UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, California 93940

July 18, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Interested Parties

FROM: Holly Price
Acting Superintendent
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

SUBJECT: Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center Site Feasibility Study Phase II Report

I am pleased to announce the release of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center Site Feasibility Study Phase II Report. A team of expert consultants led by AMS Planning and Research has prepared this report. As you know, the Sanctuary hired AMS to conduct a comparative feasibility study of four potential Visitor Center sites. The primary goal of the study is to provide objective analysis of the Visitor Center concept and provide Sanctuary staff with information on the opportunities and challenges associated with prospective sites. Phase I of the study, completed last spring, included background research, stakeholder interviews, market analysis, visitor demographics and interests, and visitation estimates. Phase II of the study explored more technical aspects of each site, including cultural resource and environmental issues, geotechnical and toxic hazards, architectural constraints and opportunities, and permit requirements.

We encourage you to download a color copy of the report from our website: http://montereybay.noaa.gov/educate/visitorcenter.html. To request a black and white hard copy of the report, please contact the Sanctuary office at (831) 647-4201. The Phase II report appendices, which present the geotechnical, toxic hazards, and cultural resources research in greater detail, are available on the website above.

The Phase II Report includes a ranking of the four sites, and some recommendations from the team of study consultants. A final decision on which site to pursue will be made by the Sanctuary Superintendent and the Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program in late August, using the consultant's reports, recommendations made by our Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC), and public comments.

AMS Planning & Research will present their Phase II Report to the SAC at its next meeting, July 31- August 1st in Santa Cruz. Following the presentation, the SAC may make a recommendation to the Sanctuary Superintendent on a Visitor Center site. There will be opportunity for public comment to the SAC during a special public comment session on

July 30th beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the UCSC Inn and Conference Center, 611 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz. Please note that the SAC will not be hearing public comments during its daytime meetings on July 31 or August 1. If you prefer to submit written comments to the SAC, you may bring them with you to the July 30 public comment session. Alternatively you may comment directly to the Sanctuary Superintendent, William Douros, at 299 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940. Your letter must be received by August 20 in order to be considered in the final decision-making.

If you have any questions about the Phase II Visitor Center Report please contact Jen Jolly at the Sanctuary's Santa Cruz office at (831) 420-1630 or jen.jolly@noaa.gov; or Rachel Saunders at (831) 647-4237, rachel.saunders@noaa.gov. For details on the SAC meeting agenda, please check our website the week of July 28: http://montereybay.noaa.gov/intro/advisory/sacagendas.html. Thank you for your interest in the Sanctuary's future Visitor Center.