

FROM: Paul Michel
TO: MBNMS Advisory Council Members
DATE: February 8, 2016
RE: MBNMS AC Prioritization Exercise Results and Recommendations

After receiving issue prioritization input from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, staff created a series of spreadsheets reflecting the compiled information. The attachments include the collective input of all responses to both exercises 1 and 2, as well as member comments and a summary sheet for both exercises. The information below, as well as contents of the attachments will need to be reviewed prior to the February 19, 2016 meeting in order to have meaningful discussions. **The goal of the agenda items is to decide on a recommended issues list to move forward for consideration and the ways to address them (e.g. working groups, workshops, etc.)**

Exercises 1 & 3 (Scoping comments)

Ranking was looked at in two ways, first by the total score received for each comment and, then by the total number of council members who ranked each. The total rank score was used to sort the recommendations and create the summary sheet.

The summary sheet is color coded with the top actions being green, the bottom shaded red and the middle topics shaded yellow. To the right of the rankings, are the council's recommendations for methods of obtaining more information or providing more input into the process (AC Working Group, AC workshop, Staff workshop or staff to address as well as the recommendation not to address).

The highest scoring green items suggest a high level of recommendation by the advisory council, which we accept as is (this does not necessarily mean we will move forward on all things, but your advice is clear). The same holds true for the lowest ranking (red) items, understanding these are not items of interest to the larger council membership. Please note that some of the top-ranked actions received a 10 or a 9, coupled with a recommendation to take no action (noted as a red number in the raw data spreadsheet) while other members sought action on that topic by MBNMS. Hence, we have shaded those options yellow to allow for a council discussion. Overall staff looked for natural breaks in ranked scores to form the green, yellow and red bins. Where near the margins, staff also evaluated the strength of the council members' recommendations, for instance, for issue 7.2, of the five members ranking it, three scored it an 8 or 9, so we considered that more clearly a green vs. a yellow.

Therefore, we would like the discussion on February 19th to focus on those items in yellow. This does not mean items in the red area are off limits, but only 1 or 2 members ranked those items. To be better able to discuss the yellow (or any items) ALL of the council comments submitted on the scoping topic prioritization (Exercise 3) have been collated and are included for your review. The objective of this discussion is to determine which of the yellow items go green or red and how the AC wants more information or process.

AC input on the 19th will be assessed and organized for April meeting action on the process moving forward (e.g. establish needed working groups, list of topics for workshops and/or future AC meetings)

The yellow items (in descending order of score) for discussion are below with some clarifications or notations:

3.2 Expand south if Chumash Heritage NMS nomination does not progress

2 of the 5 member recommendations were requesting no action (do not address) rather than some action, as the other 3 suggested.

8.2 Address Fishing overall in MBNMS

3 of the 5 member recommendations were requesting no action (do not address) rather than some action, as the other 2 suggested.

2.2 Change definition of dredge spoils in designation document to permit beach nourishment

Current designation document prohibits (absolutely, no permit can be issued) the disposal of dredged material outside of pre-existing, pre-approved offshore disposal sites. We have worked around this over the years by allowing placement of clean sand above mean high water (up on the beach) or for Santa Cruz Harbor, who has to deal with shoaling at the mouth, by moving that material by dredge slurry pipe to mimic an actual flow of sand north to south. Changing the definition to be clear that only clean sand can be disposed in the sanctuary is one way to facilitate permitting of beach nourishment projects.

14.4 Address issues with ocean noise

MBNMS would continue its work with the national NOAA Noise Working Group and facilitate characterization of MBNMS soundscape.

12.4 Reduce high surf warning requirements to High Surf Advisory

Regulatory clarification or change to allow more frequent use of the Maverick's zone and season, given that advisories are more frequent during the open season (Dec-Feb) than warnings. (Recommendation from AC's MPWC subcommittee).

8.1 Address Anchovy Fisheries issue

MBNMS Staff have alerted the state and federal fishery managers of the concern raised during our public scoping and they are aware of the concern and are addressing it. Only issue for MBNMS may be to better understand anchovy abundance and role in healthy ecosystem function.

3.1 Expand north to include Pacifica Exclusion area

Staff will be analyzing this issue and suggest a working group or agenda item to discuss.

13.2 Address runoff from urban landscapes

MBNMS currently has a Water Quality Protection Program, with numerous strategies and activities related to runoff.

4.2 Invest more in citizen science programs

This was the third highest topic in number of public comment.

9.1 Establish a Joint Powers Authority for Advisory Council

MBNMS is open to having a discussion with the advisory council. However, long-term members will remember past discussion on this subject and the reality that establishing such a new authority is not possible given the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Sanctuary Advisory Councils are created by the authority under the NMSA – the MBNMS Management Plan cannot change that.

7.1 Expand signage efforts about wildlife issues

MBNMS works with a variety of partners, who own the land on which these signs would be installed, on signage efforts. Funding and staff time are limiting factors.

12.1 Allow safety training (for MPWCs)

Safety training is allowed (permitted) already for public safety search and rescue agencies. Any volunteer group wanting to request such a permit would be required to meet the same criteria as public search and rescue agencies.

14.3 Develop a marine mammal viewing distance regulation

Advisory council input has been varied on this. See staff recommended changes document (exercise 2 #14.4 and C4). The need to properly address marine mammal/wildlife disturbance was the second most recommended activity by the public during the scoping process.

11.1 Install mooring buoys at popular dive sites

Would require permits for seabed disturbance and frequent maintenance.

Exercise 2 & 4 (Staff recommendations on current management plan)

Council members' recommendations on previously identified staff recommended changes to the management plan are copied in attached sheets in their entirety. Remember, council members were asked to indicate a "Priority," "Keep," or "Do not address" for each staff identified change. Totals for each are located on the right side of the table. Items marked in purple are process items – not actions.

For each item the staff has outlined for updating the management plan, a percentage of the votes for "Priority/Keep" and "Do Not Address" is assigned. Items marked "Priority" and "Keep" have been combined. All of the items with a score of 75% or more (for Priority/Keep) are shaded green, less than 75% as yellow.

There are 5 yellow items, which we would like the advisory council to discuss on February 19th:

9.1 Develop new performance measures for all plans (process item) 71% pro/29% con

NOTE: ONMS Headquarters has identified this as a new requirement of all management plans.

12.2 Incorporate relevant items of the cross-cut outreach plan into the Education & Outreach plan (replacing the Ocean Literacy and Constituent Building Action Plan) 73% pro/27% con

NOTE: MBNMS Education team works closely with CBNMS and GFNMS, so the relevant portions of the Crosscut Outreach Action Plan (which CBNMS and GFNMS included in their new plans) will be included in MBNMS' revised plan.

15.0 Consider new permit requirements for volunteer safety group at Mavericks (as required for agencies) 73% pro/27% con

NOTE: This recommendation came from the MPWC AC Subcommittee.

D2: Modify definition of “motorized aircraft” to include model aircraft and unmanned aircraft (a.k.a. drones) 67% pro/33% con

NOTE: This is an issue the AC has mentioned as needing more information. It is also an element of the wildlife disturbance issue.

C4: Identify in regulation what distance spectators must keep from certain species of whales (blue, fin, humpback, gray and orca) 53% pro/47% con

NOTE: item 14.4 consider a marine mammal approach regulation received 75% pro/25% con

Thank you for reviewing the tables, summaries and AC comments prior to the February 19th meeting to ensure the most informed discussions.

Process to address scoping issues and staff recommended actions:

The advisory council provided valuable input regarding the methods to address both the scoping issues and staff recommended changes - AC Working Group, AC workshop, Staff workshop or staff to address as well as the recommendation not to address. We note council members recommendations strayed away from suggesting AC Working groups and towards single event discussions such as a council or staff lead workshop. While we don't intend to resolve this at the February 19th meeting, we need to know which issues you are interested in addressing first. We are interested in receiving any council feedback on the 19th about how your process recommendations for working groups, workshops, etc., look in aggregate.

Thank you for your time and participation.