



CORDELL BANK, GULF OF THE FARALLONES AND MONTEREY BAY
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES
JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
– NMSP Communication Plan Template
February 20, 2003 Meeting

Strategic Communication Plan

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Executive Summary

XXX requires the development of a clear communication strategy to ensure consistent and accurate information is conveyed. This plan was developed to maximize public outreach and participation and to be flexible so that all or portions of the plan can be implemented according to changing needs.

The communication strategy was developed to help focus on:

- specific groups and individuals that need to be involved (key constituent outreach component),
- members of the public who need to be kept aware (community awareness component),
- specific media that should be contacted and informed (media outreach component)

B. Background

(Describe need for getting messages out.)

Communication is essential, both to inform the public and constituents and to receive valuable input. Communication ranges from personal interaction of management and staff to prepared documents, maintenance of web sites, and facilitation of messages through the media.

The Strategic Communication Plan is essential to XXX, aiding in clarity of message, inclusion of the public and constituent communities and a harmonious effort.

C. Situation Analysis

The situation analysis provides an overview of our current understanding of the public's perception of XXX. Situation analysis may be derived from staff surveys and from internal brainstorming.

EXAMPLE

Issue:

The identity, role and benefits of the National Marine Sanctuaries are not clearly understood by the general public or the media.

- The general public is unaware or confused about what exactly is a "sanctuary."
- The media often confuses issues and agencies in articles referencing the sanctuaries.
- Some in the conservation community have criticized the use of the classification "sanctuary".
- Many achievements and benefits of the NMSP have gone unpublicized.

Issue:

The media is the sole source of information for much of the general public. Media do not always get facts correct or relay a balanced viewpoint regarding actions by the National Marine Sanctuaries.

- The media may confuse issues and agencies in articles referencing the sanctuaries.
- The media is more likely to cover stories with controversy than positive stories.
- Media coverage may be generated by interest groups who disagree with or oppose the actions of the sanctuary.

(Add specific issues here)

II. INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION PLAN COMPONENTS

To address our current understanding of the public's perception of XXX, four main strategies were developed. These include: key constituent outreach, community awareness, media outreach, and internal training.

A. Key Constituent Outreach Component

Goal:

Inform and involve as many constituents as possible, representing a diverse range of user and interest groups.

Objectives:

- 1) To inform key constituents about how they and their constituencies can actively participate with XXX.
- 2) To cultivate personal relationships with key constituents and create a flow of accurate information back and forth throughout the process.
- 3) To raise awareness about the National Marine Sanctuary Program, XXX and important issues affecting their current and future management.
- 4) To garner broad public involvement and support for XXX and for programs.

Target:

Targeted constituent groups include sanctuary users, conservation and interest groups, elected officials, and government agencies throughout (define geographic area.)

Constituent contacts will be divided into nine main groups:

- 1) **Recreation Groups:** There are a diverse number of groups that regularly recreate in sanctuary waters, including recreational fishing, sailing, wildlife watching (birders, whale watchers.) These users are passionate about continuing their use and maintaining high quality habitat. Efforts should be made not only to develop relationships with key individuals but also to encourage them to get their constituencies involved in the sanctuary. There may be local, regional and national representatives.
- 2) **Conservation Groups:** Local, regional and national conservation groups will be involved in the sanctuary's issues and programs. Many of these groups have staff that work full time on marine conservation issues. It is critical to maintain regular communication with these key groups.
- 3) **Commercial Fishing:** Commercial fishermen are a diverse group of users that represent many different types of gear and fisheries. As a group they tend to be politically connected and are effective in vocalizing their concerns. Commercial fishermen depend on marine resources to sustain their livelihood, and may fish all or part time in sanctuary waters. Staff should make efforts to learn about commercial fishing operations in and around the site and regularly meet with key fishing leaders in each community.
- 4) **Business/Industry:** There are many marine-related businesses that rely upon the sanctuary for all or a portion of their existence. They are very interested in any activities or changes that could limit or enhance their ability to operate. These include: charter boats (fishing), ports and harbors, marine transportation, communication (cables), and tourism. Staff should make efforts to provide these groups with regular updates and encourage them to get involved.
- 5) **Research/Academia:** A great deal of scientific research occurs within the sanctuary that can be used to better characterize the conditions of marine resources. Staff should maintain cooperative relationships with these individuals and institutions to encourage them to get involved in the sanctuary's programs and issues.
- 6) **Education/Outreach:** A number of organizations and institutions conduct marine education and outreach programs throughout the northeast. These include universities, schoolteachers, government agencies, aquariums, conservation groups, and even marine volunteers. These groups often have effective networks for reaching the public and getting them involved in the process.

- 7) **Elected Officials:** Key elected officials at the local, state and federal government level. These are important, politically connected community leaders who often react to controversial issues in their communities. It is important to meet with these officials and keep them informed on sanctuary issues.
- 8) **Government Agencies:** The sanctuary has jurisdictional overlap and share management responsibilities with many other, regional, and federal agencies. Efforts will be made to coordinate, consult and involve these agencies and the coastal states when appropriate.
- 9) **NOAA/DOC:** Many outreach and media items must go through the NOAA and DOC chain of command for approval. It is imperative that key NOAA and DOC officials are made aware of outreach and media activities. This will involve key personnel at the headquarters and regional level.

Tools:

Process:

Draft Timeline:

B. Community Awareness Component

Goal:

Educate and inform community groups and the general public about marine conservation issues, the presence and mission of the sanctuaries, and promote community involvement in the sanctuaries and their programs.

Objectives:

- 1) To build public awareness and promote discussion about current ocean and coastal conservation issues.
- 2) To raise awareness about the National Marine Sanctuary Program, individual national marine sanctuaries, and important issues affecting their current and future management.
- 3) To inform community groups about how they and their members can actively participate.
- 4) To garner broad public involvement and support for the sanctuary and its programs.

Target:

Targeted audiences include community-service groups, chambers of commerce, school groups, park auxiliary/volunteer groups, fairs and community events, and open house/general public presentations throughout (geographic area), with specific emphasis on (targeted towns, cities.) Key area newspapers and publications will be identified for feature stories to increase general awareness of the sanctuaries.

Community audiences will be divided into eight main groups:

- 1) **Chambers of Commerce and trade groups:** In each community, there are a diverse number of businesses that participate in the Chamber of Commerce, including tourist-serving, user-serving, and general businesses. Efforts should be made to educate these groups on the benefits of the sanctuaries and to encourage their participation and support.
- 2) **Community Service Groups:** Groups such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and others bring together a wide range of people within a community who have a service ethic and interest in improving their community. These audiences should be targeted for general presentations about the sanctuaries.
- 3) **Park Auxiliary/Volunteer Groups:** There are many state and local parks along the coastal area that have volunteer docents and aides. These people are usually very supportive of efforts to protect wildlife and the environment. Staff should make every effort to identify these groups for general presentations about the sanctuaries and provide them with information and regular updates to encourage them to get involved.
- 4) **School Groups:** Many schools incorporate marine education programs in their curriculum. Additionally, there are often parent/booster groups associated with schools. Both types of audiences should be assessed for possible general outreach about the sanctuaries.
- 5) **Community Fairs, etc.:** Throughout the year, there are community fairs and other events where it is appropriate for sanctuary participation, either with an educational booth or as a speaker/presenter. Staff should seek out these opportunities to disseminate information about the sanctuaries.
- 6) **Sanctuary Sponsored Open Houses/Events:** Also during the year, the sanctuaries may sponsor a number of events and lectures where information is provided about the sanctuaries.
- 7) **Multicultural:** There are growing numbers of community residents who either do not speak English or have English as their second language. Efforts will be made to inform and involve these communities.
- 8) **Newspaper Feature Writers:** In conjunction with the media plan, staff should identify possible subjects and markets for feature stories about the Sanctuary System to enhance overall community awareness.

Tools:

Process:

Draft Timeline:

C. Media Outreach Component

Goal:

Print and electronic media covering the sanctuaries will communicate correctly and clearly the messages of the sanctuaries, helping to inform the public and constituent groups.

Objectives:

- 1) To educate the most influential key media representatives and provide a comprehensive base of knowledge that leads to informed reporting of sanctuary issues and activities.
- 2) To cultivate personal relationships with key media and create a flow of accurate information.
- 3) To create and implement an efficient method of generating and submitting announcements of meetings and public events to print and electronic media outlets.
- 4) To achieve maximum exposure in the media to increase public awareness of the sanctuaries and their programs.

Target:

Targeted media include print and electronic writers and editors covering environment/ sanctuaries throughout (geographic area) and key media from (targeted cities.)

Media contacts will be divided into three main groups:

- 1) The top writers and editors who will be covering the sanctuaries for influential print publications.
- 2) Key print and magazine environmental and marine reporters within the identified geographic areas, news and feature editors and/or reporters at television and radio stations. This is a comprehensive list for press releases generated about the sanctuary.
- 3) Calendar and city editors at newspapers and assignment editors at television and radio stations. For meeting and public event announcements.

Tools:



Process:

Draft Timeline:

E. Outreach Tools

Outreach Tools				
Tools	Constituent Outreach	Community Awareness	Media Outreach	Staff Training
Messages and talking points	*	*	*	*
Website	*	*	*	*
Press/Briefing Kits	*	*	*	
- Brochure	*	*	*	
- Informational one-pagers	*	*	*	
- Maps and charts	*	*	*	
- Timeline	*	*	*	
- FAQ sheets	*	*	*	
- Editorial fact sheets			*	
Press releases			*	
Calendar press releases			*	
Media advisories			*	
Power Point presentation	*	*		*
Feature Story and/or Op-Eds		*		
Flyers for Events, Meetings		*		
General Mailing/Distribution Lists	*	*		

* This represents a primary tool for this target group; all materials are available for use with any target group as needed.

Explanation of Outreach Tools:

- 1) **Messages and talking points:** Key messages are specific “take home” messages that should be stated at every opportunity. Talking points provide staff with agency-approved language that can be used to respond to specific issues.
- 2) **Website:** Updates, notices, background information and maps can easily be posted on the site website, creating a location where media can easily learn about the sanctuary’s issues and programs. This site can also be used to archive media releases, correspondence, and other outreach materials.

- 3) **Press/Briefing kits:**
- 4)
 - a) **Brochure:** This brochure provides an introduction to the sanctuaries.
 - b) **Informational one-pagers:** Information presented on key subjects. Informational one-pagers will be ever changing, reflecting the sanctuaries' issues and programs. They may be included in briefing kits or handed out on their own.
 - c) **Maps and charts,** depicting the marine sanctuaries and any other specific features needed.
 - d) **FAQ sheets:** Frequently asked questions based upon questions asked by the public.
 - e) **Editorial fact sheets:** Information in bullet format for editorial use. Facts, figures, and easily understood pieces of key information. The intended use is to provide writers easy access to necessary information in a useful format. Fact sheets will be ever changing, reflecting the topic of interest. They may be included in press kits or handed out on their own.
- 5) **Press releases:** Sent out to announce an event or development. May be used prior to or concurrent with an event (announcement of a cultural resource location.)
- 6) **Calendar press releases:** Simple "who, what, where" format announcing public meetings, sent to calendar and assignment editors to publish for public to read or see.
- 7) **Media advisories:** Activity or event notice sent to media and constituents with the intent to have them cover the story. Notice to editors and assignment editors that a potential story opportunity will take place and their coverage is encouraged. They can also be used to provide public notice of an event.
- 8) **PowerPoint presentation:** Computer presentation summarizing a topic or issue.
- 9) **Feature Story and/or Op-Eds Topics/Information:** Ideas for possible sanctuary-related feature stories to appear in local newspapers, publications and trade journals will be identified and provided to writers/reporters to promote awareness about the Sanctuary System.
- 10) **Flyers:** Flyers and handbills will periodically be prepared for posting on community bulletin boards and provided to locations throughout the area announcing upcoming sanctuary-related events as well as key public meetings.

- 11) **General Mailing/Distribution Lists:** In order to keep both groups and individuals informed of upcoming public meetings and activities, the site will establish a general mailing/email/fax list that can be used to periodically disseminate such information.

III. Implementation: tools, schedule, tasking

- A. Key messages
- B. Talking points
- C. Frequently Asked Questions
- D. Media list
- E. Key Constituent lists

IV. Budget (Materials, printing, meetings, travel, misc.)