

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

APRIL 2001 RAP MEETING

Host: Monterey Bay Aquarium
Friday, April 13, 2001 9am-12pm
Attendance: 9 RAP members, 10 guests

PRESENTATIONS

Institutional Update: Monterey Bay Aquarium (Chris Harrold)

The mission of the Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans through live exhibits, education outreach, research & conservation.

2001 Budget: 41 million

Research and Conservation Activities:

SORAC (Sea Otter Research and Conservation)

- Sea Otter research, rehabilitation, and return are the goals of SORAC
- The program also seeks to conduct research that contributes to the long-term conservation of southern sea otters and to improve captive management strategies in case the wild population is lost
- Of the 193 Sea Otters recovered since 1984, 74 were returned to the wild, 55 survived beyond the 2 week critical period, 28 survived beyond 1 year, and 4 pups born in wild to SORAC graduates

TRCC (Tuna Research & Conservation Center)

- The goals of this program are to improve our understanding of ecology & biology of pelagic fishes, and improved fishery management and conservation
- The Monterey Bay Aquarium is also developing and expanding knowledge of captive pelagic fishes for husbandry and display
- Tagging tunas in Atlantic with “pop-up” satellite archival tags has contributed significant information on migration patterns in this fishery

Marine Conservation Policy (a new arena for the Aquarium)

- The goal is to express MBA conservation policy based on the best scientific data possible
- E.g., Seafood Watch- To increase consumer awareness of sustainable seafood resources
- MBA is developing partnership with seafood purveyors (e.g., Whole Foods, Bon Appetite, Chef’s Collaborative) and is developing a sustainable seafood information center

COMPASS (Communication Partnership for Science and the Sea)

- Partners in this program include Sea Web and Island Press
- Their goal is to accelerate the pace of solutions to important marine conservation problems

MBA Outreach includes the Public Forum

Using Oil Dispersants in Spill Response (Ellen Faurot-Daniels)

Since 1992, six area committees have been meeting regularly throughout California to form response plans to authorize mechanical response technology. Currently dispersants are used only with Regional Response Team (RRT) approval. The area committees want to define a process for quicker approval. Pre-approval zones would be in Federal waters only 3-200 mi offshore. Sub committees have been established to gather resource information for ecological risk assessments. New zones could be fully or partially pre-approved. The Area Committees need Resource information. Ellen requested that RAP members contact her via email with suggestions and contacts for resource information. Pelagic water & upper water column information needed the most. Ellen would like to come back to the RAP and give a presentation on future draft recommendations

DISCUSSION

Desalination Plant Issues (Marc Del Piero)

Desalination plants are not the answer to everyone's problems! Long term adverse impacts include damage to the seafloor where the waste comes out (e.g., brine sinks to seafloor, and 40 gallons of fresh water produces 60 gallons of waste). MBNMS policy includes no new discharge into Sanctuary. The Persian Gulf has the most desalination anywhere. Some studies indicate they have impacted regional fisheries. Carmel Dam vs. Desalination plant: in an EIR/EIS alternatives actions are mandated by CEQA and require analysis. For more information: American Desalting Association- Has bibliography of case studies in Persian Gulf & Caribbean & Wateruse Association of the US- Has a Northern California office in Sacramento.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Management Plan Review Process (Brady Phillips)

Brady gave a brief update of the SAC meeting. MBNMS, GFNMS & CBNMS will do their review at the same time. This is a 2-3 year process that started in February. A state of the Sanctuary report will be available to public in September. The public process includes scoping meetings that will begin in October. On a side note: starting in July CDFG will hold public meetings on Marine Protected Areas. Mary Yoklavich is in a group of 8 advisors to the state on the MPA's. Her group would like to come and talk to the RAP and to the Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fishing (Mike Rickett's group). On May 23 there is a meeting on reserves in Inverness (call Ed Ueber for more info).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Marine Reserve Process & Request for GIS layers (Erica Burton)

Erica informed the RAP that the Sanctuary will have an active roll in the State's Marine Reserve process. Erica will send an email requesting any GIS data and/or layers that RAP members might have that would be helpful in the process. She would also like suggestions for habitats or sensitive areas that should be included or omitted for consideration. Mary Yoklavich stated that Nancy Wright at CDF&G has most of the relevant information on GIS.

RAP Website Update (Kelly Newton)

Kelly announced that the summaries from past meetings are now available on the website at: <http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/Intro/advisory/rapma.html>

Introduction of new GFNMS employee (Jan Rolletto)

Jan introduced Natalie Cosentino, the newest GFNMS employee. Natalie will be working on intertidal monitoring and Water Quality.

Pt. Pinos Update (Chris Harrold)

Chris informed the RAP that the City of Pacific Grove filed an objection to the Department of Fish & Game. The objection was reviewed and denied because the code under which the objection was filed was deemed inapplicable. The State says they are the ones responsible for regulating collecting and scientific permits.

MAY 2001 RAP MEETING

Host: California Department of Fish & Game

Friday, May 11, 2001 9am-12pm

Attendance: 12 RAP members, 10 guests

PRESENTATIONS

Institutional Update: California Department of Fish & Game GIS Lab (Nancy Wright)

The Marine Region GIS Lab was started in January 2000. The Lab's objective is to map the nearshore area of California from 60 meters to shore; currently 58 out of 1100 square miles of coastline have been mapped. CDFG has contracted several organizations to do coastal habitat mapping and multi-spectral kelp surveys. The lab is in the process of cataloging ~11,000 kelp slides into GIS. CDFG has mapped the range & distribution of 35 fish species. CDFG services for the coastal community include: nearshore substrate mapping, shallow sub-tidal substrate & bathymetry, kelp monitoring, coastline monitoring for erosion, pollution, or emergencies, and GIS & remote sensing support services.

For more information, go to: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/index.html>

The Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fishing (Holly Price)

The Alliance was created by members of the fishing community to develop recommendations for the upcoming Sanctuary Management Plan Review, and to comment on marine reserve proposals by other organizations like CDFG (for the Marine Life Protection Act process) & NMFS/ Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Areas of interest include effectiveness of marine reserves, bycatch, stock assessments, and observations. The first subcommittee was formed to study reserves. The subcommittee consists of 5 commercial fishermen (one from each of the five harbors in the Sanctuary), 1 recreational fisherman, 1 fish processor, 4 members of SAC (fishing, harbor, conservation, research), and 2 non-voting members (representatives of the Institute of Fisheries Resources and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary). They envision this

subcommittee working with the SAC's Research Activity Panel (RAP) and the Conservation Working Group (CWG) to have meaningful input on issues related to marine zones.

The Marine Life Protection Act Process (Paul Reilly)

The Marine Life Protection Act was established in October of 1999. It is currently at the start of the public process, which may be extended. A Master Plan Team has been assembled with 8 scientists and 6 agency representatives. The primary requirements of MLPA are to develop alternative networks of MPAs, review existing MPAs based on preferred alternatives, and to recommend changes in the existing system. A new classifications system will be used starting in January 2002. The new classifications are: State Marine Reserve- no commercial or recreational fishing, research collecting with permit; State Marine Park- no commercial fishing; State Marine Conservation Area- various restrictions; and State Marine Cultural Preservation Area- Fort Ross. Recommendations will be made for monitoring, management and enforcement, the improvement of enforcement, funding sources, and public and agency input and review. California is divided into 4 regions: Oregon border to Pt. Arena, Pt. Arena to Ano Nuevo, Ano Nuevo to Pt. Conception, and Pt. Conception to Mexico border. Public workshops will begin in July. For more information, go to: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa/index.html>

DISCUSSION

Theme for the 2002 Sanctuary Currents Symposium (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Andrew discussed the 3 possible themes for 2002. Resource Management Issues, Marine Protected Areas, and Technology and Exploration. The general consensus of the RAP was that the MPA's topic will be covered in many other forums, and that Technology and Exploration would be the best theme. Many interesting ideas were discussed favoring both topics. No one mentioned Resource Management Issues. Mario Tamburri volunteered to be the RAP liaison if Technology & Exploration was selected as the theme.

MBNMS web site update (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Andrew gave a brief update of the MBNMS web site. The MBNMS web site is being updated. Please send any comments or suggestions to Andrew.

SAC Update (Chris Harrold)

Chris announced that the SAC annual report is now available. It was decided that a SAC Update would be a standing item on the RAP agenda, and that Chris would give the RAP highlights of the SAC meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Bioregion Assessment Project (Andrew DeVogelaere)

The NOAA Biogeography Program will be coming to California to identify and collect selected relevant biological and physical data in a study area from Pt. Arena to Pt. Arguello. They will start with a literature review and then begin to collect data sets on key species and habitats. The program has impressive GIS tools and has done lots of modeling, especially in coral reefs. For more information go to: <http://biogeo.nos.noaa.gov/descriptions/canms.shtml>

MBCORC Meeting Update (Chris Harrold/Andrew DeVogelaere)

Chris and Andrew summarized the last MBCORC meeting. CORE has published a white paper on the inadequacy of marine science education in K-12. The problem of affordable housing in the Monterey Bay was also discussed. Innovative ways to recruit employees must be developed.

Fleet Numeric Open House Update (Andrew DeVogelaere)

There was an executive session sponsored by MBCORC where Congressman Sam Farr brought up the need for affordable housing can be solved by looking at Fort Ord. Congressman Farr would like to see all of the institutes in the Monterey Bay work together, and to become interconnected. The Open House was an overall success, sharing the capabilities of Fleet Numeric and the entire research community with the public.