



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Service
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

March 20, 2008

Mr. Brian Overfelt
PO Box 731
El Granada, California 94018

Dear Mr. Overfelt:

Thank you for taking the time to convey your concerns at the February 15, 2008 Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting in Half Moon Bay and for submitting a letter to my office. I very much appreciate receiving input from members of the public.

Dredging and dredge disposal is an important issue, and one that we are continuing to address through our management plan review process. As you may be aware, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) completed an intensive public comment effort over the past few years as part of the Joint Management Plan Review (JMPR).

This management plan review is a site-specific planning and management update that describes the objectives, policies, and activities for a sanctuary. Management plans generally outline regulatory goals, describe boundaries, set priorities and performance measures for resource protection, research, and education programs. They also guide the development of future management activities.

As part of this JMPR effort, the MBNMS convened a working group to address concerns related to harbors and dredge disposal. This working group of professionals, which included harbor masters who played an integral role, were able to reach consensus on the contents of the Harbors and Dredge Disposal Action Plan. Because the MBNMS recognized that the needs of harbors have changed since sanctuary designation, the Harbors and Dredge Disposal Action Plan developed a mechanism to accommodate changing dredge disposal needs while continuing to ensure protection of sanctuary resources. This Action Plan outlines necessary steps needed to evaluate a disposal site at the Pillar Point Harbor. This Action Plan was later reviewed and endorsed by the MBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council.

In 2003, as part of this process, the Sanctuary requested the following information from the Pillar Point Harbor:

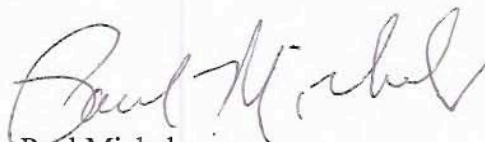
- A project description which identifies the scope of the proposed action
- A map identifying the area proposed for disposal (latitude and longitude)
- A description of the potential alternatives available
- Documentation of the adverse environmental impacts of dredge disposal below Mean High Water (MHW) including any impacts to beach access and recreational water usage (i.e. surfers)
- Recommended actions or direction from other agencies, such as the US Army Corps of Engineers or the Environmental Protection Agency, indicating a need to evaluate the potential designation of a subtidal disposal area.

Although we have had other correspondence with the Pillar Point Harbor, the simple truth is that our office has yet to receive the critical information requested in 2003. This information is essential to evaluating disposal at this location. Once the sanctuary program receives a comprehensive analysis from the harbor, staff will be able to move forward with the evaluation of dredge disposal alternatives at this location as outlined in the Action Plan. Please see the complete Harbors Dredge Disposal Action Plan for more information. It can be found in its entirety on our website at: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/jointplan/drafts/mb_mp.html

At this time, the onus remains on the Pillar Point Harbor to supply the Sanctuary Program with information we requested several years ago. Until we receive this information, there is little my staff can do to assist them with their management challenges.

Thank you again for taking the time to verbalize your concerns. The MBNMS continues to be interested in this issue. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Deirdre Hall by phone at 831-647-4207 or via email at deirdre.hall@noaa.gov. Thank you for your interest in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Sincerely,



Paul Michel
Superintendent

cc: Maria Brown, GFNMS Superintendent
GFNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council
MBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council

