

**NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES**

# Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

# Emerging Issues...

## Artificial Reefs



### Wrecks and Reefs

by  
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# Emerging Issues Action Plan

Goal:

Develop a system to identify, track and respond to emerging issues which are potential threats to MBNMS resources



# Emerging Issues Action Plan

A sampling of issues :

- Wave or wind generators
- Deep sea mineral development
- Rapid ferry service
- One-man submersibles
- Acoustic technologies
- Bioengineering
- Small plastic marine debris
- Artificial reefs (for coastal development purposes)
- Etc.

# Plan Strategies

## **1) Identify and track emerging issues**

- Develop and prioritize list of issues to track
- Develop means to track issues with limited resources
- Consider “early warning” system

# Plan Strategies

## **2) Develop process to address emerging issues**

- Establish evaluation criteria--threat level, rate of growth, etc.
- Define alternative categories--  
defer  
conduct new research  
staff address  
short-term resolution  
full action plan and long-term effort

# Plan Strategies

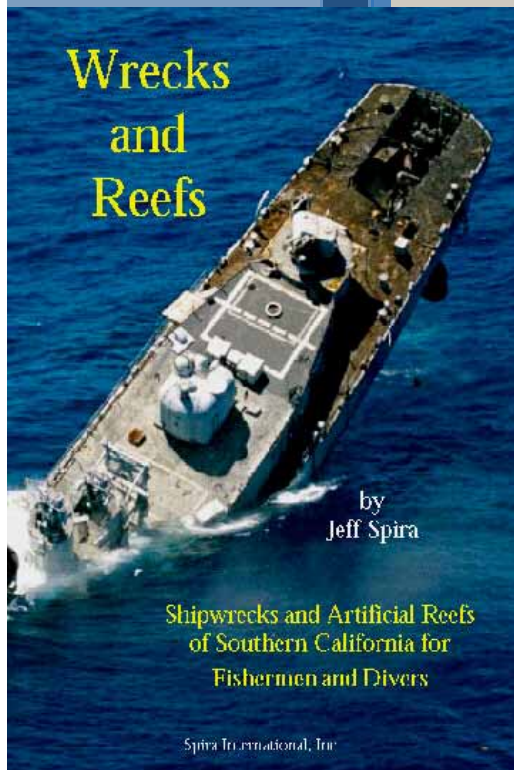
## 3) **Develop emerging issues staffing and operations structure**

- Staffing allocation
- When to bring issues to SAC
- *Plan Implementation Priority--Low  
SAC meeting Aug. 04*

# Emerging issue--Artificial reefs

## What are they?

- Various structures --aircrafts, ships, cars, tires, and household appliances
- Intentionally sunk in the world's oceans to attract divers and/or fish
- Recent national policy defines how NMSP will consider proposals to establish artificial reefs





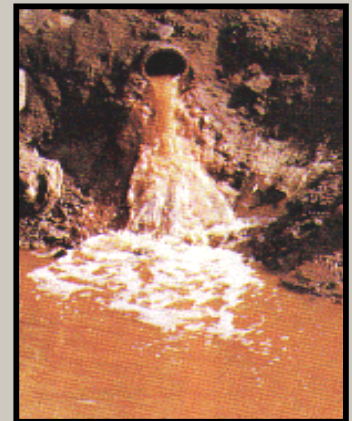
# Artificial reefs, a background

- Artificial reef development is prohibited in Sanctuaries
- May only be undertaken by going through the permit or authorization process
- Within the NMSP, only the Florida Keys Sanctuary has approved such structures

# MBNMS Prohibitions include: (among others)



- Discharge or deposit of any material (some specific exceptions)
- Altering the seabed



# National Artificial Reef Policy Statement

- Outlines NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act ).
  - Requires EA / EIS
- Outlines permitting process & criteria
  - Must meet permit category requirement
  - Whether it meets MBNMS threshold of short-term negligible adverse effect
  - Application contents

# May also require approval from...

## Federal

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

NOAA Fisheries

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## State

Central Coast Regional Water Quality  
Control Board

California Coastal Commission

California Department of Fish and Game

California State Lands Commission

# FKNMS- Spiegel Grove



- Vessel is 510 feet in length, 84 feet wide
- May 2002- FKNMS issued permit--goal of diver displacement from natural reefs
- May 2002- accidentally sunk upside down
- June 2002 efforts to right it unsuccessful--final position on starboard side
- June 2002 began leaking small amounts of hydraulic fluid
- July 2005-- a storm 200 miles to west resulted in currents which caused the vessel to flip upright

# Recent inquiry on artificial reef proposal in MBNMS

- Proposal to sink excess Navy vessel (approx. 350-feet long by 80 feet wide, 2,900 tons)
- Project proponents met with MBNMS staff
- Proponent's goal is to:

Create a wreck dive site

Attract additional divers to area and provide new site for existing divers

Create “additional habitat space” for fish and invertebrates

# MBNMS concerns:

- Seabed alteration
- Loss of natural habitat
- Discharges
- Vessel condition: PCBs, asbestos, hydrocarbons, paint chips, fuel tanks
- Fishing interactions
- Stability and long-term placement
- Monitoring
- Liability/clean-up

# Artificial reefs-- lessons learned

- Stability issues with past NMSP permitted projects
- Unexpected resource issues: vessel condition- leaking fuels, when none thought to be onboard
- Ongoing monitoring efforts to assess goal of diver displacement are still inconclusive



# Recent and next steps...

- Recently met with interested parties & provided them with relevant info
- Indicated these types of projects must undergo a thorough review
- Indicated very significant challenges in getting a project like this approved.
- Proponents interested in moving forward with the application / NEPA process anyway if there was public support.

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