



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

APR - 5 2001

Mr. Stephen B. Scheiblaue
Harbormaster
Monterey City Hall
City of Monterey Harbor
Pacific and Madison Street
Monterey, CA 93940

Dear Steve:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with you and the other members of the California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference (CMANC). I want to thank you for your quick response and suggested language on a statement regarding the relationship between the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and the commercial and recreational fishers. Our frank discussion and exchange of views has led me to a better understanding of your concerns and fears about the upcoming management plan review and any potential ecological reserves in the Monterey Bay area. Let me reiterate that the ports and harbors and fishing industries are important constituents of the MBNMS, and that we take very seriously our obligation to treat these groups fairly and equitably. Similarly, I trust you also came away with a more complete understanding of both how the National Marine Sanctuary System (NMSS) conducts the reviews, and the process we use when reviewing the efficacy of establishing ecological reserves. As I agreed at our meeting, I want to provide to you in writing an explanation of how the Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries (the Alliance) and CMANC will be included in the decisions regarding the establishment of ecological reserves in the Monterey Bay area.

It is important to note that the NMSS has made no decision to establish ecological reserves within the MBNMS. While it is my position that each management plan review will assess whether ecological reserves are appropriate, there is no policy that they must be established or that they be a certain size. As you know, our purpose for assessing the potential need for



ecological reserves is to protect bio-diversity and sensitive ecological features. This decision will be a product of the management plan review and reached through a community-based and science-driven process.

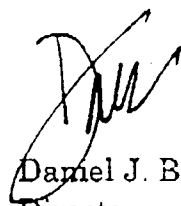
Community-based process means that there will be numerous opportunities for the Alliance and CMANC members to participate and make their views known. In addition to public meetings and hearings, there will be workshops on key issues and I hope that members will be willing to participate in key working groups. In correspondence to Bill Douros, ACSF has outlined a proposal to set up a study group to review no take zones. The proposal involves industry representatives and MBNMS Advisory Council members. I have spoken with Bill Douros, and he will be working directly with ACSF and consulting with the Sanctuary Advisory Council, to explore this proposal.

Science-driven process means that we will be using the best available information to make resource management decisions. This includes not only natural resource data, but socioeconomic information as well. We will be collecting important data on the nature and location of both commercial and recreational fishing and the value of the landings. It is our normal practice to work with the local fishing community and economists to gather information and we will be doing this in the MBNMS as well. It is important to note that one of our objectives in considering any ecological reserve is to minimize the adverse economic impact of restrictions on fishers. As we have done with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) in the late 1990s, and the more recently designated Tortugas Ecological Reserve in the FKNMS, we seek to minimize adverse impacts to the fishers while providing maximum protection for the resource. The Florida Keys fishers who participated in the working group acknowledged the fairness of the process and supported the establishment of the ecological reserve.

In addition, I think that it is important to point out that this type of process already has been successfully applied at the MBNMS in addressing complex water quality issues and has led to outcomes acceptable to most, if not all, stakeholders. The Sanctuary's water quality protection program, including a component on harbors and marinas, is based on this type of stakeholder process. The Agricultural and Rural Lands plan, which took several years to develop jointly with the agricultural community, is another example. I think that the NMSS and the MBNMS already has a proven track record of working with all stakeholders in good faith to develop the best and fairest possible solutions to difficult marine resource management issues. I expect this to be the case with the management plan review as well.

I hope that this letter clarifies the way in which the NMSS intends to work with the harbor and fishing industries through the course of the upcoming Monterey management plan review. Please feel free to call Bill Douros or me with any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Basta
Director
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries