

# Joint Management Plan Review Proposed Action Plans

A Report to the Monterey Bay National  
Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council



**June 10, 2003**



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# **Part I - Introduction**

**Background**

**Purpose of Report**

**Action Plan Development**

**Next Steps**

**Public Comment**



## **Background**

### **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary**

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS), designated in 1992, is a federally protected marine area offshore of California's central coast. Stretching from Marin to Cambria, the MBNMS encompasses a shoreline length of 276 miles and 5,322 square miles of ocean, extending an average distance of 30 miles from shore. At its deepest point, the MBNMS reaches down 10,663 feet (more than two miles). It is our nation's eleventh and largest marine sanctuary of thirteen.

*The Mission of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is to Understand and Protect the Coastal Ecosystem and Submerged Cultural Resources of Central California*

The MBNMS was established for the purpose of resource protection, research, education and public use. Its natural resources include our nation's largest kelp forests, one of North America's largest underwater canyons and the closest-to-shore deep ocean environment in the continental United States. It is home to one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in the world, including 33 species of marine mammals, 94 species of seabirds, 345 species of fishes, and numerous invertebrates and plants. This remarkably productive marine environment is fringed by spectacular coastal scenery, including sandy beaches, rocky cliffs, rolling hills and steep mountains.

There are a variety of potential resource threats and opportunities within the Sanctuary due to the sensitivity of habitats and species in the region, the long stretch of adjacent populated coastline with several urban centers along the Sanctuary's shoreline, and the multiple uses of the marine environment. Sanctuary research and monitoring programs evaluate the status and health of marine species, habitats and ecosystems, provide critical information to resource managers, and coordinate activities with the array of world-class research institutions in the region. Resource protection activities use a variety of means to reduce or prevent detrimental human impacts, including collaborative planning efforts, regulations and permits, emergency response activities, enforcement and education. Education and outreach is used as a critical element in enhancing understanding and stewardship of this national treasure, ranging from public events and interactive teacher workshops to extensive written materials.

### **Joint Management Plan Review**

The National Marine Sanctuary Act requires the program to periodically review sanctuary management plans to ensure the sanctuary sites continue to best conserve, protect, and enhance their nationally significant living and cultural resources. The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has not reviewed its management plan since its designation in 1992. Recent scientific discoveries, advancements in managing marine resources, and new resource management issues may not be adequately addressed in these existing plans.

The Sanctuary's management plan describes the objectives, policies, and activities for the MBNMS. It generally outlines the regulatory goals, describe boundaries, identify staffing and budget needs, set priorities and performance measures for resource protection, research and

education programs. The management plan guides the development of future management activities.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is reviewing the management plans of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary together with the Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. These sanctuaries are located adjacent to one another, managed by the same program, and share many of the same resources and issues. In addition, all three sites share many overlapping interest and user groups. It is also more cost effective for the program to review the three sites jointly rather than conducting three independent reviews. Using a community-based process that continues to provide numerous opportunities for public input, the NMSP will determine whether current issues and threats to the resources are the same as when the initial management plan was developed, and whether the management plan put in place at that time is adequately protecting sanctuary resources. The review will also evaluate management strategies, regulations and boundaries.

### **Identification and Prioritization of Issues**

The NMSP selected the issues to be addressed in the joint management plan review following and extensive public process of scoping and issue prioritization. Twenty scoping meetings were held between November 2001 and January 2002, and over 12,500 comments were received. A Summary Scoping Report (February 25, 2002) was used by the Sanctuary Advisory Councils to select their highest priority issues. Through a series of workshops in April 2002, SAC members provided feedback and recommendations on the resource issues to be addressed. The results from the workshops are published, Report on Sanctuary Advisory Council Prioritization Workshops on May 13, 2002. Based on input from the SACs, a Selection of Priority Issues to be addressed in the Joint Management Plan Review was presented in July 2002. Following selection of the priority issues, NMSP staff developed a work plan (Priority Issue Work Plan, December 4, 1992) which characterized the issues to be addressed, identified potential working group members, outlined the timelines for completion and described the potential products to be produced as part of the working group or internal team efforts. For many of the priority issues, working groups comprised of staff, SAC members, stakeholders and subject experts were established to further characterize the issue and develop strategies to address them. Internal teams comprised of NMSP staff that also developed proposed action plans and recommendations for the Advisory Council addressed other issues. These documents are available for viewing on the JMPR website (<http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/>).

Certain issues were also determined to be addressed as site specific issues, which would be addressed by the individual Sanctuary. Other issues were also determined to cut across all three sanctuaries and were to be addressed as cross cutting issues. These Cross Cutting issues were issues that would be addressed by all three sanctuaries in a coordinated fashion.

## **Purpose of Report**

### **Report to the MBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council**

This document is a report to the MBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council comprised of the draft action plans developed by the working groups and the internal teams. This report only includes Action Plans developed by MBNMS working groups and those developed by the Cross Cutting working groups. This document does not include action plans developed to address site- specific issues for the Cordell Bank or Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries. MBNMS and NMSP staff have produced this report to provide the opportunity for the MBNMS SAC and members of the public to review and comment on the working group recommendations relevant to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary prior to preparation of the Draft Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### **Advisory Council Review of Proposed Action Plans**

The MBNMS SAC discussed the review of this document and the proposed action plans at their meeting on December 6, 2002 in Half Moon Bay. The Council agreed on the following process to review the proposed action plans. First, MBNMS staff would deliver this document two weeks prior to their meeting of June 26 and 27, 2003. Staff will be presenting each of these proposed action plans to the SAC at these meetings and the Council members will have the opportunity to ask questions about the proposals. The meeting will be held at the Best Western Beach Resort located at Highway 1 at Canyon Del Rey, Seaside, California.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, the Advisory Council will host a public comment workshop to hear input from members of the public. On July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, the SAC will consider each working group report will be considered one at a time. SAC members will be asked to identify the specific problems, strategies and/or actions they are concerned about and those will be pulled out for discussion. All other problems, strategies and actions will be presumed to be satisfactory to the SAC. The SAC will focus on the problems, strategies and/or actions that have been pulled out. The SAC will try and resolve differences through consensus. SAC members will be responsible for identifying the concern they have, as well as identifying an alternative proposal that meets the interests of all other members of the SAC. If the SAC cannot reach consensus, the SAC may refer the item back to the working group and ask that it make a recommendation to the SAC for resolution of the issue (SAC has agreed to only do this once per issue). If consensus cannot be reached on a discussion item (i.e., problem, strategy and/or action) the SAC may also take action (vote) on that item (majority rules) rather than refer it to a working group. The SAC has agreed to ultimately provide guidance on all strategies and activities by consensus or by a majority vote.

## **Action Plan Development**

### **Working Groups Tasks and Products**

This report is comprised of Action Plans developed by working groups and internal teams that were tasked with identifying recommended strategies and activities that address specific priority issues identified during the scoping and prioritization phases of the Joint Management Plan Review. Meetings of the working group were meant to be working meetings focused on collaboratively developing a recommendation to the Sanctuary Advisory Council regarding their specific issue. The working groups met approximately once a month between January 2003 and

May 2003 and focused on the development of the action plans and recommendations in this report.

### **Working Group Decision Making**

The working groups achieved decisions and recommendations by consensus unless otherwise noted. In seeking consensus, each member had an obligation to articulate interests and build agreements by negotiating a recommendation for adoption by the Sanctuary Advisory Council. In exchange, each member had the right to expect a full articulation of agreement and areas of disagreement and an opportunity to revisit issues on grounds of substantial new information that becomes available during the working group's deliberations. The process defined levels of consensus as everyone either supporting, agreeing with, or accepting a particular decision, even though it may not be the decision they preferred above all others.

If unable to support a consensus, working group members had an obligation to demonstrate during the meeting that the item at issue is a matter of such principle or importance that his or her constituent's interest would be substantially and adversely affected by the proposed decision. In the event of significant disagreements over language in the draft recommendations, the working group decided, in consultation with the facilitator, when best to move forward.

### **Working Group Selection and Role of MBNMS Staff**

Working group members were selected individuals with a strong knowledge of the regional marine resources and management issues, who also have the ability to understand and respect diverse points of view. Staff and SAC members nominated experts from the community to participate in the working groups. MBNMS staff selected working group members after consideration of these nominations. Sanctuary staff also participated in the working groups as a stakeholder and as a source of information. As a stakeholder, the Sanctuary representative forwarded NOAA's point of view, provide advice on NOAA's authority and defined the range of acceptable outcomes for NOAA. All working group meetings were open to the public and observers were welcome.

### **Action Plan Components**

Generally, the action plans are the means by which the MBNMS identifies and organizes the various management issues and the tools with which to address the issue. They should articulate how programs and projects will be implemented, the various steps in the program or project, who will be accomplishing the work how long it should take, the resources necessary for implementation, the partners that the MBNMS will be working with during implementation, and finally ways to measure the whether or not the issue is being addressed (performance measures). The action plans in this report do not contain all of the above components. The working groups involved focused on identifying four components: Strategies, Activities, Phasing, and Potential Partners. Some of the action plans have also identified a "Status." Following is a brief description of these components.

### ***Strategy***

The action plans are generally divided into Strategies. These strategies are generally the necessary programs to address a priority resource management issue identified in the scoping and prioritization processes.



***Activities***

The activities are the description of the “action” that must take place to implement the strategy and therefore accomplish the goal of addressing the specific issue.

***Phasing***

Generally, the working groups identified strategies or activities according to the following three categories of “phases” of management plan implementation. In some cases, the lack of time did not allow for the working groups to complete the prioritization or assigning a particular “phase.”

*Phase 1*

Phase 1 projects or actions are those considered to be “mission critical” projects or core programs that are the highest priority strategies critical to meet the goal of the action plan and/or “first step” projects or programs that must be accomplished first to maintain a logical sequence prior to proceeding with other actions in the plan

*Phase 2*

Phase 2 projects or actions are those that are considered to be important and necessary (but not necessarily “critical”), for a complete Sanctuary Management Program to accomplish goal in action plan and/or “second step” projects that are sequenced to be pursued following projects or programs identified in Phase One.

*Phase 3 & Opportunistic Projects*

Projects that were identified as Phase 3 were considered less important or “opportunistic” projects that should be to be initiated as funding or resources become available

***Potential Partners***

The working groups suggested potential partners to assist in the implementation of the particular strategy or activity. The identified partners include many of the stakeholders on the working group however, in many cases, the working groups identified potential partners merely as suggestions. Many of the institutions, agencies, non-governmental organizations may not be aware they have been identified as potential partners. This is merely a draft list of suggestions from the working group, and clarification of names, appropriateness, or willingness to participate will be clarified prior to release of the Draft Management Plan.

***Differences in Action Plans***

Many of the proposed action plans in this document vary in the amount of discussion and direction provided by the working group. These variations reflect differences in the types of issues being addresses, the amount of attention to the issues provided by MBNMS staff prior to the review of the management plan, and the level of input that the working group felt comfortable with in this setting. Therefore as one reviews this document, one will notice variations in detail. Some action plans are merely frameworks that will have additional detail added as the management plan is further developed and some action plans may also require additional editing of background information that may not be necessary to describe the proposed action. Again, these action plans reflect the recommendations of the working group and a product that they developed. MBNMS staff has strived to reflect that product in as much original

form as possible while providing some consistency across the action plans in terms of formatting, organization and presentation.

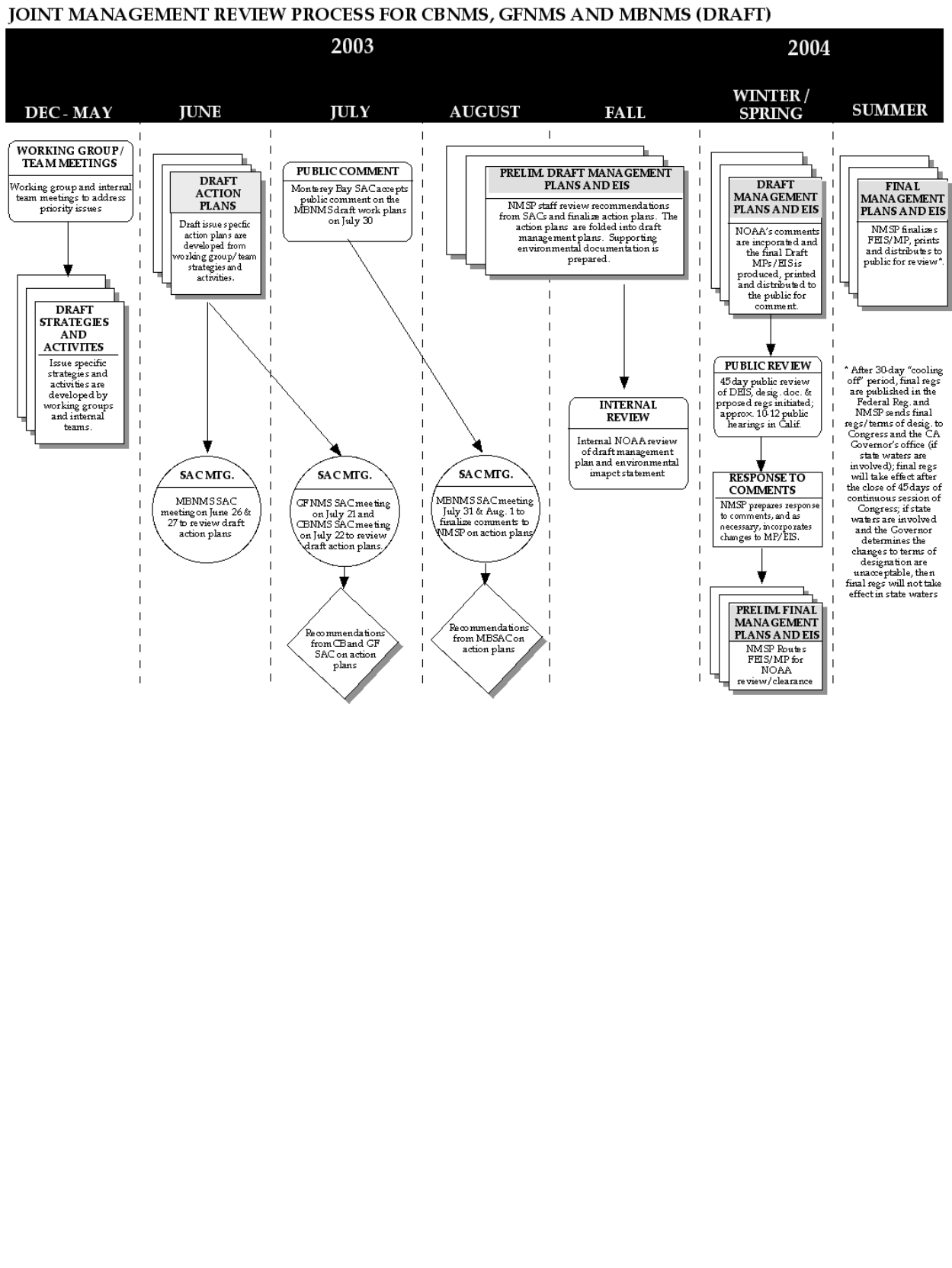
After receiving input from the Sanctuary Advisory Council, MBNMS staff will be adding further detail to ensure consistent

Many of these issues or programs that are being recommended in this document are in various stages of implementation at this time or are ongoing programs that have been already been developed and fully implemented. Some of the programs identified in this document would be completely new endeavors that would require a shifting of priorities for the MBNMS or the addition of new resources.

## **Next Steps**

The National Marine Sanctuary Program will prepare the Draft Management Plans (DMP) and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) after receiving input and recommendations from the Sanctuary Advisory Councils for each Sanctuary. The DMP/DEIS is expected to be released in January 2004 for public review and comment. Following review and possible changes to the management plan, a Final Management Plan should be released in the Summer of 2004. See Figure 1, Joint Management Plan Review Process Flowchart.

Figure 1 – Joint Management Plan Review Process Flowchart



## Public Comment

Members of the public who wish to comment on the proposed action plans may:

1. Contact their Representative on the Advisory Council (See Appendix I), or go to <http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/Intro/advisory/sacmem.html> for more information
2. Attend the July 30, 2003 Advisory Council Public Comment Workshop:  
UCSC Inn and Conference Center  
611 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, California  
For location and times please go to:  
<http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/intro/advisory/advschedule.html>  
or call (831) 647-4201
3. Write to the Sanctuary Advisory Council:  
Stephanie Harlan, Chair  
Monterey Bay NMS Advisory Council  
299 Foam Street  
Monterey, California  
93940

### Additional Information

For more information regarding these Proposed Action Plans, the Joint Management Plan Review, SAC meeting times and location of meetings go to the website (<http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/>) or contact:

Sean Morton, Management Plan Coordinator  
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
299 Foam Street  
Monterey, California  
(831) 647-4217  
[sean.morton@noaa.gov](mailto:sean.morton@noaa.gov)