

VESSEL STRIKES AND ACOUSTIC IMPACTS



GULF OF THE FARALLONES AND CORDELL BANK NMS

Report of a Joint Working Group of the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries Advisory Councils

June 2012





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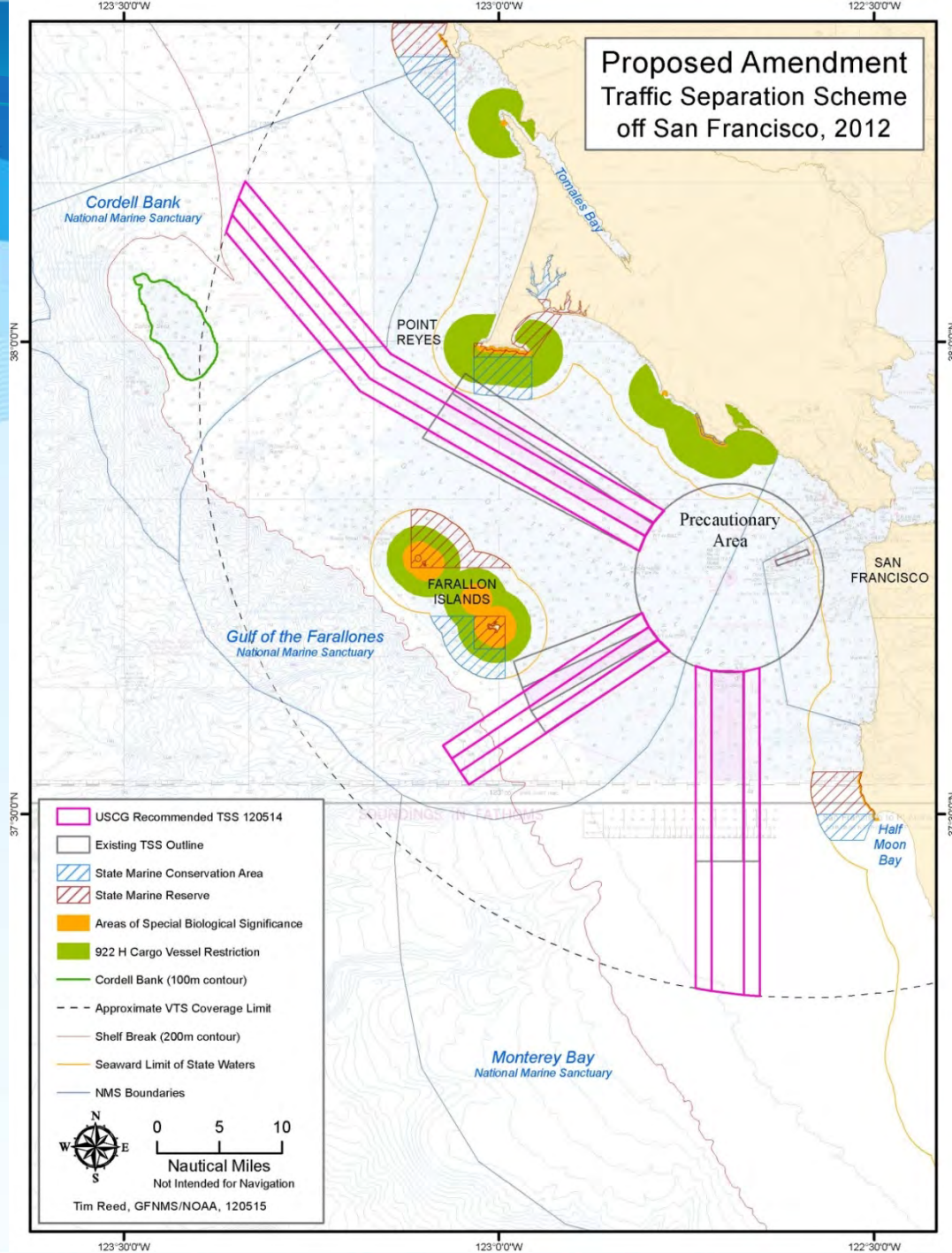
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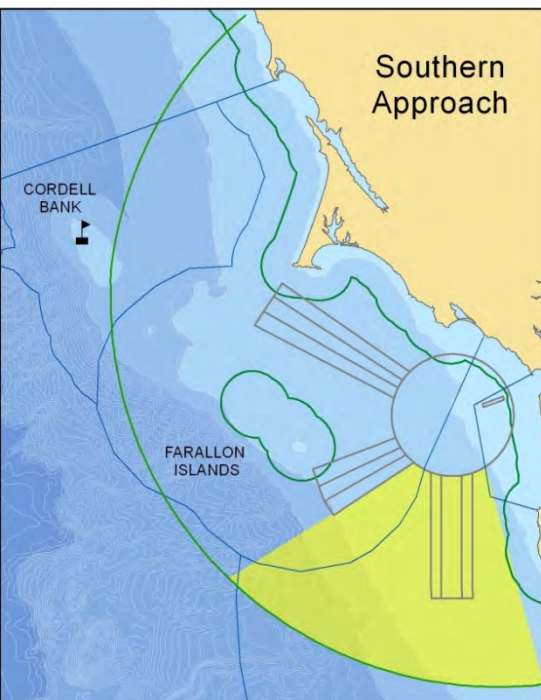
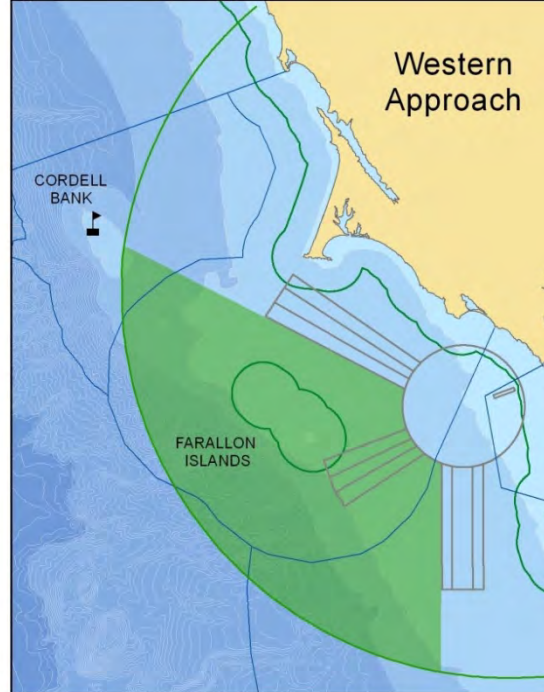
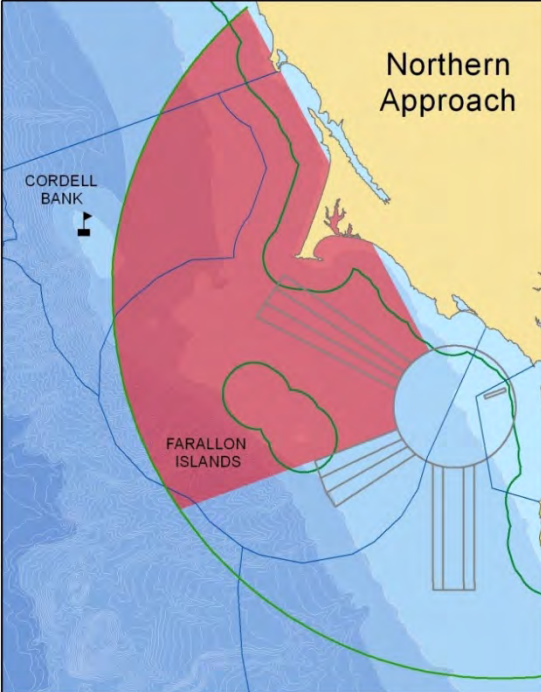
Management Recommendations

- Modification to shipping lanes

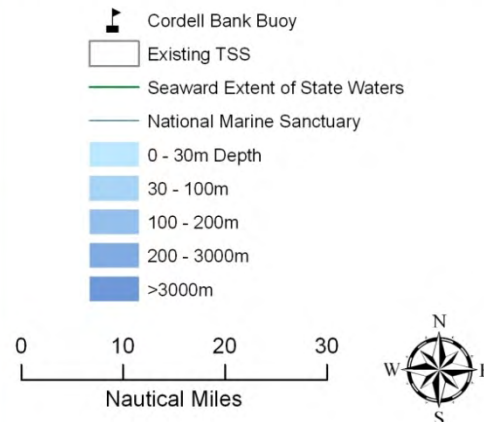


Management Recommendations

Dynamic Management Areas



Potential Dynamic Management Areas



Contour Interval 100 Meters
Not Intended for Navigation

Management Recommendations

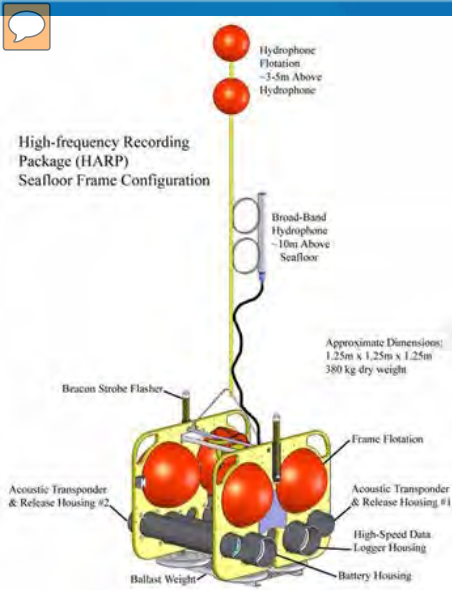
- Real-time monitoring
- Observations from ships
- Reporting and compiling sightings



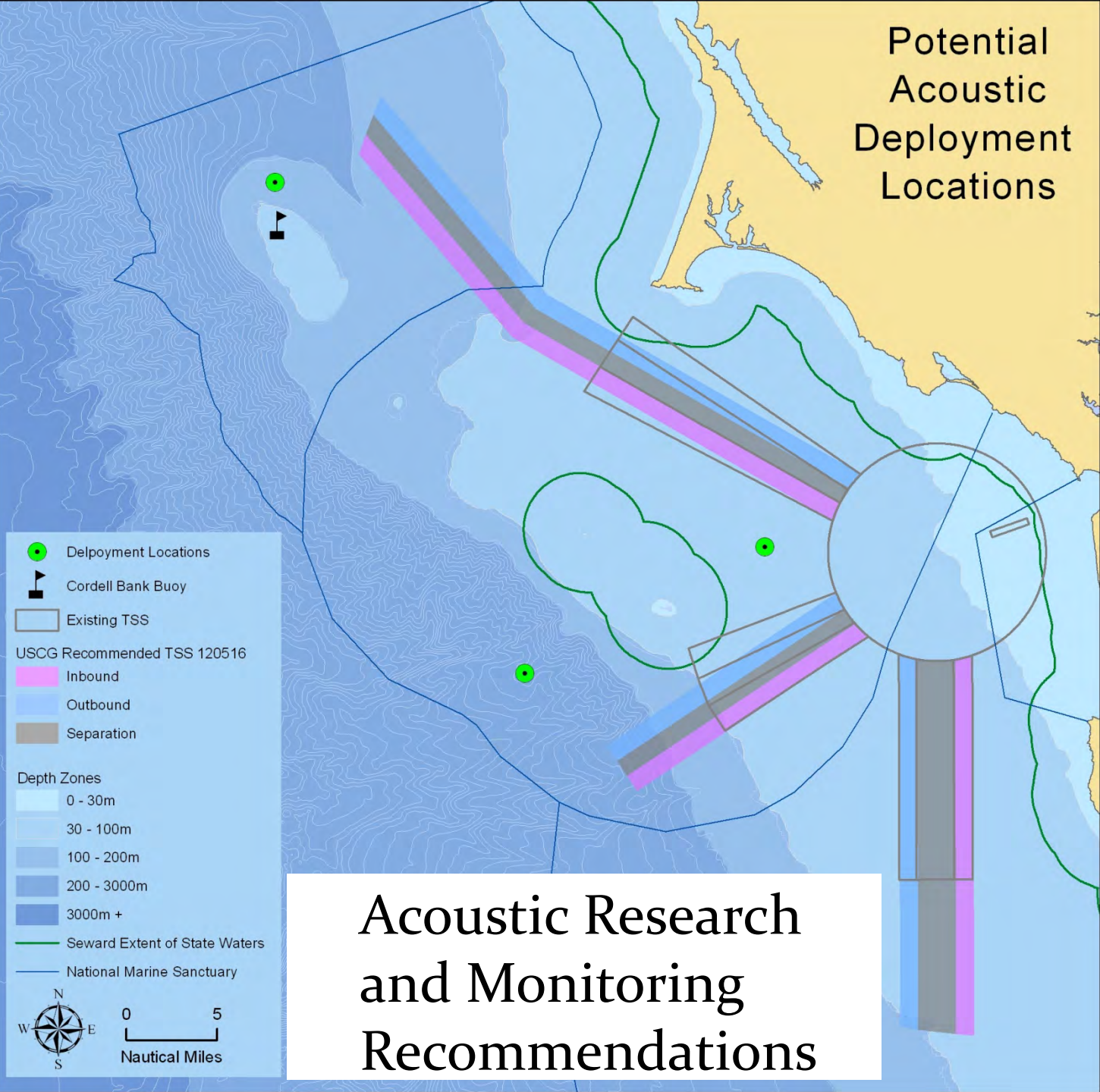
Management Recommendations



- National Marine Sanctuaries Act consultation
- Incentives for ship quieting



- Tiered Approach
- Passive Acoustic Monitoring
- Archival
- Multiple Objectives



Ships Strike Research and Monitoring Recommendations

- Continue compilation and analysis of historical and new sighting data
- Compile ship traffic data
- Evaluate the degree to which documented ship strikes reflect true mortalities of whales and consider the relative risk of ship strikes to different species.
- Continue monitoring whale population trends
- Ensure that stranded whales are examined to determine cause of death
- Gather data on behavior of whales in and around shipping lanes
- Examine how whales react to nearby ships to determine vulnerability to ship strike, and how changes in noise levels from ships or speed changes alter vulnerability.

Education and Outreach Recommendations

- Prepare a strategic plan for addressing education and outreach
- Prioritize commercial maritime industry for education and outreach materials
- All elements of the strategic plan should be clearly defined and include expected and measured outputs (outcomes) and be subdivided into those with short-, medium- and long-term implementation schedules.
- ONMS West Coast Region and NMFS should develop a regional education and outreach program to leverage scarce resources, avoid duplication of efforts and recognize that commercial vessels often call/transit near all NMS on many voyages.



Right Whales

Guidelines for Mariners

Precautionary measures should be taken to avoid northern right whales.

It is illegal to approach closer than 500 yards to any right whale! See 50 CFR 224.103 (c)

See U.S. Coast Pilots for information on the location and seasonal occurrence of right whales and the complete list of recommendations.

- Check Coast Guard Safety Voice Broadcasts, NOAA Weather Radio, NAVTEX and local authorities for recent right whale sighting reports.
- Maintain a sharp watch with lookouts familiar with spotting whales.
- When the ability to spot whales is reduced (e.g. night, fog, rain, etc.), mariners should bear in mind that reduced speed may minimize the risk of vessel strikes.
- If a right whale is sighted from the vessel, or reported along the intended track, mariners should exercise caution and maintain a safe speed within a few miles of the sighting location.
 - Reduced speed may minimize the risk of vessel strikes.
 - Do not assume right whales will move out of your way.
 - Right whales are slow swimmers, seldom traveling faster than 5 knots.
 - Their direction of travel may change suddenly.
 - They often travel in small groups that may be dispersed over an area of several miles.
- Any whale accidentally struck or any dead whale carcass should be reported immediately to the Coast Guard on VHF Ch. 16.

In the event of a collision the following information should be provided to the Coast Guard:

- Location and time of accident
- Speed of the vessel
- Size of the vessel
- Water depth
- Description of the impact
- Fate of the animal
- Species and size, if known

For detailed information, see U.S. Coast Pilots.



Thank You

