

Sanctuary Education Panel (SEP) Meeting Notes - Wed., March 26, 2014

Attendees: Simona Bartl, Moss Landing Marine Lab, SEP Chair
Amity Sandage, CREEC Network
Suzanne Hebert, Seymour Center (by phone)
Virginia Guhin, Elkhorn Slough Foundation
Dave Feliz, Elkhorn Reserve
Tucker Hirsch, NatGeo Education and curriculum developer/writer
Amity Wood, Camp SEA Lab
Liz Love, NOAA/Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
John Trapani, retired teacher
Amanda A, Elkhorn Slough Reserve Education Coordinator
Pat Clark-Gray, CA State Parks Monterey District

Agenda items:

- Future meeting dates
- Marine Debris update
- Additional item – SAC charter: Sanctuary Advisory Council is rewriting their charter, how we do things, committee work, so we may be able to nail down a more specific task-oriented assignment for the SEP.

Discussion:

- Liz: Sanctuary is missing an education staff person (only Liz part-time) so if we keep realistic about our goals that would be good.
- Everyone likes an annual meeting to outline the educational goals for the year with a broad audience and Paul Michel presenting. And then a smaller group could come up with a task and outcome related to the goals.
- One idea for next year, we pull together 4-5 great marine debris activities to feature/offer at the sanctuary currents symposium in a workshop. Give the teachers a take-home kit of activities to do with their students.
- Bigger picture from Liz: Management team just met for the Sanctuary so Liz gave overview of the restructuring. No education coordinator coming any time soon. Sanctuary has lost 1/3 of staff and 1/3 of budget over the last 7 years. New hiring will happen very slowly. Lisa Uttal was involved with SEP because she is full time. Liz had to prioritize meetings with her part time status. Lisa is now asked to focus more on the SEC so Liz is being asked to step back in as Sanctuary rep on SEP. Some history: there was no education coordinator in the past, but there was money for education. SEP was very helpful in advising at that time. That was how it began. Time for reevaluation of the working groups along with the charter. Can we rethink why this group gets together? It should have benefits to SEP members as well as the Sanctuary.
- Question: If the SEP was not meeting, how would the SAC Education Seat get input from the education community? Answer: MBEE provides school and teacher perspective very solidly and can communicate this to SAC Ed Seat. Should SEP focus on public programming? MBEE does struggle to address it all and maybe the two groups could complement each other. History again: SEP was more about networking, sharing what we do, best practices and training. Is this still needed?

- Basic need: SEP should be valuable to the participants (and their agency) and the sanctuary
- SEP participants' viewpoints: SEP people have different niches so it does not work particularly well as a consortium/support group. The focus should be on helping the sanctuary and staying connected with the sanctuary, while learning some ways for the SEP members to make their programs better.
- If the above is true, then is the frequency of meetings appropriate? Maybe less frequent. The once a year report is important. SEP members want to be up to date on the sanctuary. Then members can take what they understand about Sanctuary priorities and pass along the information to MBEE and others can help address those needs or disseminate the information to educators.
- SAC meetings—Simona would like to know ahead of SAC meetings any burning topics, areas to address in the SAC meetings on behalf of our constituency. Is the role of SEP to just help Simona be better prepared for each SAC meeting and then report back on the SAC to the SEP? Maybe it does not have to be a one to one meeting of SEP and SAC. Proposal: one meeting for September overview with Paul Michel/priorities, then two others meetings a year with overviews of SAC meetings. The rest is done over email. Before the meetings, give people heads up on the topics so people can bring resources/information to share on that topic. If Simona is more proactive about what is coming up in the SAC, after a topic is identified by the Sanctuary, then she can ask at the meeting for feedback. And the organizations that are best linked to the topic can shine/be featured.
- More input from members: Can we agree that we are here because of our interest in understanding the sanctuary and serving the sanctuary so that SEP members have those priorities in mind as we network and work within our programs? Liz: "Is there consensus on this?" Yes, but people are also interested in being informed somewhat about what the sanctuary is doing beyond education, for example resource protection and research. Here's the issue: Simona notes that this is what happens currently at the SAC meetings so we can't ask those people to present their same presentation again for the SEP. Liz thinks the presentations could be by different people and then give more an overview of the information.
- Symposium feedback: Might want to do a Sanctuary FYI day en masse with a report out on all areas of sanctuary work. Simona notes that the annual day with Paul Michel could serve this purpose. A 2 hour meeting could include highlights of each priority area (Ed, Research, Resource Protection) for the sanctuary.

Simona confirms timing of meetings:

- Next meeting: May 28 after the MBEE meeting, to include a recap of the Currents Symposium.
- September will be the annual State of the Sanctuary meeting.
- Meet two more times (January and April 2015) during the year (one with a research expert and one with protection expert) tagged onto two MBEE meetings and including a debrief on the last few SAC meetings.
 - Idea: would be nice to also include info on what other sanctuaries are doing in education.

- John offered suggestion to draw on topics/presenters from the SEC training for volunteers (intro to intertidal, Davidson Seamount, diving into the deep, geology with Chad King, leatherback turtle research, seasons in the sanctuary, climate change with Sarah Nelson, John Pierce for LiMPETS, and lots more brought to the docents) to enrich the SEP meetings.

SAC meeting update - Simona

(ALL is online, including presentations - <http://montereybay.noaa.gov/sac/sacma.html>):

- Mayor of Pacific Grove did introduction. Reopened barometric chamber and they have a new ordinance for the protection of harbor seals.
- Superintendent's report: Talked about sea start wasting disease. Two recent events: water quality event in Watsonville and Whalfest in Monterey. Showed book "Emotion for the Ocean" by Chet Forest available on Amazon. Council Coordinator doing coffee talks with all SAC members to get feedback. And we are losing her (Sara Hutto) to new baby ☺
- SEP and CWG presented on October Summit on Leatherback Sea Turtle Day and the reaction to motion for support was frustrating.
- Report on underwater noise research—main point it is on the increase! How does this affect wildlife?
- Motion for letter of support for legislation (AB 1603) to provide funding for outdoor education – PASSED.
- Update on the MLPA Central Coast Monitoring Effort
- Established charter revision subcommittee
- Vessel traffic analysis and report on recommendations established in 2000. Most traffic is following the rules.

MBNMS/Liz's Report:

- Beachcomber report—they collect tar samples. Good news is 89% of tar on beaches is natural seepage from Southern Big Sur coast.
- Report on drones/automated flying vessels (kits available). Have been a number of reported incidents of them flying out over ocean and interfering with wildlife. Need outreach about overflight zones that exist and disallow flying low (under 1000 ft), so these drones are not allowed to fly over open areas (unless specifically allowed). Hard to track down the operator. Campaign needed. Report incidents to NOAA Office of Enforcement. Liz will be distributing info in the next month on this topic with contact info similar to what they did during the whale disturbances.
- West Coast Superintendent has backed idea of bringing the Whale Trail program here. Shows where people can go on land to see cetaceans and marine mammals from points on land. MBNMS will host 3 events at: Gulf of Farallones, Monterey Maritime Museum, and SEC in Santa Cruz. Also will put up a sign at Pt Reyes and at Pt Lobos (possibly) and Lighthouse Field. Some concern expressed about some of these areas being at capacity for visitors (Pt Lobos specifically). Also some concern about the quality/content of the signs.

Member Announcements:

From Pat

- Making a model of Whalers Cove. Event on May 10. Purpose: for divers to see best place to dive but will also be used for education programs.
- Celebrating 150 yr. anniversary of State Parks. Amazing patch was shared. Monterey County Fair will have a State Parks Kids Day and free display area. Table area available for partners and handouts. Programs will have middle page for publicity and special ribbons/categories. Fair dates are August 28-Sept 2. Maybe include Marine Debris activity from Liz.
- Elkhorn Slough Foundation is partnering with state parks to put up interpretive signage at Moss Landing State Beach to inform about the slough, marine debris, and snowy plover.

From Virginia:

- Teacher workshops are finishing up
- Snowy Plover Mud Stomp on April 5 at Moss Landing Wildlife Area.
- April 26 talk on Snowy Plovers
- School programs are packed, great teaching lab up through junior colleges
- PD workshops: GIS series, Communicating Climate Change (with CCC case study and expert panel feedback on direction for outreach campaign). Plan to take to national level. “Sensitive species” series is also coming, but weather is not cooperating.

From Amanda:

- There is a new Outreach and Education Coordinator for the Marine Protected Areas.
- There is an MPA collaboration group forming for law enforcement, education.
- OSPRS (Office of Spill and Prevention) being expanded to land.
- California Coastal National Monument—retired staff member interested in expanding educational opportunities.

From Simona:

- MLML having open house May 3 and 4 all day.

From Suzanne:

- Email coming about this: Educator workshop on the 26th. GEMS LHS education team introducing Ocean Sciences Sequences workshop

From Amity Wood:

- Running at capacity right now. Camp SEA Lab 80% over where they were this time last year based on parents' independent booking online. This means either parents are planning ahead or CSL may be ready to grow their program. Hoping to grow to fill demand/needs as they come. Things are going great. To grow, need to find a permanent site to fit with 5-10 year plan. Note from Pat: Fort Ord conversion of a site could be rented for day use venue for camps. Residential program is their niche so that will be their focus.