



GREATER FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY  
 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
 Wednesday, August 25, 2021  
 9:00AM – 2:00PM  
 Virtual via Google Meet

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Note: The following notes are an account of discussions at the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Copies to: Bill Douros, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, West Coast Regional Director

**Call to Order: Roll call**

Meeting called to order at: 9:00am

VOTING MEMBERS: 11 present (quorum met)

At-Large Marin: Dominique Richard	Education: Bibit Traut (Vice Chair)
At-Large Mendocino/Sonoma: Cea Higgins	Maritime Commercial Activities: John Berge
At-Large SF/San Mateo: Joe Fitting	Maritime Recreation Activities: Abby Mohan (Chair)
California Resources Agency: absent	National Parks Service: Craig Kenkel
Commercial Fishing: absent	Research: John Largier
Conservation: Bruce Bowser	U.S. Coast Guard: LT Chris Bell
Conservation: Richard Charter	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: absent

Alternates Present: 9 present

At-Large Marin: George Clyde
At-Large Mendocino/Sonoma: Nancy Trissel
At-Large SF/San Mateo: Kris Lannin Liang
Conservation: Francesca Koe
Conservation: Kathi George
Education: Mary Miller
Maritime Commercial Activities: Julian Rose
Research: Jaime Jahncke
U.S. Coast Guard: LT Lelea Lingo

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: 4 present

Channel Islands NMS: absent
Monterey Bay NMS: Lisa Wooninck

National Marine Fisheries Service: Jennifer Boyce
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Youth Alternate: Owen Youngquist
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GFNMS staff present: Maria Brown, Superintendent; Brian Johnson, Deputy Superintendent; Alayne Chappell (Affiliate) Advisory Council Coordinator; Olivia Johnson (Affiliate) Administrative Assistant; Carol Preston, Education Coordinator; Jan Roletto, Research Coordinator; Max Delany, Permit Coordinator

**Welcome, Roll Call, Review Agenda**

**SAC Business**

Abby Mohan, SAC Chair

Alayne Chappell, SAC Coordinator

**MOTION: Approve May meeting highlights, with requested edits**

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion passes.

**Update on council recruitment**

The application review panel will convene in two weeks to review applications that have been submitted. We did not receive applicants for maritime recreational seat so we will re-recruit for that seat during the next recruitment period.

*Cea Higgins: I noticed some alternates have been moved to the primary position. Can you clarify whether we are seeking alternates or primaries for those seats in the current recruitment period.*

*Maria Brown: In the future, we will send a notice to the SAC letting members know when someone has moved from an alternate to a primary position.*

**SAC retreat planning (Draft council letter and potential action item)**

*Abby Mohan: The Executive Committee has drafted a letter to Maria to request that the sanctuary consider holding the council retreat entirely or partly in person (with Covid-safe measures like masks and distancing if needed). We would like to have the opportunity to gather in person to have bonding opportunities and celebrate outgoing members. The draft letter was distributed to the council; we would like to hear input from members.*

*Cea Higgins: I agree that this would be an opportunity to celebrate outgoing members, acknowledging and honoring the institutional knowledge leaving. My concern would be who might be excluded because of health concerns.*

*Bibit Traut: I've heard experts expect the surge to be over in September, so that would be a pretty good timeline that we can adapt to. We all want to attend and interact whether it's virtual or in person, I think a hybrid option would be good.*

*Abby: This letter would be a request for Maria to look into it and consider the options; so it could get denied or it could completely change depending on what they are able to do.*

*Cea: Can we edit it to mention the hybrid option and add making the presentations available at a later time.*

*Jaime: A rapid covid test requirement is something we've been doing at work for our retreats. That could be an option.*

*George Clyde: I move to send the letter to Maria with those edits.*

*Cea Higgins: Seconds the motion.*

**MOTION: Send the letter with the suggested edits to Maria requesting consideration of a full or partial in person council retreat**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain

Motion passes.

**President Biden executive order on climate (aka 30x30 report) (Draft letter Potential Action Item)**

The draft letter to Maria expressing support for sanctuary involvement in the “America the Beautiful” (aka 30x30) Report was distributed to the council for review.

*Cea Higgins: Unfortunately, we don't have Barbara Emley or Sarah Bates here today to represent the fishing community. I've attended 30x30 stakeholder meetings, and a common concern is lack of engagement with commercial and recreational fishing communities. I would like to see some language in the letter ensuring that engagement with tribal members and fishing communities will happen.*

*George Clyde: Thank you for bringing that up, Cea. I support that addition.*

Bibit Traut: Motion to send the letter with that addition.

Abby Mohan: Seconds the motion.

**MOTION: Send the letter with the suggested edits to Maria expressing support for sanctuary involvement in the 30x30 initiative**

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain

Motion passes.

**Joint Ship Strike Working Group progress update**

Julian Rose, Working Group Co-Chair: We have a few more upcoming meetings scheduled and the group is moving toward final recommendations. Looking forward to bringing them to the councils in early 2022.

### **Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report**

Maria Brown, GFNMS Superintendent

#### **GFNMS Operations**

Sanctuary staff will continue with maximum telework until further notice from the Department of Commerce. Sanctuary facilities and Visitor Center remain closed to the public.

#### **GFNMS and CBNMS: Two sanctuaries with one staff**

- We are modeling staff efficiency and effectiveness, looking at the need for coordination and information exchange, and exploring redundancies in staff roles with the merger of CBNMS with GFNMS staff.
- We will be advertising for a new full-time council coordinator to support both sanctuary advisory councils. This new position will also be responsible for stakeholder engagement. Lilli Ferguson, the SAC coordinator for CBNMS, will be transitioning out of the council coordinator role and will be assuming maritime heritage program position for both sanctuaries and further engage with tribal communities along our coast.
- We are currently assessing facilities to evaluate office needs and future operations. We still have a sanctuary office in West Marin and in San Francisco.

#### **GFNMS achieves emissions reduction goal in 2020**

We are modeling how to reduce emissions at our sanctuary facilities. Covid halted commuting and field work which resulted in very low emissions from office operations over the past year. We will be looking at how to continue this pattern of reduced emissions. Our challenge will be to maintain site emission reductions while returning “normal” onsite and field operations.

#### **Conservation Science**

- Beach Watch has resumed 98% of surveys with Covid-safe protocols. The program is recruiting new volunteers and orientations are occurring right now.
- Summer ACCESS cruises were completed; the first since 2019.
- There is a joint GFNMS/CBNMS ROV cruise in progress to characterize and assess benthic habitat of both sanctuaries.
- Kelp drone and dive surveys are planned for September to look at kelp ecosystem health.
- We are analyzing the past 10 years of data to look at trends related to the health of the sanctuary ecosystem.

#### **Education**

- 151 people tuned into the *Get Into Your Sanctuary* Virtual Tidepool Excursion. 904 people total reached for both GFNMS and CBNMS *Get Into Your Sanctuary* events.
- A new Ocean Acidification Program in partnership with Hawaii’s Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Monument reached 1,327 students.

- Sanctuary educators conducted a LiMPETS training for teachers on climate literacy, in partnership with the National Park Service.
- K-12 Virtual Oceans After School summer programs are complete.
- Family programs and camp reached 3,863 participants.
- The Marin/Sonoma Coast Guide featured GFNMS and CBNMS.
- 5,645 students served through K-16 virtual academy.

### **Ocean Climate Program**

- We published recommendations for marine protected areas (MPA) managers in the new “Blue Carbon in Marine Protected Areas” Report, Part 1. Part 2 is coming out in September and will look specifically at GFNMS and carbon sequestration capacity from sanctuary habitats and processes like kelp, sea grass, wetlands, benthic habitat, and whale falls.
- We did a soft launch for the International Partnership on MPAs, Biodiversity and Climate Change in May. A full launch will take place at COP26 in November, engaging high level policy and decision makers. The US, UK, France, Chile, and Costa Rica formed the Partnership. I was the representative from the US. We have already had multiple countries ask to join from the soft launch. The purpose of the Partnership is to highlight MPAs as part of the solution to climate change.
- GFNMS is supporting the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Climate Vulnerability Working Group.

### **Ecosystem Protection**

- We participated in the July 2021 San Francisco Harbor Safety Committee Navigation Work Group to reduce ship strikes to whales. We are hoping to connect work inside and outside of the San Francisco Bay to reach the goal of reduction of risk to endangered and threatened whales.
- Seabird Protection Network staff has strengthened our partnership with the US Air Force and recently brought in a fellow who was formerly with the military to help with outreach.
- The Greater Farallones Association (GFA) in partnership with the sanctuary completed a successful invasive green crab removal season.
- GFNMS funded GFA participation in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Bull Kelp Working Group.

### **Permits**

*No questions or comments.*

### **Sanctuary Enforcement Update**

Max Delaney, GFNMS

Lt Chris Bell and Lt Lelea Lingo, USCG

### **Recent Enforcement Activity**

Max Delaney

- There have been a few groundings at Point Reyes National Seashore; we are standing by and trying to assist as a partner. National Parks have been leading this response effort. GFNMS has focused on devoting staff time to the *American Challenger* incident and is still active in the Unified Command along with CDFW, Marin County, the Environmental Protection Agency, and USCG. The original salvage plan is no longer feasible. We are looking at an option to deconstruct in place and use aircrafts to lift pieces out. Unified Command is currently reviewing that plan.

*John Berge: Is there an estimate on how much has been spent to date on this?*

*Max: We don't have the numbers; wish I had more concrete info for you but we will share more as we have it.*

*George Clyde: I've seen estimates of over \$2 million. Which agency has the responsibility to go after the responsible party? Can we expect a report on that eventually?*

*Maria Brown: I recommend asking Commander Macon this afternoon. We can't speak for the Coast Guard. For the national marine sanctuaries, we move forward on incidents after the incident is dealt with; the enforcement case is separate from the actions we are currently taking.*

*George: Some agency should be responsible for these massive losses that come from these incidents.*

*Maria: If the council would like to write and forward recommendations, that is an option.*

*Cea Higgins: What concerns were raised when discussing cutting the vessel, and what is the role of the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) when it comes to wrecks in NPS jurisdiction? Is it only for sanctuary issues or will they follow up with negligence of other areas?*

*Max: OLE is housed under NOAA Fisheries, which is under a different department, so they don't work directly on NPS enforcement-related issues. We've identified mechanisms to prevent debris and pollutants from releasing into sanctuary waters, and we are identifying measures to minimize disturbances to marine wildlife.*

*Cea: A council working group on abandoned vessels would be good.*

## **USCG Enforcement Report**

LT Chris Bell and LT Lelea Lingo, USCG

- 1,600 combined hours between USCG patrol and station boats
- 100 rotary and fixed wings hours
- Enforcement with the Dungeness crab closure in June. Our focus has been the salmon fishery, we have one fishery violation in the rockfish conservation area. We were responding to a vessel taking on water and when we got there, there were five licensed fishermen on board; someone identified a yellow eyed rockfish and was trying to conceal that catch. We will be working with CDFW who are familiar with these fishermen.

## **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report**

Lisa Wooninck, Acting MBNMS Superintendent

### **Research**

- We have new research showing ocean noise from shipping traffic was reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Assessing anthropogenic sound impacts is critical component of SanctuarySound.
- “Discover Wonder: The Octopus Garden” won best short film at the International Ocean Film Festival; and was selected for screening at the Woods Hole film festival and Nature Track film festival. This film aims to increase awareness of the octopus garden discovered in MBNMS.
- Scientists revisited Sur Ridge and Davidson Seamount. MBARI hosted a live-stream interactive event on June 30th, featuring a unique MBNMS collaboration to develop a deep-sea coral observatory.
- MBNMS staff is training and assisting OCNMS, ONMS, and NOAA Fisheries staff in kelp surveys. We share expertise across west coast regions sites, and completed a kelp forest survey of the Olympic Peninsula July 26 -30.
- The Maritime Heritage webpage is expanding with historic shipwreck profiles. Four historic wrecks have been added: the schooner *Active* (1872 - 1876), the steam schooner *Celia* (1884 - 1906), the steam freighter *La Feliz* (1904 - 1924), and the passenger cargo steamer *St. Paul* (1875 - 1896).

### **Resource Protection**

- USCG Marine Safety Information Bulletin. The purpose is to keep large vessels offshore, away from sensitive areas, while waiting for anchorages in San Francisco. USCG/MBNMS made two dozen requests since February, and all vessels complied.
- Bay Net and Team Ocean programs are back.
- 8 Vessel Casualties in MBNMS since Feb 25, 2021: Sailing vessel disabled and adrift, sunk off Big Sur; 3 Capsized vessels, all removed; Fishing vessel taking on water, safe at Santa Cruz Harbor; Engine fire and loss of power of NYK Delphinus over Davidson Seamount, safety towed to San Francisco/Oakland; Zodiac spilled oil in Stillwater Cove; M/Y Fish Magnet at Andrew Molera St Park 8/18.

### **Education**

- Distance Learning Programs for the 2020-21 school year
  - A total of 111 virtual programs (45 minutes) delivered to 2,836 students at 28 K-12 grade schools
  - 1,740 students (61% total) from Title 1 eligible schools
- Public and volunteer enrichment webinars:
  - “Take a Deep Dive” of the 2020 E/V Nautilus expedition (May)
  - “Revealing the Mysterious Coral and Sponge Gardens of Sur Ridge” with MBARI and support of live stream event (June)
  - “Monitoring Marine Biotoxins Volunteer Network” (July)
  - “Tracking White Sharks” & “Update on Beach Combers” (August)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Richard James: In light of the growing number of ADVs (abandoned and derelict vessels) showing up in the sanctuary (FV Marian, American Challenger, Ji-Me II still residing or decomposing (Ji-Me) in the sanctuary), what work is being done to understand the events, regulatory landscape, enforcement efforts that preceded the groundings/arrivals of these ships?*

*If we are to plug the legislative gaps, change the towing procedures, improve the enforcement guidelines as well as the interstate and international maritime vessel classification, insurance requirements, penalty assessments and cleanup response, we need to know exactly where the shortcomings are.*

## **BREAK**

### **Presentation: Sanctuary Oil Spill Response, Implementing Council Recommendations**

Max Delaney, GFNMS

#### Presentation Highlights:

- **Summary of Joint SAC Report on Vessel Spill Response Technologies:**
  - Vessel Spills Joint Working Group of the CBNMS and GFNMS advisory councils, 7 Meetings (2011-2012) (The report can be viewed on the GFNMS website here under 2012: [https://farallones.noaa.gov/manage/sac\\_actions.html](https://farallones.noaa.gov/manage/sac_actions.html))
    - Working Group Members: 5 SAC members (4 from GFNMS 1 from both GFNMS/CBNMS), CDFW Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), NOAA Office of Restoration & Response (OR&R), and SF Baykeeper
    - Supporting / Reviewing Participants: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (GFNMS, CBNMS, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, West Coast Region Office); National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Reported findings brought to the councils (June 2012)
  - The councils approved the Final Report and sent recommendations to the sanctuary superintendents (June 2012)
  - 21 SAC Recommendations on Dispersants: General Science and Research (10), General Education and Outreach (3), General Policy and Management (3), Sanctuary Specific Recommendations (5)
- **GFNMS is proceeding as recommended on the following recommendations:** (View list of recommendations and sanctuary response) (link to the presentation file once posted on the website)
  - The sanctuaries need to support the development of a specialized Net Environmental Benefit Analysis (NEBA) that focuses on specific resources and/or physical events, and sensitive habitats that support nearshore and subtidal species



- that are known to be highly sensitive to oil and/or dispersed oil (e.g. Dungeness crab, black and red abalone).
- o Given the Superintendent's role is advisory/consultative to the Rapid Response Team (RRT), the SAC recommends a precautionary approach to any incident response technology. Any oil spill response decisions in sanctuary waters will require a higher burden of proof of compelling need given the high resource productivity and sensitivity.
    - *GFNMS agrees and adopts a precautionary approach in all communications and recommendations provided to oil spill partner agencies.*
  - o The sanctuaries need to consider a policy of no-aerial spraying area within one mile of the Farallon Islands; follow provisions of the Wildlife Response Plan.
    - *The California Dispersants Use Plan does not preauthorize spraying in state waters would (including 3 nm around Farallon Islands), includes required no-dispersant use buffer areas around wildlife haul-outs, rookeries, and aggregations, and prescribes a general policy of not using dispersants in water less than 60 feet. GFNMS recommendations to the SCC and RRT would capture these as well as other conditions on dispersant use to protect sanctuary resources.*
  - o Attention needs to be given to the Sensitive Species Matrix, and ensure the Matrix is modified as new science-based information is obtained.
    - *We will be adding this matrix to our GFNMS Emergency Response Portfolio (ERP) as a tool to assist sanctuary emergency response analysis.*
  - o Provisions need to be made to review additional data collection needs and updating of the Sensitive Species Matrix should the boundaries of the GFNMS and CBNMS change.
    - *Since the boundaries of both GFNMS and CBNMS expanded in 2015, GFNMS will be updating the matrix to include sensitive species in the expanded areas of each sanctuary site as part of the next update the ERP in the coming year.*
  - o Seek funding to complete the SW ERMA placing a priority on the GFNMS and CBNMS and in the process of building data sets. Identify the highest priority/most sensitive species at risk during an oil spill for inclusion in the SW ERMA.
    - *NOAA has completed the development and launch of ERMA, which is now used by all the ACP partner response agencies. GFNMS has uploaded baseline sanctuary data layers in ERMA and can upload additional data layers as needed during a spill.*
  - o Identify existing sources of real-time data feeds on surface and subsurface currents; support the placement of an HR radar antenna on Southeast Farallon Island to close the existing radar shadow.
    - *GFNMS works with NOAA Office of Response and Restoration, the National Buoy Data Center (NBDC), and Central & Northern California Ocean Observing System (CeNCOOS) to identify the locations of existing ocean buoys and High Frequency Radar (HFR) stations in GFNMS and CBNMS. Buoys currently record wave conditions and HFR captures*

*surface currents; both provide data to ERMA. GFNMS will work with the USFWS, CENCOOS, and other partners to evaluate the potential to place station on SEFI.*

- o Complete a review of the existing literature and identify data gaps on the status of marine life within the greater Gulf of the Farallones Ecosystem, particularly during the winter. Identify opportunities for research on species of concern that would be affected by oil spills and dispersants in the sanctuaries during winter. Identify the seasons and species that use sanctuary waters in substantive numbers where an oil spill and/or dispersed oil could have significant long-term impacts on the viability of the population (e.g. Ashy Storm-petrels).
  - *GFNMS does both of these tasks (through periodic literature review, analysis of ACCESS cruise data and other monitoring program reports, etc.) on a regular basis to ensure that all trophic levels of the ecosystem are considered when evaluating dispersant use. GFNMS also has a robust emergency phone tree (updated throughout the year) of local resource experts we can call during a spill event to get recent updates on species presence and distribution in the area of the spill. In addition, a NOAA white paper on dispersants is currently in development to assess and compile recent literature and findings on dispersant use and potential impacts and to identify data gaps and future research needs.*
- **Recommendations GFNMS (or another division of NOAA) is proceeding with but in a different way:**
  - o Continue to follow and support research on the effects and impacts of alkylated PAHs in dispersed oil on fish and invertebrate egg and larvae.
  - o Support NOAA and State research on the reproductive success and behavioral effects (spawning, foraging, predator avoidance) for black/red abalone exposed to dispersed oil. Specific research on the potential for behavioral responses from exposure to dispersed oil (narcosis) is needed.
  - o Support research on the effects of dispersed oil on critical or surrogate species that represent important commercial and public trust resources in the GFNMS and CBNMS. Targeted research should include adult and juvenile Dungeness crab, and ESA listed Black Abalone and the potential impacts (short and long-term) to the habitats that support these resources.
  - o Identify current or published research on the effects of inhalation and dermal exposure of dispersed and non-dispersed oil on birds and marine mammals.
  - o Support research that includes: a) Standardization of dispersant toxicity studies for inter-comparability, b) Maximizing dispersant efficacy while minimizing potential toxicity, and c) Filling data gaps on: 1) Feather and fur wetting effects by environmentally realistic concentrations of dispersed oil, and 2) Toxicity testing of species of concern and how they relate to surrogate species and species sensitivity curves.
    - *The NOAA white paper on dispersants will likely address many of the recommendations above to extent that these studies have been completed. GFNMS will work with ONMS HQ, OR&R, and other NOAA partners to identify relevant studies from recent literature reviews that address species*

- of concern and habitat in our sanctuary region and evaluate these findings. GFNMS will also support research on key data gaps.*
- o The GFNMS and CBNMS Superintendents need to establish an annual coordination meeting with NOAA ERD and ARD, EPA, USCG and OSPR on coordinating the San Francisco Bay-Delta Contingency Plan pre-spill planning with the Sanctuary roles/response coordination.
    - *The sanctuary does this through participating in Area Contingency Plan (ACP) oil spill drills with all the partners listed above and this gives us the feedback we need to effectively coordinate and plan for spill response. Sanctuary staff also attend bimonthly ACP planning meetings with ACP partners to continually plan and coordinate for an oil spill.*
  - o The GFNMS and CBNMS Superintendents need to schedule an annual USCG and NOAA OR&R briefing at the joint SAC Meeting to provide SAC members updates on spill modeling, cleanup technologies, dispersants exposure research, non-toxic dispersant development or any emerging news on oil spill containment and response such as gelling agents, emulsion breakers, improved chemical spreading additives to enhance physical mixing/dispersant effectiveness.
    - *The sanctuary has and will continue to provide updates when there is relevant new information to share or emerging issues of concern.*
  - o The GFNMS and CBNMS Superintendents in coordination with OSPR need to develop an oil spill and response outreach plan for county and local governments that border the GFNMS in order to foster communication and awareness and to establish pre- spill working relationships.
    - *GFNMS does not have an oil spill outreach plan. However, sanctuary staff attend bimonthly ACP planning meetings, which includes local government representatives, to foster ongoing relationships with the local community.*
  - o Actively support the research and development of “next generation” biodegradable dispersants and alternative products for oil spill response. Consider establishing a policy that requires the use of alternatives to existing dispersants within the GFNMS and CBNMS.
    - *The sanctuary has evaluated whether to establish a policy and has concluded the best way to approach this issue is to continue tracking these technologies through participation in the biennial CDFW OSPR Oil Spill Technology Conference and consulting with experts about alternatives. This task is primarily conducted by organizations who have the capability to do research and development and share findings with response agency experts. The sanctuary can, however, provide recommendations to the RRT and ACP partners to consider the use of these technologies when we think they will be appropriate.*
  - o Support research to find more effective seagoing and coastal oil spill containment and sorbent booms, skimmers, separators, and “oil mop” types of petroleum recovery devices for use in the sanctuaries.
    - *As a trustee of the natural resources, the sanctuary evaluates research on new spill response equipment and technologies to ensure that the best*

*known technologies are being used and that impacts to natural resources are minimized or avoided.*

- **Recommendations GFNMS is not proceeding with:**

- Working with the USCG, EPA and OSPR, develop a standing policy that provides for using commercial fishermen in response and clean-up which takes advantage of local knowledge and expertise to most effectively deploy response assets.
  - *GFNMS did not take this recommendation, because we do not have the authority to determine how EPA, USCG, and OSPR use local stakeholders during a coordinated response.*
- It is suggested that the Sanctuary Superintendents request that the appropriate public health entities (e.g. NIH, EPA, Public Health Departments, etc.) provide information regarding the human health effects of oil, dispersants, and dispersed oil on responders and general public. Sanctuary Superintendents consider this information in the deployment of Sanctuary staff and resources while actively supporting the research and development of alternative products for oil spill response (General Science and Research Recommendation #2).
  - *Other agencies, including the Federal EPA, provide information regarding human health impacts from oil dispersants and dispersed oil. The sanctuary does not have the authority to determine impacts on human health.*

*Discussion:*

*Richard Charter: At the rate we're having groundings in the sanctuary, this is an important issue. Thank you for continuing to use this report 10 years later after it was created.*

*John Largier (in the chat box): Thanks Max, great overview. As regional lead for High Frequency Radar stations, can we follow up on the data gap and possibility to put a station on the SEFI (Southeast Farallon Island) (which has been a challenge, but we're very interested), as well as other oceanographic data from buoys.*

*John Berge: In terms of the use of fishermen in OSPR: they did a study. You may want to follow up with them if that's of interest. OSPR and Chevron host a biannual conference that reviews new technologies from around the world; it would be a good conference to attend or monitor. You make a good point about local government and contingency meetings as a venue for local governments to interact. For budget reasons, some local governments are very engaged and some not so much. Are the ones involved with the sanctuary the ones that are more involved?*

*Max: I see a lot of county interactions at this meeting. It might raise awareness to get other counties involved.*

*Cea Higgins: Coastal land managers and governments should be involved in the area contingency meetings and be aware of who they are supposed to notify. There are so many acronyms. It would be helpful if they are spelled out for people who are not aware of them.*

## **Presentation: West Coast Region (WCR) Blue Economy Planning: Sustainable Tourism and Recreation**

Carol Preston, GFNMS Education Coordinator

Presentation highlights:

- WCR Blue Economy Plan Goals:
  - Encourage awareness about sustainable tourism & recreation opportunities within NMS
  - Promote responsible human uses and quality visitor experiences
  - Enhance collaboration between sanctuaries, tourism purveyors and recreation vendors
  - Protect biodiversity and economic productivity in NMS
- Five Strategies:
  - Promote: Increasing the visibility of sanctuaries as iconic travel destinations
  - Access: Enhance access to, between and within sanctuaries
  - Sustainable activities and ecotourism: Cultivate travelers who are also ocean stewards
  - Coordination with partners: Establish high-level communication and collaboration between sanctuary sites, other government organizations and community partners
  - Performance: Conduct research, measure performance, and evaluate the program

## **Recreation and Tourism Subcommittee Recommendations and SAC Discussion**

Dominique Richard, Subcommittee Chair

Subcommittee members: Dominique Richard, Cea Higgins, Bruce Bowser, Francesca Koe

- Goals and objectives: The public knows they are in the sanctuary, know the purpose of the sanctuary, and are determined to practice stewardship for the sanctuary
- Communicate to visitors: Responsibility to the sanctuary through stewardship, to local inhabitants through respect, and to themselves and others through safe and ethical behavior.
- Sanctuary needs to reach out to potential visitors and educate them on these responsibilities through in person and virtual ways, especially in sensitive areas like tidepools, by providing a list of recommended behaviors
- Implementing a dynamic and online presence, engaging with online followers, interacting on twitter
- Formalizing and implementing the concept of ambassadors: identify and train ambassadors to alert public to the existence of the sanctuary and to the main components of its mission with the purpose of making it a personal conversation and creating compelling stories

*Discussion:*

*Richard Charter: Thanks so much to Dominique, Cea, Bruce, and Francesca for this excellent work! I especially like the reference to “Stewardship Protocols.”*

*John Largier: Dominique, perhaps Bodega Marine Lab can also be an ambassador site (when our Friday visitor program restarts).*

*Cea Higgins: Thank you to the other subcommittee members and Carol on all the work here. What we haven't seen addressed is the safety of sanctuary visitors, so I just want to bring that forward and make sure that is included in these recommendations.*

*Carol Preston: Safety is going to be one of the topics at the next WCR blue economy meeting. Thank you for that suggestion. It's important.*

*Richard Charter: We may want to also encourage that it also be shared with County and State Parks leadership in the affected areas.*

*Kris Lannin Liang: I would like to suggest we include something about communicating to diverse audiences by translating sanctuary outreach information into multiple languages. Pillar Point has talked about the creation of a science center and said GFNMS is going to be doing the interpretation for the science center. San Mateo County Parks is devising a systemwide interpretation plan and updating signage over time, starting with Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.*

*Francesca Koe: Motion to forward the recommendations as edited today.*

*Bruce Bowser: Seconds the motion.*

**MOTION:**

Vote: 10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion passes.

The subcommittee is disbanded.

**Presentation: US Coast Guard Abandoned Vessel Response in the Sanctuary**

Rhianna Macon, USCG

Presentation Highlights:

- *Abandoned vessel* defined by the USCG as “any craft designed for navigation that has been moored, stranded, wrecked, sunk, or left unattended for longer than 45 days. A vessel is not abandoned if it is on private property with the permission of the owner.”
- *Derelict vessel* refers to a vessel with an identifiable owner that has been left unattended and is in significant disrepair, as described in Section 1 of National Response Team (NRT).
- Response limitations: Patchwork of federal/state/local authorities/funding; no single agency is funded sufficiently with authority to remove pollution and vessel
- Funding tied to threat of pollution NOT to vessel itself.
- Commandant Approval Process: Commandant of the USCG has the sole authority to destroy a vessel. “Coast Guard does not authorize destruction requests for vessels that are

a community nuisance. The typical response action in these cases is to remove the threat of pollution from the vessel in situ.”

- *American Challenger*: 90’ F/V ran aground off Dillion Beach, Bodega Bay; 29k gal max potential assumed at initial response; The USCG Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF) funded Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) assessments, which concluded all tanks empty of oil products. Remaining pollution sources are residual oils and hull construction components.
  - OSLTF current pollution removal costs: ~\$2.1 million; with complex and high-risk salvage operations.
  - Currently pending Commandant approval for OSLTF funded destruction.
- *R/V Puffin*: 32’ F/V ran aground on Kelham Beach, Point Reyes; 200+ gal potential; Responsible Party (RP) walked away and fled the state
  - OSLTF funded \$65,000 pollution removal; OSRO landside with ATVs and 1 mile hike on foot with 5 gal cans.
  - NPS expressed interest in funding salvage after pollution removal
  - NPS slow contract bidding process delayed salvage; surf destroyed the vessel
  - NPS was able to hire contractors to remove beachside debris
- *P/C Godfather*: • 65’ P/C ran aground off Federal Break Wall, Long Beach; 500+ gal potential; RP unresponsive to CG calls; Vessel drifted into channel during response ops; As a hazard to navigation, USACE assumed jurisdiction for removal
  - OSLTF funded \$499,000 and pollution was removed with crane and barge
  - USACE assumed full responsibility after pollution removal and covered disposition and destruction
- Limitations and solutions:
  - Gap in regulations regarding former commercial vessels;
  - Legislative solution on both federal and state levels
  - Insurance Requirements
  - Success in Washington State (and others) with dedicated state funds
  - NRT Guidance

*Discussion:*

*Cea Higgins: That was very interesting and clarifying. Thank you for the presentation. When looking at USCG TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures), is there a recognition in the difference in marine environments—which require a much shorter response time due to waves, wind, etc.—versus estuaries?*

*Rhianna Macon: Yes, we do. All of the resources are centralized in the San Francisco Bay and it’s intensive to get resources out to the other areas. For other vessels like container ships there is a required capability to respond to oil spills so tugs are retained for those; we don’t have resources for something like a private citizen boat or for vessels like the American Challenger. This is an issue. There are more resources in the Gulf because of the types of vessel activities there. I’ve been doing this for 18 years and stationed in many different areas, and it’s very different in each different area in terms of what resources are available and how we work with*

*industry, federal agencies, and states. For example, California expects resources as soon as possible because of the pristine environment; that's not the case in some other places.*

*The USCG requires certain types of insurance depending on size and certification to operate in USCG waters, but we have very little jurisdiction for recreational vessels. The state should work on this.*

*Richard Charter: Regarding dead ship tows, if you see something moving on the AVD out in the water, can you not intercept it or put someone on the vessel?*

*Rhianna: It's difficult. We are focused on commercial vessels, and search and rescue. The people on the tow Hunter did contact the USCG the day it broke, and we evaluated for search and rescue. There were no people on board and we were told there was no pollution on the American Challenger. We did not see a need to respond at that point. We have to consider resource management and be cautious about how we are sending our helicopters out. We were monitoring the situation and working with the Hunter and the owner. We realized they were not able to retrieve the vessel. We could not approve putting our people in harm's way for a vessel with no people on board and no pollution. We can change the process to avoid these situations in the future.*

*John Berge: I would like to see California adopt the same insurance and liability protocols as Washington. There is such limited authority with respect to what agencies can do here. Most important is to create sustainable funds. Local government ends up paying. Are there any opportunities for federal funding?*

*Rhianna: It's really hard. Collectively as a group, we feel if people are going to make unsafe and unwise decisions, there should be consequences. For example, when a person buys a car, the selling lot is not responsible after that time. We can't interfere with what people do with their boats, so it's a predicament. Millions of dollars have been spent so far on American Challenger from the OTLF. Industry pays into the fund so they do care how the fund gets used. Different populations and stakeholders have different values. We are trying to figure out if there is a better way forward. My private opinion is that there should be a fund that covers the lifetime of the vessel and include end of life costs.*

*John B.: The American Challenger is one thing, but the issue you brought up about the San Francisco Bay and homelessness. We don't have anything to sustain that. It's not a responsible party issue at that point. There are a lot of ideas for funding, but it will take a political will.*

*Craig Kenkel: Thank you for your response and help removing the two vessels at the Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS). The vessel owner from August 3<sup>rd</sup> did have insurance and said they would handle the salvage themselves, but then a month later they were not able to and the insurance company said they would not move forward with the federal government cosigning. I would rather deal with an uninsured owner than this slowed down process with someone who claims they can but can't pay. Millions of dollars were spent on removal at the Seashore this year; now we have two shipwrecks and don't have the funding to handle them so it's a scramble.*



*Rhianna: My appreciation to you for stepping up. Contracting is really challenging. We've had insured people where there are significant delays. You lose valuable time and it makes it harder and ultimately more expensive.*

*George Clyde (in the chat box): The fact that the sanctuary does not have any jurisdiction in the 1/4 mile off of the PRNS boundary is a problem in other areas (jurisdiction for low overflights). Not likely, but someday it might be worthwhile for NPS and GFNMS to discuss this issue so that recovery and enforcement efforts are more efficient and effective.*

*Craig: It would be good to have pre-established insurance.*

### **Member Reports**

*Maria Brown: I would like to express appreciation for all of you and especially those of you who are terming out and those who have been here from the beginning of the sanctuary. You have all influenced and informed us for years and given us a better understanding of what community concerns are. You have been a lifeline to the communities and stakeholders that are important to the sanctuary, and we are so grateful for your efforts. I wish that we could thank you in person. We will be celebrating the ONMS 50th Anniversary next year and we plan to take that opportunity to recognize you in person.*

**Abby Mohan, Maritime Recreational Activities:** charter boats and ecotourism industry has started doing charters again with limited capacity, it has been really nice to see the waterfront start working again. Fleet week is returning which will be great for the industry.

**Bruce Bowser, Conservation (written report):** It is hard for me to believe that after nearly 16 years with the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, that it is time to come up for air. Meeting, sharing, and participating in GFNMS operations and programs was so enlightening. Meeting other extraordinary people who share my deep love of the ocean and care for our blue planet, has been simply an extraordinary experience. Every meeting of the SAC was loaded with informative and educational content from which I have benefited. I have enjoyed every minute with sanctuary staff who I found dedicated, outgoing and a true credit to the ideal of stewardship.

Simply, I have loved every opportunity to learn and re-educate. My future involvement in ocean health is a calling I cannot deny. I intend to remain active in North Coast environmental and water issues from Bolinas to Bodega Bay. If I'm not in the audience at future SAC meetings, then rest assured that I am following your actions with great interest and trust.

On a newsy note: Coho salmon have returned to Pine Gulch Creek at the headwaters of Bolinas Lagoon for the first time in 10 years!

Thank You, Be Well & Stay in Touch.

**Richard Charter, Conservation (written report):**

### Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing

The House Appropriations Committee has reported out a comprehensive Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas leasing prohibition for fiscal year 2022 for the Pacific Coast, but since the House adjourned for the August recess without completing work on various Appropriations bills, it appears more likely that a Continuing Resolution will be adopted instead, which itself would likely continue the previous annual offshore oil and gas leasing ban off of the California coast.

### Offshore Floating Wind Leasing

#### State Waters:

California State Lands Commission (CSLC) staff is currently in the early stages of information gathering for two lease applications for offshore wind energy projects in State waters, located in the Pacific Ocean offshore Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB), formerly named Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB), in western Santa Barbara County. The Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the Vandenberg Offshore Wind Energy Projects (Project or Projects) is an early information document to assist with the upcoming formal California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, including the Notice of Preparation and scoping for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The PEA is not intended to include the content and in-depth analysis of an Initial Study, but rather to serve as an early foundation of information to feed into the EIR process. The PEA provides background information on offshore wind development in California as well as the purpose, goals, and site selection factors for the Projects provided by the Project proponents. The PEA also includes information on staff's early government consultation, tribal government outreach and consultation, and stakeholder outreach process and the feedback received during the process. CSLC staff determined that because floating offshore wind is a new technology that has not yet been deployed on the U.S. west coast, it should seek early engagement and input via a comprehensive public and tribal government consultation process, which included a series of virtual public outreach meetings with public agencies, tribal government representatives, and key stakeholder groups, to gather information about concerns, suggestions, and data sources for the preliminary environmental review of both Projects. CSLC staff used that information to prepare this PEA for the proposed Projects.

<https://slcprdwordpressstorage.blob.core.windows.net/wordpressdata/2021/07/Vandenberg-Offshore-Wind-Draft-PEA.pdf>

#### Federal Waters:

The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has announced two actions advancing the federal wind leasing process offshore California. First, BOEM is publishing a Call for Information and Nominations (Call) to request information from the public and determine industry interest in commercial offshore wind energy development for two new areas within a 399-square-mile area located off central California, identified as the [Morro Bay Call Area East and West Extensions](#). The new areas are adjacent to the Morro Bay Call Area, originally identified by BOEM in 2018. The extension areas will be included in BOEM's overall analysis of the Morro Bay 399 Area, Second, BOEM has formally designated the Humboldt Wind Energy Area (WEA) offshore northern California and will now proceed with an environmental review of this area, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

On May 25, 2021, the Departments of the Interior and Defense and the state of California [announced their agreement](#) to advance areas for wind energy development offshore the northern and central coasts of California, enabling a path forward for the Humboldt Call Area and areas within and adjacent to the Morro Bay Call Area.

#### *Morro Bay Call Area – East and West Extensions*

The Morro Bay Call Area East Extension and the Morro Bay Call Area West Extension offshore the central California coast consist of approximately 141 square statute miles (90,025 acres).

BOEM has published the Commercial Leasing for Wind Power Development on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Morro Bay, California, East and West Extensions – Call for Information and Nominations in the Federal Register on July 29, 2021, which initiated a 45-day public comment period. BOEM will accept nominations and comments until September 13, 2021. Additional information on the Call and how to comment can be found at <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/morro-bay-call-extension-areas>.

#### *Humboldt Wind Energy Area (WEA)*

BOEM is also designating nearly 132,369 acres (206.8 square miles) as a WEA offshore Humboldt County in northern California. BOEM will conduct an environmental assessment (EA) of the WEA, per NEPA. The EA will consider potential environmental consequences of site characterization activities (e.g., survey activities and core samples) and site assessment activities (e.g., installation of meteorological buoys) associated with issuing wind energy leases in the WEA. The EA will also consider project easements associated with each potential lease issued, and grants for subsea cable corridors through state tidelands.

As part of BOEM’s scoping process, BOEM is seeking public comments on what should be considered as part of the EA. BOEM also will use these comments as input for its consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additional information on how to comment can be found at <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/humboldt-wind-energy-area>.

#### Oil Sheen in GFNMS from Yet Another Vessel Grounding:

This photo shows oil sheen in the waters of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary as a result of yet another vessel grounding event as described here....

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2021/08/04/coast-guard-boater-dogs-rescue-tomales-point/>



**Kathi George, Conservation (written report):** Since our last meeting, The Marine Mammal Center and the California Academy of Sciences responded to six whale strandings. Five of the whales were gray whales and one was a fin whale. All causes of death were undetermined.

1. May 23, 2021: male gray whale, Angel Island State Park; cause of death: undermined (no necropsy performed, only samples taken)
2. May 26, 2021: male gray whale, Tennessee Valley Beach; cause of death: undetermined (no necropsy performed due to inaccessible location)
3. May 28, 2021: gray whale, Point Bonita, rewashd ashore at Rodeo Beach on 6/3; cause of death: undetermined
4. June 20, 2021: fin whale; Mavericks Beach, San Mateo County; cause of death: (no necropsy performed, partial whale in decomposed pieces, only samples taken by Cal Academy)
5. June 21, 2021: adult female gray whale; Ocean Beach; cause of death: undetermined
6. August 3, 2021: adult female gray whale; McClures Beach Point Reyes National Seashore; cause of death: undetermined, partial necropsy

There are 14 confirmed entanglements on the West Coast (8 humpbacks, 4 grays, 1 minke, and 1 fin).

**Joe Fitting, Community-at-Large San Francisco/San Mateo (written report):**

Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project: The United States Army Corps of Engineers Beach Nourishment Phase at Ocean Beach is underway. Approximately 225,000 cubic yards of dredged sand from San Francisco Bay Main Ship Channel is being placed just offshore at Ocean Beach just south of Sloat Boulevard. It is then pumped ashore to rebuild the damaged bluffs across from the Zoo. The project is being managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers at the request of the city and county of San Francisco, in partnership with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). Work should be completed by September 30th and that stretch will be closed to the public.

San Mateo County Harbor District Master Plan Revision: Using the 2020 Strategic Plan the harbor district is preparing a Master Plan to provide a comprehensive guide that will focus the District activities in a relevant, and realistic manner for decades to come. A Communication and Engagement plan to engage the communities and stakeholders is underway with public workshops and involvement of other local agencies. A revised draft Master Plan should be completed by Autumn of 2021 with a Final Plan in Winter of 2022. Coordination w/Boarding Jurisdictions and other Government Agencies is referenced with the Marine Sanctuaries and NOAA called out a number of times

Request for Council Action: Through the SAC chair a request to the SM Harbor District for an update/presentation on the proposed revised plan to the advisory council.

**Kris Lannin Liang, Community-at-Large San Francisco/San Mateo (written report):**

Partner/Constituent Groups:

California State Parks: The preserve at Año Nuevo is open three days a week. Staff is working with volunteers to determine how many days they'll be able to staff during the week, during breeding season. Like a lot of volunteer organizations, they've lost volunteers during the pandemic, and many who remain on the roster aren't active again (yet).

Mavericks Beach: No one knows who owns most of the beach. Pillar Point Harbor Master Plan documents show the southern part is within the District's jurisdiction, some don't. State Lands owns a minority piece (which is why they require a lease for the surf competition). GGNRA is shown as a part-owner on title documents, but they don't own any of it. Mavericks is the primary access point to the Pillar Point State Marine Conservation Area, which is located within Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, but County Parks (or San Mateo County at this point) doesn't own it. It's the most popular of three access points to the Mavericks surf break and the path to the heavily used Pillar Point Reef. The District's Master Plan consultant, State Lands, San Mateo County Counsel, members of the Midcoast Community Council, staff at the MPA Collaborative and SMC Parks Director, Nicholas Calderon are all involved in trying to sort it out.

San Mateo County Harbor District/Commission:

Master Plan: The District is moving forward with updating its Master Plan for Pillar Point Harbor. I suggest the SAC request a presentation from the District on the Update.

- Life Rings Installed: Collaborated with Sea Valor and the Arunay Foundation to pilot life-saving stations at four locations near Pillar Point Harbor (largely) in response to the

12 lives lost to sneaker waves along Bay Area Beaches in 2020/2021. Stations are 8' tall and consist of multi-language information about sneaker waves, and a Glasdon life-ring buoy cabinet with buoy and rope. The goal is to install additional stations once the donors receive permits from the CCC.

- West Trail Project: Engineering was completed, permits have been approved. The board hired Michael Roberts Construction to complete the project this year.
- Surfers Beach RV lot: Construction of new public restrooms (including an outdoor shower facility), redesign of the day use parking lot (exchanging RV parking for public/ADA/EV parking) is in final permitting stage and should be completed early next year. The project also includes a drop-off area for surf schools.
- Sand Replenishment: Completed eel grass mitigation – looking at potential 2022 start date.
- High-intensity Boat Lights – Seabird Disturbances: Captain Pruett approved staff overtime to educate boaters about using high-intensity lights in the harbor. In addition to creating a navigational hazard, these operators flush huge numbers of birds on the jetties and breakwaters at night, when it's difficult for them to land again. Bart Selby, on the MBNMS SAC has rescued numerous birds with foot and wing injuries, some he suspects might have been caused by flushes like these.

#### San Mateo County Marine Protected Area Collaborative

- The Collaborative is allocating funding for the creation of a Friends-like volunteer group at Pillar Point Reef.
- The contract between CDFW and California Academy of Sciences has been finalized; funding is in process.
- California Academy of Sciences will house the coordinator position. Fingers crossed Dru Devlin (Beach Watch) agrees to lead the new group.

#### San Mateo County Parks

- Parks is advocating for an Off-Leash Dog Pilot Program at Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff.
- Point Bluff visitors share a parking lot with West Trail and Mavericks Beach visitors. So far SMC Parks Commission has endorsed. SMC Parks Foundation does not plan to comment. Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Sierra Club and Green Foothills have opposed. West Trail:  
<https://www.kronon.tv/videos/people-behaving-badly-2013-half-moon-bay-birds-3641596>
- Proposal and Related Documents: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021070237>

*Abby: We can flag that as an agenda item for consideration for an upcoming council meeting.*

**Bibit Traut, Education:** I taught marine biology at UC Berkeley. They were very excited to hear about the work that's being done by the sanctuaries. I worked with LiMPETS and did the NNOCCI training this summer for climate messaging. I highly recommended it for everyone.



**Mary Miller, Education:** My position at the Exploratorium is transitioning out so I will be in more of an emeritus position. Going to be helping with communications and outreach and diversity, equity and inclusion work. Other activities include: a buoy that measures ocean acidification in San Francisco Bay, using iNaturalist to identify animals in the area, and work on kelp with Francesca.

**Cea Higgins, Community-at-Large, Sonoma/Mendocino:** There is a coastal cleanup day on September 18<sup>th</sup>. It's been scaled back because of Covid but there are cleanup sites posted and information about individual efforts. Sonoma County is going through the revision of their coastal plan; the second hearing is in front of the Sonoma County Planning Commission about hazards of sea level rise. Thank you for the blue carbon paper because it's something that local coastal plans need to look at, and take into account the value of blue carbon.

**Nancy Trissel, Community-at-Large, Sonoma/Mendocino (written submission):** As is typical, the potentially sanctuary-impacting activities in the Mendocino area center on the Gualala River and its watershed. Last week, the Independent Coast Observer printed the following: Friends of Gualala River, along with Forest Unlimited in Forestville, on Monday sent a request to state and local officials asking that a regional state of emergency for the Gualala River watershed be proclaimed.

In a letter to State Senator Mike McGuire, Assembly member Jim Woods, Sonoma County Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, Mendocino County Supervisor Ted Williams and officials at Cal Fire, the Water Resources Control Board and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the groups ask that all timber harvest plan water drafting and all other nonessential water diversions be halted until healthy flows resume.

To read the entire article, visit Local environmental groups and ask for emergency protections for Gualala River; halt to water drafting.

An excerpt from the letter itself is telling:

The exceptional drought conditions in Sonoma and Mendocino counties have stressed the Gualala River and its watershed to the brink of demise prompting Friends of Gualala River to call on the State Water Resources Control Board to take emergency action to save it from complete collapse. The river and estuary are collapsing from unsustainable practices during this unprecedented drought which has placed the counties in the Exceptional Drought (D4) category.

"Unsustainable practices" range from the increased water needs due to a significant influx into our local population during the pandemic to the water used for dust abatement on logging roads.

Some additional very upsetting and fundamentally disappointing news is that the Dogwood Timber Harvest Plan that was successfully held at bay for years was finally executed. The logging is done. The legal complexities of how this resulted is convoluted and disheartening. For complete details, visit

<https://gualalariver.org/news/dogwood-thp-update-from-fogr-board-of-directors/>

On a parting, bright note: I've never seen so many Brown Pelicans on our coast! Hundreds have been seen for the past few weeks, flying by heading both north and south in squadrons of varying size and bathing noisily and energetically in the Gualala River estuary.

**Dominique Richard, Community-at-Large, Marin:** I am continuing as a Beach Watch volunteer and as a volunteer for the Watershed Council sampling. Generally speaking, the water in the river is very low. One thing I've been focused on is how to make people care. I also want to think about ways that I still be useful to the sanctuary after leaving the council. I want to stay involved. You might see me at future meetings, but this has been a great time and I really appreciate all of you.

**Sarah Bates, Commercial Fishing (written report, not present):** Commercial salmon fishing is closed for the 2021 season. Due to some historical vagaries of the ocean harvest model, all salmon harvested after September 1 will be counted as part of the next brood year in 2022. Fishing was much, much better than expected this summer. Season modeling predicted approximately 64,000 Chinook salmon would be caught. As of July 31, the commercial fleet had already caught over 145,000 fish. Heavy rainfall in the spring of 2019 helped wash juvenile fish into the ocean. Conversely, we are already anticipating some terrible salmon fishing in 2-3 years due to current drought conditions.

We have seen large numbers of small fish in the ocean (almost certainly 2-year old fish that will be recruited to the 2022 fishery). Somewhat contradictory, we have also seen larger than normal pound averages on our deliveries. The average fish is nearly 1-1.5 pounds bigger than last year. It's impossible to say for sure what's driving this trend, but it's likely that many fish did not return to dry rivers last fall, so we are catching a larger than normal number of 4-year old salmon.

We are very concerned about the discrepancy between predicted ocean abundance and the biomass of fish that we are seeing. In the short term, this is very good news. We are still able to make a living. In the medium term, those fish don't have sufficient water or good spawning grounds to return to this year; we are likely to see large die-offs of adult fish in the Klamath and Sacramento River systems this fall. In the long term, we need ocean abundance calculations and harvest models that we can rely on to manage our fisheries sustainably.

The crab gear retrieval program is being expanded into Bodega Bay, Fort Bragg, and hopefully, Eureka. We've had very good success at retrieving untended commercial crab gear from ocean waters during times when whales are more likely to be present. We are working with CDFW regulators to allow retrieval of recreational crab gear when that season is closed.

**John Berge, Maritime Commercial Activities:** As of the end of July, I retired from The Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, but am continuing to serve on various committees as a consultant for them, so will be able to continue that work as a liaison for the shipping community.

**Jaime Jahncke, Research:** I was on the 30x30 panel for the State. There is a lot of knowledge in the that group. I would like to thank Maria for providing feedback to one of the earlier drafts. I



won't be part of the SAC retreat but I think offshore wind is the topic. Yesterday, I participated in a discussion called Integral doing modeling work with the effects of wind turbines on upwelling, they would be a great group for you to invite. I would like to thank all of you for all you've taught me over the past 12 years. It's been a great experience so thank you.

**Craig Kenkel, National Parks Service:** Today is the 105th birthday of the National Park Service. The NPS is preparing a court-mandated Aviation Tour Management Plan for San Francisco Maritime, Golden Gate (including Fort Point and Muir Woods), and Point Reyes, due at the end of October. Point Reyes National Seashore and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria have entered a formal government-to-government partnership for stewardship of their ancestral home in the seashore.

**Gerry McChesney, US Fish & Wildlife (written report, not present):**

- We are still working with California Coastal Commission staff on scheduling a new hearing date for the Farallon mouse eradication consistency determination.
- At the Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the seabird nesting season is mostly over for the majority of species. Several species nested early this year, but Brandt's Cormorants nested late and many nests still have chicks.
- Farallon Islands sea lion and fur seal pup numbers continue to increase. For the delisted Steller sea lion, the annual high count of 69 pups was the highest since Pt Blue started annual monitoring in the early 1970s.
- Monthly average sea surface temperatures have been below normal at the Farallon Islands all year except for June when SSTs were slightly above average. The cooler temps are probably related to La Niña conditions.
- An unusually large number of gray whales (about a dozen) summered in the nearshore waters around the islands. Normally there are 1-3.

**WRAP UP & ADJOURN: 2:00pm**

*Meeting highlights prepared by Alayne Chappell, Advisory Council Coordinator.*