

CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting

FINAL Key Meeting Outcomes
Friday, July 19, 2019
Museum of Ventura County, Ventura, California

This meeting summary will be reviewed and approved by the advisory council, and then posted online at https://channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/meeting_notes.html. Additionally, audio recordings from the meeting are available upon request to pike.spector@noaa.gov.

Administrative Business and Announcements

Twenty-three representatives attended the July meeting representing 16 voting seats (see Appendix 1). Public attendance included approximately 12 individuals in the morning, and seven in the afternoon. Council Chair Phyllis Grifman called the meeting to order, and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Deputy Superintendent Michael Murray called role.

Recognizing outgoing members

Council Chair Grifman acknowledged the departure of US Coast Guard member CDR Lushan Hannah and alternate CDR Jason Brand. She then welcomed the incoming USCG member CDR Jason Noggle and alternate LCDR Less Crusius (neither were in attendance). Council Chair Grifman then recognized the new CDFW member Carlos Mireles, an environmental scientist with the marine region (also absent).

May 17, 2019 Draft Key Outcomes

The council unanimously voted to approve the key outcomes from the May 17, 2019 meeting. Copies of these documents are available upon request from pike.spector@noaa.gov. They will also be posted on the Sanctuary's website.

Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Chris Mobley began the Superintendent's report by introducing UCSB Bren student sanctuary intern Ms. Laura Ingulsrud and CSU Channel Islands COAST intern Ms. Cassie Rogers. Mobley then announced the arrival of Dr. Peavey-Reeve's newborn son Everett. Mobley finished his introductions with the announcement of the designation of Mallows Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the first sanctuary designation in 20 years.

During the Superintendent's report Mobley passed the microphone to CINMS Outreach Coordinator Shauna Bingham, who introduced a new shark poster for outreach and education purposes. Ms. Bingham announced that the "Protecting Your Channel Islands" brochures would also be updated in the near future. Finally, she made a pitch for the "Get into Your Sanctuary" photo contest, and upcoming sanctuary shoreline cleanups (August and September 2019).

Superintendent Mobley then continued his report with updates from recent giant black seabass tagging efforts and sound trap studies on Santa Barbara Island. He also acknowledged the large turnout for the World Oceans Day celebration on June 8th, which included a booth staffed by Channel Islands Naturalist Corps volunteers. Mobley then recognized CINMS Research Operations Specialist Ryan Freedman's completion of a PhD

from UCSB. Mobley concluded his report with an announcement of recent deep-sea coral garden research in the northern Channel Islands, and the airing of a National Geographic program “Drain the Oceans” episode featuring Maritime Heritage Coordinator Robert Schwemmer and the wreck of the *Winfield Scott*.

Council Member Brief Announcements

Council members shared news and announcements about recent events unrelated to the meeting agenda. Audio recordings are available upon request from pike.spector@noaa.gov.

Guest Presentation: Microplastics in the Coastal Environment (slides available upon request) CSU Channel Islands Assistant Professor Dr. Clare Steele introduced the problem with ocean litter, which is generally concentrated in gyres. Nearly 8 billion tons of plastic have been generated over the last 70 years, with an estimated 150 million tons currently circulating in the ocean. Most of this plastic gets broken into smaller pieces known as microplastic particles (0.001mm – 5mm). Microplastics can be designated into two types: primary - manufactured to be small; microbeads, nurdles/pellets and secondary - fragments of larger items; plastic fragments, tire dust, and microfibers, which can accumulate in the ocean from the air. Dr. Steele noted that it’s not just the size and type of plastic that may be harmful to marine life, but also the additives and absorbed chemicals found in many types of plastics that may pose a threat.

Dr. Steele explained that the prevalence of microplastics in ocean circulation patterns is an emerging ecological catastrophe; nowhere is not impacted by microplastic pollution. Given this persistent problem, Dr. Steele has focused her efforts on California’s coastal ecosystems, specifically sandy beaches. While microplastics are ubiquitous on California’s beaches, the Channel Islands contain relatively low levels. Dr. Steele did note that of the 37 beaches sampled (mostly on the northern Channel Islands) 97% of the samples contained plastic microfibers.

Because different processes act on micro vs macroplastics, Dr. Steele also investigated general marine debris at seven sites across Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Islands. Santa Rosa Island (NW side) accounts for most of the debris by item and weight (mainly lobster traps). While this has become a research focal area, there are no monitoring programs for microplastics in the Southern California Bight. From CALCOFI data: the distribution of microplastics in the Bight is variable. However, microplastics increased by two orders of magnitude between 1972-1987 and 1999-2010 in both numerical and mass concentrations. On a larger scale, over 2220 different species (worldwide) have been found to consume microplastics. Small size makes microplastics indistinguishable from natural prey, and also may be accidentally ingested by filter feeders. As part of her research efforts, Dr. Steele has investigated the effects microplastics may have when ingested by marine invertebrates: physical distress (false satiation, altered feeding, gut perforation, tissue damage) and chemical distress (toxicity, inflammation, impacts to reproduction and growth). While still ongoing, Dr. Steele has found demonstrated impacts at the sub-lethal on individual mortality rather than at population level for many [small] invertebrates. However, because microplastics are usually found in the gut of the animals that consume them, this can cause a problem for the organisms at higher trophic levels.

A lively discussion followed Dr. Steele’s presentation. Many interested groups in California and at the federal level are lobbying for better control of microplastics; locally Dr. Steele noted that CDFW changed regulations to hopefully reduce lobster trap loss. While many council members expressed distress over the rise of microplastics in the marine environment, Dr. Steele cautioned

them against getting too alarmed until more research is conducted. The presentation ended with both Superintendent Chris Mobley and Deputy Superintendent Michael Murray extending an offer to continue collaborating with Dr. Steele, who was very receptive.

Public Comment Period (#1 of 2)

None. However, Education member Cliff Rodrigues requested an update about microplastics from Dr. Steele in a year, if possible.

Guest Presentation: Gray Whale Unusual Mortality Event (slides available upon request)

Ms. Laura McCue (National Marine Fisheries Service member), a fishery biologist from the Office of Protected Resources, West Coast Region, NOAA fisheries, gave an update on the recent gray whale unusual mortality event. For context, Ms. McCue described two populations of gray whales; the eastern north pacific population is considered “recovered”, while the western population is listed as “endangered”. Ms. McCue then defined an unusual mortality event (UME) as “a stranding event that is unexpected, involves a significant die off of any marine mammal population, and demands immediate response”. The official designation of a mortality event as “unusual” is designated by a working group and must meet a series of criteria. The current UME was designated in June 2019 after an elevated number of gray whales were found stranded; 182 from Mexico to Canada since January 2019. Because the current UME is still ongoing, and still under investigation, Ms. McCue spent the rest of her presentation comparing what is currently known to the last most recent UME (1999-2000). There is no current defined cause to this UME; of the full necropsies on 38 stranded animals, many were emaciated. Ms. McCue concluded by saying that the 2019 samples are still be analyzed, but that the official working group thinks this will be a multi-year UME.

Many pointed questions followed Ms. McCue’s presentation. Generally speaking, because the eastern north pacific population is considered “recovered”, a combination of oceanographic stressors affecting the whale’s foraging grounds coupled with the whale’s reaching their carrying capacity might be impacting this UME. However, Ms. McCue acknowledged that only about 10% of impacted whales are found on beaches (the rest sink), so the current data are inconclusive. Resources on how to report stranded/affected marine mammals can be found on the NMFS website.

Guest Presentation: Recreational Fishing Engagement: NOAA Fisheries West Coast (slides available upon request)

Mr. Daniel Studt, a recently hired National Marine Fisheries Service recreational fishing representative for the West Coast Region, outlined the NOAA Fisheries Priorities and Annual Guidance for 2019 and the 2019/20 engagement plan. This includes establishing a visible presence within the recreational fishing community both in person and on-line, and through the dissemination of outreach materials. Part of this strategy is to develop a mutual understanding of the priorities, challenges, and concerns for both recreational fishers and marine resource managers. Finally, Mr. Studt provided an outline for enhancing collaborations with the recreational fishing community through increased recreational fishing opportunities and collaborative research projects. Mr. Studt also highlighted a Memorandum of Agreement signed between NOAA Fisheries, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, and four recreational fishing organizations.

CNIMS Condition Report and Management Plan Revision Process

A. Update on Condition Report completion and roll-out

Deputy Superintendent Michael Murray began by clarifying that the 2019 Condition Report is titled the “2016 Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Condition Report” because the data used in the report are from 2016 and earlier. Murray continued that a new [webstory](#) about the condition report is live on the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries website. Further, pieces of the report have been used to give updates, reports, and presentations. Murray acknowledged Chumash Community seat representative Alicia Cordero’s authorship and contribution to the Chumash Ecosystem Services Assessment section of the Condition Report. Due to its large size, the final compilation of the entire Condition Report is available for download on the CINMS website.

Superintendent Chris Mobley echoed Murray’s comments about the Chumash section of the report, and praised the new Condition Report for both raising the bar and setting the standard for conditions reports within ONMS. Mobley went on to say that he wants the [upcoming] management plan revision process to be collaborative like the process was for developing the Condition Report.

B. Check-in on status and upcoming steps in the revision process

Deputy Superintendent Murray continued by stating that now that the Condition Report is done, CINMS staff can move forward with the management plan revision process. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to begin a public scoping phase is expected to be released in early October. The NOI will contain background info on CINMS, the Condition Report, and what the Management Plan process looks like. It will also contain information about how, where, and when public scoping meetings will take place. Following the release of the NOI and the public scoping comment period, staff will summarize public input, work with the advisory council to identify driving issues to be addressed, develop action plans, request additional input or assistance from existing or new working groups, and build a draft management plan that will go through a second round of public comment before becoming finalized.

Public Comment Period (#2 of 2)

No Comments.

Working Group Reports

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

- *Chumash Community Working Group* No report; Ms. Alicia Cordero was glad to know that the Chumash Ecosystem Summary was well received.
- *Research Activities* No report
- *Marketing Subcommittee* Council Vice Chair and Business seat member Michael Cohen gave an update on CINMS social media “likes” and “shares” on Facebook and Twitter. Mr. Cohen expressed a desire for council members to continue to “like” and “share” CINMS Facebook and Twitter posts whenever possible.
- *Sanctuary Education Team* Education Member Cliff Rodrigues mentioned that UC Davis is setting up a research station in Loreto, Baja California Sur and is currently looking for a suitable site. Rodrigues also mentioned that he wants to work with Shauna Bingham to

incorporate Chumash natural history into CINC presentations to reflect what is written in the Condition Report.

- *Recreational Fishing Working Group* Recreational Fishing Alternate Merit McCrea noted that the Santa Barbara Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association meets in the SB Harbor once a month.
- *Commercial Fishing Working Group* No report.
- *Conservation Working Group* Conservation seat member Kristen Hislop gave a quick update on whales, shipping, and the Vessel Speed Reduction incentive program.

Meeting Close Out

- Council Chair Phyllis Grifman thanked everyone for attending.
- Upcoming advisory council public meetings are scheduled for September 20th at the Santa Barbara Zoo and November 15th at the Channel Islands National Park’s Robert J. Lagomarsino Visitors Center

Meeting adjourned

APPENDIX 1: Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Attendance Roster, July 19, 2019

	Advisory Council Seat	Attendance
Andrea Mills	Tourism	Absent
Morgan Coffey	Tourism - Alternate	Present
Ben Pitterle	Non-Consumptive Recreation	Present
Dr. Tony Knight	Non-Consumptive Recreation - Alternate	Present
Michael Cohen	Business	Present
Capt. Kip Louttit	Business - Alternate	Present
Kristen Hislop	Conservation	Present
Greg Helms	Conservation - Alternate	Present
Stephanie Mutz	Commercial Fishing	Absent
John Hoadley	Commercial Fishing - Alternate	Absent
Capt. David Bacon	Recreational Fishing	Absent
Merit McCrea	Recreational Fishing - Alternate	Present
Cliff Rodrigues	Education	Present
<vacant>	Education - Alternate	
Dr. Robert Warner	Research	Absent
Dr. Mark Steele	Research - Alternate	Present
Phyllis Grifman	Public at Large #1	Present
Judy Willens	Public at Large #1 - Alternate	Present
Richard Block	Public at Large #2	Present
Mary Byrd	Public at Large #2 - Alternate	Present
Luhui Isha Ward	Chumash Community	Absent
Alicia Cordero	Chumash Community - Alternate	Present
Laura McCue	NOAA Fisheries	Present
<vacant>	NOAA Fisheries - Alternate	
<vacant>	National Park Service	

Ken Convery	National Park Service - Alternate	Absent
CDR Jason Noggle	US Coast Guard	Absent
LCDR Less Crusius	US Coast Guard - Alternate	Absent
Donna Schroeder	BOEM	Absent
Jeremy Potter	BOEM - Alternate	Absent
Walt Schobel	Dept. of Defense	Present
Greg Sanders	Dept. of Defense - Alternate	Present
Carlos Mireles	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Absent
John Ugoretz	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife - Alternate	Present
Jenn Eckerle	CA Natural Resources Agency	Absent
Paige Berube	CA Natural Resources Agency – Alternate	Absent
Dr. Jonna Engel	CA Coastal Commission	Present
Jacqueline Phelps	CA Coastal Commission - Alternate	Present
Errin Briggs	Santa Barbara County	Absent
David Villalobos	Santa Barbara County - Alternate	Present
Danielle Tarr	Ventura County	Absent
Mark Sandoval	Ventura County - Alternate	Present
Chris Mobley	Channel Islands NMS [non-voting]	Present
Mike Murray	Channel Islands NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	Present
Paul Michel	Monterey Bay NMS [non-voting]	Absent
Karen Grimmer	Monterey Bay NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	Absent
Maria Brown	Greater Farallones NMS [non-voting]	Absent
Brian Johnson	Greater Farallones NMS - Alternate [non-voting]	Absent

Voting Seats in Attendance: 16