

MBNMS Conservation Working Group Statement
August 14, 2013
CWG Co-Chairs: Geoff Shester and Christine Shepard

CWG Members:

Lauren Dockendorf (Save Our Shores) – present
Carol Maehr (American Cetacean Society) – present
Patricia Matejcek (Sierra Club, Ventana Chapter) – present
Harriet Mitteldorf (At-Large) – absent
Nick Naccari (Native Animal Rescue) – present
Christine Shepard (The Nature Conservancy) [Co-chair] – absent
Geoff Shester (Oceana) [Co-chair] – absent
Steve Shimek (Monterey Coastkeeper) – present
Deborah Streeter (Upwellings Ministry) – present
Anna Weinstein (Audubon California) – absent
Mary Whitney (Fluke Foundation) – present

The Conservation Working Group met on August 7, 2013 at the Moss Landing Harbor District. In addition to CWG members, the meeting was attended by Jack Ellwanger (Pelican Network), Amanda Wallner (Sierra Club California), Tim Maricich (captain of the Donna Kathleen), and Ashley Blacow (Oceana).

The CWG members received an informative presentation on the impacts of seismic testing on marine life by Mr. Michael Jasny from the Natural Resources Defense Council. The CWG found the presentation highly valuable and recommends the SAC receive a presentation on the effects of seismic surveys on marine life at the October SAC meeting.

Earlier in the year the CWG expressed their concerns regarding the deleterious effects seismic surveys may have on marine wildlife. As follow-up to their interest in becoming more involved in addressing this concern, the CWG drafted a proposed resolution for the SAC to consider banning high-energy seismic surveys and managing low-energy geophysical activities within the Monterey Bay Sanctuary and vicinity (Proposed Draft Resolution Attached). The CWG requests the SAC agendaize the resolution for final adoption as an action item at the October meeting. The CWG offers to provide a short presentation on this topic at the October meeting and will provide additional background information in support of the resolution prior to the meeting.

MBNMS Staff Karen Grimmer updated the CWG on the upcoming annual joint meeting of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council with the Gulf of the Farallons National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council on August 21, 2013 in Half Moon Bay.

Karen Grimmer presented to the CWG a summary of the Essential Fish Habitat proposal the Monterey Bay Sanctuary submitted to the Pacific Fishery Management Council in July 2013. The CWG compared the EFH areas in the Sanctuary proposal with areas the CWG had previously identified as key habitat in the region, which indicated that the Sanctuary EFH proposal included a subset of the areas of interest identified by the CWG as proposed bottom

trawl closures. The CWG supports those components of the Sanctuary's proposal within the proposal that were agreed upon by full consensus.

Karen provided an update to the CWG on the status of the Pacific Leatherback Summit occurring in Monterey on October 14-16 which seeks to establish bi-national cooperation between California and Tambrauw-Indonesia (location of nesting beaches) to improve conservation of the endangered Pacific Leatherback sea turtle. Updates included status of invitations distributed to California and Indonesia representatives; attendee RSVPs to date; status of funding five Indonesian representatives to participate in the Summit; and the summit agenda which will include signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between California and Tambrauw-Indonesia, a press conference, and an ocean excursion in Monterey Bay. The update was well received by the CWG and the public attendees who expressed their excitement about this first ever leatherback summit.