



BIG SUR COASTAL ECOSYSTEM

Action Plan Summary

MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

THE ISSUE:

Several local, state, and federal agencies are presently producing new or revised management plans affecting the Big Sur coast. Many of these agencies coordinate on several issues, however, no formal plan or guidelines exist offering clear guidance on plans, programs, contact information, and collaborative opportunities. Public groups and individuals have raised a concern that each agency will develop separate plans for pieces of the Big Sur region, rather than a single plan identifying the related roles and interconnectedness of the agencies to each other and the Big Sur coastal ecosystem.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OUR GOAL

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's (MBNMS) goal is to lead an effort to design and facilitate a framework for a comprehensive, multi-agency "Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Plan."

The Big Sur Coast is one of the most beautiful and visited coastlines in the United States. Local, state, and federal agencies share jurisdiction and responsibility for maintaining public enjoyment of the region, while protecting it from overuse and environmental decline.

Presently, seven local, state, and federal agencies are in the process of revising management plans in the Big Sur coastal region, including:

- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (Joint Management Plan Review)**
- California Coastal Commission (Monterey County Local Coastal Program Review)**
- Monterey County (General Plan Update)**
- Los Padres National Forest (Forest Plan Update)**
- CalTrans' Big Sur Coast Highway Management Plan**
- California Coastal National Monument Management Plan**
- California State Parks Regional General Plan Updates**

Partnerships between agencies, the public, and/or nonprofit groups help ease the lack of resources and extend an agency's ability to meet its goals.



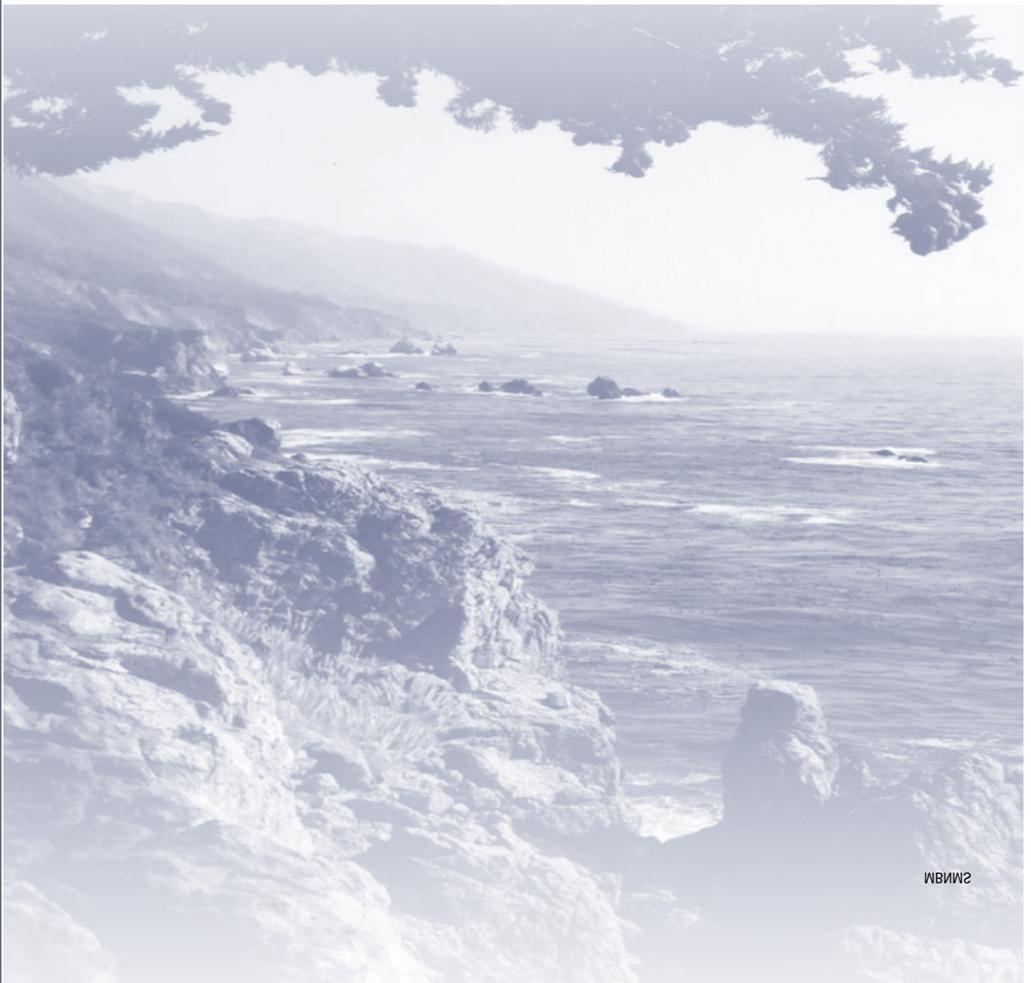
The “Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Management Plan”

will enhance communication between the public and agencies while improving resource agency coordination and providing enhanced protection and management of coastal and marine resources.

Multi-agency coordination of programs and projects can be challenging. At the same time, most agencies lack adequate resources to fully implement their mandates. Partnerships between agencies, the public, and/or nonprofit groups help ease the lack of resources and extend an agency’s ability to meet its goals. Along the Big Sur coast, the timing of all seven agencies updating or producing management plans enhances the opportunity for coordinating efforts among these agencies, including online access to planning documents, coordinated law enforcement programs, and comprehensive research, monitoring, and education programs. An integrated management plan should also help the public understand agency roles and ensure more efficient management and protection of natural resources.

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary’s (MBNMS) plan includes developing a central depository of data and mapping information for all existing plans and documents. Organization of this information will form the basis of a framework for agencies to work together on the development of action plans for priority issues. This will lead to an integrated “Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Management Plan” integrating all the plans, policies, and programs of the public agencies with jurisdiction in the Big Sur region.

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THE SANCTUARY'S ACTION PLAN

The sanctuary's "Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Action Plan" was developed jointly with a variety of stakeholders and partners and includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Continuing long term monitoring of rocky intertidal and subtidal sites
- Developing a landslide disposal policy for the Big Sur coastline
- Creating a multi-agency website for the Big Sur region that will be updated as agencies update plans and programs, and will include online access for planning documents
- Developing an integrated GIS database for Big Sur coastal and marine resource management
- Facilitating the creation of an ad hoc agency coordination team
- Facilitating the development of task forces for priority issue coordination
- Developing a system to integrate priority action plans among agencies using agency coordination team and task force representatives
- Conducting workshops to facilitate public comment on a fully integrated and comprehensive Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Management Plan
- Developing and implementing an outreach and education system for public information

MBNMS is working to identify a framework for a comprehensive, multi-agency "Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Plan," integrating resource protection, education, outreach, and research and monitoring activities specifically for the Big Sur area.



For a complete listing of the sanctuary's "Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem Action Plan" please visit:

http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/m_reptoad.html and scroll down the page.

The Joint Management Plan Review (JMPR)

"Big Sur Coastal Ecosystem" is one of the action plans in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Draft Management Plan. The MBNMS Draft Management Plan includes twenty-eight plans that, once finalized, will guide sanctuary management for the next five years. The plan is a revision of the original management plan, adopted with sanctuary designation in 1992, and is focused on how to best understand and protect the sanctuary's resources.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is updating the management plans for the Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries in a process known as the Joint Management Plan Review (JMPR).



How You Can Get Involved in the MBNMS Management Plan Process



The MBNMS 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://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan>.

Resources

California Coastal National Monument Management Plan http://www.ca.blm.gov/pa/coastal_monument

California Department of Transportation <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/bigsur>

California State Parks Regional General Plan Updates <http://www.parks.ca.gov>

Los Padres National Forest <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/lospadres>

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary <http://montereybay.noaa.gov>

Monterey County 21st Century Program/General Plan Update <http://www.co.monterey.ca.us>

Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network (SIMoN) <http://www.mbnms-simon.org>



THE MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Stretching from Marin to Cambria, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 276 miles of shoreline and 5,322 square miles (4,625 nautical miles) of ocean, extending an average distance of 30 miles from shore. At its deepest point, the sanctuary reaches down 10,663 feet (more than two miles). The sanctuary was established for the purposes of resource protection, research, education, and public use. Its natural resources include one of our nation's largest kelp forests and one of North America's largest underwater canyons. It is home to one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in the world, including 33 marine mammal species, 94 seabird species, 345 fish species, 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.