

Summary of comments from CINMS Sanctuary Advisory Council members and other attending stakeholders, July 16, 2021

Including views on sending a proposed letter of support for NOAA starting a designation process for the nominated Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, and views on sanctuary designation

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) Advisory Council Meeting, July 16, 2021

Dissents/Concerns - Council Members:

Commercial Fishing (Tim Athens, via email):

- Commercial fishing industry contacts see the sanctuary proposal as being unneeded and unwarranted, and view the proposed support letter as premature.
- The proposed sanctuary, as well as a letter of support, seem like "cart before the horse" propositions.

Recreational Fishing (Capt. David Bacon):

- The boundary that's part of the nomination proposal is outsized. This takes away from the idea that sanctuaries are supposed to be for special areas. We do not need this to help achieve "30 x 30" initiative goals.
- There's been insufficient work done to identify specific submerged cultural sites.
- Any future sanctuary should come with a legally binding mechanism to leave all fisheries management to other appropriate agencies. We have rights to keep fishing.
- The proposed sanctuary, as well as a letter of support, seem like "cart before the horse" propositions.
- As the sanctuary has been proposed, I cannot support it.
- There's no process to allow citizens to vote on the idea of designation.

Department of Defense (Greg Sanders, U.S. Navy):

- Writing a letter at this stage seems premature because sanctuary proposal details from NOAA are not yet available.
- The letter reads more like advocacy for a particular course of action, rather than just informing ONMS about all of the perspectives.
- Federal agencies like ours (U.S. Navy) tend to not tell other agencies how to do their processes, thus the DoD seat will abstain.

Dissents/Concerns - Non-Member Stakeholders:

Chris Voss (President, Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara)

- Embraces Capt. David's comments.
- This would be a massive expansion of sanctuaries, and diminished the special nature intended for sanctuaries.

- Would not want this to take away from the good work done at CINMS in collaboration with local fishermen. Do not want a dilution of good programs that need resources in favor of a pursuit of expansion.
- When decision-making is attempted too far away from the place where they will be implemented, you get bad outcomes. State and local governments know these areas best, and their role breaks down when federal agencies take over and overreach.
- The Pacific Fisheries Management Council is an entity appropriate for this area (and throughout the west coast EEZ).
- The California Fish and Game Commission already has a tribal committee that can be approached to assist with tribal issues.
- Want local people to be able to go directly to the places where decisions will be made (e.g., Sacramento, not Washington DC).
- Want to see more locally-controlled initiatives for our local waters and coast (e.g., working with The Nature Conservancy as they have bought land to protect Point Conception area, sacred to the Chumash people).
- Lost some trust in sanctuaries when they opposed a limited proposed red abalone fishery reopening around San Miguel Island. There are people above the local sanctuary superintendent that can tell local staff what they must do.
- Clarification: Agreeing with John Ugoretz -- A tragedy of the commons effect is not what the state of California allows to happen.

David Lopez (General Public, Retired U.S. Air Force Colonel, Retired U.S. Dept. of Energy Manager)

- “My concerns have been expressed by other speakers.”

Supportive - Council Member Comments:

Public At-Large (Stuart Kasdin)

- “Tragedy of the commons” is understood as a result of failing to properly manage commonly used resources. Sanctuaries and their processes at least offer the possibility of allowing us to confront environmental problems together. The forum provided is valuable to help figure out the best management to take.
- If the state does not manage the federal waters, it would seem like the [federal] area is closer to a commons. If the region is not inherently a commons, but is fully managed by the state, in terms of a capacity to manage the resources, then what risk does the sanctuary offer in terms of management?
- Over-reach is always a concern, but we can help avoid that by having local processes and forums.
- Would not want to see a result be duplicative regulations and permitting requirements.
- We don’t want unnecessary impingements on users. Getting the balance right is important.
- The sanctuary offers an opportunity for greater efficiency and reduced overlapping regulations. It allows for improved oversight for all users and all functions.

Tourism seat (Michael Cohen, member):

- There will be ample opportunity to shape the process and a sanctuary.
- Climate change problems are so severe. Sanctuaries create an opportunity for us to raise our voices in support of addressing what we can do. Carbon sequestration areas should be created.
- Tourism is such an important economic driver in our area. Parks and protected areas have been so valuable for tourism.
- A sanctuary in that area could allow us to advocate for more appropriate access to coastal areas, as opposed to private lands that are off limits to all.
- No-take zones do help all of us. But this letter does not get into that. That would be figured out later through the process. The letter is trying to be non-confrontational.
- The sanctuary is not faceless locally. They are not federal cops that will come regulate us away.
- A sanctuary can give us a tool to help us with protection, help us pursue additional funding, give us voice.

Non-Consumptive Recreation (Ben Pitterle)

- Will support the letter.
- Confident that the fishing community and others will have impactful influence on how a sanctuary would be shaped and its final details. But that can't happen without a process to support it.
- There are robust commercial and recreational fishing industries within the CINMS, which is worth considering.
- Conservationists rely on a spectrum of tools and authorities available. Regulatory agencies don't always act to address problems, so others get involved at all levels.
- We should be proactive about managing the future of our oceans.
- It may be true that we don't know where sensitive submerged cultural sites are exactly located. But this is difficult and expensive and not something the Chumash community could conduct on their own. But a sanctuary could help.

Public At-Large (Mary Byrd):

- Our lens on this issue should perhaps best be from the perspective of how the designation process and potential sanctuary could be good for us at CINMS. That's our main responsibility as CINMS advisory council members. I see future benefits to us in terms of partnerships, funding, issues that go beyond the CINMS boundary, and more.
- There are so many benefits we enjoy now that could be enhanced if there was a neighboring sanctuary to partner with.
- I also support a sanctuary helping us better address climate change threats.

Conservation seat (Kristen Hislop)

- Consider also that oil and gas development is usually not allowed within national marine sanctuaries.
- Our advisory council shows that we have a local voice to influence management. Another sanctuary and advisory council would create even more local voice in the region.

- This letter is timely given that NOAA may now be more receptive to this nomination.
- While one opinion heard today was that we should wait to protect Chumash sites until we know exactly where they are, I agree with Ben (Pitterle) that the Chumash Peoples may not have the financial means to do that before designation and a sanctuary may provide needed resources to support efforts to locate and/or protect such sites, as desired. For example, the CINMS has been able to work on seafloor mapping of the entire sanctuary, something that may prove valuable for the proposed CHNMS.

Conservation seat (Sam Franz, alternate)

- 1.2 cents per year is the per taxpayer estimated cost that a 2014 economic study estimated for the cost of designating and running the proposed sanctuary.

Tourism seat (Morgan Coffey, alternate)

- In land conservation, we know that the establishment of wildlife corridors between protected lands is crucial to species protection success, which then leads to ecosystem success. It seems to me that this applies to multiple MPAs as well. Spillover can only have a positive impact on adjacent fisheries. I've even heard this anecdotally from local fishers.

Support - Non-Member Stakeholders:

Russell Galipeau - Public comment

- Sanctuaries set up advisory councils to provide locals with a voice. In some ways it's more local than the Pacific Fishery Management Council or California Fish and Game Commission.
- Support the council sending this letter.
- Council members have a lot of knowledge that should be plugged into a designation process. This experience is very valuable to help NOAA shape the sanctuary.
- Elinor Ostrom also explained that we need self regulation and self control too. We have to do the right thing. And we need monitoring to support this.
- Careful with using not fully defined language, like it's a "lock up", without explaining what is meant.

Other:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (John Ugoretz)

- Clarification related to earlier comments: The resources off the coast of California are certainly not an open commons left to be trampled.