

**MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL
FINAL Meeting Minutes
June 19, 2015
Carmel, CA**

Agriculture: Kirk Schmidt	CA State Parks: absent
AMBAG: Ed Smith	Conservation: Geoff Shester
At Large: Margaret “PJ” Webb	Diving: Brian Nelson
At Large: absent	Education: Tucker Hirsch
At Large: James Panetta	Commercial Fishing: Kathy Fosmark
Business & Industry: absent	Harbors: Steve Scheiblaue
CA Coastal Commission: absent	Recreation: Gary Pezzi
CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife: Paul Reilly	Recreational Fishing: Rich Hughett
CA EPA: Maria de la Paz Carpio-Obeso	Research: James Lindholm
CA Resources Agency: Cyndi Dawson	Tourism: Mike Bekker

The following non-voting members were present as indicated:

Paul Michel – Monterey Bay NMS
Shannon Anthony – USCG

Alternates present in audience:

Dawn Hayes – Monterey Bay NMS
Barton Selby – Recreation
Gary Hoffman – At-large
Letise LaFeir – Conservation
Deb Wilson-Vandenberg – CA F&W
Amanda Faulkner -- USCG

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND MEETING MINUTES

Call to order at: 9:00AM

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of April 17, 2015 Draft Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Brian Nelson made motion, Kirk Schmidt seconded.

MOTION: Passed

(Vote: 13 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstentions)

Carmel-by-the-Sea mayor, Jason Burnett, made a brief welcome statement to the SAC to kick off the meeting. Jason commented on his background and praised SAC members for all of the time and effort they have put in throughout the years to help make MBNMS a special place.

Letise LaFeir, was sworn in as the new Conservation Alternate and introduced herself to the AC. Letise is currently the California Ocean Policy Manager at the Monterey Bay Aquarium where

she works on local and regional issues. She hopes to support MBNMS with its goals moving forward.

II. STANDING ITEM: SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Paul Michel reported on the outcome from this year’s *Sanctuary Currents* Symposium. It was held at CSU Monterey Bay (CSUMB) and was well attended. CSUMB President Ochoa welcomed guests at the beginning of the event. The Symposium was video recorded using Access Monterey Peninsula and presentations are available online. Paul announced CSUMB will no longer be able to host future *Sanctuary Currents* Symposiums. Members were reminded about Your Sanctuary TV video links featuring episodes about the USS Makin and the recent visit to the USS Independence. Many volunteers participated in the annual Snapshot Day event on May 2nd. The multi-year water quality report was sent out and comprises 13 years of water quality testing. Preparations for another Sanctuary Classic have begun. It will involve weekly photo contest winners and scholarships. MBNMS and the Monterey Bay Aquarium have been working with PBS/BBC for “Big Blue Live,” a live multi-day program to showcase the unique environmental treasures found in Monterey Bay. These episodes will broadcast at the end of August and early September. Lastly, Bill Giles has now joined the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement.

Max Delaney was unable to attend but reported the following: The CBNMS / GFNMS Boundary Expansion project became effective on June 9th. A final federal register notice was sent out last week announcing the expansion. The staff from both sites are busy preparing for the Celebration event to be held on Sunday June 28th at the Gualala Arts Center, in Sonoma County. The Gulf of the Farallones NMS has changed its name to the Greater Farallones NMS to now incorporate the newly expanded area. The name selection process was carried out over the last six months with input from GFNMS SAC members, GFNMS staff, and ONMS headquarters.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Public Comment:

Lee Larrew – Team OCEAN Volunteer, Carmel Chamber of Commerce.

Importance of marine Sanctuary to local economy. Importance of funding Team OCEAN to educate and inspire connection with the ocean. Encouragement to continue funding of Team OCEAN.

IV. INFORMATION ITEM: DAVIDSON SEAMOUNT RESEARCH MISSION

MBNMS Research Specialist, Erica Burton shared the preliminary findings from the eight-day research mission to Davidson Seamount. Researchers surveyed the soundscape, marine mammals, sea birds and mid-water fishes. Additional oceanographic data were collected for CTD (conductivity, temperature, depth) and environmental DNA. The goals of the mission were to: characterize Davidson Seamount, characterize SESAs, assess the importance of a seamount to the distribution of sanctuary resources, evaluate strengths and weaknesses of different marine mammal sampling techniques and develop a Marine Biodiversity Observatory Network

(MBON). Researchers used the NOAA Ship *Bell M. Shimada* to complete the mission. Some of the partner institutions included Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, UCSC, MBARI, Stanford University and California Academy of Sciences. A list of seabirds and marine mammals was compiled and included 17 seabird species and six marine mammal species. Many species of mid-water fishes were observed and included: nine species of lanternfishes, four species of drangonfishes and six species of bristlemouths. To wrap-up her presentation, Erica shared the Davidson Seamount mission video to summarize the voyage:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B3Gz0rOg_A.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

Q: How many Fin and Minke whales were seen?

A: Just a handful this time, but in 2010 saw a couple hundred. We heard more than we saw.

Q: What's the plan for environmental DNA and comparing it in surveys?

A: It is a growing science and sampling opportunity. There aren't a lot of DNA markers for the mid-water fishes, the hope is to see what fishes and mammals were there.

Q: What is the timeline?

A: Not sure, Stanford is doing the analysis.

Q: Was the work you were doing in part to evaluate the question of Davidson Seamount being a natural hotspot for marine mammals?

A: The question hasn't been answered yet.

Q: Can you explain how this mission relates to ocean health?

A: The more you go out there, the better we will be able to get a baseline; it is a long process to learn that.

Q: Are there anymore NOAA research missions coming up?

A: We can't predict that very easily, so we try to use own vessel, the Fulmar. Within the region, we are working with MBARI to use their ROV.

Q: Where did you get money to fund the mission?

A: Awarded from NOAA, and Save the Earth Foundation provided money for equipment.

Q: How fresh do the environmental DNA samples stay after being collected?

A: Several days.

Q: Why wasn't a hover type of drone/quadcopter used instead of the Puma aircraft system?

A: It was offered, but the Puma was computer operated to run transects and return to the ship and was capable of traversing several miles.

V. INFORMATION ITEM: CONDITION REPORT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW UPDATE

Since the last update at the April SAC meeting, the Condition Report is in final review by Headquarters. Paul reiterated the Condition Report includes a multi-disciplinary effort utilizing expert opinions and data analysis. The 2015 report is an addendum to the 2009 Condition Report and it focuses on status and trends updates. The 2015 Condition Report is a valuable component in preparing for management plan review. Thirteen of the 17 questions in the Condition Report

required some level of updating since 2009. This report includes new information associated with a “Level of Confidence.” This qualitative measurement is supported by expert opinions/judgment. Some of the major considerations in this report including water quality of nearshore and estuarine environments with respect to pollutants; impacts on living resources and biodiversity; impacts from harmful algal blooms (HABs); and the new rating for Davidson Seamount, which wasn’t included in the 2009 report. The updated 2015 Condition Report will be available later this summer.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

Q: Is there any evidence the Japan tsunami debris has been found in the Sanctuary?

A: Kelp Watch has been testing for radioactivity, but in terms of debris that has been noted, it has been observed only north of the sanctuary.

Q: How does this relate to climate change and El Nino/La Nina in terms of pollutant inputs?

A: This is an area for more research and understanding.

Q: Terms may be changing in the final report, could you discuss what the confidence factor will be?

A: It is not pure science, some information is subjective, we understand what we are doing is using professional judgement to rank these ratings. A consensus would be reached, involved a panel of experts who gave range of confidence in the final report. It would be helpful to provide that method to the reader.

Q: Would that include a baseline to include what is confident and what is not confident?

A: There is a very descriptive definition of the terms themselves as well as the data and how it was analyzed in the report.

Q: Is there a SAC role for this?

A: Members should summarize and inform yourself and constituents during management plan review, and perhaps provide comments to RAP.

Q: Could you talk about how the expert opinion works with your staff?

A: There is a lot of staff analysis/work going into compiling information for all the questions from 2009 recommending changes, presenting them to the panel of experts. They have multiple discussions, assessing the amount of information that was compiled and if there needed to be any changes.

Q: Is there additional analysis on marine debris? What is the range of analysis you’re gathering to make an assessment of the impacts on the Sanctuary?

A: We are looking at multiple data sources for marine debris, which will be identified in the appendix to the report.

Q: How was water quality status/rating trends evaluated for an estuarine habitat?

A: We received that information from water quality data vs expert opinion/judgement.

Q: Is anybody doing necropsies on beached whales?

A: Not specifically.

Q: How long do you think final report will be?

A: It is about 20-35 pages.

Management Plan Update

Dawn provided a brief update on the latest news regarding the management plan review. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done for the internal review. By the end of July, MBNMS will issue a Notice of Intent as the first step to alert the public for scoping. Scoping meetings will begin at the end of the summer with four scoping sessions, concluding at the end of October. October to November will involve summarizing scoping comments, reviewing the work plan and developing working groups. Dec 2015-April 2016 will involve writing with working groups and finalizing working group updates. A year will be spent writing the Environmental Impact Statement, producing a regulation package and creating the draft rule by May 2017. Staff have been collectively looking through action plans to identify changes, how much has been done, what needs to be revised, major to minor revisions, with some replacements/additions such as Maritime Heritage, Davidson Seamount and SESAs and Acoustics. Working groups will be determined after scoping comments have been received and analyzed. SAC members and Sanctuary staff cannot sit together during the writing process – a major change from the last management plan review.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

Q: Should SAC members engage constituents for scoping?

A: Yes. Constituents need to come to the scoping meetings, it is important for SAC members to communicate with their respective constituencies in order to promote public input.

Q: What is being done on ocean acidity?

A: We will need to have a section on climate change and ocean acidification. GFNMS has been doing a lot on climate models.

Q: Will working groups involve outside experts?

A: Yes.

Q: Will you be getting a budget increase during review process?

A: We will be working with current resources.

Q: Are there any national priorities coming down for this review?

A: No, these are site-based. Other sites have different plans.

Q: Do the working groups get chaired by primary SAC members holding a Primary seat?

A: A SAC member will chair the working group along with MBNMS staff. Other persons, including experts are welcome to participate.

Q: Can you explain GFNMS with the joint meeting and how the northern management area will be addressed?

A: We are not doing a joint management plan with GFNMS or CINMS this time. Right now MBNMS and GFNMS jointly manage the northern management area – together we co-manage San Mateo/Marin County.

VI. INFORMATION ITEM: HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (HABs)

University of California, Santa Cruz graduate student, Corinne Gible provided a broad overview of HABs and how they impact the ocean environment. HABs are formed by any phytoplankton that is toxigenic or has been connected to negative impacts. Corinne explained the difference between high biomass blooms, such as red tides, and harmful algal blooms involving toxic phytoplankton species. Algal blooms form based on the presence of favorable

environmental conditions such as high sea surface temperatures, lower salinity, upwelling of nutrients and an abundance of light. Toxic HAB events can be problematic with no apparent environmental change. Members were informed on a variety of phytoplankton species, both harmful and harmless. Several ongoing research efforts have compiled a large amount of long-term data. This year, evidence shows a HAB occurring from Santa Barbara to Alaska but no one knows how long it will last. For more information, check out Cal-HABMAP & CeNCOOS; Santa Cruz Ocean Observing Platform:
<http://oceandatacenter.ucsc.edu/MBHAB/monitoring.htmlg.html>.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

Q: For this toxin, is it dangerous for dogs drinking the water?

A: For now that isn't an issue; however it does bioaccumulate in some species; for example, a fish could accumulate it depending on how much copepods are eaten.

Q: Why is this toxin produced?

A: We still don't know what exactly is triggering this.

Q: Are you noticing that you're finding some species of shellfish are contaminated just during summer months?

A: There are closures every year, and consumers should not eat the whole organism.

Q: What triggers the ending of the bloom?

A: In order for that to happen, unfavorable environmental conditions and lack of nutrients needs to exist.

Q: What impact does DA have on the inverts and fish?

A: We don't know the specific mechanism for how they deal with it.

Q: Are you expecting to see a high bloom this fall?

A: It depends on if we get a strong El Nino conditions. If conditions were right, we could continue to have problems.

Q: Is there much data on DA with other marine mammals?

A: Most research being done is by the Marine Mammal Center and that could be the only research we have.

Q: Can you tell us more on how fishery warnings are processed when HABs are prevalent?

A: The Department of Health issues the warnings. With respect to the Anchovy fishery, There may have been landings before the warning went out. The Department of Health is responsible for fishery closuresas related to contaminants.

Q: What types of things could the Sanctuary do to better understand HABs and better manage it?

A: Communication is a big step, to discuss emerging needs, ideas, mitigation ideas, increasing communication between scientists and the Sanctuary. More collaboration would be helpful.

Q: What should a person do when seeing affected sea lions?

A: Keep your distance and call the stranding hot-line. Those animals are in distress and may have brown foam at the mouth and experience violent seizures.

After the lunch break, Tucker Hirsch was sworn-in to her new seat as the Education Primary. She would like to use her new role to engage higher education institutions with the Sanctuary.

VII. INFORMATION ITEM: THE SANCTUARY'S SPILL RESPONSE PLAN

Scott Kathey, from MBNMS summarized the Sanctuary's spill response plan for the advisory council members. He covered what MBNMS will do and will not do in the event of an oil spill. Scott provided background on oil spill regulations, structure and action on a federal level. The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 defines the role of government, organizational structure and actions for spill response in the United States. MBNMS does not clean up oil, collect stranded birds or organize volunteer clean ups. The primary goals for MBNMS during and after a large-scale environmental emergency are to 1) minimize damage of the spill and potential damage from response activities and 2) assess the damage and provide strategies for long-term restoration of the Sanctuary resources. Because oil is difficult to clean up, a lot of effort goes into spill prevention. At the time of a major spill, two concurrent functions take place 1) Response activities and 2) Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). MBNMS is involved in both functions but concentrates on environmental damage assessments and restoration.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

Q: From research context, is MBNMS able to monitor anything on the NRDA side of things?

A: In the case of a spill in MB, MBNMS would need to rely heavily on partners for necessary resources.

Q: Are there any funds in reserve at NOAA or Headquarters?

A: Office of Emergency Response, rely on our local knowledge. Get out to UCSC, MBARI, and Moss Landing to provide data.

Q: With limited staff, is it worth it to take away staff for response activities?

A: Only two key spots at environmental and agency areas, best defense is preventing.

Q: What is the 2014 ACP?

A: ACP is the handbook, or battle plan for oil spills. The NRC focuses on notification. The USCG receives NRC notification and then looks to the ACP for the necessary action.

Q: Is the ACP available online?

A: Yes it is online. CA OSPR does a lot of the updating.

Q: How long were beaches closed after PG spill?

A: Department of Health maintained the advisory for two days.

Q: Have you done assessment of oil clean up equipment?

A: MBNMS doesn't get involved in clean up, CA OSPR and USCG get involved, resources are kept and equipment locations are in the ACP. Inventories go up and down, equipment gets shared so the number and location of equipment fluctuates.

Q: Does FEMA get involved?

A: If resources are impacted onshore, typically FEMA gets involved if people are displaced or water sources are at risk.

Q: Is there a real time update website in the case of a spill?

A: Communication is important. There is a lot of misinformation out there. The Joint Information Center (JIC) is one source. Other websites are posted on the same day of the spill. These websites typically have ongoing posting of data and it's made available to the public and media. Posting data, ongoing, reporters and public are getting that info. The information is there but the challenging part is communication where to find it to the public.

VIII. STANDING ITEM: WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Conservation: No update.

Education: Tucker met with Amity, the Education alternate, and discussed ongoing issues redundancy with the SEP and MBEE meetings. Tucker would like to pursue additional opportunities in which the SEP can engage.

Research: Next meeting will be on July 10th at CSUMB. The RAP would like to be involved in the assessment of the spill.

Recreation and Tourism Subcommittee: next meeting July 22nd in Monterey. The Recreation and Tourism newsletter went out and the subcommittee is seeking comments/feedback on improving the document and gathering business emails to add to the contact list. It is currently at 27% readership. The goal is reach 40%. A link was sent to Seasons of the Sea, which produced promising results as far as click-rates.

IX. STANDING ITEM: ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

Gary Hoffman (At-Large): comment period for Hawaiian Islands NMS expansion ends tonight at midnight. Send email comments if you support the expansion. PSA regarding no dumping of materials as it gets into the Monterey Bay, but not sure who attributed the announcement. There is a major influence in the San Lorenzo River by the surrounding residents running on outdated septic systems. Potential to mitigate urea issues by collectively proposing upgrades to better systems. Gary also expressed concerns related to potential spill risks of derailment of trains on the train tracks next to the Elkhorn Slough. SAC members expressed interests in learning more about discussions related to this issue.

Dan Haifley (At-Large, Council Secretary): Last year, Assembly Bill 1603 was supported by the SAC; the bill would have supported outdoor environmental education programs but it has died in the legislative process; however AB 988, which has a funding source accompanying the outdoor education programs, has passed the Assembly. gone on to the Senate, and we are hoping it will go further. The name has changed for the proposed national monument of the Santa Cruz Coast Dairies property. The original proposed name was the Santa Cruz Redwoods National Monument. Now we are proposing a new name: Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument. This name change will go to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, then to Washington DC. Hoping the monument is established by next year.

Dave Feliz (ESNERR): Virginia Guhin, has become part of the Education/Interpretive Services Team. The sea otter study is in its second year of a three year study, which is describing sea otter behavior in an estuary for the first time. A marsh restoration project will take place and will focus on making use of the sediment from various projects to ultimately raise the marsh plain.

Mariela de la Paz Carpio-Obeso (CA EPA): On May 6th the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) adopted the Ocean Water Quality Amendment regarding desalination discharges. Now it seems harmful algal blooms will be another emerging topic for the SWRCB to discuss in the future.

Brian Nelson (Diving): The annual shootout for underwater videography/photography will take place on August 7th & 8th in Monterey.

Kirk Schmidt (Agriculture): With regard to algal blooms, the City of Watsonville is hopefully curing a microcystin bloom that is toxic to Pinto Lake, killing the existing Carp. There is an interesting environmental project going on involving the Salinas Reclamation Ditch and Tembladero Slough. There is talk of using the water as a resource, but more work needs to be done.

Paul Reilly (CA DFW): All 124 of the State's MPAs, including those grandfathered in before the MLPA process, are now part of the National MPA Inventory. There are still seven state MPAs all in San Francisco Bay that are on the nomination list, which have not gone through the MLPA process. On a more local scale, the CA Collaborative Fisheries Research Program received its ninth year of funding to continue to monitor coastal MPAs.

Kathy Fosmark (Commercial Fishing): The salmon fishery had a slow start this season. The crab fishery was good this year; most people have taken gear out of the water. The Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries advocates for the heritage and economic value of fishing. More information can be found here: http://alliancefisheries.org/Home_Page.html.

Michael Bekker (Tourism): There has been an influx of international tourists in Monterey. The, Monterey Conference Center is due for a major overhaul. Special cameras have been placed along Cannery Row to detect and count foot traffic every day. These cameras use special technology that is capable of recognizing faces. This is a useful tool for business and marketing purposes.

Jimmy Panetta (At-Large): A Panga boat was caught last weekend down in Big Sur coast, containing 100 bales of marijuana and 8 Mexican Nationals; unfortunately, the main two have bailed out. We need to realize that the ones we don't catch, the penalties for this type of crime is not severe, need to look at changes in laws in transporting this much marijuana. Federal authorities should get involved

Paul Michel (MBNMS): Introduced new summer interns. Heads up on Get Into Your Sanctuary June 27-28th, #visitsanctuaries. Comments due July 3rd.

PJ Webb (At-Large, Council Chair): Promoted Team Ocean and Bay Net wildlife protection programs that need funding. Seeing Guadalupe fur seal stranding's in the region, excited about new fishing education program, teaching best practices.

Steve Lindley (NMFS): Due to ocean temperatures this year, we are finding many organisms along with things we've never seen together before.

Cyndi Dawson (CA Resources Agency): Super productive meeting with all Sanctuary Superintendents in CA at Sanctuary Exploration Center, discussed continued working relationship with the state, spent a lot of time on joint messaging efforts. This network of MPAs is part of the big draw to this area, working to tie in those messages.

Deb Wilson-Vandenberg (CA DFW): two new Fish and Game Commissioners: Mike Sutton and Richard Rodgers have been replaced by, Eric Sklar and Anthony Wilson.

X. ADJOURN

Next meeting is August 19th in Half Moon Bay at the Half Moon Bay Yacht Club

Adjourned at 4:24PM