

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council

CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 21, 1996

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Moss Landing Harbor District Office

Conservation Working Group Members in attendance were Rachel Saunders, Chair (Center for Marine Conservation); Donna Meyers (Coastal Watershed Council); David Iverson (Save Our Shore - Half Moon Bay); Ellen Faurot-Daniels (Friends of the Sea Otter); Daphne White (Pacific Grove Museum/ League of Women Voters); Jack Wickham (Sierra Club - Ventana Chapter); Melissa Hippard (Save Our Shores); and Lisa Ziobro and Jane DeLay (MBNMS).

I. CWG ADMINISTRATION

1) Set June meeting, suggest agenda items:

The next CWG Meeting will be on Tuesday, June 18 from 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM at the Moss Landing Harbor District Office. Suggested meeting topics included:

á CWG Meeting Schedule and Locations for 1996;

á Update on WQPP;

á Review of the CWG Annual Report

á Update on Sanctuary Stewards and BAY NET programs;

á Status Report on the Sanctuary Foundation;

á Discussion of the relationship between fishermen and competition from marine mammals. The presentation should include a discussion of how the various agencies are proposing to deal with this issue and any efforts to enhance fishermen's education on the subject. Speakers could include Roy Torres, NOAA/NMFS Enforcement Officer; a biologist from NMFS; and a commercial fishermen. CWG members suggested that this would be a good subject to schedule as a joint meeting with the RAP and the SEP. (Rachel will look into this.)

2) Announcements and Other Meeting Dates:

á Ms. Stephanie Thornton has been selected as the new Sanctuaries and Reserves Chief.

á SOS Summer Sampling, Wine Tasting & Silent Auction, Saturday, June 1 - 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM;

á Friends of the Sea Otter, Crab Feed at the Monterey Fairgrounds, Sunday, June 16;

á In June Jack Wickham has a chance to visit the San Francisco Outfall; if anyone would like him to ask a specific question, please let him know at 624-4268 or via e-mail at wickham@mbay.net. Jack will brief the CWG about his visit.

II. SANCTUARY OFFICE REPORT

Jane DeLay, MBNMS Advisory Council Coordinator, provided a brief report on Sanctuary office activities. Highlights included:

Administration

- á A SAC Business and Tourism Activity Panel has been established; Jane will send copies of goals for the CWG. Steve Abbott (Business & Industry Representative) and Ed Brown (Tourism Representative) will serve as Co-Chairs.
- á A list of candidates for the WQPP Technical Position should be forthcoming;
- á The notice for a Public Relations Coordinator has been published in the Commerce Business Daily;
- á The Vessel Traffic Safety Study is heading toward completion;
- á The SAC will be holding a Protocol Workshop on May 31 at the Moss Landing Chamber of Commerce Building; contact Rachel for more information;

Education

- á The Sanctuary has approved a grant of \$2,500 to help produce a Citizen's Stewardship Guide; CMC and the Coastal Watershed Council are co-producing;
- á The next issue of the Sanctuary newsletter should be finished and received from the printer very soon;
- á Plans are beginning for Sanctuary Birthday Celebration in Monterey;
- á The video about the Sanctuary being produced by Kip Evans is nearly complete;

Research

- á The RAP requested that a Sanctuary staff person be assigned to follow and report progress on the proposed underwater park;
- á A draft monitoring plan for the area where the Trinity ran aground has been received by the Sanctuary office;
- á Sanctuary staff members are participating in the McArthur cruise this month;
- á Aaron King, MBNMS Program Specialist, has been meeting with local, State, and Federal agencies to develop a long-term management plan for elephant seals;

WQPP

- á The Cambria Desalination Plant project has been put on-hold for about a year as they are proposing changes that are not in the NPDES permit;
- á Lisa Ziobro, MBNMS contractor, is developing a newsletter for the WQPP and a Citizen's Guide;

Enforcement

- á The draft Enforcement MOU is ready for Terry's signature.

Miscellaneous

- á Proposed legislation in support of the State Mussel Watch Program has passed the appropriations committee; the Bill must now pass the Assembly before moving on to the floor of the State Senate. So far, everything looks good for the program;
- á In response to a request for clarification on the status of the California Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, Rachel reported that the Foundation has been established and can accept donations. At the moment, Mike DeLapa from Sea Studios, is acting as the Executive Director. Although the Foundation is still developing its role, its initial primary responsibility will be to assist the Sanctuary in funding programs. In addition, the Foundation will market Sanctuary related products such as the nautical charts and logo, and function as a vehicle for negotiating with vendors who want to develop and sell Sanctuary related products.

Also requiring further explanation was the status of the proposed Citizen's Stewardship Guide that the Sanctuary will be helping to fund. Donna Meyers, from the Coastal Watershed Council, and Rachel Saunders, from CMC, will be working on the project together. The publication will be a listing of the volunteer opportunities available in and around the Sanctuary. The project is expected to be completed by this Fall and the

information will be available on the internet. CWG members will have the chance to review a draft of the Guide before it goes to press. Rachel and Donna are planning to print from 2,000 - 3,000 copies initially and will distribute them as widely as possible.

When questioned about the Stewardship Guide's relationship to other materials such as the education resources index and the proposed Field Guide, Rachel and Donna indicated that the Guide will be much smaller than the index and will offer more volunteer opportunities than the Field Guide.

á With respect to the Vessel Traffic Safety study, the Coast Guard has recently released a report called The Evaluation of Oil Tanker Routing, also known as the "Tanker Free Study" mandated in 1990. Unfortunately the report does not contain definitive recommendations for how protection of marine wildlife and resources should be increased in relation to the implicit threats from tankers traversing the Sanctuary. CMC has sent out a press release criticizing the report as an "embarrassment". Interested CWG members may contact Rachel at (831) 375-4509 for copy of the press release.

Rachel indicated that the Sanctuary's Vessel Traffic Safety Study has been undermined by the Coast Guard report, and that it seemed unlikely that stronger actions will be taken or that specific recommendations contradicting the Coast Guard will be included in the Safety Study.

III. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CWG TO THE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rachel suggested the following as a list of activities and significant accomplishments to be included in the 1995 Sanctuary Advisory Council's Annual Report:

- á Secured signatures from each of the Advisory Council Working Groups on a memo recommending that the Sanctuary consider causes and effects of underwater man-made sound a research priority;
- á Submitted comments on the RAP's scientific plan; the comments were submitted in December 1995;
- á Participated in the planning and implementation of the Sanctuary Symposium;
- á Spearheaded efforts to create a forum with the personal watercraft industry which set a series of meetings in motion; reviewed draft language for the jet ski brochure; helped to forge new directions for dealing with the issue;
- á Provided written comments on Jade Collection;
- á Have served as a forum for identifying issues of importance for San Mateo County, through the active participation and regular updates from David Iverson;
- á Provided input to the BAY NET and SOS Sanctuary Stewards Programs;
- á Provided comments and testified at hearings concerning the proposed Central California Water Reclamation Project;
- á Reviewed Water Quality issues and received updates and reports about the Program on a regular basis;
- á Tracked shark chumming as an issue and have had forums on this by members;
- á Advocated and actively pursued the development a Sanctuary enforcement plan;
- á Regularly discussed management options for the northern region;
- á Provided input on the issue of kelp harvesting in the MBNMS;
- á Kept CWG members informed about Federal legislation affecting the Sanctuary and when necessary provided comments and wrote letters to aid environmentally friendly legislation;
- á Promoted and supported the proposed underwater park;
- á Initiated support for the State Mussel Watch Program;
- á Helped in providing comments on the California Resources Agency's ocean plan;

- á Participated in planning the Sanctuary's Anniversary Celebration;
- á Assisted in marketing the Sanctuary license plate;
- á Assisted in the establishment of the Sanctuary Foundation;
- á Promoted communication and cooperation whenever possible among the three working groups of the SAC.

CWG members approved the initial list and requested that when Rachel presents the report to the Advisory Council at its June 28 meeting, that she also mention any follow-up efforts the working group may be engaged.

CWG members are encouraged to contact Rachel if there are additional items they feel should be included in the report. A draft report will be ready for the CWG to review at the June 18 meeting.

Jack Wickham expressed concern that no movement has been made on addressing the noise issues; Rachel will carry that message to the SAC.

IV. ISSUE UPDATES AND DISCUSSION:

1) Status Report - Management Of The Northern End Of MBNMS

At the April 26 meeting in Montara, CA, the Sanctuary Advisory Council heard testimony from citizens concerned about changes in the management structure of the MBNMS; in particular, the territory located north of the San Mateo County border. In an effort to determine the management needs of the area, the Advisory Council recommended the establishment of a special subcommittee composed of individuals selected by both Sanctuary Managers and supplemented by the Advisory Council. As of yet, the Sanctuaries and Reserves Division has not yet taken a position and responded to the SAC's recommendation. There will be an update on the status of the issues at the Advisory Council's workshop on Protocols scheduled for Friday, May 31, 1996.

David suggested that there be an education effort in the north to educate the population about MBNMS Programs that affect the northern region.

CWG members discussed the importance of meeting in locations throughout the Sanctuary to provide an incentive for more geographical representation in the group. David volunteered to explore possibilities for a meeting place in Half Moon Bay and will put together a mailing list of individuals that should be contacted to attend the meeting. A list for the southern region of the MBNMS also needs to be developed.

2) Underwater Park Proposal

Following a brief discussion on the history of the underwater park proposal and its current status, CWG members re-confirmed their position that the proposal is a good one that the integrity of the park's original boundaries should be maintained. The CWG agreed that a formal statement should be made and requested that a discussion of the proposal be placed on a future meeting agenda.

3) Piedras Blancas Elephant Seals

The Sanctuary is working with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), NOAA, and the CA Coastal Commission to develop a long-term management plan to deal with the elephant seal population along the California coast. The CWG will be kept updated on the progress of the coordination efforts.

4) Overflight Study

The Sanctuaries and Reserves Division is doing a study of overflights in the MBNMS. Rachel has asked to have a copy of the study to review.

5) MBNMS License Plate

Efforts are continuing to convince AMBAG to allow local non-profits to sell the license plates in return for a decent economic incentive; AMBAG is still expressing reservations about the idea.

6) ESA Update

Ellen reported that there isn't any new legislation. Although there is some bickering and non-productive behavior, the Saxton Bill appears to be okay. Congressman Farr or Brown will make a difference in the outcome of the ESA. Nothing as yet has been introduced in the Senate.

7) Sanctuary Symposium Update

á Proposed Dates -- March 7-8 or 14-15, 1997;

á Proposed theme -- marine biodiversity; WQPP;

á Structure -- 1) Support to expand on the poster sessions and exhibits; 2) Extend the awards ceremony from 5-7:30 p.m. and shorten the Ricketts Lecture; 3) Suggest that the whole group stay together from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM for a series of panel presentations on biodiversity, then have parallel tracks from 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM; 4) Schedule lunch and an expanded poster exhibit session in one very large room so that there can be more integration.

Please contact Rachel with comments about the format and suggested speakers for the morning session. Also please provide input on appropriate topics for the concurrent sessions.

V. WQPP ISSUES UPDATE

In the interest of time, the scheduled update on the WQPP was postponed until the June meeting.

Participants in the efforts to coordinate a series of volunteer monitoring workshops met immediately following the CWG meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane M. DeLay
MBNMS Advisory Council Coordinator

CWG Meeting 5/21/96
APPROVED Minutes