

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Designated in 1980, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS or Sanctuary) consists of an area of approximately 1243 square nautical miles (NM)¹ of coastal and ocean waters, and the submerged lands thereunder, off the southern coast of California. The Sanctuary boundary begins at the Mean High Water Line of and extends seaward to a distance of approximately six NM from the following islands and offshore rocks: San Miguel Island, Santa Cruz Island, Santa Rosa Island, Anacapa Island, Santa Barbara Island, Richardson Rock, and Castle Rock (the Islands).

Located offshore from Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties in southern California, the Sanctuary's primary objective is to conserve, protect, and enhance the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural legacy of marine resources surrounding the Channel Islands for current and future generations. The significance of this objective is underscored by the Sanctuary's rich and diverse range of marine life and habitats, unique and productive oceanographic processes and ecosystems, and culturally significant resources.

This draft management plan is Volume I of a two-volume set. It contains information about the Sanctuary's environment and resources, staffing and administration, regulations and boundary, operational and programmatic costs, priority management issues and the actions proposed to address them, and performance measures. The draft management plan represents a major revision of the original 1983 management plan under which the Sanctuary currently operates. Upon completion of final revisions and clearance, this document will replace the original plan as the Sanctuary's current management plan.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is Volume II of the set. It has been developed in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. sec. 4321-4370 *et seq.*) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), contains detailed information on the greater Sanctuary region, presents a range of alternatives for modified and new Sanctuary regulations, and provides environmental and socioeconomic impact analyses of those alternatives.

The Draft Management Plan

History of the Management Plan Review Process

Although the first national marine sanctuary was designated in 1975, the initiation of the CINMS management plan review in 1998 marked the first formal management plan review of any sanctuary in the National Marine Sanctuary System. CINMS began this process with an internal review of the effectiveness of site programs and policies relative to the 1983 management plan's goals and objectives and the purposes and policies of the

¹ Since designation the area of CINMS has been described as approximately 1252.5 square nautical miles. However, adjusting for technical corrections and using updated technologies, the CINMS area is now calculated as approximately 1243 square nautical miles. The legal description of CINMS is proposed to be updated to reflect this change (see Vol. II, DEIS, Section 2.1.1). This update would not constitute a change in the geographic area of the sanctuary but rather an improvement in the estimate of its size

National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA). Also in 1998, CINMS formed a Sanctuary Advisory Council (Advisory Council) as a forum through which Sanctuary constituents could provide advice to the Sanctuary Superintendent, including advice on the management plan review.

In the summer of 1999, Sanctuary staff held several public scoping meetings across San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles counties (one meeting was also held in Washington, D.C.). During these meetings, numerous individuals raised a wide range of local, regional and national resource management issues. After reviewing and synthesizing these comments, CINMS and NMSP staff, working closely with the Advisory Council, identified a set of priority resource management issues to be addressed in the new management plan.

Developing the Draft Management Plan

In 2000, CINMS and NMSP headquarters staff began to draft the revised management plan. At the same time, Tetra Tech, Inc. was contracted to begin drafting the DEIS. Over the next few years, several revisions were made to the draft management plan with periodic input from the Advisory Council. Following public review, the document will undergo additional internal review and edits and will then be submitted as a final management plan.

The foundation of this draft management plan are the action plans, which detail the management actions (non-regulatory “strategies” and existing or proposed new/modified existing regulations) the Sanctuary will take to address the priority issues and meet the purposes and policies of the NMSA.²

Purpose of This Document

Based on purposes and policies set forward by the NMSA, all thirteen national marine sanctuaries engage in management plan review in order to:

- Evaluate substantive progress toward implementing the management plan and goals;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of site-specific management techniques and strategies;
- Determine necessary revisions to the management plan; and,
- Prioritize management objectives.

In addition, CINMS recognizes significant advances in science and technology, innovations in marine resource management techniques, and challenging new resource management issues have emerged and, as such, have rendered the original 1983 management plan obsolete. Thus, the management plan revision process is also a vehicle for the Sanctuary to integrate new tools and practices into site management.

With this in mind, the purpose of this management plan is twofold: 1) to inform Sanctuary constituents, including the general public, about the Sanctuary and the management actions CINMS has planned for the next five years, and 2) to guide site management toward achievement of the Sanctuary's goals with the best means available.

² The NMSA can be found in Appendix B of Volume II, Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or online at: <http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/natprogram/nplegislation/nplegislation.html>

Organization of this Document

The draft management plan is organized into four principal sections.

- **Section I** is an introduction presenting background information on the national marine sanctuaries and the management plan review process.
- **Section II provides** context by describing the Sanctuary setting. This section is divided into four sub-sections: II-A) The Physical Setting; II-B) The Biological Setting; II-C) The Human Setting; and II-D) The Operational Setting.
- **Section III** contains the action plans, which detail the management actions the Sanctuary will take to address priority issues and meet the purposes and policies of the NMSA.
- **Section IV** contains a number of appendices, which provide supporting information on various aspects of this draft management plan.

A summarized list of the management strategies (binned by action plan) found in this draft management plan is presented on the following page. A more detailed version of this list, which presents information on the status, funding source, level of partnership coordination, and levels of implementation for each strategy can be found in Appendix A1: Action Plan Overview.



Figure 1: California brown pelican (Shane Anderson)

Management Strategies By Action Plan

Public Awareness and Understanding Action Plan

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|---|--|
| AU.1 – Education Program Development | AU.6 – Education & Outreach Tools & Products |
| AU.2 – Community Involvement | AU.7 – Visitor Center Support & Development |
| AU.3 - Team OCEAN | AU.8 – Marine Reserves Education |
| AU.4 – Developing Outreach Technology | AU.9 – Multicultural Education |
| AU.5 – Greater Southern California Outreach | |

Conservation Science Action Plan

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|---|--|
| CS.1 – SAMSAP | CS.4 – Collaborative Marine Research Project |
| CS.2 – Comprehensive Data Management | CS.5 – Research Interpretation |
| CS.3 – Site Characterization & Monitoring | CS.6 – Marine Reserves Monitoring |

Boundary Evaluation Action Plan

- BE.1 – Completing the NCCOS Biogeographic Study
- BE.2 – Final Determination on Boundary Issue

Marine Zoning Action Plan

- MZ.1 – General Marine Zoning
- MZ.2 – Consideration of Federal Marine Reserves

Water Quality Action Plan

- WQ.1 – Offshore Water Quality Monitoring
- WQ.2 – Water Quality Protection Planning

Emergency Response and Enforcement Action Plan

- EE.1 – Improving Emergency Response Planning & Implementation
- EE.2 – Expanding Enforcement Efforts

Maritime Heritage Resources Action Plan

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|--|--|
| MHR.1 – The Shipwreck Reconnaissance Program | MHR.5 – Upgrading the MHR Website |
| MHR.2 – MHR Volunteer Program | MHR.6 – Promoting Public Education of Chumash
Native American History |
| MHR.3 – Partnering with the Maritime Museum | |
| MHR.4 – MHR Protection Outreach Effort | |

Emerging Issues Action Plan

- EI.1 – Identifying & Assessing Emerging Issues
- EI.2 – Responding to Identified Issues

Operations Action Plan

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| OP.1 – Sanctuary Advisory Council Operations | OP.5 – Administrative Initiatives |
| OP.2 – Permitting and Activity Tracking | OP.6 – Human Resources |
| OP.3 – Relationships with Other Authorities | OP.7 – Office Space Expansion |
| OP.4 – Vehicle, Boat & Aircraft Operations | |

Performance Evaluation Action Plan

- EV.1 – Measuring Sanctuary Performance Over Time