

PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

ISSUE STATEMENT

In order to fully carry out its mission, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) needs to develop community partnerships to maximize its limited resources and minimize the risk of working in isolation and missing partnership opportunities. Through community partnerships, opportunities will be leveraged to develop public awareness, education, and stewardship; obtain volunteer, financial, and in-kind support; and increase research opportunities.

OUR GOAL

To maximize community partnerships in order to facilitate the sanctuary's ability to identify, understand, and protect sanctuary resources, as well as instill within the community a sense of value and stewardship for the sanctuary.



Photo: Michael C. Carver

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CBNMS is an offshore sanctuary that does not have all the necessary resources to complete key research or education projects; or establish the same unique identity and level of interest and support enjoyed by other established near-shore sanctuaries. The sanctuary's primary program focus is on conducting research; developing associated education programs; and identifying and protecting the sanctuary's natural resources and habitats. CBNMS faces a significant challenge in effectively building community interest and support for a remote, offshore site.

One major way to achieve the sanctuary's goals is through community partnerships. Sanctuaries function more effectively with community support. All sanctuaries work with Sanctuary Advisory Councils, community groups, and agencies to provide support in reaching out to the community and building stewardship.

THE JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW (JMPR)

Partnerships with Community Groups is one of the action plans in the CBNMS Draft Management Plan (DMP). The DMP includes five action plans that, once finalized, will guide sanctuary management for the next five years. The plan is a revision of the original management plan, developed when the sanctuary was designated in 1981, and is focused on how best to understand and protect the sanctuary's resources. The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is updating the management plans for Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay national marine sanctuaries in what is known as the Joint Management Plan Review.



CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

CBNMS protects an area of 397 square nautical miles (526 square miles) off the northern California coast. The sanctuary is an area of special significance due to its unique geological and oceanic features that create conditions which support extraordinarily diverse and abundant marine life.

CBNMS is located in one of the world's four major coastal upwelling systems. The combination of oceanic conditions and undersea topography provides for a highly productive environment in a discrete, well-defined area (Schmieder, 1982a). The main feature of the sanctuary is Cordell Bank, an offshore granite bank located on the edge of the continental shelf. The vertical relief and hard substrate of the Bank provides benthic habitat with near-shore characteristics in an open ocean environment, 20 nautical miles from shore.



ACTION PLAN

The sanctuary's Partners with Community Groups Action Plan was developed jointly with a variety of stakeholders and partners and includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Develop partnerships with the research community to leverage opportunities and expertise to fulfill the sanctuary's research goals.
- Culture the Sanctuary Advisory Council as a link to the community.
- Use media opportunities to promote the sanctuary's research programs and raise the identity of the sanctuary in Marin, Sonoma, and southern Mendocino counties.
- Identify mechanisms to raise and manage additional sources of revenue and in-kind services.

TO GET INVOLVED

CBNMS welcomes your ideas about important resource management issues in the sanctuary. A Draft Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement are scheduled for release to the public in 2006. Following their release, hearings will be held in several locations throughout the region to gather public comment. Written comments will be accepted as well. To find out about public hearings, or how to submit written comments, please visit our website at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/jointplan>.