National Marine Sanctuary Program
Advisory Council Information Bulletin
September 2003

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

CINMS education team coordinated the development and design of two new brochures. One brochure is titled "Boating & Safety" and was developed in partnership with the Ventura Power Squadron, Channel Islands National Park and County of Ventura. This new brochure highlights boating safety issues relevant to the Channel Islands region, the new marine protected area network within the CINMS, watchable wildlife techniques and ways boaters can safely enjoy exploring the Channel Islands and surrounding waters. These new brochures will be mailed to all Ventura County registered boaters (estimated at 25,000).

The second brochure, "Protecting Seabirds," was coordinated with the American Trader Trustee Council, Channel Islands National Park, Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network and Santa Barbara Waterfront Department. This bilingual brochure targets pier and jetty fishermen, kayakers and boaters. The Protecting Seabirds brochure provides general information to reduce impacts to seabirds, tips while fishing and boating, and seabird viewing guidelines. Hotline information is included to report injured or entangled seabirds. These brochures will be available at landings, piers, bait shops, sportfishing, boating and kayaking stores.

Flower Gardens National Marine Sanctuary

The annual long-term coral-monitoring cruise was conducted August 25 - 29. Coral monitoring is accomplished through a contract funded equally by NOAA/FGBNMS and the Minerals Management Service (MMS). The current contractor is PBS&J, headed up by Dr. Bill Precht. Subcontractors include Dr. Rich Aronson (Dauphin Island Marine Lab) and Dr. Ken Deslarzes (Geomarine, Inc.). Guests along on this years monitoring cruise include Dr. Steve Gittings (ONMS) and Dr. Steven Miller (National Undersea Research Center / University of North Carolina at Wilmington). This monitoring event included the first data collection at some deep reef (110 - 130') monitoring stations, which were established by FGBNMS and MMS in May 2003.

"Flower Garden Banks: Exploring the Gulf of Mexico's crown jewel" was published in the Fall 2003 issue of *Riverwatch*, the Tennessee Aquarium's quarterly member's magazine. The two page full color article featured images of Stetson Bank, and highlighted the sanctuary, which is the inspiration for the central tank of the Tennessee Aquarium's $30 million expansion, set to open May 2005. Aquarium staff members, volunteers and members visited the sanctuary in July for a three-day dive trip. The images used in the article were provided by sanctuary staff and volunteer photographers.

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

The NOAA team wrapped up the final week of Monitor Expedition 2003. Although the weather was not cooperative this season, the Expedition was very successful. Outstanding imagery of the

wreck site, as well as completed mosaics of the boiler faces, and the entire length of both the port and starboard sides of the wreck site were captured. Because of the high seas, the NOAA team was only able to make one-third of the planned dive days, but in that limited time were able to accomplish all of the planned tasks in documenting the changes made to the wreck site since the completion of the major artifact recoveries in 2002.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

The Cooperative for Research and Assessment of Nearshore Ecosystems (CRANE) recently conducted field surveys in the southern-most sections of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. CRANE consists primarily of biologists from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and researchers from the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO) at the University of California at Santa Cruz. From August 2-8, 2003 CRANE divers sampled the coastal kelp forests near San Simeon and Point Piedras Blancas. By sampling benthic invertebrates, substrate type, algae, and the associated fish assemblages, CRANE divers intend to collect data on fish abundances, habitat characteristics, and trends in both space and time. With research partners from academic, state and federal institutions, CRANE will collect relevant data to meet the new management and conservation objectives stipulated in California's Marine Life Management Act.

National Marine Sanctuary Program

NMSP Director Dan Basta and members of the program's Communications Branch met with the Office of Naval Research Director ADM. Jay Cohen and his team to lay the groundwork for a symposium on the *USS Alligator*, a Civil War-era U.S. Navy submarine that sank off the Cape Hatteras coast in 1863. The symposium, to be held in Groton, CT, on October 17, will focus on the unique vessel's history and design. Staff from NMSP and the Office of Ocean Exploration will present new information about the *Alligator* and offer insights into the search and recovery of maritime archaeological resources.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program's Leadership Team met in Boston Sept. 8-12.
The meeting, hosted by Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, addressed the annual operating plan, matrix managing and out-year planning.