

MBNMS Conservation Working Group Statement

December 8, 2014

CWG Members:

Carol Maehr (American Cetacean Society) – Present
 Patricia Matejcek (Sierra Club, Ventana Chapter) – Present
 Harriet Mitteldorf (At-Large) – absent
 Geoff Shester (Oceana) [Chair] – Present
 Steve Shimek (Monterey Coastkeeper) – absent
 Deborah Streeter (Upwellings Ministry) – absent
 Bonnie Van Hise (Citizen At Large) - absent
 Mary Whitney (Fluke Foundation) – present

The Conservation Working Group met on December 3, 2014 at the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. In addition to CWG members the meeting was attended by MBNMS staff Karen Grimmer and Erin Ovalle, and Surfrider representative Tony Tersol. All CWG meetings are open to the public and SAC members are invited to attend. The focus of the CWG meeting was on developing a proposed work plan of topics and activities for 2015. In seeking a more integrated relationship with the SAC, the CWG requests that the CWG work plan be agendaized at the February 2015 meeting as an action item for formal input and approval by the SAC. The following table summarizes topics and potential CWG activities for each topic based on the capacity and interest of active CWG members:

Topic	Proposed CWG Activities
Continued work on Leatherback sea turtle conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 2010 Science & Technology Agreement (Indonesia/US): update respective work plan in collaboration with NMFS to reflect concepts developed at 2013 leatherback summit • Organize/fundraise for 2015 Leatherback Day event (October) • Continue CWG/SEP collaboration on education/outreach (ie. turtle camp) • Continue work on rapid assessment to fill data gaps on international fishery impacts (Indonesia, South China Sea, Philippines, Australia/New Zealand) • Develop concept for Leatherback bronze sculpture
Whale Disentanglement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for WET funding/equipment • Outreach to public & fishermen • Draft Analysis of key entanglement culprits • Develop recommendations for MBNMS
Alternative Energy (wave and/or wind energy) development in the Sanctuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess existing NOAA Policy on wave and wind energy development in the ocean • If appropriate, identify & schedule expert presentations • draft analysis of alternative energy impact (ie. draft white paper) • Develop recommendations for MBNMS
Acoustics/Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for research and national policy updates • Conduct additional work as needed or requested by the SAC • Plan for CWG participation in the management plan update

In addition, there was some interest in the topics of the linkage between desalination and stormwater runoff as well as beach erosion associated with sand mining activities. The CWG may consider these additional focus areas if these are prioritized by the SAC. Furthermore, the CWG hopes to contribute to the upcoming Management Plan Update and seeks guidance from the SAC in how to best engage. In conclusion, the CWG hopes to identify clear focus areas with formal SAC blessing in February 2015 that will be helpful to SAC in achieving its resource protection and conservation goals.