GULF OF THE FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY 4th Quarter FY 2010

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

July through September ~ 2010



Mounting Outreach To Prevent Whale Shipstrikes

This summer and through the fall, at least five endangered whales have been killed by verified or likely ship strike in the sanctuary. Species included humpback and fin whales, and a pregnant blue whale who aborted her unborn calf, and a species-undetermined whale that was hooked on the bow of an incoming container ship. Dense aggregations of the whales' preferred food, krill, were attracting them to heavily trafficked shipping lanes. In response, Farallones communications staff launched an outreach campaign to Bay Area media, the U.S. Coast Guard, port authorities and shipping industry communications personnel to warn vessels of the unusually high number of whales feeding intensively in and near shipping lanes where prey - mostly krill - has concentrated. The United States Coast Guard instituted repeating broadcasts of the alert. Staff also reached out to researchers studying vessel traffic impacts on whales. Shipping industry representative requested whale photos to distribute and publish. We also initiated a regional communications effort with other sanctuaries to develop a coordinated public and professional outreach strategy in an effort to minimize the incidence of lethal ship strike.







MANAGEMENT

Farallones Sanctuary Welcomes New Advisory Council Members

The Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary Advisory Council met on August 12 in Bodega Bay and the following new members were welcomed to the Council; those in attendance were sworn in: At-Large San Francisco/San Mateo Primary: Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director, San Mateo County Resource Conservation; Alternate: Tim Duff, Project Manager, State Coastal Conservancy. Conservation Alternate: Jackie Dragon, Program Director, Pacific Environment. Maritime Activities Recreation Alternate: George Clyde, boater and fisherman/ Tomales Bay Watershed Council. National Park Service Primary: Cicely Muldoon, Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore; Alternate: Frank Dean, Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Research Alternate: Jaime Jahncke, Marine Ecology Director, PRBO Conservation Science. United States Coast Guard Alternate: LT Steve Arnwine.

HEALTH OF THE SANCTUARY

Sanctuary Releases Condition Report

In August the sanctuary released a new report, the first comprehensive report of its kind, detailing the health, pressures and trends of the area's biological and maritime resources. Because the sanctuary encompasses significant outer coast and offshore habitats, and very different nearshore estuary and lagoon habitats, the Condition Report's ratings were broken out accordingly.

The Farallones condition report was prepared by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries in consultation with outside experts, who reviewed the final version. It indicates that, overall, the sanctuary's marine life and habitats for the outer coast and offshore areas are relatively good, despite pressures from nearly 8 million people in the greater Bay Area and the impacts they have on water quality. In fact, the Farallones sanctuary is one of the few places in the world where endangered blue and humpback whale populations are increasing.

However, the sanctuary's estuary and lagoon areas rate only good/fair, to fair/poor due to their proximity to the San Francisco Bay Area's large urban population, and runoff and water diversions in the rural areas. These areas are threatened by non-native animal and plant species, water quality and pollutants, increased coastal growth and wildlife disturbance. For the full report, visit http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/condition/gfnms/welcome.html

RESEARCH

Monitoring To Understand Long-Term Trends

Sanctuary Ecosystem Assessment Programs (SEA Surveys and ACCESS)

ACCESS Cruise Documents Abundance, Diversity In Area Sanctuaries

This summer and fall research staff from Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries and PRBO Conservation Science completed ecosystem monitoring cruises aboard the R/V Fulmar as part of the ACCESS (Applied California Current Ecosystem Studies) partnership. ACCESS cruises collect data on the oceanographic conditions, zooplankton community (focusing on krill and copepods), seabird and marine mammal distribution and abundance within the offshore and near shore regions of Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones and northern extent of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. Excellent sea conditions allowed the team to complete the entire survey grid and document a high abundance and diversity of marine mammals, seabirds and krill within the sanctuaries. The abundance of krill has attracted many whales to the region and over the course of the survey, there were over 200 observations of humpback whales, over 20 observations of blue whales, in addition to minke whales and a rarely seen fin whale. Seabird observations indicate that Cassin's Auklets have abundant food resources, as we documented and sampled large aggregations of krill. Common Murres were also doing well, as evident by the numerous observations of adults with chicks. ACCESS supports marine wildlife conservation and healthy marine ecosystems in northern and central California by conducting ocean research to inform resource managers, policy makers, conservation partners, and the public (www.accessoceans.org).

SEAS—Beach Watch

CONSERVATION

Minimizing Risk from Oil Spills and Vessels

Sanctuary Staff Assist with Deepwater Horizon Spill

Two sanctuary staff members traveled to the Gulf of Mexico to assist with the Deepwater Horizon blowout. Science staff participated in the SCAT (Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Technique) teams stationed out of the Mobile Alabama Incident Command Center for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill response effort. SCAT teams consist of representatives from NOAA, the state, the responsible party, and, when applicable, a cultural resources expert and a local resource trustee representative. SCAT teams evaluate oiling conditions on the shoreline and nearshore subtidal waters. They denote sensitive areas, such as nesting areas, high public use beaches and sunken ships, clean up recommendations, end point recommendations when baseline is not available, and may place constraints on clean up efforts due to ecological, cultural or economic factors.

Communications staff represented NOAA and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries at the New Orleans Incident Command Center, detailed to External Affairs' Joint Information Center (JIC). Activities included responding to national and international media inquiries; assisting the Houma NOAA staff with media planning and messaging on sea turtle Search and Rescue; and helping to develop daily and weekly outreach products for internal (Unified Command) and external (public) use on resources affected and status of fisheries closures in federal waters. The JIC system helps ensure that in an emergency response involving several participating agencies,

there is a single, central "voice" to disseminate an information flow that is complete, coordinated, accurate, timely, and reflects no bias or conflict.

Participation in these efforts helps to provide cross-training and expertise exchange between GFNMS staff and other NOAA response staff.

Cruise Ship Industry Notified of New Discharge Regulations

The West Coast Regional Office recently notified the cruise ship industry of the new cruise ship discharge regulations for Gulf of the Farallones, Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay national marine sanctuaries. Letters went to the Cruise Lines International Association, cruise ship companies whose vessels are entering the Port of San Francisco in 2010 and 2011, and the port agents who are handling the vessels. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary staff are working with the US Coast Guard to incorporate compliance with the regulations as part of the US Coast Guard's regular cruise ship inspections.

Reducing Wildlife Disturbance

Protecting Breeding Seabird Colonies

Seabird Protection Network Produces Bilingual Outreach Materials

The Seabird Protection Network, in response to a request for assistance with outreach flyers for a high traffic area where Brown Pelican roosting sites were being frequently disturbed, designed a special poster for the site, in English and Spanish, specific to the needs of the resource manager. The Seabird Protection Network has been acknowledged as a resource for managers to provide outreach materials to specific sites, and produced multilingual outreach products for the first time.

Seabird Protection Network Posts on Google Earth

Tapping into the higher-tech outreach venue of Google, the Seabird Protection Network created informative posts for the "Explore the Oceans" layer on Google Earth. Each post highlights a new no-access zone that protects sensitive breeding seabird colonies, which went into effect this spring. The Seabird Protection Network is a program of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary that works to reduce human disturbance to sensitive seabird breeding colonies along the central California coast through outreach and education. The Seabird Protection Network can reach a much larger audience through Google Earth, as part of outreach efforts to reduce disturbance to seabirds.

Protecting Whales, Other Marine Mammals

Central California Sanctuaries collaborate with USCG on C130 patrol flights

Resource Protection staff from Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary took to the air with, enforcement personnel and the USCG to patrol sanctuary waters. On Wednesday July 28th, sanctuary staff and the USCG executed the first complete survey of the central California sanctuaries using the C130 aircraft.

Protecting White Sharks

Shark Research Permit Application Triggers Environmental Assessment

Staff have been working on a permit application that requires production of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for white shark research that involves attracting a shark, capturing it, and installing a long-term satellite tag. Staff have provided guidance to the applicant on needed information, coordinated with Headquarters National Environmental Policy Act and General Counsel staff, and have collaborated with the National Marine Fisheries Service to obtain NOAA expert reviews.

This fall, the draft EA was put out for public comment on a draft environmental assessment to analyze the potential impacts of issuing a research permit for the attraction and approach of white sharks in the sanctuary. The purpose of the proposed study is to improve knowledge of the full migratory cycle of white sharks that seasonally visit the sanctuary. The deadline for comment was October 12th. Due diligence in outreach soliciting public comment on draft documents is essential for achieving transparency and clearer understanding of management decisions to respond to the public and Sanctuary Advisory Council concerns, and provide extensive documentation of information for the upcoming permit application review.

Farallones Sanctuary Releases Independent Review of White Shark Research

This fall Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary released an Independent Review of the white sharks tagged at the Farallones, last fall, under a permit issued to Dr. Michael Domeier of the Marine Conservation Science Institute (GFNMS-2009-004). The Independent Review was conducted in response to public concern of the status of the white sharks tagged near the Farallon Islands. The Farallones Sanctuary worked with a team of independent, qualified reviewers with expertise in shark behavior, husbandry, and/or health to carry out this review. The results of this assessment can be accessed on the GFNMS website. This review addresses four specific sets of questions regarding the status of the tagged sharks and recommendations to improve capture, handling and tagging methods.

Farallones Marine Sanctuary Trains White Shark Naturalists

On July 22, GFNMS held its annual White Shark Naturalist Training Workshop. Thirty-seven naturalists and shark tourism operators attending the workshop were provided with knowledge and tools to promote stewardship of the local white shark population through education and compliance with GFNMS regulations and permits. At the workshop, participants were equipped with white shark conservation messages for inspiring stewardship among clients, and were provided training on the GFNMS, its White Shark Stewardship Project and related monitoring efforts, and sanctuary permitting requirements and procedures. White shark researchers Sal Jorgensen and Michael Domeier gave presentations about their work at the Farallon Islands and provided information on their latest findings, natural history of local white shark population and global trends. The sanctuary's white shark tourism permitting program requires that each white shark tourism excursion include at least one naturalist/crew member who has completed this training.

DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS TO RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Agencies Work Together on Local Climate Change Issues

In August Gulf of the Farallones met to discuss a proposed letter of agreement among the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Coastal Services Center to work collaboratively on climate change issues within the San Francisco Bay Area Region. This federal partnership builds on the Seamless Network Memorandum of Understanding between NOAA and the Department of the Interior. Agencies agreed to move forward on the draft letter and organize regional leadership staff to sign the letter at the October Ocean Climate Change Center's ribbon cutting event. The sanctuary is taking a leadership role in addressing climate change impacts to local coast and ocean ecosystems through mitigation, adaptation, and education, supporting NOAA's strategic plan to provide climate information/services that assist decision makers, and assess risks to ecosystems.

Farallones Staff Briefs Olympic Coast Site On Climate Change Programs

Farallones sanctuary staff traveled to Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to brief its staff and advisory council on the sanctuary's Ocean Climate Initiative activities, the opening of the Gulf of the Farallones Ocean Climate Center in October, and the steps the sanctuary has taken thus far to reach Climate Smart Sanctuary certification including the completion of a Condition Report, Climate Change Impacts Report, and Climate Change Adaptation Training, as well as the site meeting minimum green operation standards.

MARITIME HERITAGE

Sanctuary's Drakes Bay Nominated as National Landmark

The National Park Service has submitted a draft nomination for Drakes Bay Historic and Archaeological District Landmark, part of the Farallones marine sanctuary. The district includes the region where the shipwrecked Manila galleon *San Agustin* is believed to be lost in 1595, the oldest recorded shipwreck in the Pacific Coast region. National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, fewer than 2,500 historic places bear this national distinction. This is a higher ranking than a National Register of Historic Places nomination. Robert Schwemmer, Maritime Heritage Coordinator, West Coast Region, and Bruce Terrell, Maritime Heritage Program's Senior Archeologist, reviewed and commented on the proposal.

Shipwrecks in Farallones Sanctuary Identified

Regional Maritime Heritage Coordinator Robert Schwemmer identified general positions of known maritime heritage resources for the Gulf of Farallones and other western region national marine sanctuaries for the upcoming new edition of the sanctuary system atlas. He also completed an inventory of shipwrecks of the West Coast Region that are potential environmental threats (e.g., the *Jacob Luckenbach*), or that no longer pose a threat.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Increasing Awareness of the Sanctuary

Outreach Fairs and Conferences

Farallones Staff High Profile at California and the World Ocean Conference

In September, management, science, resource protection and education/outreach staff were deeply involved in the California and the World Ocean Conference in San Francisco. They delivered multiple presentations and facilitated panels and covered topics including climate change, science informing policy, and the role of "citizen scientists" in informing resource management. In addition, communications and resource protection staff also helped to staff the NOAA outreach booth.

Maria Brown Chairing SF Ocean Film Festival

Maria Brown has been named Chair of the Board of Directors for the San Francisco Ocean Film Festival (SFOFF). The next festival, scheduled for February 9 to 13, 2011, is the nation's premier "cinemaquatic©" film festival that focuses on the ocean, and each year reaches people from all walks of life who share a love for and an interest in the ocean. Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is one of the founding partners of the festival. This important public outreach vehicle attracts over 3,700 people each year, and include a special youth program in which nearly one thousand students participate without charge. Film has proven an extremely effective medium through which to reach the general public with messages designed to inform, inspire, and foster stewardship of the ocean, and raise awareness of issues affecting it.

Boaters Targeted for Ocean Awareness

On August 19, the Executive Director of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association spoke at the combined Northern California and Delta Clean Boating Network in Berkeley. The presentation highlighted the GFNMS/FMSA role in getting the word out to boaters on both the newly designated marine protected areas within the sanctuary and encouraged this extensive network of boaters to become an effective resource to communicate issues of sanctuary concern to the boating public more cohesively. More than 45 attendees from state, local and federal agencies dealing with boaters, as well as numerous professional organizations, NGOs and retail networks were present. A more formal communication partnership was established with a myriad of agencies and organizations with existing structures to reach the boating public, one of the targeted user groups for sanctuary interpretive enforcement and education.

Sanctuary Staff Lend Media Assistance at BLUE Ocean Film Festival

In August, Farallones sanctuary staff assisted with media, podcast and live broadcast at the BLUE Ocean Film Festival in Monterey. BLUE Ocean Film Festival is a NOAA sponsored global film festival and conservation summit for underwater filmmakers and marine researchers. A simultaneous community festival shared the best of the film competition with the public and included presentations from the filmmakers and scientists who created them.

Farallones Sanctuary, Randall Museum Partner for Marine Science Summer Camp

This summer Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary partnered with the Randall Museum (San Francisco Recreation and Park Department) to offer a marine science camp at Randall Museum. The camp ran for two weeks, was taught by sanctuary education staff and involved 31 children between the ages of eight and twelve years old. Hands-on activities, craft projects, games and discussion were used to explore many marine topics including marine mammals, oceanography, sea birds, watersheds, oceanography, turtles, sharks, and other marine invertebrates. The camp culminated in a tidepool fieldtrip to Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in San Mateo where the campers were able to see in their habitat, many of the organisms they had studied. As campers increased their awareness and knowledge of coastal and marine life through classroom and field experiences, they also investigated some of the ways scientists learn about the ocean, its life and challenges.

LiMPETS—Long-term Monitoring Program & Experiential Training for Students

LiMPETS Model for Regional and International Student Programs

The LiMPETS program trains middle school, high school, and other young groups to monitor the rocky intertidal, sandy shore and offshore areas of the five west coast National Marine Sanctuaries. This quarter, 468 students and teachers from 14 different schools and partners carried out LiMPETS shore surveys. See www.limpetsmonitoring.org

LiMPETS Staff and Volunteers Monitoring for State Marine Protected Areas (MPA)

In August quarterly monitoring was completed at five of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary's established LiMPETS (Long-term Monitoring Program and Experiential Training for Students) sites for the MPA Baseline Monitoring Program. Beach and rocky intertidal surveys were conducted for Montara, Duxbury, and Bodega Head MPAs. Current and historic citizen-science data collected through LiMPETS will be analyzed and integrated into rocky intertidal and sandy beach data collected by other research teams who are involved in the MPA Baseline Monitoring Program for the state of California. Citizen science programs like LiMPETS have the potential to mobilize effectively a large number of willing volunteers to conduct monitoring along the coast of California. Using the results of the data analysis in combination with the North Central Coast MPA Monitoring framework, LiMPETS will provide recommendations to the state for long-term monitoring of its marine protected areas.

At-Your-School (AYS) Programs

Farallones Sanctuary Programs Go Out to Thousands of Students This Year

During the 2009/2010 school year, over 3,400 students and their teachers in 23 schools participated in 124 *At Your School* Programs (*AYS*). *AYS* staff traveled throughout the San Francisco Bay area to bring ocean education to schools in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Marine, Santa Clara and San Francisco counties. Programs include the Sharkmobile, and Crab Cab, with curricula tailored to various grade levels.

At Your School is an outreach program of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and designed to promote environmental literacy and increase students' awareness and knowledge of coastal and marine life. It includes standards-based interactive classroom programs for kindergarten through high school grades.

Visitor Center

The Farallones sanctuary Visitor Center educates diverse audiences of the general public along an environmental literacy continuum including developing awareness, building a knowledge base, changing behavior, and building stewardship. School programs include netting plankton for view under the microscope, searching for shore crabs and activities in the Visitor Center to learn about animal adaptations. Children take part in indoor as well as outdoor activities on Crissy Field Beach.

This quarter drop-in visitors from the Bay Area and all over the world came to the sanctuary's visitor center in the Presidio totaled 4,768.

Inner City Youths Experience Farallones Sanctuary Marine Life

On July 7th the Farallones Visitor Center took 17 teenagers from the "Seven Tepees" program out on a wildlife watching trip into the sanctuary. The trip was donated by San Francisco Whale Tours aboard the *M/V Kitty Kat. Seven Tepees* offers programs for promising inner-city youth from 6th grade through High School graduation, an unprecedented 7-year investment in their future, with emphasis on social competency, self-esteem, academics, the natural environment, and preparing for future success.

At sea, the teens encountered eight humpback whales, some of them lunge feeding. They saw salmon chasing and feeding on krill, and a California sea lion devouring a large salmon. For most of these teenagers it was their first time out on the ocean on a boat, and the first time seeing whales. Seas were calm, and a rich, educational, and wonder-full day of ocean experiences in the sanctuary was enjoyed by all.

Life-Sized White Shark Model Engages Visitors

With the advent of white shark season in sanctuary waters, the Farallones Visitor Center hosted a special white shark program in which participants viewed a film about the white sharks of the GFNMS, built a life size white shark model, complete with internal anatomy, and created a print collection depicting several shark species that live in the sanctuary, using linoleum block printmaking techniques.

Crissy Field Special Programs include:

Plankton and Pastries: Gulf of the Farallones NMS Visitor Center staff led this hands-on public program to promote ocean literacy where participants net their own plankton for study in the tide station pier house. The program begins with coffee, juice and pastries and a tour of the sanctuary visitor center emphasizing upwelling, plankton life cycles, and the national marine sanctuary

program. Following the introduction, participants collect their own samples and create their own slides of phytoplankton and zooplankton for a hands-on microscopic exploration of the weird and wonderful world of plankton. This program presented to 60 adults and young people this quarter.

San Francisco Bay Estuary Education Program: The sanctuary partnered with the San Francisco Bay Estuary Education Program (SF-BEEP) and introduces urban youth and teachers to the San Francisco Bay Estuary and the challenges facing this vast watershed. This program of The Bay Institute conducts in-classroom seminars, a high school internship program that extends learning to the workplace setting, and a summer institute for teacher training. This summer, Gulf of the Farallones NMS Visitor Center staff taught a two-week intensive plankton series to engage urban high school students in marine science and increase ocean literacy to public high school students.

Fishermen in the Classroom: Middle-school students and teachers took part in the Fishermen in the Classroom visitor center program, which highlights the maritime heritage in the San Francisco and Pillar Point fishing communities. Local fishing folk participated in the development of curriculum, and delivered the programs.

FACILITIES

Farallones Marine Sanctuary Staff Cut Carbon Dioxide Emissions

As part of its greening initiative, through reduced transportation and improved waste management, sanctuary staff have cut carbon emissions by an average of 0.83 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent per person.

The Visitor Center now offers paperless program registration, and reuses batteries from the adjacent historic Golden Gate Tide Station for exhibits. Aquarium creatures are 'rescued' from ships being hauled out and bottom-scraped. Specially designed solar-assisted water coolers and aquaria will be fully operational in the coming year.

Green Operations Presented For Olympic Coast Sanctuary

Operations staff presented the GFNMS Green Operations Plan and Emissions Inventory to the Olympic Coast Sanctuary Advisory Council and staff. One of the desired outcomes of this greening initiative was to share these documents with other sites in hopes that they would adopt them to guide a reduction in carbon emissions resulting from sanctuary operations.

FARALLONES SANCTUARY 30TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT CALENDAR

Month & Date	Event	
Jan - TBA	California Academy of Sciences	
	Farallones nightlife / movie promotion	
Jan - 29	Teacher Workshop: LiMPETS Introduction to Rocky	

	Intertidal Monitoring	
February	Ab.	
Feb - 25	GFNMS 30 th Anniversary Open House and Volunteer Appreciation Event	
Feb 10	Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting w/MBNMS, Half Moon Bay	
March		_
March (8-10 weeks)	Rocky Shore Naturalist Training	
March 9-13	San Francisco Ocean Film Fest	
March 26	Teacher Workshop: LiMPETS Introduction to Sandy Beach Monitoring	
April		
April TBA	Spring lecture and excursion series	
April 16	Advanced LiMPETS Teacher Workshop: Data Analysis Activities for the Classroom	
May		
May - TBA	Spring lecture and excursion series (seabird focus)	
May 12	Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting at Point Reyes	
June		
June - TBA	Teacher Summer Institute / Workshop	
July		
July - TBA	White Shark Naturalist Training	
August		
August - TBA	Excursion – Sanctuary watershed restoration (salmon)	_
August 11	Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting, Pacifica	_
September	J J	
Sept - TBA	FMSA Whale Watch	_
Sept – 11-12	Registration opens for Sanctuary School Programs	
Sept - 18	Sanctuary Beach Clean-Up / Coastal Clean-Up Day	
October		_
Oct – TBA	SharktoberFest	
November		
Nov - TBA	Fall lecture – Squid ala Gilly	
Nov - TBA	Fall Excursion: Squid Fishing Trip, Hulicat	_
Nov - TBA	Teacher Workshop: Fisherman in the Classroom or Squid	
Nov 10	Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting, San Francisco	_
December	J J J	٦

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GET INVOLVED AND STAY INFORMED!

Sign up for the GFNMS listserv to receive email notices about upcoming sanctuary events and public meetings. To learn how to get involved in the sanctuary visit: http://farallones.noaa.gov. To learn more about the Sanctuary Advisory Council visit: http://farallones.noaa.gov/manage/sac.html

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