

CINMS CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP
9/17/14 REPORT
Environmental Defense Center Conference Room,
906 Garden Street, Santa Barbara

Present: Kristi Birney (EDC), Michael Smith (Gray Whale Count), Jenna Driscoll (SBCK), Greg Helms (Ocean Conservancy), Debra Herring (SAC Non-Consumptive Seat), Stewart Willison (SAC Non Consumptive Alternate), John Ugoretz (Navy)

Staff: Sean Herron via phone (Sea Grant Fellow CINMS)

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

A. MPA implementation activities:

- a. Kristi reported that the Santa Barbara Channel Marine Protected Area (MPA) Collaborative continues to work on its MPA Awareness Campaign. As part of the MPA Awareness Campaign, upcoming events will include a dive trip for 40 divers to Naples Reef with SBCK and Truth Aquatics. SBCK is also hosting “SPASH,” a paddle out on Oct 25th in Isla Vista.¹ In addition, EDC is working with Seafaring Opportunities for Those in Need (SOFTIN) in the next few months to host two excursions trips that will provide at-sea education, skill building and self-esteem for people with special needs.
- b. Greg mentioned that he has been working with UCSB to get approval of Campus Point MPA signage. The sign location and design had been completed; next is fabrication and installation.
- c. SBCK shared a new brochure they developed, “Explore Santa Barbara’s Marine Protected Areas,” listing business and vendors serving local MPAs. Funding to print the brochures may come from the Collaborative. Brochures will be distributed to tourist centers, hotels, and businesses serving our region. SBCK is also designing a new website that provides qr codes linking MPA access maps, public access points, MPA highlights and recreational opportunities.

III. WHALES & SHIPPING

- A. VSR Pilot: On September 10, 2014, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, and the Environmental Defense Center hosted a community forum to discuss their current Vessel Speed Reduction Trial Program that aims to slow down commercial cargo ships in the

¹ Meet at the end of Del Playa Road by staircase to Devereux Beach to join. Event is from 11-2 more info here: <http://www.sbck.org/calendar/>

Santa Barbara Channel to reduce air pollution and increase protection of endangered whales. The forum featured guests from the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association and Maersk Line, in addition to a presentation on a recent air pollution and vessel speed reduction study by Dr. Wayne Miller from UC Riverside. Other meeting highlights included an overview of the program, updates on current whale research taking place in the Santa Barbara Channel, and a forum panel with the meeting hosts and guests that was moderated by Dr. Steve Gaines, Dean of the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management at UC Santa Barbara. The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District also announced that their board approved \$30,000 in funding to join the coalition's efforts, increasing the program's total funding to \$90,000.

- B. Marine Shipping Working Group: Kristi reported that she will be presenting and providing an update at Friday's SAC meeting on the funding status for the Working Group.
- a. Funding: We have successfully filled the \$50K funding need/gap for the Working Group. Funding has been provided by the Bower Foundation and International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). EDC and partners will return in early October to the Santa Barbara Foundation for an interview for an additional \$100K. Should we receive that funding we will move forward with the new SAC Working Group.
 - b. John mentioned that California Air Resources Board recently presented the latest technology assessment on potential emission reducing technologies and strategies for ocean-going vessels at a workshop in Diamond Bar. The presentation is here: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/tech/presentation/oceanvessels.pdf> and identifies vessel speed reduction on page 56 and also mentions the potential benefits to marine mammals.
 - c. We discussed sound monitoring in the SB Channel. It was acknowledged that while most of the HARPS have been removed there still remains a small handful of HARPS. Sean mentioned that a new HARP is going to be installed south of the islands to measure low frequency acoustics. NOAA staff James Barlow and Shannon Rankin are involved in the project and new HARP installation.
 - d. Sean and Kristi noted that the Whale Alert App has been released: <http://westcoast.whalealert.org/>. The Whale Alert App is designed for citizen science and for the general public to use. This same App is also used on the east coast for whale sightings and has been shared with the whale watching and shipping industry. There is a similar target audience on the West Coast. Michael mentioned that he had inquired about the ability to enter gray whale data into Whale Alert App and its usefulness for local small boater operators. He questioned that if the data was entered via Whale Alert could it then be shared with boaters to notify them of the location and presence of gray

whales. Sean shared that Whale Alerts location information is taken from the person who enters the data's physical location. This may be logistically challenging for Michaels purpose since the Gray Whale Count collects data from on-shore; thus, data points would alert boaters to the presence of gray whales but not the exact location.

IV. SAC AGENDA ITEMS

- A. New CINMS Science Team: At the SAC meeting on Friday we will get to meet the new CINMS Research Coordinator, who will give an update about current Sanctuary research projects. In addition, Ryan Freeman (CINMS Sea Grant Fellow) will report on current scientific research. Dr. Miller of UCSB MSI will present information on a large scale multi-year science project that Sanctuary is involved in.

VI. OTHER SAC ISSUES

- A. Sanctuary Nomination Process and Central Coast Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary: Kristi noted that she continues checking in with local Chumash representative, Luhui Isha Waiya to see if the Southern Band of the Chumash has endorsed the proposal. In addition, Kristi is having further conversations with local community members and groups to gather more information about the proposal.
- B. Jenna mentioned that the next cruise ship will be visiting the SB Harbor this weekend and SBCK will be greeting and monitoring the cruise ship as it enters SB Harbor.
- C. This Saturday, September 20th is California Coastal Cleanup Day. Visit this website for local cleanup sites: <http://www.sbprojectcleanwater.org/CCD/>

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