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California Coastal National Monument
Jennifer Stock, Richard Burns

- Jennifer Stock:* You're listening to Ocean Currents, a podcast brought to you by NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. This radio program was originally broadcast on KWMR in Point Reyes Station, California. Thanks for listening!
- Welcome to another edition of Ocean Currents, I'm your host, Jennifer Stock. On this show I talk with scientists, educators, explorers, policy-makers, ocean enthusiasts, adventurers and more, all uncovering and learning about the mysterious and vital part of our planet: the blue ocean. I bring this show to you monthly on KWMR from NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, one of four national marine sanctuaries in California all working to protect unique and biologically diverse ecosystems. Cordell bank is located just offshore of the KWMR listening radius off the Marin-Sonoma coast, and it's thriving with ocean life above and below the surface. If you've been listening locally there have been lots of sightings of whales in the region. Out at the Point Reyes lighthouse people have been talking about orcas and humpbacks and grays. It's definitely a very exciting time off the coast right now. Today I have a live guest in the studio, I'm really excited to learn more about this area that is very special off our coast. I have Rich Burns with us, who is with the California Coastal Monument. This is a very special place; the entire stretch of California that we're going to learn more about today. Rich comes from the Ukiah office and dropped in here to Point Reyes today. Rich, welcome, you're live on the air in the studio.
- Richard Burns:* Jennifer, good afternoon. Thank you, and also thank you too for putting out the initial invite for me to be here and talk about the California Coastal National Monument. I really appreciate it.
- Jennifer Stock:* You're welcome. There's so many special things about California for so many giant superlatives. We have four national marine sanctuaries, we have national parks, we have state parks, and there is this California Coastal Monument that I think not that many people know too much about. I'm really excited; I invited you because I want to learn more, and I'm involved with coastal education so this is fantastic. First of all, what is the California Coastal Monument? What division in the government is it part of?
- Richard Burns:* It is actually a division of the department of Interior, and it's managed by the Bureau of Land Management. It's actually the entire stretch of the California coast from the border of Oregon all

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the way down to Mexico, so it's basically 1,100 miles long. It includes the-- originally, and this is what makes us really interesting and unique, originally it was the rocks and islands off the coast of California basically from mean high tide out twelve nautical miles. The monument was originally established to not have a mainland base to it of any kind. However, this past year, as I think a number of people know, President Obama signed the proclamation which added 1,665 acres to the California Coastal National Monument; the only mainland piece currently outside of Point Arena, California in South Mendocino County. That's what makes us very, very interesting because you were right at the very beginning. It's probably one of the most seen and least recognized of all the federal national monuments and parks across the nation. Everybody talks and marvels at all the rocks and islands off. I can't tell you how many times I make drives down highway 101 and see people taking pictures of those, not recognizing that it's actually a monument.

Jennifer Stock: And it has special protections in place for that?

Richard Burns: Yes, it does. As a matter of fact, the plan that was written for the monument which was basically completed around 2004 established four major themes; one of it being habitat protection as far as for the seabirds, pelagic life, and I guess you'd call it pinnipeds and other marine mammals who use the offshore rocks and islands. In addition to that, it's also science and research; that was another big element of the monument. Then, basically preserving heritage because it's kind of interesting, when you look at the California coast and such, and you have cultural resources out there. And then last but not least is recreation which is also being looked at as a part of it. But, really, for the most part until the acquisition--not really the acquisition-- until it was actually moved to the mainland, there really couldn't be a whole heck of a lot of recreation except for people in kayaks and those things who were out venturing around the rocks and islands.

Jennifer Stock: In terms of the history, going back to the beginning, is this the only coastal monument in the United States? Or how did it come to be?

Richard Burns: It came to be, really, through work on behalf of congressman Sam Farr down in basically the Santa Cruz, Monterey area. And he-- and at the time he and the BLM State Director, Ed Hasty had talked and really looked at the rocks and islands along the coast

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and discovered that there are some significant resources there and unfortunately being that they really were just out there. They weren't withdrawn from a lot of different purposes, for example: mineral exploration. That was something they were open for, and different "rights of ways", things like if people wanted to go out there and put up cell towers, or signs, or those particular things. The rocks and islands were open for all of that and so you had this kind of people looking at these things thinking, "Well, stunning as it is; as we all recognize it to be, shouldn't there be some form of protection put on these rocks and islands?" And, that was really how it all began with the work of congressman Sam Farr down South, like I said, and then Ed Hasty who was the state director for BLM at the time, to start putting some parameters as to what this can be. And then congressman Farr carried it forward and in 2000 it became-- it was signed by President Bill Clinton, again through proclamation to be a national monument for the entire length of the California coast. And again, it's the rocks and islands above mean high tide just off from mainland until again this year, twelve miles out.

Jennifer Stock: Twelve miles out; so there's some rocks that go twelve miles out?

Richard Burns: Yeah, you find different features: reefs and things, that actually do extend twelve miles out, so when you really look at the map of them, and really there's too many rocks and islands and features to count; it works out to an estimate, we think, around 20,000.

Jennifer Stock: Wow!

Richard Burns: Acreage-wise, it's not super huge but when you really look at the volume and the extent of it, it's about 20,000 features, the majority of which are basically from Monterey Bay, north.

Jennifer Stock: And, geologically, is there any background on why just Monterey Bay, north? Just the plate tectonics of our region?

Richard Burns: Pretty much, that's it. And it's very interesting, too. Because when you mention that, I've been involved with the original acquisition of the Stornetta public lands back, would've been-- We started that one about 1998, and to this day you have certain things that I remember from just over about 16 years that used to be features of the mainland but just through coastal uplifting and erosion and just geologic situations they have become features of the national monument. They're no longer touching the mainland.

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Jennifer Stock: I bet you're going to get more of those with erosion on the rise and sea level rise, and stronger wave action.

Richard Burns: I would agree with that; we're seeing it as we speak.

Jennifer Stock: Interesting. Now, as this designation as a national monument, are there specific regulations about the use of these? You were talking about protecting them from signs and cell towers, but can people access them if they do have the ability to-- I know some of these rocks are very accessible, especially at low tide.

Richard Burns: That is a really good question. And when the monument was first established and established for recreation, again it was mean high tide out. Really, to get to most of the features unless it was a minus tide, you really weren't going to be able to walk out there very easily. There was no real public access, and I think if there was anything that was limiting about the California Coastal National Monument it was the fact that it was sort of, you can see it but you really couldn't touch it. And so the way to experience the monuments fully was through photographs, was that people in kayaks like I said, could get out there. That's what made the expansion over there and outside the city of Point Arena such a significant piece of the monument because now a person can go out there; they can stand on the California Coastal National Monument; they can look out at the Pacific Ocean right there, it's the coastal bluffs, most of Point Arena lands are coastal bluffs. You have the little bit of beach just North of the Garcia river, however with that you can see and experience the whales just right up there off of the end. The thing that I want to mention to, with regard to location for those who aren't really aware, I feel that where the monument is located is actually what I would describe as the elbow of California. When you're at the furthest southwest corner of the monument and you're looking out into the ocean, basically you're looking at ocean. The town of Point Arena is back behind you to the east, probably a good half of a mile, maybe three quarters of a mile, and everything from there, the whole sweeping views until you look north where you can see the state going north is all water; open water. And so that gives you a really interesting perspective and you kind of look at that, wondering what Native Americans thought when they were there, seeing this incredible, expansive ocean right there and you can see whales fairly close. They come right there around that turn and just continue up the rest of the way.

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- Jennifer Stock:* Yeah, it's very similar to Point Reyes, at the tip where the Point Reyes lighthouse is in terms of that expanse all around and you have to make these little landmarks; these whales do before they continue on their journeys to these good hotspots there. I can really relate in terms of talking about the ability to really relate with people more when you have a sense of place to stand on. Working for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, which is all underwater, pretty hard to get to, is really difficult and we communicate about it mostly through video and exhibits and photographs. As you were talking about that I was like, "I can relate to that. It's been a while I've been working on how to bring that place to people."
- Richard Burns:* Well, and the thing I can say too, that's been really phenomenal from where I sit in looking at this, is-- again, a lot of the monument expansion really was grassroots efforts on behalf of the citizens of Mendocino County and especially the people in and around the town of Point Arena. And then, the lighthouse and those up and down the coast. The reason why I mention it, in those particular terms, is that if it wasn't for them this wouldn't have expanded the way that it did. And, having that sense of place where you can physically touch is really what they're looking at and really embracing.
- Jennifer Stock:* In terms of the Stornetta lands, this was really recently designated; brought into the California Coastal Monument this past spring. What's the history there? Those were originally private lands that were agriculturally used?
- Richard Burns:* Yes, that's exactly what it was. There was a small section of BLM land that was just east of highway one up there that went along one of the bluffs, and the Stornetta family had actually acquired a ranch from, I can't exactly remember whom but it's probably too far back to even worry about, but around 1917. And so the family had been out there farming; basically growing peas, beans, potatoes, and then they had a cattle operation as well. There's a Stornetta side of the family that has a dairy and they're actually out there as well. But, the particular Stornetta brothers who owned and operated the ranch were really into more of the beef cattle. So, they used a lot of the coastal bluffs there for their beef cattle operation.
- Jennifer Stock:* And did they stop operating as a ranch recently?

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Richard Burns: No, as a matter of fact that was one of the things that made this really, really unique. The family had been looking at a way-- you had three sisters, not to get too much into the history of the family, who had been interested in a conservation land offer and so not interested in wanting to give up the agricultural practices that the family were doing. They had actually a number of different entities that they were looking at, BLM not being one of them, and the reason why BLM got it was kind of an interesting fluke. I had a very good friend of mine who has since retired from the agency, who had a friend that worked for Conservation Lands something-- I can't remember exactly. But they were in a bar in Sacramento drinking-- as sometimes good things happen-- and they mentioned that they had this property on the coast and they were looking for a conservation buyer, so they approached this friend of mine who basically said, "Y'know, BLM would be interested in this because we actually can make things work where you can maintain certain agricultural practices that are compatible with landscape, and still be able to have public lands that would be available for people to go." So, they actually got me in touch then with the Stornetta family and then the rest of the people who were involved and it took about close to five years of really working very diligently with the family and with those who were interested, and the city of Point Arena and other entities and advocacy groups to really pull this together.

Jennifer Stock: That's fantastic. I'm talking with Rich Burns from the California Coastal Monument and you're listening to Ocean Currents. Right now we're talking about a new area that folks can visit on the coast of Point Arena: the Stornetta lands, that have just recently been added to the California Coastal Monument. And this is extremely significant for that region because you go up to Point Arena and there's not a lot of places to go for a hike. You can go to the Point Arena lighthouse and enjoy the views and the vistas but now this is a significant piece of property right on the coast with so much beautiful access to enjoy the birding, and the wildlife, and the wildflowers. But you mentioned that the land is still being used for agriculture as well? Because I didn't notice that when I was up there.

Richard Burns: Correct, you still have the cattle operation that is operated by the Stornetta brothers coastal ranch, and they actually run about two hundred a head, approximately, and they move them around. One of the things that's very unique about this, and we've worked very close with US Fish and Wildlife Service, you have some key

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threatened and endangered species on the property. One of being a Behren's Silverspot butterfly which is, when you look at it and see pictures of it it's hard to distinguish from other, different butterflies, but what the fact of the matter is is that it goes in and around Point Arena, and that's just about it. Not too many other populations are known and the thing that the grazing actually does, and again this was actually proved through work with US Fish and Wildlife Service, is that livestock keep a lot of the grass species that more or less come up and don't allow the violet that the butterfly needs to survive to be exposed. So, thereby the cattle there, keeping the grass at a fairly low level, actually allow for the violet to be visible, the butterfly uses the violet, and the species basically goes on. And they haven't really-- we've been doing monitoring, my staff has with different transits and the numbers have been about the same, but the fact is is that we're afraid, as US Fish and Wildlife Service pointed out, if you have no grazing at all, that'll probably be detrimental to the butterfly species overall. Too much is also going to be the same so the thing that we kind of bumped into here was that the numbers of cattle being out there apparently seemed to be approximately about right. And we're not really seeing from the grazing practices really any serious degradation. There's red-legged frog habitat out there as well and so we have those areas that are pretty well maintained for the red-legged frog and the livestock don't seem to be of issue there. And then in addition to that there's mountain beaver, Point Arena Mountain Beaver, which is also another threatened and endangered species, and those areas have been protected as well. So, it seems to be a very good arrangement and relationship, and I guess the one thing I do want to highlight is the Stornetta family in general because they are incredibly good stewards and always had been. I think a person can truthfully say and make the statement that if it wasn't for their stewardship, I'm not sure how many people would've been interested in this place, but their stewardship really kept the species there and allowed for the economic to come into the area. And it's phenomenal, I mean, it really is. It all works and fits.

Jennifer Stock: Point Arena is in Mendocino County, right? So, Mendocino Land Trust, did they have any interest in working with that family and that property?

Richard Burns: Correct, and they have. We have worked with Ann Cole and the Mendocino Land Trust now; they're a wonderful organization to work with and partner with. And right now we're working with

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them very closely on a number of different projects. The one being is an app that you could get for your phone that more or less talks about where you are along the coast; they're working on that one. And another one is with Coastwalk, and we're working through them on the whole coastal trail that basically starts in Oregon and ends up down in Mexico. One of the key pieces, with regard to Coastwalk, was the fact that once you left Manchester State beach to the north, you had to walk down highway one, inland, until you got basically south of the town of Point Arena. Now, what you really have is that a person can be at Irish beach, which is north of Point Arena by about eleven miles, and you could actually walk on Manchester State beach from off of Irish beach and then walk on Manchester State beach, which links up with BLM lands all the way into the city of Point Arena and basically beyond. That whole stretch of coast, which was at one time unavailable for hiking, now is totally available.

Jennifer Stock: That's exciting! Where can you access it from downtown Point Arena?

Richard Burns: Right at city hall; You can just park in the parking lot at city hall and there's a pass through there, at the fence. We're working right now for better signage and a kiosk and things. And those are some things that we're hopefully going to have in place when we have a Discover the Coast event on July 19th of this year. But right now a person can park at city hall, they can go out through the back of the property and there will be a pass there in the fence, which basically takes them right out onto the public lands. In fact, there's a grassy area that we have people park on which is actually BLM; that came when we got the phase of the Cypress Abbey property for-- well, we got that first phase which is actually within the city limits of Point Arena, and it does provide for parking and things like that, and we're going to have maps and brochures and things, eventually. But, yes, right at the fence, right along the top of the harbor, the coastal bluffs, and then just on around the corner, and all the way up to Irish beach.

Jennifer Stock: When I had the chance to go up there, which I think was October of last year; I hiked along the bluffs, I noticed that it was really, quite treacherous. Thankfully, I was without my toddler at the time and right at the edge, I mean, there was nothing between you and a sheer drop-off. Is there going to be any type of fencing put up or anything? I noticed one thing I love about it is there is none of that and it's just wild landscape, but it's a little treacherous. And

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there's one area where it was almost like a sinkhole in the middle of nowhere and it was really like, "Whoa, where are we? This is interesting!" And I was really curious of the geology; how did that happen? But that's something I'd be curious about in terms of safety and warning visitors about that.

Richard Burns:

That is one of the things that we're working with the community on, and you bring up a really interesting point, also, because there are seen to be two schools of thought. One is that people said, "We like the naturalness. We like not having the burdensome of fences that we're either climbing over or having to look around.", things like that. And then there's the other group that says, "We want to make sure when we're out here we're okay." I can tell you that since we've had everybody out and hiking around, people seem to be pretty aware of where some of the danger zones really are. I've actually had more people concerned about, when they're out there hiking, that if they come across some of the cattle out there then they're not sure what to do. And so they don't know if they should leave or what, and it's like, "No, no, no." They're all a part of the landscape and if they look like they're coming too close, because they are used to people and so they're not really afraid of anyone, just wave your hands and say a loud noise. Odds are they will back away and go; they'll never hurt anyone, but I've actually heard more from that than people as far as the danger. But with that said, one of the things we want to try and do too, and the city of Point Arena is working very closely with us, is put up what we're thinking is small carsonite signs; just to let people know that it's dangerous if you move beyond this particular point. That way they'd be pretty innocuous but enough that if you're coming down from a hill you will see that there and know that, "Maybe if I step too much further here it might be not such a good idea." Those are some of the things we're looking there by keeping the whole aesthetics of the area wide open, but still giving something out there that says, "Beyond this point it gets a little bit dicey."

Jennifer Stock:

And hopefully common sense is part of that too if you're going to access the land.

Richard Burns:

Yes, definitely; because you're right. One of the things, too, about it-- and I'm really appreciative of this-- is that when we did the-- there've been a number of partners that have been involved in this whole acquisition from the beginning and I'd like to name a few. The Wildlife Conservation Board, the arm of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife that looks at land acquisitions for

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the state; they provided funding, there was the Coastal Conservancy; also equally involved with this, and the Nature Conservancy, and then US Fish and Wildlife like I mentioned earlier. When we did the first phase of the acquisition they were all the major players on all of that as far as the funding sources, so state propositions 12, 13, 40, and 50 as well as some federal funds went into that whole acquisition. The reason why I make that a point is because it's state money and then federal money for the whole second phase of everything; the Land and Water Conservation Fund. There will never be a fee charge there, people can go and use it as it is and just accept the fact that it is what it is but not having to worry about a fear or anything like that.

Jennifer Stock: In terms of the grassroots effort to get it included, we're talking about the back-story of how it did get included, it was then a presidential proclamation to add it. How did that take place? It was just going up the chain and came down as Obama signing a thing; there it is!

Richard Burns: Exactly, and this really gets into what grassroots really means and the group there in Mendocino County, they took a lot of ideas and stimulation and excitement from *Rebel with a Cause*. All of the things happened with regard to Point Reyes National Seashore and everything else, and the grassroots effort from that activity, they looked at that and said, "We can do that here. There is nothing that says we can't." And you had some very key players involved, the Lighthouse Keepers Association and again the city of Point Arena; congressman Jared Huffman-- actually congressman Mike Thompson before him, the reason I mention that is because it was originally going to be through Congress. In fact, there was legislation that was originally entered by congressman Thompson about 4 or 5 years ago to make it a national monument at that particular point in time. Really, we only just had the Stornetta public lands; there wasn't the property to the south of Point Arena at the time but people felt that this was such a key area that having some sort of designation was important. He originally entered the legislation then and when they redistricted and congressman Huffman became the person overseeing the legislation, he reentered it again and now we're looking at, instead of just the Stornetta lands which were only about 1,160 acres at the time, now having actually the whole thing at 1,665 acres. You had representatives from his staff and again you even the families involved; the Stornetta family and others were very supportive so, you had no known opposition that we were aware of for any of

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this, which is rare when you think of designating and setting things aside. You would assume that people would be kind of concerned about that but in this particular case, no. In fact, even Congress, when the hearing was held in that House Resources Committee, once again they heard absolutely no opposition to any of this. Needless to say, you had all these major players: the Land Trust, the environmental groups again, and the local businesses, and everything else all supporting this becoming a monument. I would say it took the better part of several years of constant being visible with what this was and a lot of it too goes to Visit Mendocino, the group out of Fort Bragg, a nonprofit group that really markets Mendocino County. They did a wonderful job in keeping this in the forefront of a lot of people. We had the secretary visit, Secretary Jewell, back in November. She wanted to have a town hall meeting and I actually took her on a hike along the coast, and she was floored. Congressman Huffman was there as was State senator (?) and there was members from the Land Trust and Public Lands Foundation and others who went on the hike. The thing I think that really captured it in a lot of ways was the fact that it was November, November 8th and I remember the day well because it was my wife's birthday thinking, "Here I am out at the coast." We're out there and we're just behind the college property and on the new acquisition that BLM had, and we're looking out on the ocean and here are whales breaching. It was almost like you couldn't have asked for a nicer day or more fantastic event than to stand there and watch this, so we watched it for a long time. It just got everybody all on the same page too; it's like, "This place is special, there's no other way to describe it. This place is amazingly special." The town hall meeting was held later that day, it started about 2'o'clock and it was really only scheduled to go on for about an hour to an hour and a half. There were a little over 300 people who came to the town hall meeting, and when you figure Point Arena itself is only 475 people, to have 300 there at a meeting was pretty amazing. It was opened up, the whole opening started with a ceremony by the Manchester band of Pomo Indians dancing and with a prayer, and it just captured everything perfectly, for lack of a better way to call it. No one mentioned anything that-- Secretary Jewell asked, "Is there anybody who is against any of this?" and no one was. By 4:30 where there was still people wanting to talk why they were in favor of this, they finally said, "We're going to have to wrap this up. We're sorry we can't hear from everyone." That was a good clue; she brought that back to Washington with her and then the process began on that front as far as having it done administratively. In the meantime-- again

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there's so many stories here, I could go on for hours so if there's anything feel free to interrupt but in the meantime while all of that is happening New York Times is out there looking to identify places to go for 2014. What did they list third in the world, but this place.

Jennifer Stock: That's exciting!

Richard Burns: It is very exciting, so you had that being captured now in addition to what is happening back in Washington D.C. and all of a sudden it began to take notice in many people's eyes that this was a special place.

Jennifer Stock: Well, I bet you that town is thrilled. It helps with the economy and it's a sleepy little town and not too easy to get up and around from Point Arena so it's wonderful to have more visitors come and spend some money in that tiny little town.

Richard Burns: The town is very thrilled and really they had run into some hard times. You look at it and obviously timber is no longer what it was at one point in time, a lot of the fishing is protected there off the coast, they needed something and the economics that they had were centered a lot around agriculture. So now having the tourism, as far as in that area, the town has gotten very vibrant. You can see it, and going down the streets I'm really shocked at when I look at how Point Arena was about a year ago and now just the whole dynamics and the attitude of the community is just very, very powerful as far as to be a part of. One of the things too, I forgot to mention, it gets back to the monument; there's gateway communities wherever you have--

Jennifer Stock: I'm going to pause you right there, actually, and we're going to take a break. I'd like to come back and talk about gateway communities as well as this event coming up on July 19th.

Richard Burns: Perfect, thank you.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you, we're talking with Rich Burns from the California Coastal Monument here on Ocean Currents. We're going to take a short break and be back in a second.

And you're tuned to Ocean Currents here on KWMR, this is Jennifer Stock and I'm here with Rich Burns in the studio from the California Coastal Monument. You were about to talk, Rich, about

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gateway communities which is one of the efforts within the Coastal Monument about connecting with communities along the coast and stewarding this special area of these rocks and islands and now new land up at the Stornetta lands. Can you tell us more about gateway communities and where are they?

Richard Burns:

When the plan was being developed one of the key features about the plan was public involvement and public management of the rocks and islands off the coast, based on the framework on how the plan was. When you look at it, again you've got 11,000 miles of coastline there and there's no way that an agency could effectively see all of that all the way through. It just became natural, that in order to really experience the monument and really involve people in the things that the monument is all about, establishing communities that are close to where a lot of the major features are for the rocks and islands was key. With that it was through public meetings literally starting in San Diego and ending up at Crescent city, meetings were held where people were brought in to talk about the aspect of management and the involvement of communities and such. Some of the most active areas for community were actually in the Sonoma and Mendocino and Humboldt County area. For example, there were meetings held down in Bodega Bay; really well attended and talking about what the monument was. A lot of it also talked about what was looked at upon as what you could and could not do, as we've talked about earlier, and then as you got into Mendocino County you were really getting a lot of interest. For example, the town of Point Arena at that particular meeting there must have been close to eighty people there just to find out about the monument and we had another one in Elk which is only twelve miles up the coast, and we had another eighty people there and then another one in Fort Bragg. With that said, you could see that the interest level was running really quite high. When the management plan was signed, and now the beginning of the gateway communities was started, the city of Point Arena was the ultimate first one to want to become a gateway community; Trinidad followed shortly thereafter. Those are the two longest-standing gateways amongst the whole monument itself and really what it does is that it captures what those communities would like to see at the monument right down from what they want to highlight about it to the brochures that are being created to how they feel they could actually take advantage of the monument to market the things that they would like to market. Really, that was it and at first it kind of took some getting used to on a lot of people's levels because you

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have a management plan there that obviously sets the sideboards and the framework. But, it really became this, “Well, what is it that you guys would like to see?” And you almost have to-- well, I would say there was a lot of feeling our way through as far as the process goes. A lot of our way at the beginning was really centered around scientific studies-- birds, primarily-- and then looking at where you could go watch birds, bird counts, some of the key features. The other part, too, about the gateway communities was that you also had the communities and then key partners like the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife and then state parks. We tried then to literally button these lands together, the state parks lands and the BLM lands and such, to create a fabric where people could go and see the different things, experience the different things along the coast. That, then, began to really start formulating what an area could look at and provide for support. That’s kind of how the gateway communities were originally thought and pretty much how they kind of got started. The one up in Point Arena, because I’m most familiar with that and the one in Fort Bragg are the three that I’ve been pretty much involved with, they really wanted to highlight the lighthouse. They wanted to highlight the agricultural community as it was; they wanted to highlight the tie that all three of those play, historic all the way up to things as they are now. We created brochures, did interpretive hikes, all those particular things at the very beginning to show the connection that those things had. Starting about two years ago, it really began to gel and it began to-- and at the same time of course was the legislation that was talking about why this place needed to be set aside and then it became as a community and such it’s like, “How can we let this place be better known to people?”. That was a lot of the focus that Point Arena had and as you move up to Elk the community up there is really focused on the history more than anything else. You have-- actually, if you were to see poster of the California Coastal National Monument a lot of the original posters that came out were actually the rocks and islands off of the community of Elk, that you would see. The rocks and islands were actually used to load ships for logging and to take cargo out because the rocks and islands themselves create enough of a barrier to keep the wave action away from some of these communities. It really allowed for easy historical shipping and so they were called “dog-hole ports” and that’s how these communities thrived. Then Fort Bragg was the same, you had the rocks and islands off the coast, you had the larger community with timber again. The people there really liked the history but were also into the science and seeing what can be done help educate people about the importance of the ocean to the

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people there. Each individual gateway has it's own theme that they like, that the people like and that they want to get out there to everyone. That's what I think makes the gateways very, very special and no two are alike. You go up to Trinidad a lot of Trinidad there is working very closely with the Trinidad Rancheria, the tribe up there; and so it's a whole different feel for the way that gateway is compared to the ones we have our way.

Jennifer Stock: It's really interesting because it is a great way to preserve the coastal history in terms of those that settled along the coast and found its natural resources as a way to live on the land and to start the economy in California, in terms of rich products of timber, and dairy, and butter among other things, I'm sure.

Richard Burns: Yeah, exactly.

Jennifer Stock: In Point Arena coastal access is tough in terms of getting on the water up north. Where are the key access points? Point Arena, people can get on the water at Point Arena Cove?

Richard Burns: That is true, at Point Arena Cove there is the harbor right there and people generally can go out from there through boats right there. It is also-- I surfed a long time ago and have for a few years now, but the fact is I remember as a kid growing up, looking at places to go; I'm actually from Oregon, born and raised; and needless to say everybody always said the best surfing was down in California. What I wasn't totally aware of was that some of the best surfing-- surfing, if you're not counting way out there at Half Moon Bay-- is really right there at Point Arena. A number of people will put in surfboards right there outside of the pier, and they'll paddle out to where the waves are and you will see them if you're on the bluffs up above. Quite a few people will be out there surfing, where some will go out from the Garcia river and come around which to me would be rather a challenge but we've seen people do that as well. That's one easy access to the water, and then another easy access to the water is actually the Garcia river itself. You can come down to it through where some of the land features allow you a path down to where the river is. Miner Hole Road, which is actually a county road but it's gotten very overgrown, people do use that now as a hiking path to actually get out to the Garcia River and then from there they can actually take kayaks on down. Garcia is open for fishing but barbless hooks, so people can go salmon fishing.

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- Jennifer Stock:* Coho?
- Richard Burns:* Coho, yes.
- Jennifer Stock:* Where is the Garcia river, again?
- Richard Burns:* Garcia river is north of Point Arena about not more than 4 miles.
- Jennifer Stock:* Okay, so that's just north. The Gualala river too, actually, there's access on the river; you can get out that way as well?
- Richard Burns:* Correct; yes, you can.
- Jennifer Stock:* I noticed there's a couple outfitters in each of these areas with kayaks and stand-up paddleboards and wonderful ways. I'm curious now what the water levels are in the rivers.
- Richard Burns:* Actually, they're not too bad. They really aren't; I was over there just last week and the Garcia river was actually looking pretty good.
- Jennifer Stock:* Those late rains probably helped quite a bit. You were just mentioning earlier about a big event coming up in July; Discover the Coast. And this is in Point Arena?
- Richard Burns:* This is in Point Arena. Statewide, there are different locations that are having events throughout the year and it began down south at A Whale of a Day down at Point Vicente; that was one of the first ones that was held. Each local community can shape the event as they would like to see, so there was that there which was Whale of a Day, which had education and different vendors and things like that happening at that location. There was just one held over in Monterey, over there I think at Seaside, and that one was centered more around an educational theme; the schools and things had people come in and talk about the different marine resources and such. There is another one that is being held middle of this month, actually, in Trinidad and the key point of that particular celebration is Trinidad Head and Trinidad Head Lighthouse are actually going to be signed over to BLM. That's going to be from the coastguard, so that is a real key feature. In July will be the one in Point Arena and we've been working very closely; the community is just into parties, there's no other way to describe it.
- Jennifer Stock:* Sounds like it!

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- Richard Burns:* Anyway, what we've got crafted for July 19th is, from the dawn up until about 9 AM, Mendocino Coast Audubon Society wants to do birding and have different spotting scopes and things set up over and above the pier up on the bluffs to watch birds. Starting at about 9 o'clock will be themed hikes for geology, botanical, resources, and then cultural resources in and amongst the monument lands. Lunch will be pretty much on your own, noon to one, and then from about 1 o'clock until 2:30 is going to be a big dedication celebration for Discover the Coast. Once again, it's going to involve the Manchester band of Point Arena, they want to do some more dances and celebrations in that regard. The school wants to be involved, a charter school as well as a high school. There's others that would like to have different dances, different band performances, those particular things. Starting at about 3 o'clock is going to be an open house downtown, that's what the city was looking at, where different businesses are going to have different things for people to experience and see. Rebel with a Cause will be shown from about 4:00 to 5:30 and then dinner will pretty much be on your own, but starting about 7 o'clock until the sun goes down there will be a sunset hike out on the public lands.
- Jennifer Stock:* Oh, nice.
- Richard Burns:* It should be a fun day, and a full day, and everybody is really looking forward to it.
- Jennifer Stock:* That's great; are there any other big things? Or anything else you'd like to talk about regarding the California Coastal Monument? I have a few other announcements as we get towards the end here, but what do you think?
- Richard Burns:* I would say the biggest thing that I want to make sure people are aware of is that it really does exist. It's out there; you can see it, and you can experience it. I also wanted to encourage people to come up towards the Point Arena area; if the New York Times looks at this place as being the third best place in the world to go, that's saying something. Now, while it's still fresh, people are still just kind of discovering what it is; the charisma that the place has. To be able to take advantage of that is great, and the best way to take advantage, too, is to hike it. You can literally park in city hall, like I mentioned, and go out right onto the public lands from there and go walk up to the lighthouse and back. Round trip, it's going to take you about seven miles all the way around. The fact of the

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matter is that you're going to be out there along the bluffs, and you're going to be just in awe of all the things that you could experience, see, and do. And then if you're really adventurous you can continue on up to the Garcia river. If the tide is right and low enough you can cross the Garcia river on Manchester State beach all the way up to Irish beach.

Jennifer Stock: Wow; you can walk pretty much the entire coast.

Richard Burns: Yes, you can, for that stretch.

Jennifer Stock: Actually, I want to get in touch with Coastwalk and learn a little bit more about what they do because I know they're big into providing access and educating people about where people can hike along the coast.

Richard Burns: Yes they are, and again they've been a wonderful partner with us as well. We have a number of different NGO's that have been working with us this whole time, and Coastwalk has definitely been a major player, as had Audubon society, California Native Plants society, Sierra club has been also an incredible player there. Then, again, the Land Trust has been just spectacular as well.

Jennifer Stock: Now, one more question, actually, before we get going is: most of-- since it's an entire state of California, the entire coast, and there's three national marine sanctuaries along the coast off of the Channel islands. Does the Coastal Monument go off, around the Channel islands as well?

Richard Burns: Yes, it does.

Jennifer Stock: Does anything in the state of California?

Richard Burns: Actually, I'm sorry. I was thinking of the Farallones. The Channel Islands; I don't believe it goes out that far. But what I think you're leading up to, and not to immediately cut to the chase, but you have different portions of the monument that are overseen by different field offices. As you go from Oregon border down to north of Fort Bragg, MacKerricher state park; that's actually overseen by the Arcada office, and then you head from MacKerricher down to San Francisco, that's me. Then you go south of San Francisco below Carmel, that's actually seen out of the Hollister area. Then you've got Bakersfield overseeing Piedras Blancas and the lighthouse there; then you've got South coast

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overseeing literally from Mexico up to Santa Barbara, I believe. So, yeah, five field officers. You do actually have a manager who oversees the entire stretch of the monument; he's fairly new. He's actually only been with BLM for just a couple of months and he's actually stationed in Monterey.

Jennifer Stock: Right, okay! Well, how about a website for people to learn more and figure out how to get out to some of these places? Is there a website for the California Coastal Monument?

Richard Burns: There is, and if you were to get onto the main BLM website and search for it, you can get there as well. I would say the easiest way would be to just go to the individual field offices where you can get more specifics as to what that office has to offer. For us I think it's www.blm.gov and I think that'll get you there. The easiest way, obviously, is Google and I'm discovering that; that will help you for the locations that you're interested in.

Jennifer Stock: Great; well, Rich, thank you so much for coming in today and talking about the monument. It's been really interesting and the whole time I've just been visualizing all rocks and islands because I just love the stretch of coast and enjoying those special features that make California so special.

Richard Burns: It really does and I think it also to me is a reflection, the whole monument, on the grassroots efforts people can do and what you can succeed at. To me, that's how I look at it.

Jennifer Stock: For folks still tuning in here, you're listening to Ocean Currents and I just have a few more announcements before we wrap up the show; two big ones. If you haven't seen the news yet, very much in line with the California Coastal Monument out in the ocean, the national marine sanctuaries have a proposal in to expand Cordell bank and gulf of the Farallones National Marine sanctuaries all the way up to just north of Point Arena. This is a proposal out there right now, and this is a public comment period, and we're really seeking people to get engaged and participate in this public process. Should this expansion take place, and what's in it, we'd really like people to read up on the documents and come to these hearings. You can go to either cordellbank.noaa.gov or farallones.noaa.gov and on both of the home pages are links to information regarding all the documents and how to comment online. People can also comment by writing a letter to Maria Brown, the Sanctuary superintendent at the Gulf of the Farallones

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National Marine sanctuary. There are also three public hearings; one of them coming up really soon is in Sausalito May 22nd. Again, all of this information is online at farallones.noaa.gov; very exciting time! And that comment period goes until June 30th, 2014 so please take a look at that. This is a pretty big thing for these national marine sanctuaries. We've been learning all about the California Coastal Monument and a lot about the Point Arena area, the Stornetta headlands that were added to the coastal monument this year; one of the only coastal areas that is part of the monument. Most of the monument is rocks and islands that are a little hard to get to so this is a really exciting addition and a wonderful place to explore the coastal wildlife on this amazing stretch of coastline and the Pacific ocean. Thanks again for tuning in today, Ocean Currents is always the first Monday of every month between 1 and 2 PM and I have a podcast if you're interested in catching up on the past shows from the last eight years, come to cordellbank.noaa.gov and you can catch up on lots and lots of topics; different interviews we've had over the years. Thanks for tuning in and have a great afternoon; thanks for tuning in to KWMR.

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