

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

Council Profile

The Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, established in 1998, provides opportunities for public involvement in sanctuary management. Members represent education, conservation, research, recreational fishing, commercial fishing, tourism, non-consumptive recreation, business, the indigenous Chumash community, public-at-large, and ten agencies.

2010 Accomplishments

- 1. Sanctuary Education Team Hosts “Understanding Ocean Acidification” Workshops.** In 2010 the Council’s Sanctuary Education Team (SET) working group planned a series of innovative educational workshops on ocean acidification, which were successfully held October 7th and 23rd. The target audience was hundreds of dedicated volunteers from the Sanctuary and partner organizations. The workshops provided scientific background and current research on ocean acidification, case studies about successful education and outreach efforts, and hands-on interactive educational activities. The private company Citrix Online volunteered significant staff time to develop a web page featuring videos of workshop presentations and recommended resources: cisanctuary.org/acidocean. Eight outreach kits were made available to participating organizations.
- 2. Sanctuary Advisory Council Requests Support for MERITO Program.** In November 2009 the Advisory Council unanimously voted to express their support for the Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans (MERITO) program in a letter to Dan Basta, ONMS Director. Their letter expressed appreciation for the MERITO program’s numerous successes, such as involving over 2,600 4th-8th grade underserved students, 79 minority-serving teachers, and more than forty organizations over the past five years. The Council also expressed concern about MERITO being overly reliant upon grant funding and donations, and requested consideration of an adjustment to the base budget to assure that, at a minimum, labor costs could be covered. At the March 2010 Council meeting, Dan Basta attended to acknowledge the Council’s concerns, and shared news that he had made available funding to cover MERITO staffing for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 3. Sanctuary Advisory Council Weighs in on New Shipping Traffic Patterns.** In March 2010 the Council learned of a significant shift in local shipping traffic patterns following passage of a new state air quality law. This raised concerns about potential vessel accidents, spills, and whale ship strikes. In May 2010 the Council sent a comment letter concerning to the U.S. Coast Guard regarding a new Port Access Route Study that aims to evaluate altered traffic patterns and potentially recommend safer navigation routes. The Council’s letter encouraged incorporation of various marine spatial planning considerations.

Council Subcommittees and Working Groups

- ❖ Chumash Community Working Group
- ❖ Conservation Working Group
- ❖ Commercial Fishing Working Group
- ❖ Recreational Fishing Working Group
- ❖ Research Activities Panel
- ❖ Sanctuary Education Team

Contact Information

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Channel Islands NMS web site: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/>

Channel Islands NMS Council link: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/main.html>