	County of Santa Barbara member	
David Villalobos	County of Santa Barbara alternate	Yes
Jed Chernabaeff	County of Ventura member	Yes

VOTE TOTAL: 13-Yes, 0-No, 3-Abstain