

CWG REVISED DRAFT 12-3-13
SEISMIC SURVEY RESOLUTION FOR MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

AT A MEETING OF THE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL HELD IN _____,
CALIFORNIA, ON _____, 2013

**RESOLUTION-IN SUPPORT OF BANNING SEISMIC AIR GUN SURVEYS WITHIN
MBNMS AND MANAGING UNDERWATER NOISE CONTRIBUTED TO MBNMS
WATERS BY SEISMIC SURVEYS OCCURRING IN ADJACENT WATERS**

WHEREAS, MBNMS hosts thirty-four species of marine mammals, including genetically distinct populations of harbor porpoise that are highly sensitive to acoustic impacts;

WHEREAS, impulsive, short duration sounds from air guns can deleteriously affect marine mammals through temporary and permanent hearing impairment, abandonment of habitat, disruption of mating and feeding activities, tissue damage and mortality;

WHEREAS, the use of air guns can change behavior of commercially and recreationally valuable fish species; kill fish eggs and larvae; and decrease catch rates for coastal fisheries;

WHEREAS, sea turtle behavior can be negatively altered by air guns affecting foraging behavior and MBNMS waters are primary foraging grounds for critically endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtles;

WHEREAS, the efficacy of commonly used mitigation measures such as safety zones and ramp-up procedures to address impacts that may occur close to surveys is often compromised by inability to detect or accurately locate individuals that may be harmed;

WHEREAS, laterally transmitted low frequency energy from seismic air guns is known to travel hundreds to thousands of miles, impacting acoustically sensitive marine species;

WHEREAS, the California Coastal Commission in 2012 unanimously voted to deny seismic testing permits off the Central Coast based on “significant and unavoidable impacts to marine resources”;

WHEREAS, the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) recognizes the critical importance of protecting the overall marine ecosystem and traditional activities within MBNMS;

WHEREAS, the SAC acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the integrity of the marine ecosystem within MBNMS is maintained for present and future generations in accordance with the purposes of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the SAC recommends MBNMS adopt and implement new regulations that prohibit all seismic air gun activities within MBNMS boundaries;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the SAC recommends MBNMS further characterize the degree to which other seismic activities may be impacting marine life populations that occur in Sanctuary waters, and implement appropriate management measures if adverse impacts are identified;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the SAC recommends MBNMS work to manage seismic air gun activity outside Sanctuary boundaries through consultation or coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service and state partners.

DRAFT