

**GREATER FARALLONES and MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES
ADVISORY COUNCIL (GFNMS & MBNMS)**

**Meeting Highlights
August 15, 2019
Half Moon Bay Yacht Club, Half Moon Bay, CA**

VOTING MEMBERS: MBNMS

Agriculture: Sarah Lopez
AMBAG: Ed Smith
At-Large: absent
At-Large: Gary Hoffmann
At-Large: PJ Webb
Business & Industry: absent
CA Coastal Commission: absent
CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife: Paul Reilly
CA EPA: Julia Dyer
CA Resources Agency: Tova Handelman

CA State Parks: absent
Commercial Fishing: absent
Conservation: Katherine O’Dea
Diving: Brian Nelson
Education: Jon Hill
Harbors: John Haynes
Recreation: Gary Pezzi
Recreational Fishing: Jose Montes
Research: John Hunt
Tourism: Mike Bekker

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: MBNMS

Channel Islands NMS: absent
College: Jacob Winnikoff
Cordell Bank NMS: absent
Elkhorn Slough NERR: Dan Brumbaugh
Greater Farallones NMS: Maria Brown
Monterey Bay NMS: Paul Michel
National Marine Fisheries Service: Steve Lindley
U.S. Coast Guard: LCDR Lee Crusius

Alternates present in audience: MBNMS

Keith Rootsart – Diving
Pamela Neeb Wade – Education
Bart Selby – Recreation
Victoria Dickey – College
Dawn Hayes – MBNMS

VOTING MEMBERS: GFNMS

At-Large Marin: Dominique Richard
At-Large Mendocino/Sonoma: Nancy Trissel
At-Large SF/San Mateo: Joe Fitting
CA Resources Agency: absent
Commercial Fishing: Barbara Emley
Conservation: Bruce Bowser

Maritime Commercial Activities: John Berge
Maritime Recreation Activities: Abby Mohan
National Parks Service: absent
Research: John Largier
U.S. Coast Guard: LCDR Lee Crusius
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: absent

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: GFNMS

Channel Islands NMS: absent
 Cordell Bank NMS: absent
 Greater Farallones NMS: Maria Brown
 Monterey Bay NMS: Paul Michel
 National Marine Fisheries Service: absent
 Youth: absent

Alternates present in audience: GFNMS
 At-Large SF/San Mateo: Kris Lannin Liang
 Commercial Fishing: Sarah Bates
 Conservation: Francesca Koe
 Education: Bibit Traut
 Research: Jaime Jahncke

GFNMS staff and affiliates present: Maria Brown, GFNMS Superintendent; Karen Reyna, GFNMS Resource Protection Coordinator; Max Delaney, GFNMS Permit Coordinator; Jan Roletto, Conservation Science Coordinator; Mary Jane Schramm, GFNMS Media Specialist; Alayne Chappell, GFNMS Affiliate, Advisory Council Coordinator; Sara Hutto, GFNMS Affiliate, Climate Program Coordinator; Wendy Kordesch, GFNMS Affiliate, Geological Oceanographer; Olivia Johnson, GFNMS Affiliate, Administrative Assistant; Julia Royster, on detail to GFNMS, NOAA’s Restoration Center

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, MBNMS Advisory Council Business

MBNMS Chair Brian Nelson called the meeting to order. GFNMS Advisory Council Coordinator Alayne Chappell and MBNMS Vice Chair PJ Webb attended to roll call.

Three new MBNMS Advisory Council members were sworn in by MBNMS Superintendent Paul Michel: Tova Handelman, CA Natural Resources Agency alternate; Victoria Dickey, College alternate; Pamela Need Wade, Education alternate.

APPROVAL OF MBNMS MEETING MINUTES

Approval of June 21, 2019 DRAFT Meeting Minutes
 Mike Bekker introduced a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. Seconded by John Hunt.

MOTION: Passed

(Vote: 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions)

MBNMS Advisory Council Coordinator Nichole Rodriguez gave an update on the current recruitment periods. One round of recruitment is at ONMS Headquarters for final approval while another is open to receive applications through August 30 for At-Large (southern region) alternate, Commercial fishing primary and alternate and Recreational Fishing alternate.

Brian Nelson announced the 2019 Sanctuary Sea Star Brunch hosted by Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. It will be held Sunday, September 22 at the Sanctuary Beach Resort in Marina. For more information and to purchase tickets:

<https://montereybayfoundation.org/news/seastarsbrunch/>

II. MBNMS Superintendent Report

Paul Michel mentioned an article on the mortality of gray whales. MBNMS Research Coordinator Dr. Andrew DeVogelaere co-authored this article. The opinion piece's goal was to inform the public on what is happening and the need to determine the cause. For more information:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/22/opinion/sunday/dead-whales-pacific.html>

MBNMS Agricultural Water Quality Coordinator Pam Krone coordinated two clean up days to remove abandoned plastic in an agricultural field near Elkhorn Slough. Abandoned plastics breakdown and can be carried into watersheds. Staff is pushing for innovations and alternatives to plastics in the agriculture industry.

MBNMS visitor centers started submitting weekly reports because so much is going on there. The Sanctuary Exploration Center has two new exhibits. One being a salmon exhibit featuring the life history within watersheds, land-sea connection and salmon fishing. This exhibit is currently three panels. A fourth panel is coming in partnership with US Forest Service featuring protection for salmon. The other exhibit features sound (natural and manmade) in the sanctuary. MBNMS staff received help from Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI)'s Dr. John Ryan.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's Sea Star Brunch is scheduled for September 22, 10:00-12:00. The foundation is also working on scheduling salon events where individuals can host a small fundraising event at home.

MBARI will be taking MBNMS staff out to Sur Ridge soon. They will be exploring around the seamount and potentially visit the octopus garden out at Davidson Seamount.

II. MBNMS Management Plan Update

Paul Michel gave an update on the status of MBNMS's Management Plan. Staff reached a milestone by submitting the draft management plan, draft environmental assessment and draft proposed rule to ONMS Headquarters for review. The whole package will go through formal clearance and then open up for public comment, which will include several hearings. MBNMS Staff will then have time to respond to those comments. The final documents will hopefully be published by summer 2020.

It was suggested to have a management plan dedicated Advisory Council meeting in January. Paul gave a summary of the input the Advisory Council has given during the management plan review process thus far.

III. Shoreline Fishing/Gear and Threats to Pelicans

Dr. Rebecca Duerr with International Bird Rescue (IBR) gave a presentation on seabirds and recreational fishing gear in MBNMS and GFNMS. She gave an introduction to the formation of IBR and their focus. IBR has year-round wildlife facilities. Within GFNMS and MBNMS, IBR receives birds in need from Sonoma County to southern Monterey County. Many of the birds they treat are injured from recreational fishing hooks and line. Brown Pelican is a species majorly affected. Dr. Duerr discussed the gradual increase in birds they care for annually and the cost to rehabilitate birds. She ended with suggesting a sub-committee be formed to address the issue. For more information:

https://nmsmontereybay.blob.core.windows.net/montereybay-prod/media/sac/2019/190815/190815seabird_fishinggear-ppt.pdf

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

It was asked where most of the injured birds are getting entangled. Dr. Duerr stated that it is a difficult thing to determine since birds can travel while entangled but she believes many injured birds are coming from the main wharf in Santa Cruz.

It was asked what the best practices are for recreational fishermen. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has some recommendations that Dr. Duerr does not necessarily agree with. Cutting birds loose from fishing gear may be best option if there are no others. Paul Reilly mentioned that USFWS recommendations say not to cut the line and to instead pull the bird in and remove the gear if possible.

Jose Montes believes 90% of these incidents can be prevented. Most of the gear mentioned in the presentation was related to shore-based fishing. He said it is much easier to bring a bird in on a boat and remove the gear than it is from shore. He believes educating fishermen is key.

Paul Hobi with Seabird Protection Network gave a presentation on the Network's boater outreach program. He reviewed the goals of the program and the geographic/species focus for the program. The boater outreach program reaches the community through presentations, events, signage, brochures and an E-newsletters. He discussed the Reel in and Recycle partnerships within GFNMS and MBNMS to recycle fishing line. The Seabird Protection Network will continue to spread the message regarding bird entanglement and will continue to build partnerships to recycle fishing line. For more information: https://nmsmontereybay.blob.core.windows.net/montereybay-prod/media/sac/2019/190815/190815seabird_boateroutreach-ppt.pdf

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

It was recognized that the major issue/cause of seabird entanglement is the need for education. It was suggested having published best practices available at wharfs and harbors.

A sub-committee was formed by MBNMS Advisory Council members to review the issue further. Members include: Bart Selby (Chair), Jose Montes, Katherine O'Dea, PJ Webb, Gary Hoffmann Tova Handelman.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Richard James (comment 1)

Affiliation: Coastodian.org

Issue of interest: Tomales Bay treated as a toilet (*items not on agenda*)

Comment Summary: Increased visitation by tourists, fishing along road and homeless/roadside camping is creating a human and canine feces problem in and around Tomales Bay. The 2018 norovirus outbreak among live shellfish consumers highlights the impact.

Richard James (comment 2)

Affiliation: Coastodian.org

Issue of interest: Crab fishing impact on whales and ocean (*items not on agenda*)

Comment Summary: Enormous amounts of buoys, rope, bait jars and other plastic items (plus bits of all of the above) wash ashore each day. This gear is then ground into micro plastic which enters the food chain.

V. GFNMS Coastal Resilience Sediment Plan for Sonoma through San Mateo County

Sara Hutto and Dr. Wendy Kordesch with Greater Farallones Association and Max Delaney with GFNMS gave a presentation on the GFNMS Coastal Resilience Sediment Plan. This plan is one of four regional plans comprising the statewide Sediment Master Plan. They discussed the goals and outcomes of the plan as well as the thirteen strategies covering hardscaping and softscaping. They

discussed regional themes for the North-central coast and how GFNMS binned site-level recommendations for sediment management along the sanctuary coastline. The plan will be used to communicate GFNMS sediment management priorities: 1) to the State and the California Coastal Sediment Management Workgroup (CSMW); 2) to agencies and partners in the region; 3) to provide a road map to help the sanctuary plan and/or coordinate specific future projects within sanctuary boundaries; and 4) to provide a model plan for the newly-formed North-central California Coastal Sediment Coordination Committee to develop their own sediment action plan(s). Lastly, they presented the next steps including the release of the final plan and presenting the plan to the North-central California Coastal Sediment Coordination Committee. For more information: <https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20190815-coastal-resilience-sediment-plan.pdf>

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

It was asked how the California Coastal Commission (CCC) is involved in the process, what their authority is and if they have veto power for agency mandates. The presenters could not speak for CCC. CCC is participating in this process.

VI. West Coast Regional Priorities

Bill Douros, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) West Coast Region Director, presented the West Coast Region (WCR) leadership team priorities and priorities set by ONMS. He focused on seven of these priorities.

Priorities from ONMS:

1. Law Enforcement - Providing enough law enforcement officer coverage for managing and supporting primary sanctuary missions.
2. Whales and Ship Strikes - Working with the shipping industry to reduce ship strikes to whales.
3. Veterans Programs - Involve more U.S. veterans in sanctuary programs.
4. Deep Sea Coral Research - Build upon existing deep-sea coral research.
5. NOAA Small Boat Capitalization Projects - Sanctuaries have been handicapped with a shortage of small day boats to perform essential management tasks.

Priorities from WCR Office:

1. Monterey Bay Management Plan Review - Complete the Management Plan Review process and finalize
2. Wind Farm Planning - Reviewing proposed wind farm projects

Bill also mentioned a few accomplishments for WCR, including:

1. A strong relationship between the Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA sanctuaries. There is continued effort to foster exchange of research for the benefit of each organization.
2. MBNMS staff discovering of the octopus garden. He felt this is an exciting natural history event.
3. GFNMS staff locating a massive dry dock that sank near San Francisco a couple years ago.

VII. GFNMS Advisory Council Business

GFNMS Advisory Council Coordinator Alayne Chappell gave an update on:

1. SAC recruitment. GFNMS AC will begin re-recruiting for the Maritime Commercial Activities alternate seat in September. Alayne will distribute details.
2. The SAC retreat is on Oct. 16 at the Estuary and Ocean Science (EOS) Center in Tiburon, CA. GFNMS is working with EOS and NOAA's San Francisco Bay and Outer Coast Sentinel Site Cooperative to host a Symposium on Connections between the SF Bay and Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary during the afternoon as part of the retreat. SAC members should RSVP as soon as possible.
3. Two GFNMS AC members are invited to ride along on the upcoming ACCESS Partnership (Applied California Current Ecosystem Studies) cruise, on a first come, first serve basis.

APPROVAL OF GFNMS MEETING MINUTES

Approval of May 22, 2019 DRAFT Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Passed

(Vote: 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

VIII. GFNMS Superintendent Report from Maria Brown

Management

Strengthening Biosphere Reserve Partnerships Internationally

The Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve (GGBR) partners met in July and discussed joining the Coastal and Marine Network of Biosphere Reserves - A forum for cooperation and knowledge transfer between distant territories facing common challenges. Members are featured on their website:

<http://www.islandbiosphere.org>

The Dublin Bay Biosphere Reserve is interested in partnering with the GGBR as sister biosphere site which would encourage knowledge sharing and staff visits to each site to learn from each other. A biosphere in Chile is also interested in a peer to peer exchange to learn from each other.

Conservation Science

ACCESS (Applied California Current Ecosystem Studies)

Summer Ecosystem Studies cruise at Cordell Bank and Greater Farallones

Scientists from Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank sanctuaries (CBNMS), Point Blue Conservation Science, and collaborators, completed a mid-upwelling season ACCESS research cruise in July. Good sea conditions allowed the team to complete its planned transects. They observed high levels of phytoplankton, zooplankton and krill in the prey samples. Humpback whales were observed throughout the region and across the shipping lanes. No blue whales were observed during this cruise, which is somewhat uncommon. Lower than average numbers of common murrelets with chicks were observed. Shelley Gordon, a NOAA "Teacher at Sea" from the Oakland School District, joined the science team on this cruise, making her the fifteenth "Teacher at Sea" to join throughout the project's history. Daily updates were posted on the ACCESS Partnership Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/ACCESSoceans/>

*Beach Watch***Monitoring To Understand Long-Term Trends: Beach Watch staff presents to Pomo Indians on coastal monitoring**

At the request of the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians, conservation science staff from Greater Farallones Association presented to the Kashia Tribal Council, sharing with them the online Beach Watch portal and database as an established data management platform. For the past two years, Greater Farallones staff has been working with the tribe's biologists to assist with their "Stewart's Point Coastal Reserve" monitoring program, integrating data management and quality control protocols modeled after Beach Watch. The Greater Farallones Association is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the tribe regarding database sharing and data ownership. This sharing of skills and expertise between tribes, the Greater Farallones Association, and the sanctuary helps to build trust and cooperation, as we collaboratively address resource management information needs to maintain a healthy coastal environment.

*Seafloor Mapping***Sensitive Habitat Mapping Effort Completed by E/V *Nautilus***

Conservation science and operations staff completed a mapping cruise (NA107) on board E/V *Nautilus*. Over 355 square miles were mapped (including areas of Point Arena South, "The Football" and Fanny Shoal) collecting multibeam and backscatter data. The mapping data will be used to identify areas to be targeted for ROV surveys on E/V *Nautilus* in October. Data from these cruises better define the role of rocky substrate in our deep ocean ecosystem and characterize unexplored deep-sea coral reefs. Data will be publicly available on NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information website (<https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/>) in approximately 24 months. Data are also available upon request from Greater Farallones or Ocean Exploration Trust (<https://www.oceanexplorationtrust.org/data-request>)

*Pinnipeds***Northern CA Harbor Seal Population Counts Completed**

Conservation science staff led the harbor seal counts at rookeries and haul-outs along the San Mateo County coastline. Annually, Greater Farallones provides integrated population counts of harbor seals in partnership with staff from the National Park Service, State Parks, Greater Farallones Association, and other NGOs for all of northern California. The sanctuary protects habitats where more than 20% of the state's harbor seal population feeds, gives birth and raise their young. Data from these counts are used to inform management actions, such as timing of permits to reduce or eliminate disturbance to harbor seals and separation of pups from their mothers and identifying sensitive wildlife management zones. Data are provided to NOAA Fisheries and integrated into assessment of the NE Pacific harbor seal population.

Resource Protection**Gray Whale Mortality Event on West Coast**

On May 31, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) declared an "Unusual Mortality Event" (or, UME) concerning the sudden, elevated die-off of gray whales along their entire migration route on the West Coast of North America from Baja Mexico to Alaska. A "UME" is an unexpected stranding event that involves significant die-off of a marine mammal population and demands immediate response to determine the cause. From January 1 through July 18, 189 dead grays have been found in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, the majority in California. Preliminary findings in many

show emaciation, while additional necropsies show vessel strikes in three whales and entanglement in one whale. Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is assisting NMFS with public and media outreach in the region. More information can be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/2019-gray-whale-unusual-mortality-event-along-west-coast>

Kelp Recovery

Kelp Recovery Program activities:

In June, staff from the Greater Farallones Association (GFA) mapped 47 coastal access points along 100 miles of the northern California coastline. These points are adjacent to locations determined to be priority regions for bull kelp restoration and recovery efforts. Data collected during this excursion will inform kelp canopy mapping efforts. Staff met with faculty at the UC Davis Bodega Marine Lab and the CA Department of Fish & Wildlife to discuss research priorities for bull kelp restoration and recovery. Based on conversations with partners the sanctuary's kelp recovery priorities this year are supporting efforts to develop standardized kelp monitoring protocols to determine the location of resilient kelp beds, why those beds are resilient, and to focus restoration efforts in areas that will be most successful. The first steps for developing standardized monitoring protocols are supporting efforts to assess plane surveys against satellite imagery and drone surveys. GFA will be conducting drone surveys above the Sonoma coast kelp beds while GFNMS/MBNMS/WCR will be supporting in-water ecosystem surveys aboard the *R/V Fulmar*.

Linking Concerns for Kelp Forest Health, Management Actions, Restoration

Conservation science staff participated in the State's Red Abalone Fishery Management Planning meeting representing Sanctuary interests. Approximately 60 people attended this first meeting to integrate management strategies, prepare for climate impacts in the kelp forest ecosystem, identify science issues, exchange scientific information, and design a de minimis recreational fishery while kelp forest restoration actions are underway along the Sonoma and Mendocino county coasts. Participants ranged from recreational fishing advocates, CA Department of Fish & Wildlife, Ocean Protection Council, The Nature Conservancy, UC Santa Cruz, and members from the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians tribe.

Protecting Against Oil Spills

Sanctuaries, federal and state offices, oil company stage Bay Area oil spill drill

In June, Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank sanctuaries, NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (ORR), and National Weather Service participated in a San Francisco Bay Area oil spill drill sponsored by BP Shipping, Alaska Tanker Company, and the California Office of Spill Prevention and Response.

A hypothetical container ship and oil tanker "collided" in Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary releasing 60,000 barrels (around 2.5 million gallons) of oil. The Office of Response and Restoration provided scientific support on overall NOAA activities and Environmental Unit actions involving dispersant use, spatial data, a mock press conference, and environmental consequences of different response methods. Responders discussed sensitive resources, exposure pathways, resources of concern for Natural Resource Damage Assessment and developed a sampling plan for ephemeral data collection and other pre-assessment activities.

Climate Change Program

Farallones sanctuary guides development of new climate adaptation course

GFNMS Climate Change Program Coordinator traveled to the USFWS National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia in June to help pilot the first offering of a new four-day climate adaptation course for resource managers. The course, titled "Planning for Climate Change," provides the foundational training critical to integrating climate considerations into resource management, including scenario planning and climate vulnerability assessments. The Farallones Climate Change Program Coordinator participated in a course design team led by NOAA Office of Protected Resources and will be co-instructing the course for sanctuary staff. As a "Center of Collaboration" on climate change, GFNMS works to increase the capacity of sanctuaries and other protected areas to integrate climate change into resource management to ensure long-term viability of natural resources.

*Seabird Protection***Seabird Protection Network partners with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Staff from the GFNMS Seabird Protection Network partnered with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to include a seabird safety message in the 2019 Ocean Sports Recreational and Commercial Fishing Regulations booklet. The message highlighted the importance of seabird safe boating behavior and the locations of Special Closures at the start of the saltwater sport fishing season. The booklet was sent to the CDFW Marine Management News email list and paper copies were distributed at CDFW offices and sport fishing businesses. The annual booklet is widely distributed in the state reaching boaters from inland areas that are difficult to target with outreach. Partnering with state agencies increases the reach of the program and expands recognition of sanctuaries' efforts to protect sensitive wildlife.

Education

GFNMS Visitor Center Manager, Justin Holl, has been on detail to the CBNMS as the Acting Education Coordinator. As Acting CBNMS Education Coordinator, Justin hosted the Pt. Arena Ocean Film Festival for "Get Into Your Sanctuary" this past July. The Film Festival was attended by 150 enthusiastic viewers.

IX. Whales in the Sanctuaries: Threats to Whales and Sanctuary Whale Protection Efforts

Cotton Rockwood with Point Blue Conservation gave a presentation on whale distribution modeling and research on the west coast and decreasing the risk of deadly ship strikes and entanglements in fishing gear. Cotton started with a summary of an annual whale stock assessment by NOAA along with the species of whale and locations they have been recorded struck. He discussed trends in abundance and mortality and related that to where whales are most commonly struck by ships. Cotton presented potential management solutions including vessel speed reduction and having seasonal management areas. For more information:

<https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20190815-whale-conservation.pdf>

There was clarifying discussion regarding the data in Cotton's presentation. It was asked what Cotton's data on whale mortality was based on. He responded it is based on a mechanistic model.

Karen Grimmer, MBNMS Resource Protection Coordinator, gave a presentation on whale entanglements and sanctuary protection efforts. Karen reviewed current west coast whale

entanglement numbers including species of whales, fisheries (crab or gillnet) associated with specific entanglements and the reported entangled whale location. She discussed the work done by the Dungeness Crab Fishery Working Group including the development of a Risk Assessment & Mitigation Program used to assess entanglement risk to humpback and blue whales from fishing gear. Karen discussed gear innovation/testing and results for ropeless crab traps. Lastly, she mentioned the response teams involved in disentangling whales. It is an interagency cooperation coordinated by National Marine Fisheries Service. For more information:

https://montereybay.noaa.gov/media/sac/2019/190815/190815whales_entanglement-ppt.pdf

Jess Morten, Resource Protection Specialist for Channel Islands and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries gave a presentation on vessel strikes to whales and sanctuary protection efforts. She reviewed the recorded strikes of endangered whale species in California between 1986 and 2018. Jess discussed the sanctuary's work to reduce ship strike risk, including reducing co-occurrence of whales and ships by adjusting Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS); establishing seasonal voluntary Whale Advisory and Speed Reduction Zones; establishing an incentive-based Vessel Speed Reduction program; supporting ongoing related research; engaging and working with industry and stakeholders. She also discussed the next steps for addressing whale ships strikes on the west coast including: better understanding the frequency of the issue; increasing awareness of the issue; looking into expanding Areas To Be Avoided and exploring additional TSS adjustments; continuing to explore options for vessel speed reduction policy. For more information:

<https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20190815-blue-whales-and-blue-skies.pdf>

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

It was suggested the timing of fishing seasons be considered during whale season; if whales are early, fishing season should end early. However, data shows whales are consistently arriving earlier each year. It was asked if the shipping lane in the Santa Barbara Channel could be moved to the south side of the Channel Islands. The shipping lane cannot move because there is a Navy missile testing ground on the south side of the Channel Islands.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT for Tomales Bay Native Oyster Restoration

Richard James

Affiliation: Coastodian.org

Issue of interest: Native Oyster augmentation (item on agenda)

Comment Summary: Legacy shellfish gear from late 1800's litters the south Tomales Bay and is now a nursery/habitat center for the Atlantic Oyster Drills. Before placing structures in the bay to help Olympia oyster recruitment, these hundreds of redwood posts need to be removed. These posts also present and hazard to kayakers at certain tide levels.

XI. ACTION ITEM: GFNMS Tomales Bay Native Oyster Restoration Working Group Recommendations

Bibit Traut, Working Group Chair, provided an introduction to the working group. It was convened by the GFNMS SAC in the winter of 2018 to evaluate the information available on Olympic oysters in Tomales Bay (TB) in order to determine whether restoration is needed and if so, what sites should be selected for restoration. One of the overall goals of native oyster restoration would be to create a

more resilient native oyster population. The group had two in person meetings and one webinar meeting.

Bibit addressed written public comments that were submitted: The working group focused on defining “restoration” for the purposes of native oysters in Tomales Bay, noting that “restoration” can look different for different projects; and focused on resiliency of the native oyster population, particularly in light of changing oceanographic conditions in Tomales Bay. The group was also charged with looking at the potential benefit of native oysters as living shorelines.

Bibit did not review the recommendations word for word, as they were provided to SAC members and available to the public; but highlighted key points of the recommendations for a vote.

Bibit recapped the general SAC working group process: the SAC votes to establish a working group; the working group is convened for indeterminate amount of time (generally 1-2 years); the working group agrees upon recommendations that are given to the SAC. Once the SAC adopts the recommendations of the working group, the working group is closed. The SAC recommendations are then forwarded to the sanctuary for consideration. Once the sanctuary has the opportunity to determine which recommendations, if any, they will move forward with, the sanctuary will report back to the SAC on reasoning and final decisions.

The Native Oyster Working Group was not open to the public. The public comment period was offered once the working group recommendations were complete in July 2019. The working group recommendations were planned to be completed in the spring of 2019, and scheduled to be presented at the SAC meeting in Point Reyes on May 22, 2019. However, as a direct result of the federal government furlough in early 2019, the process was delayed, and the recommendations were rescheduled to be presented at the Aug 15 meeting.

Advisory Council Member Discussion:

Council members agreed to add in the following addition provided by George Clyde. It was noted by sanctuary staff that the sanctuary will be required to initiate the appropriate permitting or environmental impact mitigation processes with relevant agencies regardless of whether this is noted in the recommendations, but including it offers clarity for any readers who may not be familiar with the permit requirements of the sanctuary or agencies involved.

Added: To the extent that the pilot sites involve the construction or modification of or otherwise altering the submerged lands of the Sanctuary in any way, the Sanctuary should, as part of its permitting process, require that all incidental consequences of the activity be considered and require appropriate mitigation measures (beyond the expected benefits of the project itself), as appropriate.

Members wondered about the benchmark or end-state vision. What does success look like, and do the stakeholders or ecosystem services guide what success looks like? Bibit answered that while the details of that weren't determined during this working group, the overall goal is to have a resilient and sustainable population. So even if conditions change, you will still have a reservoir of native oysters to support enough recruitment for a resilient population. But the exact numbers have not been determined. Part of the recommendation is for these questions to be answered in more detail.

Karen Reyna commented that regarding the North of Tomasini and Marshall Mile sites, the sanctuary has been in contact with Marin County and Marin County is currently conducting feasibility studies at these two sites. Because the County participated in this working group, they are going to be moving forward with assessments for those sites on a deeper level.

Members recommended using “human-made” as opposed to “man-made” and this was edited on pg. 7 of the recommendations.

It was noted that public comments were considered.

More information:

Presentation: <https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20190815-tomales-bay-native-oyster-working-group-recommendations.pdf>

Working Group recommendations: <https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20190726-native-oyster-restoration-wg-recommendation-package.pdf>

ACTION: To adopt the Tomales Bay Native Oyster Restoration Working Group recommendations and forward to GFNMS, including the working group meeting notes

Vote: 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

MOTION: Passed

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 PM.