

Research Activity Panel Meeting Summary
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium, RAP Chair

JANUARY 2001 RAP MEETING

Host: Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Location: Seminar Room, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
Friday, January 12, 2001 9am-12pm
Attendance: 13 RAP members and 4 guests

PRESENTATIONS

Current Status and plans for the MBNMS and an overview of the MBNMS Research Program (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Andrew reviewed the mission and general operations of the MBNMS. With a budget of roughly \$1.9 million, some of the MSNMS priorities over the next year will include: a Management Plan review; development of a comprehensive monitoring network (SIMoN); multicultural education; management plans for Highway 1 along the Big Sur coast; undersea cables; and satellite office development in Cambria and Half Moon Bay.

The MBNMS Research Program consists of four components: providing technical information to decision makers; facilitating collaboration between research institutions; developing monitoring programs to assess Sanctuary health; and promoting research on resource management issues. Issues the Research Team will address in the near future are; initiating SIMoN; modeling the physics and biology of central California; using hyperspectral imaging to assess kelp and shallow substrate types; expanding Beach COMBERS to Cambria; and updating the Research Plan as part of the Management Plan review process.

For more information see, <http://bonita.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/Research>

The Nature Conservancy Monitoring Plans (Michael Beck)

Michael summarized the work of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) based at UCSC. It is 50 years old with 3000 employees, and it manages more than 1 million acres. One recent realization was that to maintain diversity they could never buy enough land with private money, so they are creating many different partnerships from Army Corps and Navy to Sanctuaries. Michael said that most people don't realize that TNC is involved in marine conservation. They have a MOU with FKNMS and they are working on a national MOU. TNC also works extensively with ESNERR.

Michael gave examples of different marine conservation efforts, most are closely linked with terrestrial projects. They have a series of Ecoregion Plans- pick areas, conserve them to preserve regional biodiversity. TNC has an extensive and impressive planning process data collection, GIS, algorithms to select straw-man locations, and they review with experts to modify their findings. TNC will no longer work in and on areas that are not priority sites on their maps, so planning maps are a key tool.

Marine conservation plans have to be approved by the State Chapter. California is a strong chapter, and is just starting to consider marine systems. The Nature Conservancy does support research through Mellon Ecosystem Fund; postdoctoral fellowships fund; and smaller pots of money. They also support agencies by lobbying for funds from Congress.

DISCUSSION

The COMPASS Program (George Leonard) Communication Partnership for Science and the Sea

George summarized the COMPASS program, funded by Packard, stating that it is an interface of research and public policy. The goal is sustainable ocean practices; changing the culture of how science is done by 1) enhancing conservation thinking in science, 2) translating academic science in accessible forms, and 3) enhancing communication among groups that do not traditionally interact. COMPASS is a catalyst, facilitator, and enabler to accelerate the rate of solving conservation problems. George described their four main activities:

- 1) Create new venues for discussing and using science information. For example, marine reserve groups were brought together for a workshop to share science among them, and to develop a coordinating committee to determine 10-15 priorities that need to be addressed and to develop strategies to take care of them.
- 2) Training scientists in communication skills with media. For example, a select group of academic scientists are being trained one on one to deal with the media.
- 3) Media outreach related to science. For example, Sea Web set up a media office at the coral reef conference.
- 4) Books on science and conservation. Island Press is a partner in COMPASS and is writing and promoting books on marine conservation.

Their main partners are Island Press (publisher of books on conservation), Sea Web (roughly a PR firm), and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Otter Project Update (Steve Shimek)

Steve reported that they have received a grant of 30 days of ship time to be used near Pt. Conception. Potential use of this money could be to buy a ship, or any other projects that need help.

MBNMS Research Plan (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Andrew updated the status of the Research Plan and asked for comments within 1 week.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Pt. Pinos Update (Chris Harrold)

Chris reported that money has been allocated by the Packard Foundation, and the public announcement is eminent. Sandy Kauffman is organizing a public forum on health and safety of nearshore waters- Feb 28, 6-9pm Pacific Grove; and the next night in Santa Cruz.

Ricketts Lecture and Research Award for Sanctuary Currents 2001 (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Andrew announced that Dr. Michael Foster will receive the science award, and that Dr. Silver was selected to give the Ricketts Lecture.

New SAC Members (Erica Burton/Brady Phillips)

Chris Harrold and Jeff Paduan are now official RAP Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.