



GREATER FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING



Wednesday January 10th, 2018

9:15AM – 3:30PM

Bodega Bay Fire Protection District Firehouse

510 Highway 1, Bodega Bay, CA

KEY MEETING OUTCOMES

Note: The following notes are an account of discussions at the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Members Present: George Clyde, Cea Higgins, Richard Charter, Francesca Koe, Barbara Emley, John Largier, Sarah Allen, Dan Howard, Abby Mohan, Bruce Bowser, Dominique Richard, Elizabeth Babcock, John Berge, Joshua Russo, Jaime Jahncke, Cicely Muldoon, Kip Hutchinson
Quorum – 10 voting members

Copies to:

Bill Douros, ONMS West Coast Regional Office

Call to Order 9:18am

Review Agenda

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

Maria Brown, Sanctuary Superintendent

Permits

An authorization was issued to Graham Stapelberg and Bill Sharp of World Surf League to use motorized personal watercraft (MPWC) for the purposes of water safety and contest operations at the annual Mavericks Surfing Event. The event is expected to be held for one day only between December and February when the surf and weather conditions cooperate.

A research permit was issued to Barbara Block (Stanford University) and Sal Jorgensen (Monterey Bay Aquarium) to deploy moorings and receivers on the sea floor and use wave gliders, UASs and saildrones to track acoustically tagged white sharks and to attract white sharks for tagging, biopsy sampling and photo identification purposes. This work is a continuation of the TOPP program's long-term research program to evaluate and monitor population trends, population biology, migrations, and behaviors of the Northeastern Pacific population of white sharks in both coastal and offshore waters. This amendment was issued to allow the permittees to use UASs at the Tomales Point field site for the purposes of collecting white shark IDs, photos, and video imagery.

A research permit was issued to Cameron Dunning and Tim Janssen (SpoonDrift Technologies) to deploy five (5) lightweight moorings and buoys within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary at a location west of Pillar Point in Half Moon Bay, CA, in approximately 40 meters

of water depth. The goal of this project is to test the on-board data collection and telemetry functions on solar-powered wave buoys. Results from this pilot study will provide the basis for a multi-institution research effort along the Central and Southern California coasts to improve understanding of inner shelf wave-driven dynamics. The buoys will collect surface-wave-induced motion data (3D position and velocity).

A permit is under review for Dr. Richard Starr (Moss Landing Marine Labs) to deploy a video lander on the sea floor, which is an underwater camera system, to assess the abundance of fishes and invertebrates in marine areas without conducting extractive sampling. Amendment 1 is being requested to include additional survey sites within CBNMS in 2018.

A permit is under review for Graham Groneman (Marin County Fire Department) to use MPWC for life-safety and search and rescue training within the sanctuary. The exact areas and seasonal windows in which trainings would be conducted are still being determined.

An education permit is being appealed by Ms. Jane Reifert and Mr. Greg Barron (IA Worldwide Inc. (aka Incredible Adventures)). The permittee is appealing their permit for the 7th time since 2009. The permit was issued in September 2017 to allow the permittee to attract white sharks at the Farallon Islands using decoys only for the purposes of conducting educational tours. The permittee is appealing the GFNMS decision and requesting permission to use chum and scent attractants during their tours.

A question was asked about if anyone keeps track of the kinds of buoys in the water. It was clarified that they are tracked to make sure buoys are not overlapping and find ways to partner with existing buoys.

A question was asked if we had heard more from the jetski situation in Half Moon Bay. This was in reference to the public comment in November regarding jetskis and Mavericks. The news media says Coastal Commission has approved them, though we are not seeing anything educational in their materials. It was clarified that there are conditions in sanctuary issued-permits, including jetski operators to wear gear and have wildlife observers. It was brought up that this could be an opportunity to insert more sanctuary educational and promotional material into their materials, and that the sanctuary should follow up with them. Francesca is happy to help with providing talking points.

It was clarified that research permits have the condition that the research must benefit the sanctuary. An annual report is required and a summary of data collection efforts are requested. Research is published to NOAA's Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network (SiMON) website: <https://sanctuarysimon.org/>. Research permittees are also invited to present at the research symposium.

Vessel Groundings

None

Conservation Science Update

Working with staff from Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Ocean (PISCO), Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINe), and Point Blue Conservation Science, sanctuary conservation science staff began revamping our rocky intertidal monitoring plots on Southeast Farallon Island. Several historic plots were converted to target important intertidal algae and invertebrate species, which will assess climate change and are good indicator species of impacts from oil pollution and vessel groundings. The changes were implemented after consultation with National Parks, University of California PISCO, and staff from NOAA's damage assessment program. Sampling methods were implemented, which will greatly reduce the cost of long-term sampling, be more comparable to mainland data, and data will be available on line through the PISCO, MARINe and Point Blue Conservation Science. We will complete the conversion of the historic sites to a broad West Coast wide rocky intertidal characterization later this winter. For more information contact Jan.Roletto@noaa.gov.

Education Update

Staff from Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank sanctuaries met with the director of the Whale Trail Project to discuss how the trail might be implemented in Northern California. The director envisions five to seven locations where interpretive signs can be placed to increase education about whales and the sanctuaries for coastal visitors. Several of these signs will be situated on coastal bluffs overlooking the marine sanctuaries.

The Farallones Fall Camp, the first in a series of new mini-camps by the Greater Farallones Association and Sanctuary education staff, launched during Thanksgiving week, November 20 through 22. Seventeen campers ages eight to 12 engaged in 24 hours of lesson plans over three days, including fish feeding experiments, seaweed adaptations, impacts of plastics on seabirds, the diving abilities of leatherback turtles, the anatomy and physiology of octopuses and squid, biodiversity of crabs and the amazing technology of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs). Field based mini-camps provide children with experiences to connect with their national marine sanctuaries and increase their ocean literacy through exploration and discovery. The winter break mini-camp just wrapped up last week from January 3 to 5.

Vessel Speed Reduction Update

We have seen increasing levels of cooperation with our Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) requests thanks in part to a detailed report card program where we communicate with industry on their vessels' level of cooperation during transits within the VSR season. Sanctuary staff, in collaboration with USCG and NMFS, completed a preliminary analysis of the ~3000 transits during the 2017 voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR). 36% of all transits were in full cooperation transiting at 10knots or less. In the three years, we have been managing the VSR program, commitment from commercial vessels has increased from 19% to 36% while transiting in traffic lanes during whale season. Sanctuaries will again be following up with reports to all ships and companies that transited the sanctuary during the VSR informing them of their cooperation and encouraging their participation in the VSR.

On March 1st, the Sanctuaries in collaboration with the air pollution control districts and supporting foundations will be hosting a recognition ceremony for the VSR program at the Los Angeles Harbor.

We have a contract with Point Blue Conservation Science to determine whether this management action has reduced risk to whales, and to assess the effectiveness of other management actions under a variety of scenarios. Specifically, Point Blue will quantify the reduction of risk during the 2015 and 2016 VSR, compared to before and after the VSR, accounting for changes in shipping traffic behavior from other drivers. The results of the work will help determine if past management actions have reduced risk to levels acceptable with sanctuary thresholds. This work will help sanctuaries quantify the reduction of risk of whale mortality and set specific and measurable compliance targets to protect whale populations from ship strikes within sanctuaries.

More information will be shared at the May 9 Advisory Council meeting.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

On December 15, the MBNMS Advisory Council met and received a series of presentations and updates on the ONMS Strategic Plan as well as plastic straws (and other single use plastics) and steps taken in Santa Cruz County to reduce their use. One action item to report from the beach nourishment issue is the MBNMS AC Recommendation:

“The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council recommends that Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary interpret existing language regarding beneficial reuse of clean dredged materials, as defined by the Clean Water Act and Ocean Dumping Act. The goal would be to allow placement of such materials from harbors or other sources below mean high water as long as the interpretation does not open the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary designation document”. The Advisory Council urges an expeditious response because of community concerns.

The Research Team just returned from a cruise with Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) out to Sur Ridge for a series of ongoing partnership studies on deep-sea coral and transplanting techniques. After over a year, success so far in all six species transplanted. The Deep Sea Field Guide characterizing Sur Ridge is now available. Recently, Sur Ridge has been surveyed using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV; midwater and seafloor), and with a midwater trawl. At least 261 taxa were observed and are presented in this field guide. The purpose of this guide is to create an inventory of benthic and midwater organisms, and associated imagery, observed at Sur Ridge to provide a baseline taxonomic characterization. It may also be useful for other deep-sea studies off California. Sur Ridge Field Guide can be viewed and downloaded at:

<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/nov17/cataloguing-the-depths-of-monterey-bay-national-marine-sanctuary.html>

Whalefest is happening January 27-28 at Monterey Fisherman's Wharf and Plaza. It will be a great time and people are free to stay for the symposium.

MBNMS is NEPA lead on CalAm desalination project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Report (FEIS/FIER), which is on track for release at the end of March. This is the project to draw seawater from beneath the sanctuary through wells to a desalination facility. The impetus for the project (6MGD) is extreme water shortages and a court-ordered cease and desist from tapping the Carmel River due to ESA-listed steelhead salmon.

Deep sea cruise planning is underway for Bell Shimada ship time July 14-24, 2018; the focus will be on Davidson Seamount area. The Research Team also planning for ten days of Ocean Science Trust (OST) Nautilus in 2018. The Sanctuary Exploration Center is closed for the last two weeks of January for maintenance and deep clean. For more information, contact Paul Michel at paul.michel@noaa.gov.

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

Dan Howard, Sanctuary Superintendent

Dan is on the International Ocean Film Festival Student Film Competition jury and will be scoring all student films submitted; there have been 135 films submitted. The Film Festival will be held March 10-12, 2018 in San Francisco.

Demonstration of GFNMS Story Map and Web App

Dominique Richard, GFNMS Advisory Council Member

Dominique shared an online story map of GFNMS that he created for an online class. The story map has an interactive map of the Highway 1 route along the sanctuary coastline. The interface provides the user or tourist to get to know the sanctuary and can be used as a travel tool. The idea is to journey along Highway 1, show points of interests and pins with photographs, and display the sanctuary highlights in geospatial format. It is currently on a computer interface for now, but hoping to be expanded to a web app for smartphones. It will be posted to the GFNMS website as a resource for sanctuary travel and tourism efforts.

Suggestions for enriching the tool included providing additional visual cues, workshopping the icons, creating separate lists for different activities, cross linking with social media and Trip Advisor, creating a citizen science observation challenge using iNaturalist, listing iconic places that can be accessed by foot such as trails, including map layers such as hiker resources and bicyclist repair shops. Elizabeth Babcock offered to help with cross-promotional efforts.

BREAK

Office of Law Enforcement Update

Did not occur

Discussion on Outer Continental Shelf Leasing Announcement and Proposal

The SAC drafted, proposed, and discussed a resolution to respond to the OCS Leasing Announcement Proposal: *Resolution of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council in Response to the Call for Comments on the Draft Proposed Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019 through 2024.*

[Resolution available here](#)

ACTION: Motion to approve resolution and submit as a public comment on the Draft Proposed Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program

First: Dominique Richard

Second: Francesca Koe

Verbal approval, 2 abstentions (USCG & NPS)

Motion approved

Ocean Climate Initiative: Update on Climate Action Plan and Presentation of Marin/Sonoma Regional Sediment Management Revised Recommendations and Draft Report
[Presentation available here](#)

The council review period for the draft report is January 12 to February 5. The draft report will be sent out and feedback and edits to formatting and presentation will be accepted. The council will hold a publicly accessible webinar meeting to approve the report on February 5th, 2018 at 10:00am. The in person meeting will take place at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office, 1455 Market Street, San Francisco. Council quorum is needed at the webinar to vote on the report. Members can send a vote by email if you cannot attend.

Initial suggestions to the report included showing a locator/orienting map and making the photo of the map in each site larger.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Sediment Management specific)

Norma Jellison, local resident: She is a coastal advocate and coordinates whale watch on the coast. She acknowledges and commends the important efforts of the project. For those who spend time on the coast and see the impacts, it is helpful to know this work is being done. Observing the loss of coastal cliffs, she hopes that what has been done makes it ways into the state program for implementation.

ACTION: Motion to approve regional and site revised recommendations, forwarding recommendations to sanctuary, and recommend that superintendent send them to the State Coastal Sediment Management Workgroup.

First: Francesca Koe

Second: Abby Mohan

Verbal approval, 1 abstention (USCG)

Motion approved

PUBLIC COMMENT (General)

Norma Jellison, local resident: Supportive of the sanctuary taking a position of cooperation with Caltrans on the Gleason Beach project. She noted that it is important to take a position on this issue because what is being proposed for the realignment will have an impact on sanctuary waters. The community is seeing lots of material in the sanctuary due to the collapse of hillsides and armoring. The community is concerned about the magnitude of how this has been engineered and the impact on coastal resources inland. The area rife for problems and there is limited public safety response in the area.

LUNCH

Presentation on U.S. Coast Guard Proposed Rule

Max Delaney, GFNMS Staff

[Presentation available here](#)

A question was asked about what the tradeoffs would be in terms of an exemption versus a permit. It was noted that the Coast Guard conducts activities in the sanctuary that are beneficial, so the discharge will be allowed; it is a matter of how to go about allowing the discharge. For the exemption, the Coast Guard would need to do a consultation and discuss mitigation measures. For permits, they would need to return every 5 years to discuss any changes in actions, and there would be special conditions within the permit. The tradeoffs are in the process.

When asked what the USCG thinks about the trade-off between an exemption vs. applying for a permit, Kip Hutchinson stated that the USCG agrees with NOAA's preferred alternative and then said he couldn't speak to whether the USCG would apply for a permit or not.

A question was asked about why the “boxes” on the boundary map were not used as discharge zones. The goal is for sewage to be released underway.

A question was asked regarding if pyrotechnics were included in the areas. The Coast Guard was not sure if the areas were the exact location that they would do the discharge.

A question was asked if there is language that suggests they stay away from areas of high density of wildlife. There is no proposed language in the rule; through the 304d consultation they would hope to come up with best practices for discharge.

The SAC drafted, proposed, and discussed a resolution to respond to the U.S. Coast Guard Discharge Rule: *The Resolution of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Regarding Coast Guard Discharges in Sanctuary Waters.*

[Resolution available here](#)

Further discussion included if the discharge issue could be a transitory problem as vessels are replaced with better treatment and more capacity in holding tanks; if future technological advances could be considered; including language that addresses using science based data to help guide selection of sites; if there are any political considerations to be discussed; the problem being the precedent that is set rather than the biological problem; and that the problem with an exemption would be allowing one party to discharge but not another. It was also brought up that the expansion area and the original boundaries should not be split up. George Clyde, chair of Cordell Bank SAC, noted that the CBNMS SAC voted for Alternative 3 and acknowledges the important role of the Coast Guard. The U.S. Coast Guard noted that within Sector San Francisco there are five patrol boats and some smaller vessels and larger boats. Josh Russo noted that he supports the exemption and to allow the Coast Guard to continue their activities as normal.

The Advisory Council presented their concerns of the resources and is supportive of the easiest and most expeditious way of moving forward.

ACTION: Motion to approve the resolution and submit as a public comment for the U.S. Coast Guard Discharge Rule

First: Richard Charter

Second: Bruce Bowser

Verbal approval, 1 abstain (USCG)

Motion approved

Presentation on Kelp Restoration Project

Rietta Hohman, Greater Farallones Association

[Presentation available here](#)

Rietta gave a presentation on the proposed Kelp Restoration Project. She gave an overview of Northern California kelp forests, background on bull kelp decline, impacts on nearshore ecosystems, fisheries impacts and regulations, and the North Coast Kelp Recovery Project and proposed working group.

Discussions included the effects of human intervention and ecosystem imbalance; having a sea otter expert within the working group; if the working group would look at a rebound of sea stars; what the goals of the working group would be; how this working group would coincide with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) working group.

Josh Russo noted that he is a guide for abalone diving, part of the Watermans Alliance, and is on the recreational abalone advisory committee. Francesca Koe noted that this is a unique opportunity for the SAC to drive a project like this; it shows we are inclusive. The project could include scientific monitoring programs and bring in the community to enhance these efforts. It is important to include the interested stakeholder groups; to look at long term goals and increase resilience; collaborate as a cohesive project to create a framework for sites to be used both within areas inside and outside of sanctuaries that have been affected.

John Largier noted that there is lots of enthusiasm for the kelp issue; the SAC is supportive; and the project is linked to the Climate Action Plan and GFNMS science needs, however, there is a concern on staff time and resources.

Sarah Allen supports the project and working closely with the State and MPAs. Elizabeth Babcock suggested starting this working group in conjunction with the CDFW working group or planning the meetings accordingly with the CDFW working group as the insight from other members and partners on the working group is important as well. We should also try to find efficiencies where there are efficiencies. However, it was noted that it might not be efficient to wait for the CDFW.

Francesca Koe and Josh Russo were recommended as working group chair. It may be beneficial to have a commercial fishing rep on the working group; Elizabeth suggested Bibit Traut to sit on the working group as an education seat. Sarah Allen, Abby Mohan, John Largier, Josh Russo, Barbara Emley expressed interest in participating on the working group.

MOTION: The SAC establishes a Kelp Recovery Project Working Group.

First: Bruce Bowser
Second: Abby Mohan
Verbal approval, 1 abstention (USCG)
Motion approved

Francesca Koe was nominated and elected as working group chair.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Business

Approve November Meeting Minutes – Minutes approved

Discuss SAC Chairs Summit in SF

The Joint SAC Chairs Summit and MPA Federal Advisory Committee Meeting will be happening next week, January 17 – 19 at the Argonaut hotel in San Francisco. GFNMS SAC members are invited to the evening reception on Wednesday January 17th, 6pm to 7:30pm. We are also hosting members from the Business Advisory Council next Tuesday on a tour of Bolinas Lagoon, similar to last year's retreat.

Update on SAC member recruitment

No update

GFNMS Facilities Master Plan

Postponed to May meeting

Member Reports

Did not occur; will be compiled and distributed in minutes

Presentation on CalTrans Highway 1 Realignment Project

Richard Charter, GFNMS AC

Erika Sawyer and Caitlin DeLaTorre, Caltrans

Richard shared a video of drone footage of the cliffs of Gleason Beach showing the armoring and houses falling into the sanctuary. He also shared a video of Caltrans trucks sliding on the project site.

Erika Sawyer and Caitlin DeLaTorre from Caltrans shared an overview of the Gleason Beach Highway 1 Realignment project, including the project purpose, need, history, emergency repair work, project status and schedule, habitat enhancements, and coastal improvements. There is a requirement to mitigate for the biological impacts and create habitat enhancements, which includes removing culverts, establishing better connections to the ocean, and removing fish barriers. These enhancements will allow the beach and lagoon to expand and create more salmon spawning habitat. They will also plant willows or other natives along Scotty Creek. The project will create a pedestrian bridge, restrict grazing from the creek, create and enhance seasonal wetlands, create the floodplain, and phase in riparian plantings.

The management plan includes a cattle grazing regime for creek, better breeding habitat for red legged frog and silverspot butterfly. The project is limited to within the right of way property; they are working with Resource Conservation Districts to develop a more expansive area.

Regarding coastal improvements, public access is consistent with the Coastal Act, Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan, which includes coastal trails, potential pedestrian bridge, and enhanced beach access. Real estate land acquisitions and easements would need to be made to move the road. Rock slope protections would be placed around the creek as “slope retaining structures”. Maria noted that some projects may need a permit from the sanctuary.

Susan Upchurch, staff to Lynda Hopkins, noted that the project is still in the permitting stages. Gary Helfrich from Sonoma County Planning has been involved with Caltrans and the plans have been modified to be more scenic given the difficulties of the site. Caltrans is talking about giving the lands over to the county. Gary has had good response with Caltrans; they are working towards consolidating permits with the California Coastal Commission. The time to make comment is now. The Ballard project about restoration on the creek was brought up; it was noted that the fencing was mentioned in the project but the salmon spawning habitat needed more work.

Further discussion included the SAC sharing appreciation to Caltrans for the work they are doing, but notes that there are related issues; a suggestion that an educational component could be included in the project; and discussion of public access and if there would be conditions for permit approval for removal of existing or legacy debris as part of the combined permitting process; and compensatory mitigation, or how much improvement can be done to have the bridge. It was also noted that Caltrans has been accommodating for funding mitigation measures by purchasing existing residences.

There may be upcoming public meetings in April and the Coastal Board hearing will take place in May.

The SAC drafted, proposed, and discussed the *Resolution of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Council Regarding Impacts and Mitigations of the Proposed Caltrans Highway One Realignment at Scotty Creek/Gleason Beach, Sonoma County California*. A motion was proposed to forward the resolution to the sanctuary superintendent and recommend that the superintendent forward the resolution to Caltrans, Sonoma County Planning, and California Coastal Commission.

MOTION: SAC approves resolution, forwards to the sanctuary, and recommends that the superintendent send the resolution to Caltrans, Sonoma County Planning, and California Coastal Commission.

Verbal approval, 1 abstain (USCG)

ADJOURN at 3:45PM