

PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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April 24, 2003

Mr. Chris Mobley, Manager
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
113 Harbor Way
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

Subject: NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Environmental Review
Process to Consider Marine Reserves

Dear Mr. Mobley:

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2003 to the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) addressing the environmental review process for considering marine reserves in the federal waters of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (Sanctuary). During discussions at the Council meeting held in April in Portland, Oregon, the Council responded positively to your invitation to work in a spirit of partnership toward considering this important matter. We have received a substantial amount of public input asking the Council to consider marine reserves in the Sanctuary area that are compatible with those recently adopted by the State of California. The process you have outlined seems reasonable, and we particularly appreciate the Sanctuary's commitment to preparing the environmental analysis documents.

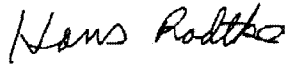
During their approval for moving forward with the proposed process, the Council discussed two other points we would like to bring to your attention:

- It is the Council's understanding that a response to engage in the process, made by the Council during the 60-day and 120-day statutory periods listed in the timeline, constitutes meeting the response period identified. The Council expressed concern these 60- and 120-day periods might not ultimately cover the entire process. We would like to confirm the understanding that these periods are provided as general guidelines, and the timeline remains flexible enough to allow full Council participation during the entire process, even if the entire process exceeds 60 and 120 days. We also presume the actual timeline and any deadlines will be cognizant of the Council meeting dates.
- As the Sanctuary analyzes changes in its designation document, Council members would like one of the alternatives to provide for extending Sanctuary authority only enough to allow the Sanctuary to create the proposed marine reserves, without extending authority over other types of fishing regulations.

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Thank you for considering these issues. We await the Notice of Intent from the Sanctuary to proceed with this effort, and look forward to working collaboratively with you during this process. Thank you again for the time Sanctuary staff spent with Council staff developing this process during the past few months.

Sincerely,



Hans Radtke, Ph.D.
Chair

JDG:kla

c: Dr. Donald McIsaac
Ms. Jennifer Gilden