



CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2009

Point Reyes National Seashore Red Barn Classroom

Note: The following meeting notes are an account of discussions at the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Welcome

Advisory Council Chair, Lance Morgan, called the meeting to order at 9:45am

Roll Call – members present

Dan Howard (Sanctuary Superintendent)
Lance Morgan (Council Chair and Conservation)
Ed Smith (Research)
Vic Chow (Education)
Todd Steiner (Conservation Alt.)
George Clyde (Community-at-Large Marin)
Jaime Jahncke (Research Alt.)
Bill McMillon (Education Alt.)
Dayna Matthews (NMFS Law Enforcement)
LT Brittany Steward (US Coast Guard)
Brian Higgins (US Coast Guard)
Kaitlin Graiff (CBNMS SAC coordinator/research specialist)

Review Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved with no changes

Review of June Minutes (Lance Morgan)

The June 3, 2009 meeting minutes were approved with the minor changes put forward by Lance Morgan.

-Lance motions to adopt June minutes as final, Todd approves, Jaime Seconds, all in favor
June minutes accepted as final

Public Comment

No public comment

Manager's Report (Dan Howard)

- i. Budget: no change, 5% cut from last yr. FY10 budget hopefully available in November
- ii. Leadership Conference in Portland, OR. Meeting coincided with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums annual meeting; sanctuary superintendents met with zoo and aquarium directors from around the country to identify areas of common interest. 175 million people a year visit zoos and aquariums making these places perfect venues to distribute information. Additionally, the national marine sanctuary leadership team listened to a panel presentation by Oregon constituents on the marine protected area process in Oregon. A second panel addressed sustainable practices in Oregon.

- iii. Sanctuaries Act reauthorization: Act may be moved a couple of different ways – administratively or congressionally. Driver for reauthorization: to update/strengthen language such as designating new sites. Discussion about adding language for permit fees to Sanctuaries Act reauthorization as a means to offset funding for sanctuary staff and provide funds to foundations. User fees have been suggested before but are not likely based on past history.
- iv. Boundary Expansion: no new developments in the House, it's likely that oil and gas language is stalling movement of the bill.
- v. Advisory Council Charter: up for renewal, Dan is making updates and will provide to SAC for discussion at the SAC retreat; will have further discussion at the December meeting. Final version is due to headquarters on March 1st.
- vi. R/V Fulmar days: same status (16 days for Cordell); "41 footer" (vessel transferred from Channel Islands to Monterey) may free up days for Fulmar use. Boat schedules will be determined after budget is finalized.
- vii. Maritime Seat: Discussion about adding primary maritime seat represented by member of shipping industry, Dan would like to have someone from the fishing community (Bodega) for the fishing seat.
 - Discussion of the benefits for having both shipping and fishing positions. Channel Islands council has commercial fishing, recreational fishing and shipping seats on their SAC. Shipping seat could be valuable for a number of reasons. General member consensus: it would be very beneficial to have both perspectives (fishing and shipping); in time we could add commercial and recreational fishing representatives.

Education Report (Dan Howard for Jenny Stock)

- i. Ocean for Life video and photo presentation
- ii. Cordell Bank 20th Anniversary Celebration: October 24, 2009 (5-9pm) at the Dance Palace Community Center, Pt. Reyes Station

Research Report (Lisa Etherington)

- i. NOAA ship Okeanos Explorer: 7 day cruise collecting multibeam mapping data of the seafloor.
 - Areas deeper than 200m in CBNMS were mapped, almost all of the potential CBNMS expansion area (including Bodega Canyon), a large portion of the deep water areas of the potential expansion area for the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS), and some of the deep water areas of GFNMS as well as areas to the west of the current GFNMS boundary
- ii. NOAA Deep Sea Coral program: allocated \$800,000 for deep sea coral work on the U.S. west coast in 2010.
 - Sanctuaries are working with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and National Center for Coastal Ocean Science to plan the mapping, research and exploration of corals.
 - Sanctuaries' time on the NOAA ship McArthur II will be used towards the deep sea coral effort.
- iii. September Regional Ocean Monitoring Cruise: Successfully sampled all lines in 7 days. Collected data on oceanographic conditions, abundance and distribution of marine mammals, birds and zooplankton.
 - Collaboration with PRBO conservation science and GFNMS will continue in 2010. Sampling will expand past Half Moon Bay and include near-shore sampling (including coverage of state MPAs, which go into effect January 1)
- iv. NOAA Teachers at Sea: local teacher participated on week long July regional ocean monitoring cruise
- v. Sea Education Association (SEA) cruise: Lisa participated on 4 day cruise and discussed partnership of the Sanctuaries Program with SEA.

Longline Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Presentations and Discussion

- i. Background: proposal for exempted shallow set longline permit to fish for swordfish 50 nm offshore
 - Sanctuaries' West Coast Regional office sent letter last year supporting the EFP
 - Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) supports the EFP and has moved the proposal to NMFS
- ii. Presentation 1: US Swordfish Consumption: Best Choices for Sustainable Seafood (prepared by Mark Helvey, Southwest Region NMFS; "presented" by Lance Morgan)
 - The North Pacific swordfish stock is considered healthy
 - EFP is trying to phase out the drift gillnet fishery (DGF) due to high bycatch
 - Purpose of EFP: evaluate new techniques: circle hooks, mackerel bait, line cutters.
 - Facts about longline gear: can be selective, circle hooks and mackerel bait will significantly reduce leatherback/loggerhead catch rates, circle hooks reduce fish bycatch mortalities
 - Example: Hawaii reduced turtle bycatch with gear modifications
 - Does California want local fishermen or foreign fleets to provide its swordfish?
 - NMFS would be in charge of the permits if the EFP is passed
- iii. Presentation 2: The Case Against Longlining in the California EEZ (presented by Todd Steiner, Turtle Island Restoration Network)
 - Longline gear is not selective
 - Some longline target species are on the IUCN red list
 - Estimated 40,000 sea turtles caught each year (not killed) by Pacific pelagic longliners
 - There is a local population of Leatherbacks
 - Commercial longline has never existed in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the EFP would reverse this.
 - Projected bycatch from longline vessel: 60% bycatch, 40% swordfish
 - Widespread opposition to new swordfish fishery
- iv. Discussion:
 - Opinions/questions: What is the basis for EFP? One person fishing? Who is fueling this industry? Is this economically sound? Do we want to be supporting unhealthy fish (high in mercury)? Good to buy local/support US fishers. Gillnet enforcing in Southern CA is hardest to enforce. How many turtle mortalities will be given to expanded fishery in the future?
 - Strong rules are set for the permit.
 - 1 turtle death is contradicting Endangered Species Act (ESA); believes there are 3,000 females nesting as part of this population (Todd Steiner).
 - West Coast Region supported the EFP due to moving towards a more sustainable fishing technique in terms of reducing bycatch from drift gillnets in foreign nations
 - Primary objective of NMS is resource protection, but sanctuaries do support sustainable fishing practices and support local fisheries. The fishery will not occur in the sanctuary.
 - Helpful to know more about the turtle population.
 - Review of resolution
- v. Resolution: Todd presented resolution. Discussion on relevant statements to adopt. Todd clipped the relevant sections for final resolution (Appendix A)

Lance motions for primary seats to accept the EFP resolution, George approves, Vic seconds, all in favor – *EFP Resolution accepted unanimously* (Note: there was no maritime representative present).

Educational Presentation: Project Kaisei (Mary Crowley)

Project Kaisei is a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, established to increase the understanding and the scale of marine debris, its impact on our ocean environment, and how we can introduce solutions for both prevention and clean-up. The sailing vessel Kaisei had just returned from a visit to the north Pacific gyre to investigate the garbage patch. Working with Scripps Institute of Oceanography, information collected during the cruise will help inform how we might clean up the garbage patch. Net sampling was conducted for plastic particulates in the gyre and in CBNMS.

Video presentation; majority of marine debris in the North Pacific Gyre is plastic; water column sampling within CBNMS at surface, 80m and 160m, samples sent to Germany for analysis

Member Reports

- i. Vic Chow: Implementing marine debris project. Bodega grad students are teaching school kids how to quantify and document debris in their schools using a protocol developed by Carol Keiper. The use of this standard technique can be used across schools; goal is to develop a Google map layer of debris.
- ii. Dayna Matthews: All West Coast Sanctuaries have enforcement plans in place. GFNMS and CBNMS will be jointly addressing common issues.
- iii. George Clyde: Invasion of sea lions in Tomales Bay; Tony's Seafood caught gillnetting in Tomales Bay - illegal fish in nets and refrigerators; Tomales Bay herring fishery is still open.
- iv. Edmund Smith: Continues to monitor herring; visited NOAA facility in Alaska
- v. Jaime Jahncke: Submitting proposal for baseline analysis of new MPAs. Two public meetings were held on wave energy in Gualala and Jenner. Sonoma county water agency's next meeting Tuesday (Sept 6th), goal is to identify people to take leads on multiple issues.
- vi. LT Brittany Steward: Attended the Ocean Policy Task Force meeting. Coast Guard station in San Francisco is shooting blanks from helicopters to train for homeland security. Goals: to prevent terrorist boats or malicious individuals boarding boats. Conducting live fire exercises north of Bodega Head, protocol: 30-40 minute wildlife observation period before and after shooting exercise.
- vii. Todd Steiner: Marin County Salmonid Enchantment Plan is out for comments - available on SPAWN website; Coho is having good survival rates: 13%; Seaturtle project will be celebrating 20th anniversary: details at seaturtle.org.
- viii. Lance Morgan: Participated on deep sea coral exploration: findingcoral.com; Attended Ocean Policy Task Force Meeting – many comments on water pollution, marine debris and climate change (overall, fishing was less of an issue). Next steps: Ocean Policy and Marine Spatial Planning guidelines. The Nature Conservancy, Minerals Management Service, NOAA and West Coast Governors Agreement are hosting a large stakeholder meeting regarding marine spatial planning for renewable energy on the West coast, in Seattle on October 6th and 7th.

Climate Change Site Scenario and Regional Working Group (Lance Morgan)

- i. Climate change site scenario is out for review, final document in December. Next steps: develop action items on how sanctuaries will move forward to address climate change
- ii. West coast SAC chair call with Bill Douros: hold quarterly meeting with chairs; discussed reauthorization of the Sanctuaries Act and budget. Majority of call was focused on how to proceed with SAC resolutions on ocean acidification. Proposed to create a West Coast regional acidification focus group comprised of 5 representatives from West Coast sites: 1 education, 1 manager, 1 science, 1 resource protection and 1 SAC chair to devise an action plan that describes what we should be doing about ocean acidification on a regional basis. Possibility to work off of the NOAA national ocean acidification action plan

Letter of Support for Twin Otter Aircraft (Lance Morgan)

- Lance provided funding support letter to members prior to meeting for their review.
- Lance motions to accept Twin Otter letter of support, Todd approves, Ed seconds, all in favor.
Twin Otter support letter accepted unanimously (Appendix B)

Council Business

- i. Future meeting topics: Brian Cheng to talk about climate change site scenario; add law enforcement report to next meeting's agenda; possible joint December meeting with Gulf of Farallones Council
- ii. Retreat: review charter; discuss future meeting topics; discuss joint meeting with Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay SAC.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20pm

Note:

Provided copies of Cordell Bank Condition Report and Cordell Bank: Blue Water Oasis DVD to members

Appendix A

Resolution of the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council on a Longline Exempted Fishing Permit and Potential Impacts to West Coast Sea Turtles

September 24, 2009

WHEREAS, Pacific leatherback sea turtles are listed as endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973 and are also classified as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and North Pacific loggerhead sea turtles are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act with their status under review for uplisting to endangered; and

WHEREAS, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act directs the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary to protect the biodiversity, productivity and aesthetic qualities of the Cordell Bank marine environment by evaluating and addressing adverse impacts from human activities on sanctuary resources and qualities; and

WHEREAS, NMFS has documented that Pacific leatherbacks forage within the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary,

NOW, THEREFORE, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby:

RESOLVES to acknowledge the severe decline of Pacific leatherback and North Pacific loggerhead sea turtle populations and support efforts to recover and preserve these populations; and

FURTHER RESOLVES to urge the Secretary of Commerce and NMFS to deny the swordfish longline exempted fishing permit proposed in the West Coast EEZ.

The council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Appendix B

Dan Howard, Superintendent
Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

re: Base Funding for Aircraft Services

Dear Dan,

The Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) Advisory Council would like to express our appreciation to NOAA leadership for its recent action in stationing a Twin Otter aircraft in Monterey to better serve NOAA and west coast sanctuaries programs.

The West Coast Twin Otter affords the CBNMS and other west coast sanctuaries an effective way to track and survey living marine resources, visitor use and vessel traffic patterns. This information is critical for adequate management of the sanctuary and provides much needed data to support the sanctuaries zonal management efforts.

The Twin Otter aircraft is a cost-effective tool that can be used for enforcing new sanctuary regulations. Although new sanctuary regulations were effective in March 2008, there has only been a minimal increase in enforcement within CBNMS. The Twin Otter aircraft allows enforcement officials to get offshore safely and efficiently, and is a vital tool for helping sanctuary sites meet their resource protection mandates.

Finally, this aircraft is an important conduit helping CBNMS to continue to build effective partnerships. The sanctuary has already increased communication and coordination inside and outside NOAA by working with NOAA Fisheries, the Office of Law Enforcement, the Coast Guard and other federal and state agencies on joint projects using the Twin Otter aircraft. These partnerships are critical for developing regional collaborations that promote more effective sanctuary management and better resource protection.

The CBNMS Advisory Council requests that NOAA provides base funding for Aircraft Services to fully support the West Coast Twin Otter in order to meet the NOAA mandate to protect living resources along the west coast. This includes endangered species, marine mammals and resources in west coast sanctuaries.

In addition, we request that this letter is forwarded to NOAA Administrator, Dr. Jane Lubchenco and RADM Jonathan Bailey.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lance Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lance Morgan
CBNMS Advisory Council Chair