

**Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
Sanctuary Advisory Council**

FINAL Key Meeting Outcomes

July 22, 2011

**Museum of Ventura County
100 E. Main Street • Ventura, CA**

Note: This document will be posted on line at <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/minutes.html>. Audio recordings of this and other Council meetings are available upon request to michael.murray@noaa.gov.

Attendance: At peak, fourteen of the Council's twenty-one voting seats were present (see attached attendance roster). Seven seats were absent for the day: California Resources Agency; California Coastal Commission; Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement; Chumash Community; Commercial Fishing; Recreational Fishing; and Ventura County. Public attendance varied from 4 to 6 people.

Administrative Business and Announcements

Eric Kett introduced incoming US Coast Guard representatives CDR Christina Davidson (member), and LCDR Elisa Garrity (alternate).

The draft key outcomes report from the May 20, 2011 meeting was adopted as final.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Chris Mobley highlighted several items in the Superintendent's Report (provided to all SAC members and the attending public, and available at <http://www.channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/super.html>).

Highlights included: the Ocean for Life program success at CINMS (including some SAC member involvement); MERITO program successes in 2010-2011; Channel Islands Naturalist Corps receiving a Dept. of Interior "Take Pride in America" award for best volunteer program in the Federal Government; and a successful SAC Field Trip to Santa Cruz Island on July 9th. Chris announced that the proposed budget in fiscal year 2012 may include a significant budget cut for all of NOAA, but at the same time a need for satellite program budgets within NOAA to increase. If so, this would likely mean other parts of NOAA would take larger cuts. Chris also provided an update on the construction of the new sanctuary office and OCTOS building at UCSB. The move into the new office could take place early next year.

Council Member Announcements

A number of Council members shared announcements (unrelated to meeting agenda items). Audio recordings are available upon request.

Single-use Plastic Bags Resolution

Kristi Birney with the Environmental Defense Center introduced the resolution on single-use plastic bags from the Conservation Working Group (CWG). Linda announced that there is a new report from Environment California which recognizes over 20 nations that have enacted bans on plastic bags. The CWG would like to support these efforts. The resolution has three parts: 1) support efforts to oppose bans, 2) support programs at stores to reduce bag use and, 3) to remove plastic litter. Kira Redmond from Santa Barbara Channelkeeper announced that they are partnering with the City of Santa Barbara on a "Where's your bag?" campaign. Kira reported that only two of 11 participating stores have followed through with that program but that the City of Santa Barbara just voted for the campaign to be mandatory in stores. Kira also explained that a state bill (AB2449) prohibits a fee on plastic bags, thus Channel Keeper is advocating for fees on paper bags and a ban on plastic bags. The Council's discussion focused on the purpose of the resolution and other methods that could be used to reduce litter or encourage recycling. A concern was raised by Chair Eric Kett about the resolution calling for a "ban", which is strongly worded and could end up being used to suggest support something that might turn out ultimately undesirable. A straw poll to check for the level of agreement and readiness to adopt a

resolution indicated no additional show-stopper issues. Shortly thereafter, a motion to adopt the proposed resolution, changing one use of the word “supports” to “encourages” and with a modification to indicate that recycling is “important” but not a sufficient solutions, was made by Linda Krop, and seconded. By roll call vote **the council approved the resolution with 10 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 5 agency seat abstentions** (see attached resolution and voting record).

Public comment

Kira Redmond from Santa Barbara Channelkeeper encouraged the council to participate in a new effort of volunteers (called MPA Watch) to educate ocean users about new MPAs. A training is set for July 26, 5:30 pm.

Status Report on CINMS Water Quality Recommendations, Plans, and Actions

Dani Lipski, CINMS Research Specialist, provided a presentation on the sanctuary’s water quality planning progress. The presentation, and sanctuary efforts, incorporated the advice that the SAC has provided to the sanctuary as well as other status reports and planning documents that the sanctuary has developed related to water quality. Dani summarized the documents and the recommendations received, the elements that the documents have in common, and the progress the sanctuary has made on water quality, and what our capabilities are for addressing water quality. Finally, Dani reported on planned next steps which include: to continue support for ongoing monitoring projects and targeted research; to continue education and outreach efforts; to track the status of monitoring programs to identify gaps; and to track emerging issues.

Update on Planned Oil Spill Exercise

Jill Lemon with the US Coast Guard’s Sector LA/Long Beach provided an update on the planned regional oil spill exercise including the timeline, participants, and objective of the drill. Jill explained that the National Preparedness Response Exercise Program (NPREP) was established as a result of the EXXON VALDEZ spill and it requires industry and government agencies to exhibit proficiency in the ability to respond to and manage a worst case scenario discharge. Jill explained that because new air regulations have resulted in increased shipping traffic on the south side of the northern Channel Islands they chose a scenario of a vessel collision in this area. Jill reported that there are many local participants including Channel Islands National Park and CINMS. Jill reported on some of the technology that will be used such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and she announced that a major objective will be to test communication, mobilization, and coordination capabilities. Jill and other Coast Guard representatives reported that up to 200 Coast Guard employees may be involved. The drill will be September 13-15 and the first day will include some interactions with the public. In response to questions, Jill responded that the Fisherman’s Oil Response Team would not be activated during the drill. Other volunteers could potentially get involved, but the Coast Guard is still waiting on guidance for this.

Ship Strike Update

Sean Hastings presented this season’s outreach and monitoring efforts to vessels in the whale advisory zone, from Pt. Conception to Pt. Mugu. Recently, staff from CINMS and NMFS Southwest Region produced and shared whale distribution modeling results (NMFS) and sightings data analyses (CINMS) with the US Coast Guard to help better inform the Port Access Route Study underway in our area. Included was a joint CINMS/NMFS recommendation that apparent whale hot spots be taken into consideration with respect to shipping lane placement, specifically within the Santa Barbara Channel. Sean also reported that a legal petition has been received by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) that asks for 10 knot ship speed limit regulations to be pursued at the four national marine sanctuaries within California. This is being reviewed now at many levels within ONMS and NOAA. The future response can be shared with the Council.

Natalie Senyk, CINMS Physical Scientist, provided a presentation on a recently completed first-order characterization of 10 to 20 years of whale sightings data collected by Cascadia Research Collective and observers aboard whale watch vessels operating within the Santa Barbara Channel. The analysis of the data was conducted by CINMS staff and John Calambokidis of Cascadia Research. For each data source, Natalie presented maps of multi-year whale sighting locations for blue, fin and humpback whales. She also showed a comparison of results from each data source, as well as the location of the compiled sightings relative to a 100

meter isobath (with 1 nm buffer). Council discussion and questions focused on how to possibly improve the understanding of which feature could be influencing the apparent areas of whale concentration, such as bathymetric slope. The full analysis is available at http://channelislands.noaa.gov/focus/pdf/pars5_19_11.pdf.

Working Group Reports

There were no reports provided by other working groups.

Conservation Working Group. Linda Krop reported on the group met on July 21st and discussed some of the items that have been on the agenda today. In addition, they still plan to put together a panel of experts on ocean energy for the SAC meeting in September. Linda reported that Michael Smith is interested in assembling a group of ocean users and to address how they may affect protected species and important habitats.

Public comment

Kristi Birney thanked the council for taking on difficult issues, conducting discussions in a diplomatic fashion, and respecting differing opinions.

Michael Smith from Gray Whales Count announced that he would like to hold a workshop about the new protected area at Coal Oil Point and inform ocean users about what activities they can do. Michael would like UCSB and CDFG to be involved in hosting the workshop. The purpose would be to educate the public about the area, the resources, and protection. Michael's website is graywhalescount.org and he is open to hearing suggestions for the workshop.

Presentation: Biological and Behavioral Response Studies of Marine Mammals in Southern California

Dr. Brandon Southall, President and Senior Scientist at SEA, Inc., provided an update on the SOCAL project which looks at behavioral responses of marine mammals to sounds that are similar to Navy sonar. Dr. Southall explained that anthropogenic noise in the ocean can be disruptive to marine life and that researchers would like to understand how these noises affect animals and at what level they can be detrimental. In the past, some military training events have been known to cause strandings. Dr. Southall reported that there is currently a lack of understanding of what causes strandings, and behavioral response studies are needed. This project is a proposed five-year project and builds on similar work done in other parts of the world. They work with many partners. Dr. Southall explained the objectives, focal species, vessels used, and area targeted. He reported on the methods used on the various legs (the area covered, the tracklines of the vessels, and the species observed). Dr. Southall described the types of tags and sounds exposures used, and explained that they are required to obtain federal permits and to comply with safety protocols to protect the animals. Dr. Southall reported that the project was successful. They were able to document human-whale interactions including interactions with cargo ships, speed boats, and jet skis. One highlight was in September and October of 2010 during the heat wave the conditions were good and a beaked whale was tagged. Overall results included 55 tags placed on 37 individual animals, mostly blue whales during the first leg. During the second leg the animals were not as abundant and less tags were successfully deployed. During the 2 legs a total of 63 tags were deployed on 44 animals. Dr. Southall reported that responses from baleen whales were either little to no response or increased swimming speed away from the sound source. In some cases calling behavior stopped during sound exposure. He discussed some of the examples of tags on individual animals. He described the tagging and some of the data from Cuvier's Beaked Whales. After tagging and sound exposure, they saw shallower dives and less steep ascents, and in unidirectional travel for 40 minutes. Post exposure, the behavior returned to pre-exposure patterns. Dr. Southall summarized that, overall, behavioral response seemed to depend on whether the animal was feeding or not. He also summarized the plans for 2011-2012, which will be similar but will refine protocols and use preferred vessels. The scouting leg for 2011 is currently underway. Questions for Dr. Southall focused on the ability to track whales by their calls and the possibility of deterring whales.

Future Meeting Schedule

Schedule for remaining 2011 meetings and events: September 23, Santa Barbara; November 18, Ventura.

Meeting Attendance Roster (July 22, 2011):

Andrea Mills	Tourism	Present
Matthew Curto	Tourism - Alternate	Absent
Debra Herring	Non-Consumptive Recreation	Present
Nicole Peters	Non-Consumptive Recreation - Alternate	Absent
Capt. Richard McKenna	Business	Present
Michael Gould	Business - Alternate	Present
Linda Krop	Conservation	Present
Greg Helms	Conservation - Alternate	Present
Bruce Steele	Commercial Fishing	Absent
Stephanie Mutz	Commercial Fishing - Alternate	Absent
Capt. David Bacon	Recreational Fishing	Absent
Merit McCrea	Recreational Fishing - Alternate	Absent
Maria Petueli	Education	Absent
Amanda Hendrickson	Education - Alternate	Present
Dr. Robert Warner	Research	Absent
Dr. Mark Steele	Research - Alternate	Present
Phyllis Grifman [Council Secretary]	Public At Large #1	Present
Victor Cox	Public At Large #1 - Alternate	Present
Eric Kett [Council Chair]	Public At Large #2	Present
Marilyn Kelly	Public At Large #2 - Alternate	Present
Luhui Isha	Chumash Community	Absent
Venisse Miller-Forte	Chumash Community - Alternate	Absent
Peter Fischel	NOAA Fisheries	Absent
Elizabeth Petras	NOAA Fisheries - Alternate	Present
Russell Galipeau	National Park Service	Present
David Ashe	National Park Service - Alternate	Absent
CDR Christina Davidson	US Coast Guard	Present
LCDR Elisa Garrity	US Coast Guard – Alternate	Present
Donna Schroeder	BOEMRE	Absent
Dr. Ann Bull	BOEMRE - Alternate	Absent
John Ugoretz	Dept. of Defense	Absent
Walt Schobel	Dept. of Defense - Alternate	Present
Marija Vojkovich	CA Dept. of Fish & Game	Present
Kristine Barsky	CA Dept. of Fish & Game - Alternate	Absent
Brian Baird	CA Natural Resources Agency	Absent
Amy Vierra	CA Natural Resources Agency - Alternate	Absent
Steve Hudson	CA Coastal Commission	Absent
Barbara Carey	CA Coastal Commission - Alternate	Absent
Dianne Black	Santa Barbara County	Absent
Susan Curtis	Santa Barbara County - Alternate	Present
Lyn Krieger	Ventura County	Absent
Marilyn Miller	Ventura County - Alternate	Absent
Chris Mobley	Channel Islands NMS [non-voting]	Present
Paul Michel	Monterey Bay NMS [non-voting]	Absent
Karen Grimmer	Monterey Bay NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	Absent
Maria Brown	Gulf of the Farallones NMS [non-voting]	Absent
Brian Johnson	Gulf of the Farallones NMS [non-voting]	Absent

Member/Alternate

Tourism

Andrea Mills / Capt. Mat Curto

Business

Capt. Richard McKenna / Michael Gould

Non-Consumptive Recreation

Debra Herring / Nicole Peters

Commercial Fishing

Bruce Steele / Stephanie Mutz

Recreational Fishing

Capt. David Bacon / Merit McCrea

Education

Maria Petueli / Amanda Hendrickson

Research

Dr. Robert Warner / Dr. Mark Steele

Conservation

Linda Krop / Greg Helms

Public At-Large 1

Phyllis Grifman / Victor Cox

Public At-Large 2

Eric Kett / Marilyn Kelly

Chumash Community

Luhui Isha / Vennise Miller Forte

National Marine Fisheries Service

Peter Fischel / Elizabeth Petras

National Park Service

Russell Galipeau / David Ashe

U.S. Coast Guard

CDR Christina Davidson / LCDR Elisa Garrity

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management,

Regulation and Enforcement

Donna Schroeder / Dr. Ann Bull

U.S. Department of Defense

John Ugoretz / Walter Schobel

California Department of Fish and Game

Marija Vojkovich / Kristine Barsky

California Resources Agency

Brian Baird / Amy Vierra

California Coastal Commission

Steve Hudson / Barbara Carey

County of Santa Barbara

Dianne Black / Susan Curtis

County of Ventura

Lyn Krieger / Marilyn Miller

Channel Islands Nat'l Marine Sanctuary

Chris Mobley [non-voting]

Monterey Bay Nat'l Marine Sanctuary

Paul Michel / Karen Grimmer [non-voting]

Gulf of the Farallones Nat'l Marine Sanctuary

Maria Brown / Brian Johnson [non-voting]

Chair: Eric Kett

Vice Chair: Bruce Steele

Secretary: Phyllis Grifman

Sanctuary Advisory Council

CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

July 22, 2011

Resolution Regarding Single-Use Plastic Bags¹

Whereas, the amount of debris in our marine environment has increased drastically over the last few decades, one of the sources being the estimated 12 billion plastic grocery bags distributed in California each year.²

Whereas, single-use plastic bags on our local beaches, and in our tributaries and oceans, are having detrimental effects on our ocean's habitat and marine life, and associated recreation and tourism.

Whereas, single use plastic bags are consistently among the top ten most common types of litter found at beaches surrounding the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and over 8,500 plastic bags have been removed at Coastal Cleanup Day events in just the past two years.³

Whereas, plastic bags never fully biodegrade, they are instead broken down by the sun through photodegradation into tiny pieces, which attract and accumulate various toxins that then enter the ocean food chain.⁴

Whereas, plastic bags threaten a variety of marine life including whales, sea otters, pinnipeds, sea turtles, and sea birds through ingestion, choking, infection and/or entanglement.^{5,6}

Whereas, recycling is important but not a sufficient solution to plastic bag pollution and there exist readily and widely available alternatives to single-use plastic bags such as reusable bags.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby encourages federal and statewide legislative efforts and local ordinances by municipalities and counties to ban the use and distribution of single-use plastic bags.

Be it further resolved that the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby supports the efforts of local businesses to transition away from single-use plastic bags.

Be it further resolved that the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby supports efforts to remove plastic bag litter from the shores and waters of the Sanctuary.

¹ The sanctuary advisory council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this resolution do not necessarily reflect the position of the sanctuary and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

² Californians Against Waste. <http://www.cawrecycles.org/>

³ California Coastal Clean-up Day Database. (2009, 2010) Top Ten Debris Items Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

⁴ California Coastal Commission, (2006) "Eliminating Land-based Discharges of Marine Debris in California: A Plan of Action from The Plastic Debris Project."

⁵ Mrosovsky *et al.* (2009). Leatherback turtles: The menace of plastic, *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 58: 287–289.

⁶ H. Gomeric, M.D. Gomeric, T. Gomeric *et al.* (2006). "Biological aspects of Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphurus cavirostris*) recorded in the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea," *European Journal of Wildlife Research*, 52, 182-187.

Voting Results: July 22, 2011 – Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

Voting results for a Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council motion to approve a resolution regarding single-use plastic bags. July 22, 2011, Ventura, California.

Name	Council Seat - position	Vote
Andrea Mills	Tourism - member	Yes
Debra Herring	Non-Consumptive Recreation - member	Yes
Capt. Richard McKenna	Business - member	Yes
Linda Krop	Conservation - member	Yes
Bruce Steele [Vice Chair]	Commercial Fishing - member	ABSENT
Stephanie Mutz	Commercial Fishing - alternate	
Merit McCrea	Recreational Fishing - alternate	Yes
Amanda Hendrickson	Education - alternate	Yes
Dr. Mark Steele	Research - alternate	Yes
Phyllis Grifman [Secretary]	Public At Large #1 - member	Yes
Eric Kett [Chair]	Public At Large #2 - member	Yes
Luhui Isha Vennise Miller-Forte	Chumash Community - member Chumash Community - alternate	ABSENT
Elizabeth Petras	NOAA Fisheries - alternate	
Russell Galipeau	National Park Service - member	Yes
CDR Christina Davidson	US Coast Guard - member	Abstain
Donna Schroeder Dr. Ann Bull	Bureau of Ocean Energy, Management, Regulation & Enforcement - member Bureau of Ocean Energy, Management, Regulation & Enforcement - alternate	ABSENT
Water Schobel	Dept. of Defense - alternate	
Marija Vojkovich	California Department of Fish & Game - member	Abstain
Brian Baird Amy Vierra	California Natural Resources Agency - member California Natural Resources Agency - alternate	ABSENT
Steve Hudson Barbara Carey - Alternate	California Coastal Commission - member California Coastal Commission - alternate	
Susan Curtis	Santa Barbara County - alternate	Abstain
Lyn Krieger Marilyn Miller – Alternate	Ventura County - member Ventura County - alternate	ABSENT

Yes –10 No –0 Abstain –5