

# CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

## Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting

FINAL Key Meeting Outcomes

Friday, November 16, 2018

Robert J. Lagomarsino Visitor Center at the Channel Islands National Park Headquarters,  
Ventura, CA 93001

*This summary will be posted [online](#). Audio recordings are available upon request from [lindsay.marks@noaa.gov](mailto:lindsay.marks@noaa.gov).*

### **Administrative Business and Announcements**

Twenty council representatives attended the November meeting representing fourteen voting seats (see Appendix 1). Public attendance included approximately 10 individuals in the morning and 4 in the afternoon. Council chair Phyllis Grifman called the meeting to order and thanked the Channel Islands National Park for hosting the meeting.

### ***Acknowledgments & Roll Call***

Phyllis invited the council members to comment on the fires affecting various areas of California. Tony Knight shared that the Oak Park school district was dealing with the impacts of about 40 students losing their homes, but thankfully no schools were lost. Ethan McKinley, Acting Superintendent of Channel Islands National Park, welcomed the council to the park headquarters, and expressed appreciation for the special partnership between the sanctuary and park. Welcoming remarks were also offered Mark Sandoval, Director of Harbor Operations for Ventura County.

### ***November 16, 2018 Draft Key Outcomes***

The council unanimously voted to approve the draft key outcomes from the September 21, 2018 meeting. Copies of these documents will be posted on the sanctuary's website and are available upon request from [lindsay.marks@noaa.gov](mailto:lindsay.marks@noaa.gov).

### ***Sanctuary Superintendent's Report***

Sanctuary superintendent Chris Mobley opened his remarks by sympathizing with the members of the community who have suffered the impacts of the recent fires. Chris began his report by announcing that the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary had more volunteer hours contributed during the fiscal year 2018 than at any other national marine sanctuary, and thanked the members of the Channel Islands Naturalist Corps for their critical role in that accomplishment. He then highlighted several events and activities related to the sanctuary, including public tours of the *R/V Shearwater* during the Annual Santa Barbara Harbor & Seafood Festival, the deployment of four hydrophones to help track the movement of giant sea bass in the sanctuary, and enhancements being made to the shoreline-based vessel tracking radar systems with visual and infrared cameras. California Sea Grant fellow Lindsay Marks concluded the superintendent's report by providing some updates on resource protection issues, including the conclusion of the 2018 Vessel Speed Reduction incentive program period and the outcomes of several cruises involving sanctuary staff and partners

seeking to locate living wild populations of endangered white abalone in and around the sanctuary.

### **Council Member Brief Announcements**

Council members shared news and announcements about recent events in their sectors. Audio recordings are available upon request from [lindsay.marks@noaa.gov](mailto:lindsay.marks@noaa.gov).

### **Cruise Ship Visits to Northern Channel Islands**

Representatives of Lindblad Expeditions provided a report on two recent visits by the expedition ship *M/V National Geographic Sea Lion* in late October and expressed the company's interest in returning to the Channel Islands for future expeditions. Lindblad representatives included Rich Reid, Expedition Photography Coordinator, and Craig Moylan, Director of Expedition Development (North & Central America). Rich began by sharing that their two trips to the Channel Islands were fantastic and covered a lot of ground. During each trip, the ship visited the islands of Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa and Santa Catalina. He showed photographs of the visitors enjoying recreating in the Sanctuary and park, highlighting some of their operations and how visitors were warned about challenges of getting on and off the island. He also mentioned some of the educational opportunities visitors enjoyed, including tours by members of Channel Islands Restoration, and interpretation of marine and terrestrial environments and wildlife delivered by their own naturalists. He also shared that about half of their passengers were from southern California yet most had never been to the Channel Islands. Rich concluded by describing a few programs of Lindblad that benefit the communities they visit. He highlighted LEX-NG, a fund generated by guest donations that is invested in conservation, education, research, and education. He also described the National Geographic's Early Career Grant Program ([www.nationalgeographic.org/grants/lex-ng-ecg/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/grants/lex-ng-ecg/)), which is funded by guests' donations and matched by Lindblad. Rich also mentioned that the ship educates passengers about Seafood Watch and Santa Monica Seafood, and serves sustainable seafood. Donations are also made directly to local resource management groups such as the Catalina Island Conservancy.

Following Rich's presentation, comments were welcomed from members of the advisory council representing entities involved in authorizing or supporting the trip, including Ken Convery from the Channel Islands National Park Service and Michael Cohen from Channel Islands Adventure Company. Ken began by saying that the park is always looking for ways to promote visitation to the park, particularly by diverse audiences, and sees expedition trips by companies such as Lindblad as a great opportunity. He did not note any issues with the first two of three planned trips by Lindblad to the park. Michael Cohen thanked Rich and Craig for coming to speak to the council, and appreciated Lindblad for respecting the Channel Islands and for their strong conservation messages and efforts to give back to the environments they visit. Michael asked Lindblad to consider contributing directly to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. Rich responded that he saw the Early Careers Grant as being the best way to direct resources to the sanctuary and park by supporting young scientists doing research in the area. He encouraged members of the advisory council to become engaged in the review process for the award.

Questions and comments from other members of the advisory council and sanctuary staff were related to details about the early career scientist funds and how the sanctuary and park could

benefit from that or other National Geographic funding programs. Council members also inquired about how visitors were receiving their information about the Channel Islands. The general sense of the council is that Lindblad did a great job of sharing accurate information about the Channel Islands with their guests, and kept the impacts of their guests minimal to natural resources. Michael Murray thanked Craig Moylan for his transparency and close communications with the sanctuary and park, and also specifically asked about their ships' discharge procedures. Craig responded that discharge in the sanctuary is not an issue because their vessels have holding capacities for up to four days, and they pumped out at San Pedro. Phyllis closed by thanking Craig and Rich for coming to the meeting, and Craig and Rich reciprocated with their appreciation of the invitation.

**Public Comment (#1 of 2)** None.

### **Sanctuary Condition Report**

Dr. Jennifer Brown, a project scientist with ECOS Consulting working for National Marine Sanctuaries, provided highlights and findings from the newly completed sanctuary [Condition Report \(Vol 1\)](#). She began by explaining the purpose of the report, which is to assess the current condition of the site and system. Jenn also described components of the last Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Condition Report from 2009. She outlined the sections of the 2009 report, and described some topics covered in the various sections. She explained the bulk of the report as the state of sanctuary resources and described how rankings were assigned, including the scales used to evaluate status and trends. Jenn then explained how the 2019 Condition Report addresses shortfalls identified in the 2009 report related to the confidence of expert evaluation of status and trends of resources in the sanctuary, and evaluating different habitats. The new report has a new confidence ranking along with the status and trends rankings, and six distinct environments are defined. Experts in these different environments were asked to help compile information about species in these different environments, and a series of workshops were then held with these experts to assign status, trend and confidence ratings. Jenn then compared the ratings for activities and resources in 2009 to ratings in 2016, and highlighted several key findings and important information gaps. She also explained the intent and process for the second volume of the report, which will assess ecosystem services. Jenn mentioned several ways in which the condition report can be used, including: updating our understanding of current conditions and recent trends in pressures and resources; updating communications, education and outreach tools and products; identifying knowledge gaps and research priorities; and identifying key areas to focus on during the upcoming management plan review process. Jenn finished by identifying next steps for improving data availability and visualization. As an example, she highlighted an interactive, user-friendly online interface being developed to improve access to data in the condition report and facilitate dynamically updating information about sanctuary status and trends. Council questions and discussion followed, concentrating on the importance of the findings and exploring potential uses of the report.

### **Sanctuary Management Plan Revision Process**

Michael Murray, deputy superintendent for programs for the sanctuary, provided an overview of the steps expected in 2019 related to the management plan revision process, including the role of public and council input. He began his presentation by walking through a flow chart to describe the steps of the revision process, and highlighted the points at which the advisory council will be

involved. Mike pointed out that no timeline has been developed for the entire revision process yet because it is difficult to predict how long various components of the plan will take. He reminded the council of the work that has already gone into the revision process, including an internal review of how the sanctuary has implemented the 2009 plan and the update of the condition report. Mike then described the steps expected to be taken in 2019, including publishing a notice of intent for the management plan process which solicits input from the public, and his ideas for how public scoping meetings could be organized and executed. He concluded his presentation by saying that the council will be a great resource for helping to digest the feedback and evaluate whether the sanctuary should be taking on given resource protection issues. He also reminded council members that they are advisors whose opinion is respected and appreciated, but that the council is not a regulatory body. Captain David Bacon asked whether the sanctuary designation document, which describes the scope of authority for a given sanctuary, would be under review. Mike responded that unless the need arises, the designation document would not be altered during the management plan review process. Sanctuary superintendent Chris Mobley added that this would be a much larger undertaking, and any proposed changes would need to warrant this additional effort.

Following Mike's presentation, council chair Phyllis Grifman asked council members to consider how they view their role in this process, and posed several discussion questions to stimulate a conversation on this topic. Bob Warner shared that it will be difficult for the council to know its role before knowing what the pressing resource management issues are and changes that need to be considered. Tony Knight responded that the council can start with identifying some known issues, such as marine invasive species, that have been high priority discussion topics for the council. Ken Convery expressed that the council members can contribute to the process by engaging their constituents. Kip Louditt believes that it will be important to have data to support claims about what issues deserve resources and the council can help generate ideas to generate other sources of support to address those issues. Kristen Hislop reiterated that the council members know what resource management issues the sanctuary faces, and said that the council can start by considering how their constituents and other members of the community can generate resources to address those issues. Conversation ensued around how to generate authentic interest and engagement from the public, including marketing and preparing enough direction to solicit feedback while remaining open to new ideas and perspectives. Captain David Bacon suggested that the council might apply the process used to set agenda items through ranking prioritization of issues to which and how resource protection issues are addressed in the management plan. Chris Mobley pointed out that the previous management plan was overly prescriptive and that the intent for the next plan is that it's more of a guiding document that lays out how the sanctuary works with its partners to achieve its management needs. Phyllis concluded the discussion with the thought that we need to establish ground rules for discussions to maintain respectful and productive dialogue. Tony Knight added that hosting public scoping meetings and expecting people to show up is not necessarily the most effective way to solicit engagement. He suggested that a more effective way to engage stakeholders is to go to their community events and meetings.

**Public Comment (# 2 of 2)** A member of the public announced a plant sale hosted by the Channel Islands chapter of the Native Plant Society at the Museum of Ventura County this Saturday, November 17.

## **Working Group Reports**

Council members shared updates on Working Groups and Subcommittee activities and plans:

**Research Activities Panel:** Bob Warner shared that he is glad the condition report is out, and that the Research Activities Panel will be able to use it to take some of the next steps.

**Marketing Subcommittee:** Michael Cohen shared some examples of social media activity about the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary that Santa Barbara Adventure Company has promoted.

**Chumash Community Working Group:** No report, as neither member was present.

**Sanctuary Education Team:** Cliff Rodriguez recommends that we hear from some students at some of advisory council meetings. He also mentioned that in January, the sanctuary will be working on planning a workshop to generate support from divers to look for white abalone in and around the sanctuary.

**Recreational Fishing Working Group:** Captain David Bacon shared that a new chapter of Coastal Conservation Association is being established in Santa Barbara County. The inaugural meeting will be Tuesday from 7 – 9 pm in the community room at the Santa Barbara harbor.

**Commercial Fishing Working Group:** No report as neither member was present.

**Conservation Working Group:** Kristen Hislop shared updates from the conservation working group which met this week, including a booklet educating boaters about how to limit the spread of invasive seaweed from the harbors and an application through National Geographic's Open Explorer to use an ROV to identify hotspots for invasive algae in harbors.

## **Meeting Close Out**

Council chair Phyllis Grifman closed the meeting by reviewing the meeting schedule for 2019, and announced that the next meeting will be held at the Santa Barbara Zoo on January 25, 2019.

**Meeting adjourned.**

**Appendix 1.** Attendance roster for November 16, 2018 council meeting.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Advisory Council Seat</b>	<b>Present</b>
Andrea Mills	Tourism	Yes
<i>Vacant</i>	Tourism - Alternate	-
Ben Pitterle	Non-Consumptive Recreation	Yes
Dr. Tony Knight	Non-Consumptive Recreation - Alternate	Yes
Michael Cohen	Business	Yes
Capt. Kip Louttit	Business - Alternate	Yes
Kristen Hislop	Conservation	Yes
Greg Helms	Conservation - Alternate	No
Stephanie Mutz	Commercial Fishing	No
John Hoadley	Commercial Fishing - Alternate	No
Capt. David Bacon	Recreational Fishing	Yes
Merit McCrea	Recreational Fishing - Alternate	No
<i>Vacant</i>	Education	-
Cliff Rodrigues	Education - Alternate	Yes
Dr. Robert Warner	Research	Yes
Dr. Mark Steele	Research - Alternate	Yes
Phyllis Grifman	Public at Large #1	Yes
Judy Willens	Public at Large #1 - Alternate	Yes
Richard Block	Public at Large #2	No
<i>Vacant</i>	Public at Large #2 - Alternate	-
Luhui Isha Ward	Chumash Community	No
Alicia Cordero	Chumash Community - Alternate	No
Laura McCue	NOAA Fisheries	No
<i>Vacant</i>	NOAA Fisheries - Alternate	-
<i>Vacant</i>	National Park Service	-
Ken Convery	National Park Service - Alternate	Yes
CDR Lushan Hannah	US Coast Guard	No
LCDR Jason Brand	US Coast Guard - Alternate	No
Donna Schroeder	BOEM	No
Jeremy Potter	BOEM - Alternate	No
Walt Schobel	Dept. of Defense	Yes
<i>Vacant</i>	Dept. of Defense - Alternate	-
Dr. Julia Coates	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Yes
John Ugoretz	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife - Alternate	No
Jenn Eckerle	CA Natural Resources Agency	No
Paige Berube	CA Natural Resources Agency - Alternate	No
Dr. Jonna Engel	CA Coastal Commission	No
Jacqueline Phelps	CA Coastal Commission - Alternate	Yes
Errin Briggs	Santa Barbara County	Yes
David Villalobos	Santa Barbara County - Alternate	No
Danielle Tarr	Ventura County	Yes
<i>Vacant</i>	Ventura County - Alternate	-
Chris Mobley	Channel Islands NMS [non-voting]	Yes
Mike Murray	Channel Islands NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	Yes
Paul Michel	Monterey Bay NMS [non-voting]	No
Karen Grimmer	Monterey Bay NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	No
Maria Brown	Greater Farallones NMS [non-voting]	No
Brian Johnson	Greater Farallones NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	No