

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

**FINAL Key Meeting Outcomes
March 18, 2011
Channel Islands National Park, 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, 18 of the Council's twenty-one voting seats were present (see attached attendance roster). Three seats were absent for the day: California Resources Agency and California Coastal Commission. Public attendance varied from five to fifteen people.

Administrative Business and Announcements

The draft key outcomes report from the January 21, 2011 meeting was adopted as final.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Chris Mobley highlighted several items during his oral report:

- Discussed the effects of the March 11th tsunamis on local harbors and sanctuary vessels;
- Reported on the current budget, mentioning that the latest Congressionally-approved continuing resolution budget will implement cuts, including a \$99 million cut to NOAA. The cut for ONMS is uncertain;
- Displayed a photo of the new CINMS/OCTOS building and discussed progress; and
- Announced that CINMS will host Oceans For Life, an educational and cross cultural exchange program for high school students in the North America and the Middle East. This will take place this July and will include marine ecology education, multi-media development, and cultural learning.

Council Member Announcements

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

Nomination and Election of Council Chair

Eric Kett accepted a nomination for Council Chair. By voice vote the Council unanimously re-elected Eric to a second term.

Channel Islands Argonauts / MERITO Academy Students

Four students from Ramona Elementary School in Oxnard presented poster projects on topics that they had learned about through their MERITO training and as members of the Channel Islands Argonauts: Yuri Cruz, Alisa Gonzalez, Alex Gutierrez, and Janette Santos. Rocio Lozano from CINMS followed with an update on the MERITO program, including with which schools and programs they are involved, the experiences the students have, the collaborators, a field trip schedule and funding needs for next school year. She encouraged Council members to contact her if they have any ideas for additional funding (rocio.lozano@noaa.gov).

Proposed Aquaculture Policy from NOAA and the Department of Commerce

Mike Murray introduced this item generally, and Kristen Hislop provided an overview of the new draft policies recently released by NOAA and the Department of Commerce (DOC). Linda Krop provided background information on the Conservation Working Group's creation of a report on open ocean aquaculture that the Advisory Council adopted in 2007, and Kristi Birney explained the proposed comment letter to the Council and how it drew on recommendations found within the Council-adopted report. The Council engaged in a lengthy discussion that was vigorous and robust, examining the promise and environmental implications of offshore

aquaculture development in federal waters, and working by consensus to reach agreement on a comment letter. A straw poll indicated that several members of the council could not support the letter as written and these concerns were discussed. A variety of views and issues were raised, including: the importance of emphasizing the Council's 2007 report recommendations to raise a number of environmental concerns known to be associated with open ocean aquaculture; not wanting a letter from the Council to be too negative with regard to aquaculture development; the relationship between advocating for plant-based aquaculture feed and perceptions of how forage fisheries are managed in California; recognizing potential adverse impacts from non-native species and how supporting a complete prohibition on the use of such species with offshore aquaculture appears at odds with existing use of Japanese oysters in California mariculture; questions about how, if at all, the proposed federal policies could introduce new barriers to entry for small-scale operators hoping to develop aquaculture in nearshore state waters; and the desire to not lose fishing grounds to offshore aquaculture sites. Edits to the proposed comment letter were suggested, and after further discussion the Council agreed to approve the letter by a voice vote of 11 yes, 0 no. Six abstained from the vote: John Ugoretz (US Department of Defense); Elizabeth Petras (National Marine Fisheries Service); Ann Bull (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Regulation and Enforcement); CDR Jason Collins (US Coast Guard); Kristine Barsky (Department of Fish and Game); and Capt. Dick McKenna (business seat member). The letter will enclose the Council's 2007 report on open ocean aquaculture, recommending that the report's advice be considered.

Update on Planned Oil Spill Exercise

LCDR Scott Peabody from the US Coast Guard's Sector LA/Long Beach updated the council on the upcoming oil spill exercise. The rationale for the location of this exercise is based on the actual shift of shipping traffic that has occurred south of the northern Channel Islands. Without a traffic separation scheme in this area there is a higher chance of vessel collision. In this drill, they will be using a scenario in which a ship collides with an oil tanker, and considering the potential impacts this may have in the sanctuary. The oil spill exercise is tentatively scheduled for September 13-15, 2011. A mid-planning conference is scheduled for May 3rd. Email Scott Peabody if you would like to participate (Scott.W.Peabody@uscg.mil).

Project Results Briefing: "Reducing the Risk of Vessel Strikes to Whales in the Santa Barbara Channel"

Students from UC Santa Barbara's Bren School of Environmental Science and Management presented the results of their thesis project *Reducing the Risk of Vessel Strikes to Endangered Whales in the Santa Barbara Channel*. Six master's students, with staff guidance from CINMS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Regional Office, evaluated potential management options for reducing the risk of vessel strikes to whales in the Santa Barbara Channel. They assessed the change in risk of strikes and the cost to the shipping industry of each of the management options considered. They concluded that a seasonal or year-round speed reduction may be the most cost-effective management option of those evaluated, but that further research is needed to fully assess the reduction in risk of strikes resulting from management options. The project provides useful information for CINMS and NMFS' response to vessel strikes to whales in the region and highlights the need for continued data collection and analysis. The group's final report can be viewed at http://fiesta.bren.ucsb.edu/~whales/pdfs/Whales_Report.pdf. Bob Warner commented that it would seem more whale distribution data is needed in order to have better confidence in the analysis. Elizabeth Petras mentioned that NMFS is developing models to work with the known variability of whale distribution across years. John Ugoretz mentioned that preliminary results show average distribution may be okay, and that cost is the main driver of management decisions. The group's public presentation is April 15, 2011, at Bren Hall, UCSB.

Research and Monitoring

CINMS Research Specialist Dani Lipski introduced the key outcomes from the last Advisory Council Research Activities Panel (RAP) meeting, at which 14 projects were discussed. Dani provided a summary of research reports provided at the RAP meeting, including notes on planned future activities. Due to budget cuts affecting many parties, research and monitoring will generally experience reduced sea days within CINMS, with some activities shifting to mainland coastal areas. Some specific programs have stable funding for the short term (e.g.

at NPS and BOEMRE). Dani read a statement from Mark Steele, who chaired the RAP meeting but was not at the SAC meeting), which expressed that overall, the area still has quality research, though there is limited funding, but a big concern is the winding down of the PISCO program. Dr. Bob Warner mentioned that it looks like funding for PISCO is almost gone, so perhaps 2013 is a good time to look at the collected research data. He also mentioned that MPA monitoring is necessary to understand if they are creating the desired effects. Eric Kett mentioned that the CINMS Condition Report expresses concern about a lack of long term monitoring programs. Debra Herring asked about the status of the invasive seaweed *Sargassum hornerii*, and Dani replied that it is in abundance around Anacapa and Santa Cruz islands.

CINMS Research Coordinator Dr. Steve Katz discussed and presented synthesis information on a science needs assessment that had been prepared for CINMS (see also <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/assessment/cinms.html>). He mentioned that the legacy of expectations is to conduct a lot of research, but little funding has been received to carry this out. Because of this, the sanctuary must have a rational basis when making decisions about research activities. The management plan calls for diverse drivers, though they are not necessarily connected to specific activities. In the science needs assessment, it is necessary to connect science needs to the management plan and create a rational basis for decisions for activities. The sanctuary is trying to address issues with credibility, and needs to produce sound research to compete for external funding. Dr. Katz showed some of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) data and how the monitoring can show interesting results of changes in vessel traffic. Having access to structured datatypes, such as AIS, allows us to answer important questions for management. Information sharing is a principle objective to this assessment. Dr. Bob Warner mentioned how the science needs assessment can really help scientists focus their work. Dani Lipski explained the rationale behind the ONMS headquarters request for a science needs assessment from all sanctuaries.

Ocean Acidification

Council member Bruce Steele displayed Point Conception area buoy data from the Pacific Marine Environmental Lab (at www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/story/cce2). He explained the variation in carbon dioxide throughout the year. Off of Point Conception the upwelling is more pronounced near the beach, and the urchin recruitment data set for 20 years near Conception shows that recruitment events are during the stationary period, before upwelling begins in the spring. One thousand parts per million is seen in areas, which is not good for coral. There are five sensors at LTER sites.

Amanda Hendrickson spoke about the implementation of ocean acidification lesson plans as part of the MERITO academy. The Sanctuary Education Team is also putting efforts toward determining whether or not this is how people are learning about ocean acidification. Linda Krop talked about the west coast regional ocean acidification task force's efforts to draft an action plan, noting that some items that will likely drop out of the plan based on funding constraints. The plan should be ready for review by the next SAC meeting.

Working Group Reports

- A. Channel Islands Technical Advisory Committee on Enforcement** (not an official SAC working group). Bill Struble with the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement said that Technical Advisory Committee has moved to quarterly meetings to reduce travel expenses. Due to budget cuts, Dana Matthews is no longer able to head up the group, and Bill is taking on this role. He also mentioned that there has been a high level of participation at the last meeting, including participation by US Fish and Wildlife Service. There is an outreach need for certain regulations, and he expects compliance to increase after this is implemented.
- B. Chumash Community Working Group.** No report
- C. Sanctuary Education Team (SET).** No report
- D. Recreational Fishing Working Group.** No report.
- E. Commercial Fishing Working Group.** Bruce Steele discussed the required safety course from the Coast Guard. A 2011 act requires all commercial vessels to have a trained operator.
- F. Conservation Working Group.** Linda reported for the group. Their recent meeting focused on whales and

ship strikes, and the “SoCal 10” study, a report for which is now available (<http://www.sea-inc.net/SOCAL10/>). At the meeting, John Ugoretz spoke about Navy support for aerial whale surveys. Linda also gave an update on the working group’s current efforts to develop a report on offshore wind and wave energy, which will focus on the issue, connections to spatial planning, and an investigation into the potential for projects locally and how this could affect the sanctuary. The hope is to make management recommendations from the report. This topic is diverse and layered, and Linda gauged the interest of inviting panels to discuss potential impacts of this technology, as well as regulatory authority. Additionally, at the meeting Debra Herring handed out a pamphlet on dolphin protection, and John Ugoretz mentioned a state Water Board draft EIR on stormwater and non-point source pollution in Areas of Special Biological Significance.

Future Meeting Schedule

- May 3-4: Annual national SAC Summit, Savannah, Georgia (SAC Chair attends)
- Friday, May 20, Santa Barbara (SAC Meeting)
- Friday, July 22, Ventura (SAC Meeting)
- Friday, September 23, Santa Barbara (SAC Meeting)
- Friday, November 18, Ventura (SAC Meeting)

Meeting Attendance Roster (March 18, 2011):

Andrea Mills	Tourism	Present
Mat Curto	Tourism - Alternate	Present
Debra Herring	Non-Consumptive Recreation	Present
Perry Ferguson	Non-Consumptive Recreation - Alternate	Present
Capt. Richard McKenna	Business	Present
Michael W.M. Gould	Business - Alternate	Present
Linda Krop	Conservation	Present
Greg Helms	Conservation - Alternate	Present
Bruce Steele	Commercial Fishing	Present
<i>Vacant</i>	Commercial Fishing - Alternate	-----
Capt. David Bacon	Recreational Fishing	Present
Merit McCrea	Recreational Fishing - Alternate	Present
Maria Petueli	Education	Present
Amanda Hendrickson	Education - Alternate	Present
Dr. Robert Warner	Research	<i>Absent</i>
Dr. Mark Steele	Research - Alternate	Present
Phyllis Grifman [Council Secretary]	Public At Large #1	<i>Absent</i>
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	Present
Vennise Miller-Forte	Chumash Community - Alternate	Present
Peter Fischel	NOAA Fisheries	<i>Absent</i>
Elizabeth Petras	NOAA Fisheries - Alternate	<i>Absent</i>
Russell Galipeau	National Park Service	<i>Absent</i>
David Ashe	National Park Service - Alternate	Present
CDR Jason Collins	US Coast Guard	Present
Steve Arnwine	US Coast Guard - Alternate	<i>Absent</i>
Donna Schroeder	BOEMRE	<i>Absent</i>
Ann Bull	BOEMRE	Present
John Ugoretz	Dept. of Defense	Present
Walt Schobel	Dept. of Defense - Alternate	Present
Marija Vojkovich	CA Dept. of Fish & Game	Present
Kristine Barsky	CA Dept. of Fish & Game - Alternate	<i>Absent</i>
Brian Baird	CA Natural Resources Agency	<i>Absent</i>
Amy Vierra	CA Natural Resources Agency - Alternate	<i>Absent</i>
Steve Hudson	CA Coastal Commission	<i>Absent</i>
Barbara Carey	CA Coastal Commission - Alternate	<i>Absent</i>
Dianne M. Black	Santa Barbara County	<i>Absent</i>
Susan Curtis	Santa Barbara County - Alternate	Present
Lyn Krieger	Ventura County	<i>Absent</i>
Marilyn Miller	Ventura County - Alternate	Present
Chris Mobley	Channel Islands NMS [non-voting]	Present
Paul Michel	Monterey Bay NMS [non-voting]	<i>Absent</i>
Karen Grimmer	Monterey Bay NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	<i>Absent</i>
Maria Brown	Gulf of the Farallones NMS [non-voting]	<i>Absent</i>
Brian Johnson	Gulf of the Farallones NMS [non-voting]	<i>Absent</i>