

NOAA seeks input on Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary management priorities

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is soliciting public and stakeholder comment on a management plan review for Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, located off the Central California coast. This is the first step in a process that could result in changes in how the sanctuary manages and protects its resources.

All comments must be submitted to NOAA by close of business on October 30, 2015.

The current management plan was completed in 2008. NOAA is initiating a review to evaluate progress toward implementing the goals for the sanctuary and to make changes to the plan and regulations as necessary.

NOAA's preliminary priority topics for the management plan review are: climate change, wildlife disturbance, water quality protection and marine debris. NOAA is also requesting public comment on potential regulatory changes aimed at better protecting the sanctuary's marine resources and maritime heritage assets.

Following the comment period, a draft management plan and environmental impact statement will be prepared through a public process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Once completed, they will be available for additional public comment before final action is taken.

Four public meetings are scheduled for the public and stakeholders to learn more about the management plan and to submit comments. Meetings are scheduled for:

- **Monterey, California:** Thur., Sept. 10, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Monterey Conference Center
- **Santa Cruz, California:** Wed., Sept. 23, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Loudon Nelson Center
- **Half Moon Bay, California:** Wed., Oct. 14, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Half Moon Bay Yacht Club
- **Cambria, California:** Fri, Oct. 23, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Veteran's Memorial Hall

Comments may also be submitted by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Submit electronic comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal using Docket Number NOAA-NOS-2015-0099.
- **Mail:** Paul Michel, Sanctuary Superintendent, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, 99 Pacific Street, Building 455A, Monterey, CA 93940.

For more information on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary management plan proposal visit the sanctuary's website at <http://montereybay.noaa.gov>.

Designated in 1992, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along the central California coast from San Francisco to Cambria and includes pristine beaches, jewel-like tide pools, lush kelp forests, steep canyons and an offshore seamount teeming with life from tiny shrimp to giant blue whales. These habitats harbor an incredible variety of marine life, including 34 species of marine mammals, more than 180 species of seabirds and shorebirds, at least 525 species of fishes, and an abundance of invertebrates and algae.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and our other [social media channels](#).