



# CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

## Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

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February 4, 2010  
PRBO Conservation Science, Petaluma CA

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 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:

Lance Morgan (Council Chair and Conservation)  
Todd Steiner (Conservation Alt.)  
George Clyde (Council Vice-Chair and Community-at-Large Marin)  
Ed Smith (Research)  
Jaime Jahncke (Research Alt.)  
Vic Chow (Education)  
Bill McMillon (Education Alt.)  
Brian Johnson (GFNMS deputy superintendent)  
Dan Howard (CBNMS superintendent)  
Kaitlin Graiff (CBNMS SAC coordinator and research specialist)

#### Other staff present:

Michael Carver (CBNMS resource protection and operations coordinator)  
Jennifer Stock (CBNMS Education and Outreach coordinator)

### **Review Agenda**

A second public comment period was added to the agenda after the council's last discussion at 2:15pm.

### **Review of December Minutes**

The December 3, 2009 meeting minutes were approved with no changes  
Lance motions to adopt December minutes as final, Bill approves, Jaime Seconds, all in favor  
*December minutes accepted as final*

### **Manager's Report (Dan Howard)**

- i. Budget: FY10 budget is level funded for base operations. Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) received some additional funds for office expansion. CBNMS also made three additional requests for national program priority (NPP) money – one of the proposals was to provide funding for the Cordell Bank Reef Crest surveys.
- ii. Cordell Bank Office Expansion: in third project phase for design, CBNMS staff will possibly be relocating to PRBO Conservation Science Petaluma office for 6 months.
- iii. West Coast Region (WCR) Ocean Acidification Task Force: Bill Douros is building WCR task force to take lead on ocean acidification. Bill predicts the effort will last 6 months and require 1 meeting and monthly conference calls. Members of the task force will include 5 representatives from West Coast sites: 1 education, 1 manager, 1 science, 1 resource protection and 1 SAC chair.

- iv. CA North Coast Marine Sanctuary Expansion Bill support group: has a Google groups list serve - 'MSEB 2010'. You can sign up for the group and receive updates about the effort to promote the sanctuary expansion bill.

## **CBNMS team reports**

### **Education report (Jennifer Stock)**

- i. Tracking Black-footed Albatross: Requested NPP funds for WCR and Pacific Islands region to build on Black-footed albatross tracking data collected in partnership with the ACES program (Animals in Curriculum Based Ecosystem Studies). The goals are to take a more scientific approach to the existing data and analyze the values of banks and seamounts as hotspots for albatross.
- ii. B-WET: is a grant through the National Marine Sanctuaries (NMS) program. There is a bay area group, but Sonoma County is not involved in the program - Dan and Jenny are meeting with Tom Roth at his request to answer questions about the B-WET program.
- iii. Outreach:
  - Technology in the sanctuary: on January 20<sup>th</sup> CBNMS hosted an evening lecture focused on marine technology used in the sanctuary
  - Annual Bodega Bay Fishermen's Festival: April 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 10am-5pm
  - Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival: April 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>; CBNMS and GFNMS will have booths at both the Bodega Bay and Point Reyes Birding festivals, Jenny put out call for volunteers
  - Cordell Bank Boat Trip: April 26<sup>th</sup> - David Wimpfheimer, Steve Howell, Jennifer Stock and Ken Wilson will be guiding.
- iv. Oakland Museum: moving into final phase for developing exhibits. The gallery is being setup to focus on the "hotspots" of California – and Cordell Bank will be a big piece of this.
- v. Exhibits: working with GFNMS to add exhibits out at the Point Reyes Lighthouse.
- vi. CBNMS website: new site will be launched by March.
- vii. Oral History: Cordell Expeditions oral histories are being posted to the NOAA Voices from the Fishers website (<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/voicesfromthefisheries/index.html>) and Jenny is also submitting audio to the Marin County Library.

### **Research report (Kaitlin Graiff)**

- i. Reef Crest Surveys: will be dedicated to exploring and monitoring the upper reef crest of Cordell Bank, CBNMS staff are awaiting Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) budget decisions to determine the feasibility of completing the planned priority project for the R/V Fulmar this year.
- ii. Deep-sea coral and sponge research: Lisa Etherington attended a planning workshop in Portland, Oregon to discuss research strategies and priority activities for deep sea coral and sponge research on the west coast in 2011-2013. The workshop brought together over 40 representatives from the Federal government, Tribes, the Pacific Fishery Management Council, academia, private industry, and nongovernmental organizations. This workshop is part of the Coral Reef Conservation Program's strategic planning efforts to ensure that deep-sea coral and sponge research activities address management needs, maximize opportunities to utilize regional expertise, and leverage and complement existing regional efforts.
  - Plans continue to be developed for deep sea coral work on the NOAA ship McArthur II for summer 2010. Several days will be dedicated to ROV surveys in deep areas within CBNMS and Bodega Canyon.
- iii. Fish abundance, distribution, size, and species data: are being analyzed from Delta submersible surveys conducted in 2001-2005 to be presented at the Western Groundfish Conference in April.

### **Resource protection (Michael Carver)**

- i. Twin otter aircraft: conducting aerial user surveys in CBNMS and GFNMS
- ii. Cordell Bank Buoy: broke loose in last week's storms, but was recovered with help from the buoy's satellite beacon and staff from Bodega Marine Lab.
- iii. Fluorometer: (collects fluorescence values of chlorophyll a) is being added to the R/V Fulmar
- iv. Marine Debris: removal cruise in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary planned for this fall, Michael will be participating.
- v. Oil Spill Drills: with GFNMS to address oil spill response – such as the use of dispersants

### **Break**

### **Council Business (Kaitlin Graiff)**

- i. New member positions: Fishing, Maritime activities, Sonoma Community at Large – primary and alternate positions are now open. Spread the word. Applications are available on the CBNMS website and/or by contacting Kaitlin
- ii. Call for presentations/presenters to come to future council meetings
- iii. April council meeting: joint with GFNMS SAC, the afternoon session will be discussion of the next steps/actions for the climate change site scenario document.

### **Public Comment**

#### Carol Kieper (Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge)

Enthusiastic about the discussion regarding the potential vessel issues working group; she highlighted John Hildebrand's presentation given at a past Advisory Council meeting regarding vessel traffic noise; she attended a marine mammal conference and attended a talk about acoustic detection and how this is being monitored in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

#### Jackie Dragon (Pacific Environment)

Scripps lab is recommending the need for acoustic monitoring programs. She is also excited about the potential vessel issues working group.

### **Member Reports**

- i. Todd Steiner: Lagunitas Creek Coho Salmon population is nearly extinct as reported in January issue of Science Magazine. Marin County is going through a salmonid enhancement plan. Loss of habitat is the major contributor to population decline. NOAA has proposed a Leatherback sea turtle closure area on the West Coast.
- ii. Vic Chow: Bodega Marine Lab is in the middle of the National Science Foundation GK-12 program, the high school students are in the process of picking out their research topics. The marine debris removal project results have been uploaded into Google maps. (Dan would like to integrate the sanctuary message into the program). The students look at how watersheds influence the sanctuaries.
- iii. George Clyde: KWMR report on elephant seals – recent storms affected population numbers in Point Reyes National Seashore. New substance has been approved for the America's Cup to reduce skin friction on boat hulls (it won't be used commercially).
- iv. Bill McMillon: Had a preliminary meeting with Vic and Jenny regarding the student advisory group (this would be separate of the CBNMS council). Goal by next year to have a pilot project.
- v. Jaime Jahncke: outlined Sonoma County wave energy proposed areas
- vi. Ed Smith: Herring spawn in SF bay has improved; he has been collecting herring and also looking at sediment impacts from dredging; dredging could impact herring eggs; also focusing on herring larval activities.
- vii. Lance Morgan: Administration announced a framework on marine spatial planning – it's trying to establish a national ocean planning policy and have all user groups come together (posted on the CEQ website), the sanctuary program has been involved. Lance and Charlie Wahle are finishing a project that maps all of the human uses across the CA current.

- viii. Brian Johnson: GFNMS education programs are in full swing; Beachwatch data are now available in a query based format online; San Francisco film festival this weekend; GFNMS staff will be attending a white shark conference in Hawaii; GFNMS budget is level funded; Summer completion for the Ocean Climate Center.

## Lunch

### **Presentation: Using seabirds and habitat features to identify 'hotspots' in the California Current** (Jaime Jahncke)

- Marine protected areas are effective management tools
- Ocean policy task force for effective spatial planning
- Purpose of Project:
  - Relate seabird data to habitat features and develop predictive models.
  - Use models to identify marine 'hotspots' throughout the California Current System (CCS).
  - Use results as to inform marine spatial planning in California (MLPA) and the U.S. West Coast.
- Seabirds are good models for identifying biologically important areas
- Hypothesis: Marine birds and mammals aggregate to forage in predictable areas determined by bathymetric and oceanographic features
- Methods:
  - Consolidate seabird and remote sensed data.
  - Develop statistical models that relate seabirds and habitat.
  - Test and validate models.
  - Extrapolate across CCS and identify 'hotspots'.
- There was a lot of available data – but uneven coverage in WA, OR and N. CA
- Model variables included bathymetric and oceanographic metrics
- Modeled a total of 16 seabird abundance based on habitat features determined by bathymetry or oceanography.
- Model Results:
  - Brand's Cormorant: highest aggregations in SF bay and Monterey
  - Brown Pelican: highest abundance in south CA Bight; good habitat in OR, WA and Canada
  - Common Murre: hot spot around San Francisco bay; good habitat north of Vancouver Island
  - Cassin's Auklet: predominately on the edge of shelf in Central CA and high abundance around Channel Islands and north of Vancouver
  - Black-footed Albatross: distribution along the shelf break to the north.
- Summary – for the model, bathymetry is more important than oceanography.
- Hotspot determination using 3 criteria:
  - Abundance: summed standardized abundance of all species (each species contributes equally to product)
  - Importance: smallest set of cells that constituted 25% of the species' top total abundance.
  - Persistence: number of years that a cell was in the top 95% of predicted abundance for a particular species.
    - These were calculated on a seasonal basis, and averaged across all seasons.
- **Hotspots**: Coast of British Columbia, Olympic Coast, Heceta Bank, Point Conception, SF Bay area (three Central CA sanctuaries), Southern CA – Channel Islands
- Hotspots line up with National Marine Sanctuaries but there are conservation gaps.
- Conservation gaps: Cape Mendocino and Heceta Bank; also continental shelf areas in the proposed expansion area of CBNMS and GFNMS
- Next steps: include National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) human threats data into model. Also address threats assessment, outreach, regionalization of models, and climate change.

### **Coast Guard Port Access Route Study (PARS) – San Francisco Vessel Traffic Lanes (Michael Carver)**

- i. CBNMS is drafting a response letter to the United States Coast Guard (USCG) with GFNMS
- ii. USCG is proposing to extend vessel traffic lanes to 40 nautical miles – the northern lane will extend into CBNMS
- iii. The PARS will take 6 months to a year
- iv. The USCG will be setting up a consultation with the sanctuaries for input
- v. The big question is where do vessels go? The USCG will be using AIS data to determine this for the study. Other questions: how will the expanded lanes affect research, fishermen, etc.

### **Discussion: Formation/Goals of Shipping Issues Working Group**

Possible joint working group with GFNMS SAC

- What is the role of the working group? The scope of work would be clearly defined and the working group has at least one member of each (CBNMS and GFNMS) SAC. The working group reports back to each SAC, SAC reviews recommendations, and reports back to sanctuary managers
- Suggestions to the working group goals statement: add a USCG representative, need sanctuary support.
- Similar work on impacts of acoustic noise has been done for the Channel Island National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS).
- Sanctuary standpoint: the issues such as ocean noise in the working group goals statement are identified in the CBNMS condition report; the management plan also has an action item to assess impacts of acoustics to sanctuary resources.
- Group Discussion: develop monitoring in this area to assess acoustics; start broad with the scope of the working group; how do you get this information out for education? Vessel speed is not correlated to noise; could analyze AIS data for a preliminary analysis; identify the noise output from the types of vessels in the area; John Hildebrand said there is the technology to make quieter ships; when a ship switches over to low emissions diesel fuel they have problems with engine stalling and navigation.
- Consider the goals of the working group carefully – address the issues in the management plan and involve the right people.
- Contributing sanctuary staff time would need to be considered, GFNMS could committee staff time in fiscal year 2011.
- The joint CBNMS and GFNMS meeting in April is a great time to talk more about the working group; the working group could fill a NPP request really well.
- Goals of working group document needs to be distributed to the GFNMS SAC.

### **Public Comment**

Carol Kieper: can provide Lance with scientific information about acoustic noise, she thinks that the working group doesn't need to do an assessment, but should be providing recommendations.

Jackie Dragon: there is momentum and a lot of work has been done on vessel issues; determine what the application is for this area. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) 2007 population assessment assigned the potential biological removal of Blue whales as one individual - so the two Blue whales that were hit off the Central CA coast exceed this. The sanctuaries are sentinel sites and are important areas for future ocean health. She is looking forward to April's meeting for more discussion.

Tom Roth: What are the jurisdictional issues? Whose issue is this? Does it belong to the USCG? Will the requirements hold up in court?

- Dan: In the CINMS, the USCG did not have the authority to regulate vessel speed – it was under the jurisdiction of the IMO (International Maritime Organization)
- If there are overlapping areas/issues, then the working group could possibly move towards a National approach.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:50pm**