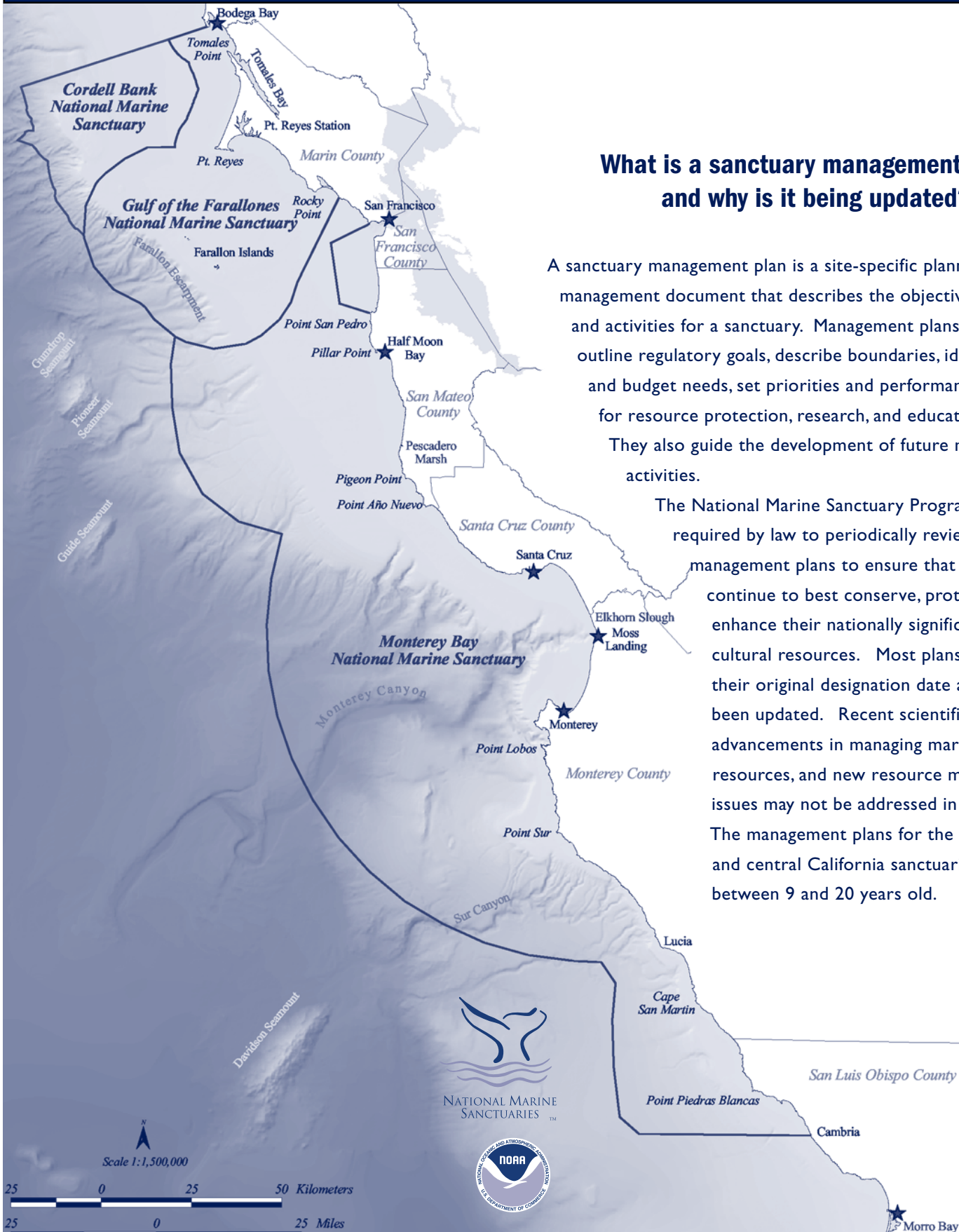


Joint Management Plan Review Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones & Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries



What is a sanctuary management plan and why is it being updated?

A sanctuary management plan is a site-specific planning and management document that describes the objectives, policies, and activities for a sanctuary. Management plans generally outline regulatory goals, describe boundaries, identify staffing and budget needs, set priorities and performance measures for resource protection, research, and education programs. They also guide the development of future management activities.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMS) is required by law to periodically review sanctuary management plans to ensure that sanctuary sites continue to best conserve, protect, and enhance their nationally significant living and cultural resources. Most plans date back to their original designation date and have not been updated. Recent scientific discoveries, advancements in managing marine resources, and new resource management issues may not be addressed in existing plans. The management plans for the three northern and central California sanctuaries are between 9 and 20 years old.



Why are we reviewing the management plans for all three sites together?

The NMSP is reviewing all three management plans jointly. These sanctuaries are located adjacent to one another, managed by the same program, and share many of the same resources and issues. In addition, all three sites share many overlapping interest and user groups. It is also more cost-effective for the program to review the three sites jointly rather than conducting three independent reviews. During the review, the sanctuaries will evaluate management and operational strategies, regulations, and boundaries. The review will look at whether the management programs at all three sanctuaries can be better coordinated.



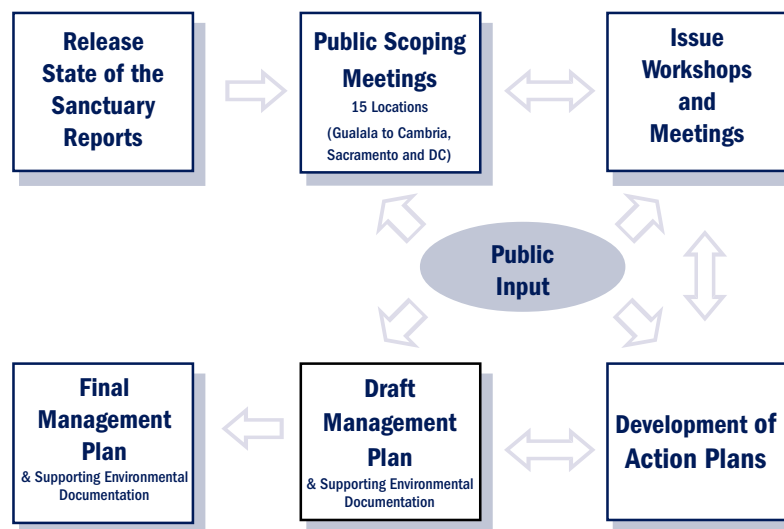
What are the steps for the review?

The NMSP periodically reviews sanctuary management plans relying on public input from both local and national communities. This process begins with the release of a “State of the Sanctuary” report that provides information to the public about the sanctuary, its accomplishments, and current resource management issues. The three reports are scheduled to be distributed this fall and will be available on the Internet or from any of the three sanctuary offices. Following the release of these reports, the sanctuaries will hold public scoping meetings, develop action plans, and prepare a draft management plan. Formal public hearings on the draft plan will help staff revise the document into a final management plan, which, once approved, will outline the sanctuaries’ priorities for the next 5-10 years.

Scoping Meetings: Sanctuary staff will hold public scoping meetings in communities adjacent to the sanctuaries in late 2001 and early 2002. The meetings will allow sanctuary users, members of the public, and agencies to comment on each of the three sanctuary management strategies and provide input on what issues and problems they see as management priorities for the next 5 to 10 years. Comments may also be sent to the NMSP through the website or in writing. The final date, time, and location of scoping meetings will be posted on the website.

Action Plans: After the scoping meetings, sanctuary staff will review all comments and work with their Sanctuary Advisory Councils and the public to prioritize issues for the management plan review. If necessary, additional workshops will be scheduled to help sanctuary staff develop tailored action plans that address priority issues. These action plans will form the foundation of the draft management plan.

Draft & Final Management Plans: The revised draft management plans will contain a series of action plans that address resource protection and general management. They may also propose regulatory changes. The sanctuaries will take written comments and host a series of public hearings on the draft plans. A supporting environmental document, such as an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement, will be prepared to support and explain any changes. After the close of the public comment period, the NMSP will review comments and make necessary changes before issuing final management plans.



What kind of changes can I expect?

Management plan review provides an opportunity for sanctuary staff and the public to shape the future direction and management of each sanctuary. At this time, it is too early to determine the specific issues or changes that may be addressed for each sanctuary. This will, in part, depend on program priorities and comments received during the public scoping meetings. However, during the management plan review, each sanctuary will evaluate and possibly revise their operation and management framework; resource protection, education, and research programs; site-specific regulations; boundaries; and management zones. The sanctuaries will also evaluate the need to improve coordination and reduce duplication among the sites.

How will the public be involved?

Active and informed public participation is a key element of sanctuary management, particularly during management plan review. The NMSP recognizes the public as a key resource management partner and values their input in helping shape and manage marine sanctuaries. For almost 30 years, the NMSP has engaged the public in helping create new sanctuaries, develop resource protection strategies, resolve multi-stakeholder issues (i.e., water quality, vessel traffic, and marine reserves), and more recently to review existing management plans. Using the lessons learned from these experiences, the NMSP will help build community awareness of key issues affecting these sanctuaries and actively engage user and interest groups, agencies, and the public in an open dialogue about how to best shape the future direction and management of these three contiguous sites.

The public will have numerous opportunities to participate in management plan review, beginning with the scoping meetings and continuing through the development of the draft and final management plans. The NMSP will provide ample notice of each meeting through local media and the website.

Photo Credits (top to bottom):

page 2: sea lion - Jan Roletto; surfer - Gulf of the Farallones NMS

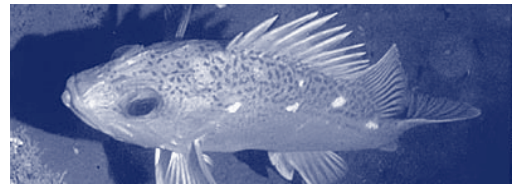
page 3 : fishing boat - Gulf of the Farallones NMS; rockfish - Channel Islands NMS

page 4 : reef fish - Cordell Bank Expedition; shark - Scot Anderson; diver - Kip Evans



How can I be involved?

You can become involved in the joint management plan review by first helping identify issues and potential solutions during the scoping phase. The NMSP will accept comments in writing, via the Internet, or in person at any of the scoping workshops. After the issues have been reviewed and prioritized, the sanctuaries will involve the public in developing action plans. These action plans will become the foundation for draft management plans, which, once completed, will be available for public review and comment. Throughout the review process, you may also attend any of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) meetings held at each of the three sanctuaries. Meeting agendas are posted on the individual site websites, and all meetings are open to the public.



Where can I get more information?

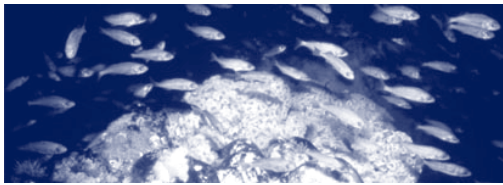
For more information, please visit the joint management plan update website at: <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/> or contact your local sanctuary office at:

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Sean Morton, Management Plan Coordinator
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940
(831) 647-4217 • Sean.Morton@noaa.gov

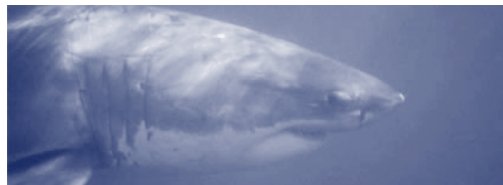
Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank
National Marine Sanctuaries
Anne Walton, Management Plan Coordinator
Fort Mason, Building 201
San Francisco, CA 94123
(415) 561-6622 • Anne.Walton@noaa.gov

What is the National Marine Sanctuary Program?

The nation's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP), established in 1972 by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and protects a network of 13 special marine and freshwater areas. The goal of the Sanctuaries Act is to set aside and manage areas for resource protection, research, enhanced public education, and compatible and public and private uses. Today, our marine sanctuaries contain whale migration corridors, deep sea canyons, kelp forests, coral reefs, and underwater archeological sites. Off the northern and central California coast, three contiguous National Marine Sanctuaries - Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay - have been established to protect and conserve these marine ecosystems.



Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, designated in 1989, encompasses 526 square miles of open ocean off Point Reyes. Cordell Bank is a submerged island that reaches within 120 feet of the ocean surface. The upwelling of nutrient rich ocean waters and the bank's topography create one of the most biologically productive areas in North America — a lush feeding ground for fish, marine mammals, and seabirds. Its depth, currents, and distance from the mainland have kept this remote and productive part of the California sea floor a mystery to most of the public. (<http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/oms/omscordell/omscordell.html>)



Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is located along the California coast west of the San Francisco Bay area. It was designated in 1981 and encompasses 1,255 square miles. The Gulf of the Farallones is rich in marine resources, including spawning grounds and nursery areas for commercially valuable species, at least 36 species of marine mammals, and 15 species of breeding seabirds. One-fifth of California's harbor seals breed within the sanctuary, and the Farallon Islands are home to the largest concentration of breeding seabirds in the contiguous United States. The Sanctuary also includes the coastline up to the mean high tide, protecting a number of accessible lagoons, estuaries, bays, and beaches. (<http://www.gfnms.nos.noaa.gov/>)



Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of the central California coast and encompasses 5,328 square miles of coastal and ocean waters. It was designated in 1992 and contains many diverse biological communities, including sandy bottom and rocky outcrop habitats, the nation's largest expanse of kelp forests, one of the deepest underwater canyons in North America, and a vast open ocean habitat. Nutrients from two upwelling centers fuel an abundance of life, from tiny plankton to huge blue whales. This diversity of habitats and marine life has made the Sanctuary a national focus for marine research and educational programs. (<http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/>)