

**MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Final Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2017**

**Monterey Peninsula College – Library Technology Center
Monterey, CA**

VOTING MEMBERS

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|--|------------------------------------|
| Agriculture: Sarah Lopez | CA State Parks: absent |
| AMBAG: absent | Commercial Fishing: Kathy Fosmark |
| At Large: Dan Haifley | Conservation: Katherine O’Dea |
| At Large: Gary Hoffmann | Diving: Keith Rootsart |
| At Large: PJ Webb | Education: Tucker Hirsch |
| Business & Industry: Tom Rowley | Harbors: Steve Scheiblauer |
| CA Coastal Commission: absent | Recreation: Gary Pezzi |
| CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife: Paul Reilly | Recreational Fishing: Rich Hughett |
| CA EPA: Dr. Maria de la Paz Carpio-Obeso | Research: Dr. John Hunt |
| CA Resources Agency: absent | Tourism: absent |

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- Channel Islands NMS: absent
- College: Clifton Herrmann
- Cordell Banks NMS: absent
- Elkhorn Slough NERR: absent
- Greater Farallones NMS: absent
- Monterey Bay NMS: Paul Michel
- National Marine Fisheries Service: Dr. Steven Bograd
- U.S. Coast Guard: CDR Jason Brand

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Alternates present in audience: | Number of audience members 9:00 AM: |
| Carol Maehr – At-Large | 4 |
| Christina McGinnis – At-Large | |
| Kevin Miller – Conservation | Number of audience members 1:00 PM: |
| Jim Moser – Commercial Fishing | 3 |
| Marian Olin – Harbors | |
| Bart Selby – Recreation | |
| Jose Montes – Recreational Fishing | |
| Dr. Steven Haddock – Research | |

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

Chair PJ Webb called the meeting to order and Vice Chair Gary Pezzi attended to roll call.

Dr. Kevin Raskoff, Chair of the Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) Biology Department, welcomed the MBNMS Advisory Council to MPC. He noted MPC students were in finals weeks. An interesting fact he shared was the total number of students enrolled in the community college system

is greater than that of students enrolled in the CSU and UC systems combined. He thanked the Advisory Council for being on campus for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of October 20th DRAFT Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Tom Rowley, Maria de la Paz Carpio-Obeso seconded.

(Vote: 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 abstentions)

II. STANDING ITEM: Superintendent Report

MBNMS staff is making good progress on the MPR process. They are currently drafting and revising action plans. The goal is to get the draft outline of the management plan to the Advisory Council mid to late January for review. At the February Advisory Council meeting, staff will present and take input on the action plan strategies and activity titles, not the detailed language of each action plan. A draft management plan will then be completed and sent to ONMS Headquarters in the spring for review.

Paul gave a presentation on the recovery effort on the endangered black abalone after a landslide at Mud Creek on the Big Sur Coast. The Mud Creek landslide, which occurred on May 20, 2017, re-shaped the California coastline. It was the largest recorded landslide in Big Sur. The landslide material extended 600 feet into the ocean, creating 15 acres of new land. The new land and redistribution of sand, sediment and rocks buried and killed black abalone and the remaining alive black abalone are slowly dying. CalTrans is working to have the highway reopened to traffic by late summer 2018. Biologists from UC Santa Cruz, CDFW, MBNMS CalTrans and Tenera Environmental searched just north of the landslide and found 334 black abalone in four hours. Thirty-one of those black abalone were taken to a protected location and placed into crevices where black abalone already lived. The remaining abalone were alive. Next steps include monitoring of Mud Creek intertidal, monitoring of translocated abalone and conducting future rescues as necessary. This is the first recovery effort of this kind. This is a critically endangered species and is found in significant numbers only on the Big Sur Coast, Channel Islands and San Nicholas Island.

III. ACTION ITEM: Beach Nourishment Options

Paul Michel gave a presentation on the beach nourishment issue being addressed in the MBNMS Management Plan Review. He recapped the Advisory Council's previous involvement in addressing the issue as well as some background information including MBNMS prohibition in terms of designation, existing regulations directing the placement of dredged material and the issue at Pillar Point-Surfers Beach. He also reviewed the three options presented at the October MBNMS Advisory Council meeting for moving forward with the issue. The first option is to do an interpretive rulemaking to clarify what the intent of the prohibition should be: dispose of sediments not suitable for beach nourishment, reuse clean sand dredged from harbors for the purposes of beach nourishment. The second option is to reopen the Designation Document and initiate rulemaking process to modify MBNMS regulations and terms of designation to allow reuse of dredged materials from harbors for beach nourishment. The third option is to take no action, to continue existing practices allowing placement of dredged clean sand above mean high water and prohibit dredged sand placement below mean high water.

Public comment:

Jim Haussener, California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference (CMANC) – CMANC has been involved in this discussion for 20 years. We appreciate the AC’s efforts and support option one.

Maura Twomey, AMBAG – Support option one.

John Moren, San Mateo County Harbor District (SMCHD) Director of Operations – SMCHD appreciates the sanctuary considering the interpretation of “dredged material” consistent with Clean Water Act, clean sand = fill, not dredge material, which must be disposed of. Fill is/can be used for beneficial reuse.

Brad Damitz, consultant to SMCHD – I encourage the MBNMS Advisory Council to adopt option one to reinterpret and “clarify and define” terms allowing for beneficial reuse.

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

PJ Webb: read the white paper and felt it helpful to understand the issue. The pilot project at Surfers Beach increases likelihood of sand staying in system longer. No other viable options for armoring have been identified. Agree with option one and against opening designation document.

Brian Nelson (read by PJ Webb): Dear Colleagues, Guests, and MBNMS Staff,

I am sorry I am unable to attend the December SAC meeting due to illness. I would like to comment on the three options regarding the Beach Nourishment Action Item before the SAC today. Over the last year we have been briefed several times on Harbor Dredging and Beach Nourishment. These discussions have helped us realize with our faster than normal changing environment, we must react more promptly to our coastal changes and needs. Beach nourishment is an alternative to man-made structural coastal armoring. My opinion from the discussions of past meetings, my professional experience, and comments from fellow SAC members is that re-categorizing “dredge material” into reuse material suitable for Beach Nourishment and materials that are incompatible due to grain size characterization or contained contaminants is smart and wise. Compatibility and contaminants are factors in dredging operations that are already studied and tested while obtaining yearly dredging permits. When considering a change in the dredge material language there would be no additional steps that would be required to make the determination of clean and compatible dredge material. The agencies responsible for these criteria are the US Army Corp of Engineers, USACE and the Environment Protection Agency, USEPA. The three options before us may seem at first very similar, however in a close review they are very different and offer significant advantages and possible unintended consequences if not carefully considered.

Addressing the options in reverse, option three is to do nothing and continue to require clean and compatible Beach Nourishment material to be placed above MHW. This is not the best use or placement point in all cases to help restore a beach or a surf zone. Transporting the material slightly offshore delays the effectiveness by at least one full cycled set of sand shifting seasons. The best option is just below MHW where the material is cycled out to the surf zone and will naturally build up a bar that diffuses energy. Option two is to open the Sanctuary Designation Document and initiate a full and complete NEPA and EIS process. Delays and the possible unintended consequences are many. All parts of the document could be changed or altered. In the case of recent review by the Department of the Commerce into Monuments and Sanctuaries that were designated within the last 10-years or less to be reviewed for mineral exploration. This action could prove catastrophic to the original mission of the Monterey Bays National Marine Sanctuary. Option one allows MBNMS staff

to use the interpretive rule and correctly identify dredge material into two categories and allow for special permitting considerations for each specific beach nourishment project.

Option one is a win win for our communities, constituents, and enables our harbors to assist in a more natural method of local coastal armoring. This year with the future closure of the Cemex plant that was negotiated will eventually help slow the loss of the southernmost beaches in the Monterey Bay. But other areas such as Pillar Point, Santa Cruz, and Moss Landing need more flexibility working with MBNMS, USACE, California Coastal Commission, and USEPA in placing the material which makes the best use for their specific projects.

The Diver SAC Representatives strongly support option one of our Harbors and Dredge Disposal Action Plan.

Thank you

Tucker Hirsch: in support of option one

Kathy Fosmark: in support of option one

Steve Scheiblauber: in support of option one but with the caveat of not placing additional dredging requirements on harbors

Joint statement of four harbors:

Background

When the MBNMS was being considered for Designation, concerns were expressed by the Harbors that such a designation not interfere with harbor dredging, or the placement of clean dredged material onto beaches and near-shore waters, consistent with past permitted practices. The outcome was that areas for each harbor were precisely defined in the Designation Document; no other areas would be allowed for the placement of dredged material.

This approach turned out to cause a variety of problems for Harbors. Although there is no question but that MBNMS Staff has been as helpful as they can be, given how precise and limiting the areas available are, costly problems have arisen, and worthy beach nourishment projects have stalled, or been made more difficult. In some cases, the historic disposal areas are defined with a precision in the Designation Document that is not reflective of historic permits or practices, resulting in new definitions having been created by MBNMS despite an intention to grandfather past practices.

Larger problems may also arise. Quoting from the October 30, 2015 USACE scoping comment on this subject, to the MBNMS:

“Prohibiting the beneficial use of dredged material in the MBNMS, and the associated limitations on beach nourishment, may contribute to more rapid expansion of coastal armoring along the shoreline of the sanctuary.”

During the last (2002-07) MBNMS Management Plan Review, a Dredging Working Group was formed. During that process, the Harbor representatives requested that the strict limiting language of the Designation Document be changed, to allow the MBNMS to permit or authorize beach nourishment projects.

Recommended Solution

The Harbors now recommend the more direct and simpler option recently suggested by MBNMS staff, to:

Clarify the term ‘dredged material’ in Terms of Designation through an “interpretive rule” consistent with Clean Water Act, Ocean Dumping Act, and USACE and USEPA policy and regulations (eg,

define and distinguish between beneficial reuse and disposal) for the placement of fill material below the mean high water line.

Provided that this change implements the goal for placement of clean material for beneficial reuse below the high water mark, the Harbors can support this option, as dredging activities already conform to the rigorous testing and science-based requirements of these Acts and policies. The Harbors explicitly support allowing the Surfers Beach project to move forward quickly, and to consider a larger project such as the 'medium beach fill concept' (up to 150,000 c.y.) as identified by USACE.

However, the Harbors will alternatively support and request a change in the Designation Document should the 'interpretive rule' change not proceed.

Harbors do not support the MBNMS requiring or recommending changes to sediment testing, or other conditions placed on top of the comprehensive testing and monitoring required by other regulatory agencies, including USEPA and USACE, with jurisdiction overseeing the placement of dredged material.

Dr. John Hunt: in support of option one. Recommendation is conditioned on assumption that interpretative rulemaking does not open Terms of Designation, agrees no conditions on sediment quality need to be added.

Sarah Lopez: seconds what Dr. John Hunt said but felt she should abstain from giving a formal opinion. She did think it should not be an issue of big concern to the agriculture industry since it will not affect the Salinas River mouth.

Gary Hoffmann: concerned about getting resolution on whether option one would open the designation document. How will the definition of dredged material be conducted/derived? Not being provided the scope of how sediment is tested (which was said that would be provided at this meeting.)

Keith Rootseart: agrees with Brian Nelson's statement.

Katherine O'Dea: in agreement we need to nourish our beaches with clean materials. Echoed not wanting to open the designation document.

Tom Rowley: From an economic viewpoint, option one is a reasonable way to go without opening the designation document.

Gary Pezzi: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document.

Dr. Steven Bograd: no formal comment from National Marine Fisheries Service but option one seems optimal.

CDR Jason Brand: no comment

Dan Haifley: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document. This would help the natural movement of the sand into the littoral cell.

Maria de la Paz Carpio-Obeso: appreciated information provided in white paper, in support of option one.

Clifton Herrmann: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document.

Paul Reilly: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document.

Rich Hughett: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document.

Christina McGinnis: in support of option one if it doesn't open the designation document. Given the uncertainty, thinks the vote should be delayed until there is an answer from legal council. Agreed with Gary Hoffmann the AC should get more information about clean sand testing. She also felt baseline studies would be good to see if contaminants are introduced.

Kevin Miller: in support of option one to solve the human-made problem.

Jim Moser: in support of option one.

Dr. Steve Haddock: how does option one solve the problem specifically? Does this redefine clean dredge?

Paul Michel: the term "dredge material" has often been synonymous with contaminated material.

Marian Olin: supports beneficial reuse of sand

Bart Selby: in support of option one. Concerned that harbor is most significant brown pelican roost in northern California, will dredging affect that population?

Carol Maehr: echoed Gary Hoffmann and Dr. John Hunt. How will the term be clarified?

Steve Scheiblauer: the definition is equal to that in the Clean Water Act. It would link beneficial reuse to the Clean Water Act.

Dr. John Hunt: has there been clarification of the terminology of "dredged material"? Will that open the designation doc?

Paul Michel: that is still being reviewed by legal council.

The Advisory Council drafted a recommendation to be given to MBNMS staff. A motion was made by Steve Scheiblauer to approve the recommendation. (See Appendix 1)

Seconded by Dan Haifley.

Motion: PASSED

(Vote: 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention)

IV. MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan Haifley, At-Large primary: New Five Year Plan for offshore oil and gas development 2019-2024, will include Arctic, Gulf of Mexico, and Atlantic. Remote chance of the west coast being included and if so, more incentive to trim west coast sanctuaries.

Paul Reilly, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife primary: Dungeness crab quality tests conducted in northern California in November 2017 indicated that the crabs would not be ready for harvest at the time of the normal season opener, December 1 in Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties. CDFW Director Bonham delayed the start of the season until December 16. Subsequently, another round of quality testing forced the Director to delay the opener until December 31. Additional testing will be scheduled to occur by Dec. 22. If quality remains low, an additional delay until Jan. 15, 2018 will be issued by the Director. This date is the latest the season can be delayed due to quality testing. Some elevated levels of domoic acid have been found in northern California Dungeness crab. California Dept of Public Health recommends not eating viscera from these crab.

The commercial season opened in central CA November 15 with mixed results.

On December 31, boat-based sport fishing for groundfish will close until April 1 in our Management Area. This closure includes rockfish, lingcod, cabezon, and greenlings.

The California Fish and Game Commission voted to close the recreational red abalone fishery for the entire 2018 season. Normally, the fishery may occur north of a line extending due west from the center of the mouth of San Francisco Bay. This action is based on CDFW scuba surveys that showed densities of red abalone well below sustainable levels, as specified in the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan. An unprecedented combination of warm water conditions, poor kelp production, and a population explosion of purple urchins in northern California has caused starvation and significant mortality of red abalone. Next year the Commission will assess CDFW scuba survey data from 2018 and discuss management options for 2019.

Gary Pezzi, Recreation primary: no new announcements

PJ Webb, At-Large primary: Cambria/San Simeon area feeling impacts of smoke and ash from the Thomas Fire. Recently had King Tides. The King Tide Project take pictures at ocean access points and helps communities plan for sea level rise and storm surges. Cappuccino Cove – California State Parks announced to plan to build a campground and RV park there. CalTrans already announced building a 60-car parking lot there. This is a highly eroded area where Highway 1 has already been moved inland. This is a northern elephant seal pupping area. Recently in the Cambria area, one sea otter has been shot, one has been skinned (more than likely skinned after death) and one successfully rehabbed and released. In January there will be an Advisory Council Chair Summit. She requested council members to send her any constituency concerns to share at the summit.

Tom Rowley, Business & Industry alternate: At the Monterey Conference Center there is a one of a kind metal sculpture/fountain of a school of fish he encouraged council members to visit. The second floor of the conference center is still being worked on. January 31st is the projected completion date. A formal dedication should happen. Secondly, Tom mentioned the sanctuary's involvement with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on desalination. The draft EIS should be available by March. He expressed concerns about further delays and the size of desalination plant. There are only 40,000 people paying for this expensive desalination/slant well. Lastly, after observing a shipwreck in Honolulu while on vacation, he suggested recent shipwrecks here need adequate security until wreck can be removed.

Katherine O'Dea, Conservation primary: There is a statewide effort led by the Center for Biological Diversity attempting to get coastal communities to sign resolutions opposing offshore oil and mineral gas exploration in SC and Monterey. Save Our Shores teamed up with Monterey Office of Oceana to get resolutions passed in many cities.

Keith Rootsart, Diving alternate: December Newsletter out with 2677 emails. For 2017 the Dive seat published a total of 12 Newsletters and special event campaigns averaging more than a 30% open rate throughout the year. Keith contributed to an article in Hakai Magazine regarding seal bombs <https://www.hakaimagazine.com/news/california-fishermen-are-throwing-explosives-sea-lions/> This was also picked up by Smithsonian.com. He also contributed to an article in Oceans Deeply on sea urchins <https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/10/10/sea-urchins-are-laying-waste-to-kelp-forests-and-an-entire-ecosystem>

Keith is trying to get permission to do an urchin removal study but is having difficulty amending a SPC to take urchins in the Pacific Grove Marine Gardens MPA. He is also exploring another tactic of changing the F&G regulations restricting urchin take through the F&G commission with Dr. Bruce Watkins.

Reef Check California has completed their 2017 survey season completing 7 more sites than last year and twice as many as 2014. This year RCCA added climate change monitoring to their surveys and is deploying temperature recording devices at survey sites along with 7 more robust monitoring stations on the California coast.

2018 we are planning to coordinate with MBNMS staff and to attend DEMA having a booth available to continue our education and familiarization campaign with MBNMS, GFNMS, and CBNMS. To continue our efforts to work with the State of California, Fish and Wildlife, to get them to “sincerely” work on a permitting process for artificial reefing.

Critical habitat issues in the Marine Sanctuary: (1) The continued proliferation of Sea Urchins and the destruction of the kelp forests as the Urchins main food source. (2) The absence of the Sea Stars. (3) A shut down of the North Coast Abalone recreational fishery

Gary Hoffmann, At-Large primary: There have been three reported whale entanglements in Monterey Bay since the last AC meeting. The whale entanglement team sighted only one. It was a calf with the mother close by. NMFS gave the ok for them to do an assessment. After three or four hours the calf disentangled itself and by the end of the day the baby was breaching. Gary also observed a drone flown in Pebble Beach at Bird Rock. He expressed drones still need to be addressed as harassment. During future Superintendent’s Report, can we receive a recap of how many calls are reported to the NOAA harassment hotline?

Sarah Lopez, Agriculture alternate: Farming doesn’t stop this time of year but does slow down. Many vegetable operations moved to Yuma and strawberry operations in Santa Maria. Industry engaging in renewal of agriculture order regulation. There are concerns about the uniqueness between different agriculture areas (coastal vs. central valley) and the language used in the regulations. In addition, they are seeing statistically significant downward trends in nitrogen loading of surface waters. Completed second round of expanded toxicity monitoring looking for multiple pesticide classes in sediment. Seeing reductions in some classes of pesticides but finding others.

Dr. John Hunt, Research primary: no new announcements

Steve Scheiblaue, Harbors primary: There were thousands of people at the recent lighted boat parades. Dredging is going on in Santa Cruz Harbor. On December 6th, Monterey Bay Aquarium gave out three awards and Steve received the Public Service award.

Kathy Fosmark, Commercial Fishing primary: In the Dungeness crab fishery, California Department of Public Health monitors have collected 6 samples of crabs up and down the coast. Two of the most recent samples were above the allowable 30% level. Those samples were from areas closest to the Crescent City port. In regards to whale entanglement and the crab fishery, someone has developed a breakaway if a whale or anything comes in contact with the rope it will break and release. The breakaway rope has been patented. There are things going on behind the scenes and whale entanglement is not a dead subject with the commercial crab fishing industry.

Tucker Hirsch, Education primary: Jon Hill and Tucker met with Amity Wood at the MBNMS Monterey office on December 13th and got a great introduction/refresher of MBNMS's education and outreach. (We even got a sneak peak at the draft Education plan!)

- Tucker attended the MBEE (Monterey Bay Env Ed) end of year meeting. Amity Sandage's work with the Env Ed providers in Santa Cruz has resulted in a beautiful brochure to help teachers get Env Ed into their classes. (Much of the focus of Env Ed here is on the Sanctuary, MPAs, and our connected watersheds).
- Exciting work is happening in SC county to get more Env Ed for students, in conjunction with the roll out of the new science standards that are in the process of getting into the classrooms (NGSS). This is especially true in PVUSD.
- Monterey seems to be lagging behind here, and I would like to see more happening down there.
- Save Our Shores is looking at ways we can partner with these efforts so that we can make sure there is an emphasis on marine and sanctuary education.
- Drum Roll - for Rich Hughett - Fishermen in the Classroom has been a great success in partnership with Real Good Fish this year - it's been presented in 6 schools, in both counties, reaching 28 classes and over 600 students. More funding is needed to see this continue at a cost of about \$3,000/10 presentations.
- Save Our Shores is scheduling more paddle cleanups for 2018 on the Pajaro and Salinas Rivers. We are now looking for groups with their own watercraft and transport or in-kind donations of kayaks and trailers. Kayak Connection in Elkhorn Slough has graciously donated for those local paddle cleanups and Monterey Bay Kayaks will most likely offer some assistance, but we'll need more.
- Save Our Shores is offering its first, new Sanctuary Stewards volunteer training this January. 4 week sessions, Wednesday evenings, Jan 17 - Feb 7. Details TBD but signups are up on the website.

Dr. Steven Haddock, Research alternate: The Deep-Sea Biology Symposium will be held at the Monterey Conference Center on September 9-14, 2018. Anyone interested in local sponsorship or participation can contact the organizers via the web site <http://dsbs2018.org>.

A paper and video about deep-sea food webs in Monterey Bay came out this week, summarizing 27 years of submersible observations in the Sanctuary. <http://j.mp/deepfoodweb>

A study analyzing 350,000 organisms seen from the remotely operated vehicle found that bioluminescence, the ability to make light, is present in 76% of the visible animals throughout the water column from the surface to 4000 meters. <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep45750>

Jim Moser, Commercial Fishing alternate: This year's salmon season has been chopped up. They were able to fish for a couple months then the fishery closed for a month and reopened for another two months. It was surprising to have found many small fish. Charter boats out of San Francisco had

an epic season. Commercial fishermen were upset the shutdown by the government did not affect sport fishermen.

Kevin Miller, Conservation alternate: no new announcements

V. ADVISORY COUNCIL 2018 CALENDAR & WORK PLAN

Nichole Rodriguez proposed the 2018 Advisory Council calendar. She pointed out there will be six meetings in 2018. The February 16th meeting will be in Santa Cruz. The April 20th meeting will be in Moss Landing. The June 15th meeting will be in Cambria. The August 17th meeting will be in Marina. The October 19th meeting will be in Salinas. Topics include an overview of the draft MBNMS Management Plan. The December 14th meeting will be in Monterey. Nichole also discussed drafting a work plan for 2018 meetings. Annual work plans outline issues and projects for the Advisory Council to focus on. The Executive Committee will convene prior to the first Advisory Council meeting of 2018 to determine potential topics for the Advisory Council to rank/prioritize prior to the first meeting in 2018 where the work plan will be presented. Advisory Council members shared their topics of interest for the Executive Committee to consider.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

none

VII. REVIEW OF ONMS STRATEGIC PLAN

Dawn Hayes gave a presentation on the ONMS' New Strategic Plan including background information, core values, goals, objectives and implementation. The strategic plan is meant to convey to the public the priorities for the next five years, provide focus and direction to staff, affirm core values and deliver on NOAA's responsibilities as stewards of nationally significant ocean places. Dawn reviewed the new vision and mission for ONMS. She also discussed each core value: community, conservation, collaboration, respect, creativity, accountability and teamwork. There are five strategic goals in the plan: 1.) Ensure thriving sanctuaries and other ocean parks; 2.) Safeguard more underwater treasures as sanctuaries; 3.) Increase support for sanctuaries; 4.) Deepen our understanding of sanctuaries; 5.) Ensure the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is a great place to work. To put the strategic plan into action, ONMS will: create an environment that invites staff and partners to be active participants in achieving the mission, objectives and priorities; prioritize the actions identified in existing planning documents that align with this strategy; align revisions to sanctuary management plans and employee performance plans with the intent of this strategy; use this strategy to guide future decisions including resource allocations and staffing prioritization.

Advisory Council Member Discussion

There were a few clarifying questions regarding the intent of the plan. Dawn explained the strategic plan is the "what" document, not the "how" document. An implementation plan would be the "how." She also stated the strategic plan should not affect the MBNMS Management Plan Review process. A council member felt the strategic plan should include cost benefits and another felt the interface between the sanctuary system and other governments should be spelled out better.

VIII. WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Conservation Working Group: In order to determine top priorities and issues for the Conservation Working Group (CWG), Katherine O'Dea and Kevin Miller put together a survey with the help of Karen Grimmer, MBNMS staff, to send out to CWG members. The survey asked how often and

when they wanted to meet as well as top priorities and issues for the CWG to focus on. They received 14 responses. The major responses included having meetings in Monterey with Moss Landing as an alternate location and meeting bi-monthly. Top issues to focus on were water quality, habitat health and coastal erosion. Themes of feedback were CWG members like the collaboration and networking happening between AC members and the CWG, CWG members like updates from SAC members and MBNMS staff, and they like providing feedback to SAC representatives. It was decided to hold bi-monthly in Monterey (or Moss Landing alternatively.) The next meeting will be January 25th. They will discuss the definition of habitat health and options to determine top topics for next six months.

Research Activity Panel: The Research Activity Panel met on November 3, 2017, at the Long Marine Lab's Center for Ocean Health in Santa Cruz. Caroline Pomeroy of the California Sea Grant Extension Program provided an overview of Sea Grant activities, including collaborative fisheries research, climate change and adaptation, and marine spatial planning.

Long-term Monitoring

There are three primary components of the RAP effort to advance long-term monitoring of the sanctuary ecosystem:

1. Identify and integrate the information needs of resource managers from the sanctuary and partner organizations, with a special focus on the next generation Sanctuary Condition Report;
2. Support development of web platforms that aggregate data from multiple sources, analyze the combined data, and provide easily accessible information products such as interactive maps, graphics and reports; and
3. Coordinate the efforts of the many existing monitoring programs to develop common assessment questions, monitoring objectives, monitoring designs and ecological indicators.

At the November RAP meeting we received a presentation from Dr. Jennifer Brown of the MBNMS research team that described the progress made by MBNMS staff and their partners in developing the web portals necessary for effectively conveying monitoring information to managers and the public. The major partners in this effort are:

- The MBNMS SIMoN website program that tracks and catalogs monitoring efforts in individual habitats;
- The MBNMS research team that gather and interpret monitoring information and expert opinion to produce the sanctuary Condition Reports;
- The NOAA Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) that is helping to identify standard measurement parameters that reflect overall ecosystem health; and
- The Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON) that is developing databases, analytics, condition indices and web platforms.

Dr. Brown escribed the substantial progress that has been made on conceptual models of ecosystem function and the graphical user interface tools that help managers and the public access and

understand information about the status and trends of sanctuary plants, animals and biological communities.

The RAP is pleased to announce that Dr. Brandon Southall is the new primary member for the Nearshore Environment. Dr. Southall has been a leader in the NOAA investigations on ocean acoustics and the effects of noise on marine organisms. He is an expert on marine mammals, a productive researcher and an active participant in marine policy deliberations.

The next RAP meeting is scheduled for January 12th in Moss Landing, and all Advisory Council members are encouraged to attend.

Recreation and Tourism Working Group: November Newsletter out with 583 emails and a 26.6% open rate which is about 5% off the normal for this newsletter. For 2017 Rec and Tourism sent out 11 Newsletters and special event campaigns.

2018 we are planning to present to SAC, after the Management Plan is completed, the Friends of the Sanctuary Program

X. PLASTIC STRAWS/DEBRIS

Mary Simmons, Waste Reduction Program Manager for City of Santa Cruz, gave a presentation on the use of plastic straws and what steps Santa Cruz (and other local cities and counties) are taking to address plastic disposables. Jackie Nunez, an ocean steward for Save Our Shores, started the “The Last Plastic Straw” movement to help reduce the impact plastic straws have. Mary’s predecessor, Chris Moran, wrote an article in 2014 about Jackie and her program. Straws are being addressed because it is an unnecessary item that is easy to give up. More than 500,000,000 plastic straws are used and disposed of daily in the US. The City of Santa Cruz started a voluntary polystyrene ban in 1992 that gradually became a ban of all polystyrene disposable service ware in 2017. Service ware must now be biodegradable, compostable and or/recyclable in the city’s recycling program. They also continue to educate the public through campaigns and programs. She noted many other cities (e.g, Capitola, Carmel and Monterey) have similar ordinances and/or campaigns to address disposables.

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

It was asked if educational materials are provided to companies and restaurants. There is information available on Jackie Nunez’s website. There has been work done with local food service vendors to convey the importance of reducing the use of plastic disposables. It was also asked what the biggest issue with plastic straws is. Plastic straws are not recyclable and they are harmful to wildlife.

Katherine O’Dea then gave a presentation on her involvement as well as Save Our Shores involvement in dealing with disposable plastics. When the ordinance when into effect in 2017, local businesses were contacted by Save Our Shores to see how the transition was going. Overall, it went smoothly. Once that was completed, Save Our Shores mandated Katherine to reach out to businesses in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. This will occur in 2018. It will be a coordinated effort with organizations like Monterey Bay Aquarium. Assemblyman Mark Stone has a proposed bill “Leash the Lid” law so single use plastic bottles would need lid leashed to the plastic bottle. When doing beach cleanups, Save Our Shores finds many more bottle caps than they do bottles. He is also working towards a ban on cigarette filters. These filters are plastic, filled with chemicals and last

indefinitely. Also, over the last two years there have been statewide workshops held for packaging waste management strategy for California conducted by CalRecycle. Recommendations will then be presented to CalRecycle leadership. Recommendations include first management solutions, a good option to avoid placing bans on every single type of single use packaging.

Meeting adjourned at 4:04PM