

**ROCKS, ECOSYSTEMS, PARTNERS, & GATEWAYS:
THE COMPONENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT WITHIN
CALIFORNIA'S "ELEVENTH BIOREGION"**

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OPENING COMMENTS

In this presentation I will (1) provide a brief explanation of what the California Coastal National Monument is, (2) touch on the framework for the management of the monument (i.e., rocks, ecosystems, partners, and gateways) and the implementation priorities, and (3) conclude with a few comments on how the CCNM contributes to the implementation of the recommendations of the California Ocean Protection Council's five-year strategic plan and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Ocean Commission reports.

BACKGROUND

The California Coastal National Monument (CCNM) is arguably the Nation's most unique national monument. This national monument is under the responsibility of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (commonly referred to as the "BLM") and is part of the recently established National Landscape Conservation System.

So why is the CCNM unique? It's rocks, a network of more than 20,000 of them, located off of the 1,100 miles of the California coastline from San Diego to the Oregon border.

The CCNM is among the most viewed but the least recognized of any of the Nation's national monuments. Established over six years ago by Presidential Proclamation, the stated purpose of the CCNM is to elevate the protection of "all unappropriated or unreserved lands and interest in lands owned or controlled by the United States in the form of islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and pinnacles above mean high tide within 12 nautical miles of the shoreline of the State of California." It's the portion of the rocks and islands above mean high tide. The entire national monument is offshore (currently there is no on-shore portion of the monument).

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The Presidential Proclamation recognizes a dual purpose. First is the need to protect the CCNM's overwhelming scenic quality and natural beauty and it specifically directs the protection of the geologic formations and the habitat that these rocks and islands provide for seabirds, sea mammals, and other plant and animal life within this portion of the coastal intertidal zone. Second, the proclamation recognizes the CCNM as containing "irreplaceable scientific values vital to protecting the fragile ecosystems of the California coastline." It is this phrase that links the CCNM and its roll with the larger California coastline ecosystems of which the monument is a vital part.

The CCNM, therefore, consists of rocks, small islands, exposed reefs, and pinnacles of various sizes, shapes, and habitats for both plants and animals.

Simply speaking, the CCNM is the exposed portion of a network of more than 20,000 of California's "nearshore" rocks and small islands. The surface area of these rocks and small islands (i.e., islets), and therefore the CCNM, covers about 1,000 acres, but as delineated by the Presidential Proclamation, are located within a 14,600 square nautical mile area (i.e., the "CCNM corridor"), and contain a wide variety of biological, physical, and cultural values. It's all off-shore (Again, no portion of the CCNM is currently onshore). The monument cuts across five of BLM's field offices and adjoins and is intertwined with dozens of different jurisdictions. The simple fact that the CCNM is intertwined with a variety of jurisdictional responsibilities and management entities up and down the entire coast of California necessitates a cooperative and collaborative approach to the protection and management of the CCNM.

In order to identify and assemble the components needed to implement this unique national monument, the BLM developed and issued a management plan for the entire CCNM (2005). Completed just about a year ago, this plan focused on the monument (i.e., the rocks and small islands) within a larger planning area that consisted of the "CCNM Corridor" and the California Coastal Commission's coastal zone.

The CCNM plan established the framework in which the monument is to be managed, identified the goals and objectives, and laid out dozens of management actions needed to implement the plan over the next 15 to 20 years. I'm going to briefly touch on the basic framework established for the CCNM and the major implementation priorities identified in the plan.

MAJOR ASPECTS & FOCUS OF THE CCNM

In order to effectively manage the CCNM, attention is being paid to four equally important aspects. The first of these is preservation.

PRESERVATION (Management Focus)

Preservation is the primary management focus for the CCNM. This focus applies directly to the more than 20,000 rocks and small islands that make up the CCNM

(i.e., the portion above mean high tide). This is the monument, with attention on protection, research, education, and planning. When push comes to shove, this is what the BLM is responsible for off the California coastline.

LANDSCAPE (Ecosystem Focus)

Landscape is the ecosystem focus of the second aspect of the CCNM. This aspect recognizes that the 20,000 rocks and small islands that constitute the CCNM are part of a larger landscape (or seascape). It is the more than 14,600 square nautical mile area (i.e., the “CCNM Corridor”) within which the CCNM is located, but it is not the CCNM. It is here that we can effectively assess all three of the dimensions of the coastal ecosystems (i.e., abiotic, biotic, and cultural). It is the landscape aspect that connects the CCNM with the various ecosystems of which its rocks and small islands are an important part, and links the CCNM with the many jurisdictions and management responsibilities that together ensure the proper management and long-term protection of the California coastal and marine resources and values.

This landscape also links the CCNM with its current and future partners, as well as with the public. In addition, it is this landscape that provides the opportunity for using the CCNM as a focal point for the “sea-land connection” that can help link the coastal initiatives with the marine initiatives. This is where the CCNM meets with its adjoining jurisdictions and, therefore, its partners and potential partners.

PARTNERSHIPS (Collaboration Focus)

Partnerships provide the collaboration focus for the CCNM. The only way that the CCNM can be effectively managed is with partnerships. As mentioned above, the CCNM is located adjacent to or embedded within many jurisdictions, including other federal and state agencies, counties, municipalities, tribes, and private entities. With the myriad of adjacent and overlapping responsibilities and jurisdictions, BLM intends to continue with existing partnerships and develop new partnerships to share some of the management responsibilities.

In order to provide some order to large number of partnerships that will be associated with the CCNM, the following three partnership categories have been established:

Core-Managing Partners. BLM, California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) serve as CCNM’s core-managing partners. These agencies have the responsibility for long-term oversight and administration of the entire CCNM. Through the interim MOU signed in spring 2000, BLM extended its partnership with DFG and added State Parks, the state agency that administers almost 30% percent of the California coast.

The involvement of other entities with management of the CCNM will be formalized through the use of the other two partnership categories.

Collaborative Partners. Collaborative partners serve to help implement various aspects of resource programs related to the monument. Most of the partnerships related to the CCNM will fall into this category. Collaborative partnerships will be developed with a wide variety of governmental, tribal, and private agencies and entities. These partners have specific interests or responsibilities that, when linked with the CCNM, enhance the monument's purpose and the purpose of the collaborative partner. These partnerships will include entities that oversee similar resources (e.g., seabirds or tidepools), have program-related interests (e.g., maritime heritage or marine protected species), are involved in a related activity (e.g., research or education), and/or oversee adjacent locations (e.g., an area within a National Marine Sanctuary). Currently, collaborative partnership agreements have been developed with wide variety of entities, such as NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, PRBO Conservation Science, Recreation Fishing Alliance, City of Point Arena, and Trinidad Museum Society.

Stewards. Steward partners are select entities with ownership or management responsibility for a specific portion of the coast that adjoins part of the CCNM. These partners agree to serve as stewards for that portion of the CCNM. Stewards will support resource inventory and monitoring, education and interpretation, and resource protection. Currently, a stewardship agreements have been developed with the U.S. Air Force for the 35-miles of coastline associated with Vandenberg Air Force Base, the Trinidad Rancheria (a federally recognized tribe) for a 4-mile portion of the Trinidad coast in Humboldt County, The Sea Ranch Association (a not-for-profit property owners corporation) for a 12-miles of coastline along the northern portion of the Sonoma County coast, the Yurok Tribe (another federally recognized tribe) for the CCNM rocks within their traditional tribal territory, and the U.S. Navy for the CCNM rocks and exposed reefs off San Nicolas and San Clemente Islands and the west side of Navy Base Point Loma, as well as Begg Rock located northwest of San Nicolas Island.

COMMUNITIES (Local Focus)

The final focus, the "Local Focus," is a key element to making all of this work. Without developing community involvement and the sense of community "ownership," it will be very difficult to effectively manage the CCNM. Success in implementing the CCNM is the establishment and initiation of a series of "CCNM Gateways."

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Although the RMP identified dozens of objectives and management actions that needed to be accomplished over the next 15 to 20 years, six implementation priorities were identified in order to set the management of the CCNM into motion. Each of the six priorities is intended to allow the BLM and its CCNM partners the opportunity to begin the initial implementation of the RMP without too much expense and within the current staffing limitations. Together these implementation priorities are intended to establish the framework needed to get started on the basic aspects and tasks required to meet the CCNM's overall

goals. Each of the six implementation priorities is intended to cover at least one of the CCNM's major aspects and focus.

(1) PROTECTION *(Protecting the CCNM resources & resource values)*

As directed by the Presidential Proclamation, protection is the primary reason for establishing the CCNM. The use of the term "protection" in this context is broad, encompassing both physical and administrative measures. It also includes a variety of management actions, both reactive and proactive, that can be taken to respond to threats to the monument's resources and resource values. These actions range from public outreach and education to coordinated law enforcement efforts and permanent closures.

(2) PARTNERSHIPS *(Developing & maintaining partnerships)*

Partnerships provide the collaboration focus for the CCNM. With a national monument that is as extensive as the CCNM, as well as being connected to so many varied jurisdictions, the opportunities for partnerships are enormous and are absolutely necessary for the success of the CCNM.

(3) SITE CHARACTERIZATION *(Conducting, maintaining, & updating the CCNM Site Characterization Study & Survey)*

This is critical if BLM is to get a handle on what the CCNM actually consists of and what specifically are the important locations, resources, and values that the CCNM is intended to protect. It will also enable BLM to organize the research and monitoring needs, gaps, and opportunities; discuss the CCNM in terms of its abiotic (physical), biotic (biological), and cultural (socio-cultural) dimensions; begin developing the CCNM's public education and interpretive initiatives; and establish a public accessible web-based site.

(4) CCNM GATEWAYS *(Establishing & supporting a series of "CCNM Gateways")*

Key to the successful management of the CCNM is the development of effective community involvement and a sense of community "ownership." The primary means to accomplish this is the establishment and implementation of the series of "CCNM Gateways." The CCNM Gateways help to bring the monument into focus and serve as a way to link it with local communities and initiatives. Each CCNM Gateway provides a variety of opportunities with a variety of local partners.

CCNM Gateways are sections of the California coast that serve as focal points and visitor contact locations for the CCNM. These are areas, towns, cities, communities, or various locations that are ideal for providing visitor information and services, and have the infrastructure and interest in serving in this capacity. It is also the vehicle to establish a local "flavor" for a specific portion of the CCNM and provide local stewardship.

Twelve segments of the California coast have been identified as the initial CCNM Gateway locations and to provide the primary contact locations for what is the CCNM. These 12 potential CCNM Gateways are (from north to south) the following: 1) Crescent City, 2) Trinidad, 3) Shelter Cove (Lost Coast), 4) Mendocino (Fort Bragg/Mendocino), 5) Elk, 6) Point Arena, 7) Sonoma Coast, 8) Pigeon Point (San Mateo/Santa Cruz coast), 9) Monterey Peninsula, 10) Big Sur, 11) Piedras Blancas/San Simeon (San Luis Obispo North), and 12) Palos Verdes Peninsula. The initial focus is on the first five locations, one within each of the five coastal BLM field offices' jurisdictions. All 12 of these locations provide a variety of opportunities with a variety of partners and potential partners to serve as key contact points for the CCNM.

(5) SEABIRD CONSERVATION *(Developing & implementing a Seabird Conservation initiative)*

Focusing on seabirds initiates the research and resource monitoring aspect of the CCNM. Of the various coastal resources, seabirds have received the least attention and, therefore, provide the CCNM with the opportunity to make a very useful contribution to further the understanding of California's coastal resources. Since the rocks and small islands of the CCNM provide important habitat to seabirds for roosting and nesting, the CCNM can help to fill the gaps in the seabird inventories along California's coast and service as a focal point for seabird conservation initiatives. This could include working with various CCNM partners to coordinate seabird research, monitoring, protection, and public outreach initiatives.

(6) TIDEPOOL CONNECTION *(Initiating & maintaining a Tidepool Connections network)*

Tidepools give the CCNM an education and outreach focus on an area that needs attention. With over 20,000 rocks spread the California coastline, the CCNM is associated with most of the state's tidepool areas. Being connected with a wide variety of California's tidepools provides the CCNM with the opportunity to serve as the vehicle to help develop and coordinate a California coast-wide initiative related to tidepool education and protection. This could include the development and dissemination of a "tidepool etiquette" applicable to the entire coast, common tidepool public education materials, and appropriate signage wording and formats, as well as establishing a communication network. In addition, this initiative moves the CCNM towards its vision to serve as a catalyst for fostering cooperative stewardship of the monument's resources and California's coastal ecosystems.

SUMMARY

Success with these priorities will open the door for increased opportunities and capabilities. The challenge is to ensure that the appropriate level of attention and support is provided to make this a very positive undertaking for all of the parties involved in this unique collaborative endeavor along the entire California coast.

The CCNM (i.e., The “**Rocks**”) can not be effectively managed by itself. It is an integral part of a complex of coastal ecosystems (i.e., The “**Ecosystems**”) and is intertwined with a wide variety of other jurisdictions, all current or potential CCNM partners (i.e., The “**Partners**”). Partnerships are an absolute necessity for the CCNM, as is bring this partnership approach down to the community level and developing a sense of community “ownership” (i.e., The “**Gateways**”) is a key aspect of the long-term management of the CCNM. All four of these major aspects must come together in order to effectively administer the CCNM and implementation of the CCNM priorities.

CCNM & CWO’06 CONFERENCE FOCUS

Before I conclude, I would like to briefly discuss a few of the links that the CCNM has with the focus of this conference and how the CCNM contributes to the implementation of the recommendations of the California Ocean Protection Council’s five-year strategic plan and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Ocean Commission reports.

The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy’s final report (2004) called for, among other things, enhancing coordination, advancing a regional approach, and coordinating management, plus promoting stewardship and education, as well as promoting resource conservation along the coast. The Pew Ocean Commission (2003) recognized the importance of the sea-land connection and the California Ocean Protection Act and the California Ocean Protection Council’s follow-up five year strategic plan (2005) began implementation of these recommendations for California. CCNM management framework and implementation priorities touch on all of the above mentioned recommendations.

The CCNM, with its network of more than 20,000 small islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and pinnacles, can further help California with the implementation of these recommendations. Below are three areas that the CCNM can help provide some focus:

First, the CCNM can **model “participatory governance”**, one of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy’s guiding principles and the first theme of the California Ocean Protection Council’s strategic plan. With the CCNM’s partnership approach and “CCNM Gateways” initiative as key elements of the CCNM’s implementation, the CCNM has already begun to model this guiding principle. At the core to this approach is the concept of “Think coastal, act local”.

Second, with the CCNM being the only Federal designation that runs the length of the California Coast, it can serve as a **catalyst for fostering stewardship** of the California’s coastal ecosystems. Cutting across, intertwined with, and connecting to so many coastal jurisdictions, CCNM provides an existing vehicle to help enhance cooperative and collaborative initiatives and partnerships with various communities, agencies, organizations, academic institutions, the public,

and other stakeholders. This stewardship, of course, recognizes the importance of outreach, public awareness, and lifelong ocean and coastal education.

And finally, the “CCNM corridor” can help bring a holistic perspective to California’s nearshore and offshore zones, a perspective that recognizes that this portion of California constitutes **California’s “eleventh bioregion”**. The current division of California into ten large bioregions inadvertently excluded California’s nearshore and offshore zones (i.e., the western edge of the four western bioregions is the “coastline”). As a result, the State’s current biodiversity initiative (i.e., California Biodiversity Council) is missing a key part of California’s diverse ecosystems. By treating California’s nearshore and offshore zones as the eleventh bioregion, we complete California’s intent of including all of the State’s natural resources under its biodiversity initiative and formally add California’s eleventh bioregion to the existing forum.

Promoting the bioregion concept for the California’s nearshore and offshore zones (i.e., its ocean and coast) is also key to ocean and coastal resource conservation and economic growth and sustainability. A holistic perspective of California’s ocean and coastal bioregion is critical if California is to maintain its primary economic draw- -the diversity, scenic beauty, and natural resources of its world-class coast.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Developing and effectively implementing a functional management focus and partnership approach for the CCNM is not a simple challenge. It is, however, an opportunity to initiate a coast-wide partnership, or series of partnerships, that can coordinate or facilitate and enhance the sharing of information, messages, and research related to the California coast and the land-sea connections. It provides the opportunity to help link the coastal initiatives with the marine initiatives, and to do so with a multi-agency, multi-organization, and multi-jurisdictional approach where the partners participate in the management of the CCNM. This has the potential of being a very interesting endeavor where a wide variety of partners share in the management of a very unique national monument and in “a partnership in protecting unique California coastal resources.”

REFERENCES

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- Pew Oceans Commission. *America’s Living Oceans: Charting a Course for Sea Change*, 2003
- U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. *An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century*, 2004
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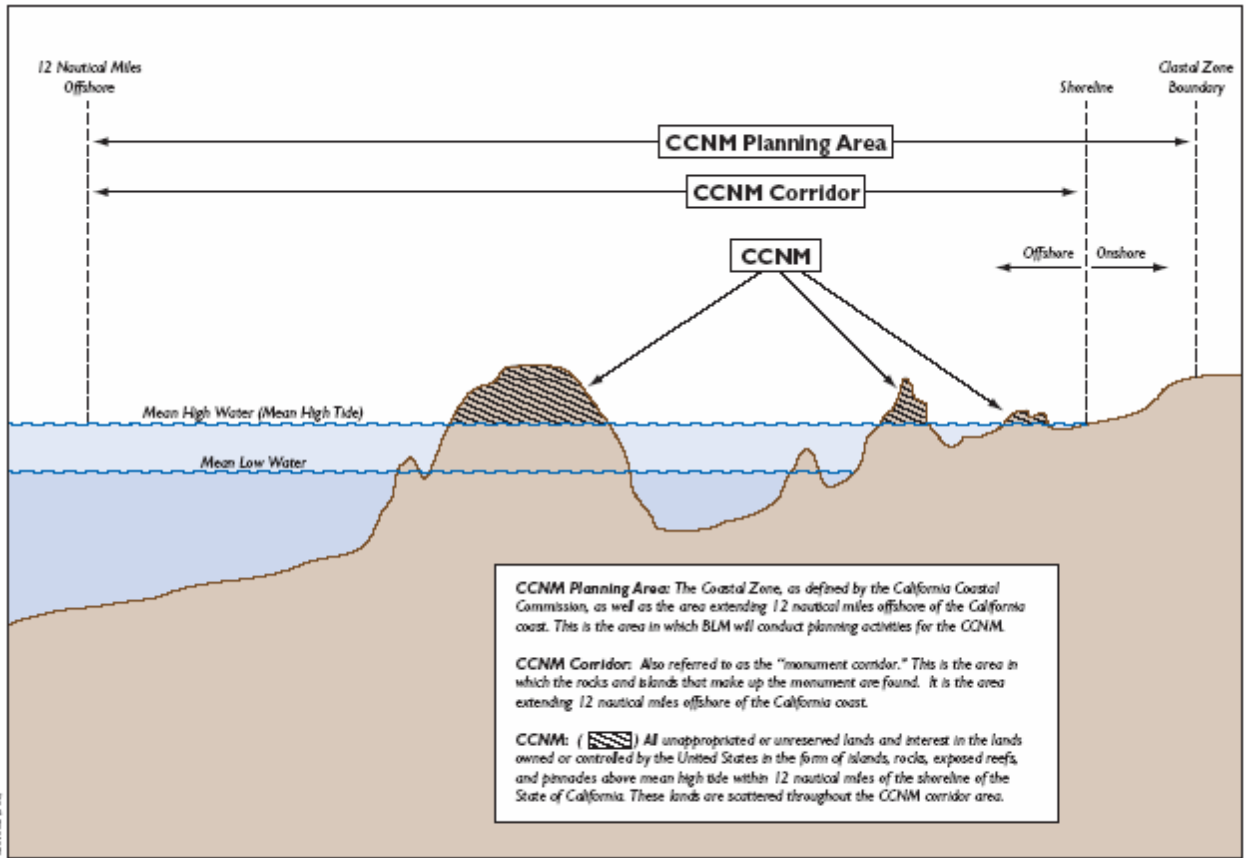


Figure I-1a
CCNM in Relation to Mean High Water/Mean High Tide

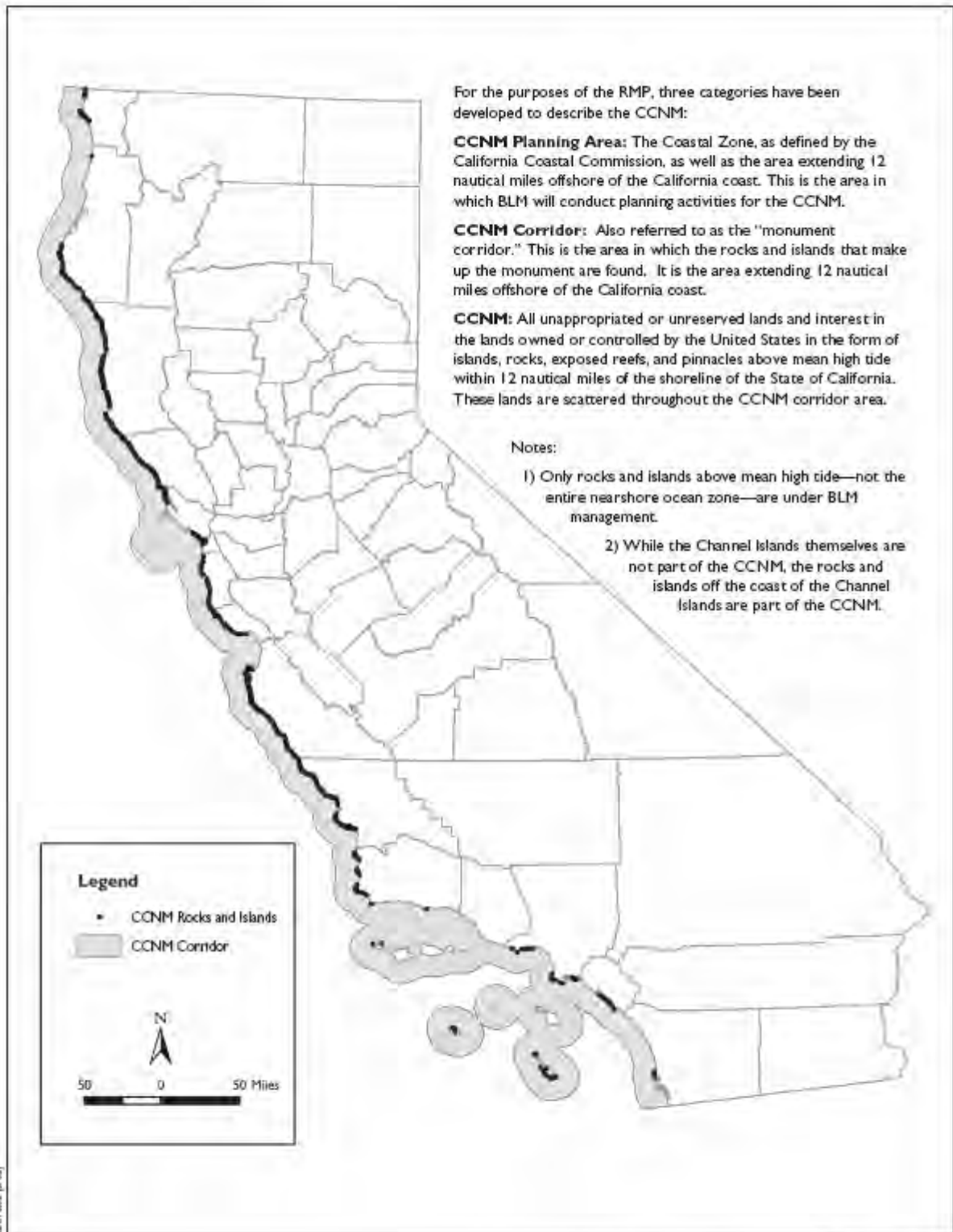
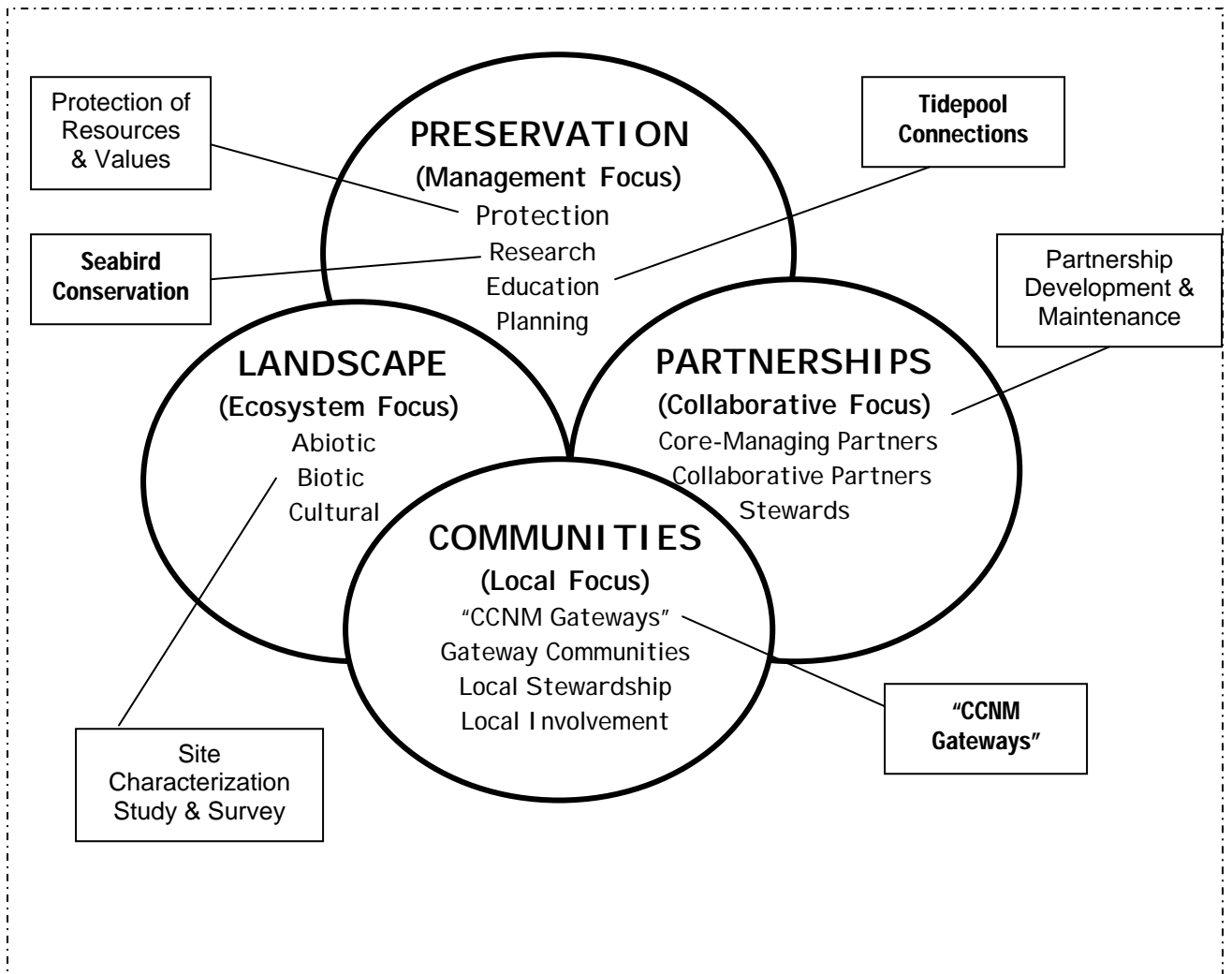


Figure 1-1b
CCNM Relative Location of Rocks, Islands, and Pinnacles

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT
RMP IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES**



The CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT is:

- An amazing diversity of more than 20,000 rocks & small islands
- Home for thousands of seals & sea lions
- Haven for hundreds of thousands of seabirds
- Habitat for millions of upper rocky intertidal species
- A spectacular interplay of land & sea
- A unique coastal treasure
- A partnership with a variety of communities, agencies, tribes, organizations, academic institutions, and organizations
- A catalyst for fostering stewardship of the California's coastal ecosystems
- Spread along California's 1,100 miles of coastline
- Encompassed within a 14,600 square nautical mile area (CCNM Corridor)
- Only about 1,000 acres in total size
- All off-shore (no on-shore portion)
- Within 5 BLM Field Offices
- Adjoining & intertwined with dozens of different jurisdictions, from one end of the California coast to the other