

ODYSSEY



CENCAL DIVE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER LATE SUMMER 2022

CENCAL BI MONTHLY MEETING: Wednesday September 28, 2022 at 7:30 pm via zoom

CALIFORNIA NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES: A proposed new National Marine Sanctuary would increase California Sanctuary coverage creating Sanctuary coverage of the entire area from Pt. Arena lighthouse through the Channel Islands - one large, long National Marine Sanctuary. The Chumash Indians have proposed the new Sanctuary covering from south end of Monterey Bay NMS to tip top of Channel Island Sanctuary; it would fill the current gap of non Sanctuary waters in mid California. Monterey Bay Sanctuary covers Cambria to Ano Nuevo where the Gulf of the Farallons picks up coverage and carries to Pt. Arena lighthouse.

The National Marine Sanctuary system was created in 1972 by the *National Marine Sanctuaries Act*. It is important to remember and recognize each every sanctuary is different in purpose. There are 15 Marine/Gt Lakes Sanctuaries plus 2 Marine National Monuments – 620,000 sq miles. I attended a webinar on Chumash Sanctuary last week; will be more. Evidently, there was a meeting on public access in proposed Sanctuary – will try to find info. It is not really CenCal area, but diving access in California is universal interest. Wonder if GLACD keeping track?

KELP RESTORATION/URCHIN CULLING: New to me: Recently, I attended a zoom webinar on kelp restoration. At the meeting, I discovered the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) granted Reefcheck over \$600,000 to research kelp. There were 2 research sites: Noyo Harbor and Albion. Each site had 2 areas, one as control (no activity) and other with action. Initially, each ‘action’ site was culled and then research followed.

COASTAL COMMISSION SIGNS OFF ON MORRO BAY OFFSHORE WIND FARMS

The California Coastal Commission has given approval to the federal government’s plan to create wind farms off the coasts of Morro Bay and Humboldt County. [offshorewind.biz]

Last year, the federal Department of the Interior, in coordination with the Department of Defense, identified a 399-square-mile area northwest of Morro Bay as a location that will support three gigawatts of offshore wind. The federal agency also announced it was advancing wind energy projects located offshore of Humboldt Count. In May, the Biden Administration announced plans to auction five offshore areas for wind development, three of which are northwest of Morro Bay and two are off of Humboldt County. The Interior Department publicized a proposed sale notice for the commercial wind energy leases with auction prices starting at \$8 million each.

Recently, the Coastal Commission reviewed whether the leasing process proposed by the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is consistent with the California Coastal Act. The Commission reviewed BOEM’s plans for regulating site inspections by the auction winners, as well as construction and operation of offshore wind farms. In separate hearings for the two areas, the Coastal Commission gave approval for both the Central Coast and Northern California projects, with a set of

conditions that federal officials must follow. The auction for the five offshore wind development areas is expected to occur this fall. [June 13, 2022 By Josh Friedman.]

FRACKING In June 2022, California Attorney General secured a decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals blocking the Department of Interior from authorizing fracking on offshore platforms on the coast of California. In December 2016, the California Attorney General's Office and the California Coastal Commission filed a lawsuit challenging Interior's final environmental assessment, which would have cleared the way for fracking, acidizing, and other advanced well treatments on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf on the coast of California.

HOW AGENCIES COLLABORATE TO REMOVE ABANDONED AND DERELICT

VESSELS: California Coastal Commission is partnering with several agencies to secure the removal of two abandoned and derelict vessels: the American Challenger, grounded on rocks in the Greater Farallons National Marine Sanctuary near Dhillon Beach (Marin County); and the Polaris, stuck in bay mud off Rodeo (Contra Costa County). When it comes to removing these types of vessels, many agencies have some jurisdiction or funding for abandoned and derelict vessels, but no agency has all the authority or resources needed to respond to such problems. Responses are collaborative.

SONOMA COAST SHIPWRECK NORLINA NEARS HISTORICAL DESIGNATION

January 1926, the steel-hulled tramp freighter *Norlina* dropped 75,000 cases of Campbell's condensed soup at the Port of Los Angeles. Seven months and several assignments later, at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 3, she left San Francisco, bound for Puget Sound with cargo to be delivered to the Sears Roebuck Co. The *Norlina* got as far as Gerstle Cove on the Sonoma Coast. There, in a dense fog, the ship ran aground on jagged rocks in the middle of the night. "There was a grinding crash, a sudden sickening lift and lurch, and the vessel was still," the San Francisco Examiner reported. "The engines were shut off, then run in reverse. But all efforts to back off were vain." There were no casualties.

The *Norlina* would sail no more. The surging swells broke the ship apart in slow motion, over a period of four months, within shouting distance of the shore. Today it lies in pieces along the ocean floor, within the boundaries of Salt Point State Park about 20 miles north of Jenner. And yet the *Norlina* continues to steam forward, at least through the bureaucratic waters of historic preservation. The California State Historical Resources Commission on Friday approved the shipwreck's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The final decision now lies in the hands of the Keeper of the Register, a National Park Service official.

The main concentration of the *Norlina*'s remnants sits in 15-30 feet of water. At extremely low tides, tips of the ship's machinery can poke into the air. The *Norlina*, built in England in 1908 and originally launched as the *Harfleur* before a new owner renamed it for a small town in North Carolina, was 385 feet long and 51 feet wide when seaworthy. Its remains are strewn over an area longer than a football field, generally oriented northeast to south west. There is structural material from the ship's hull, along with its 130-foot drive shaft, steam engine, boilers and propeller blades, most of it encrusted with urchins, starfish and other marine life.

The *Norlina*'s precise resting place works to its advantage, too, the archaeologist said. Since 1971, when Salt Point State Park was expanded, it has lain on public land, a strong barrier to looters and souvenir hunters. An extended salvage operation removed the cargo and many usable items from the steamship before it sank in December 1926, but it hasn't been bothered much in recent years. Finally,

one simple quality preserves the Norlina's character: It was constructed entirely of steel pieces, riveted together.

As for historical uniqueness, there are currently 24 freighters on the National Register, but none of them are located west of Minnesota. Marx also pointed to the Norlina's modified duty during World War I — first as a civilian merchant vessel armed with 4-inch guns of war, then, after it was acquired by the U.S. government, as a Navy cargo ship. If the National Park Service checks the final box — a determination that generally takes two to six months — the Norlina will receive national recognition nearly a century after her final run. Her status will be marked with a plaque, visible even in the highest tide.

WHY POLIO IS MAKING A COMEBACK: On April 12, 1955, the world learned Jonas Salk had developed a vaccine protecting against polio. The news was so big that businesses and schools closed, and nationwide vaccinations started.

In 1963, my university closed for a day, and all students went thru the gym in alpha order for a sugar cube. In the decades since, wild polio has been eliminated in all but two countries — until NOW. The disease has crept back in countries, including US, believing polio was long behind them. These new cases, experts warn, are just the tip of the iceberg. Kids are probably ok as California requires vaccine for school but you?

In 2008 in planning trip to So Africa, I checked with CDC for health warnings and discovered polio epidemic in the country. Realizing my last vaccine was 1963 (!), I checked with San Mateo Cnty health and found I needed/got a booster. Now I will check again. So check your polo vaccine status now. Crose

US POSTAL SERVICES UNVEILS NEW NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES STAMPS. The **US Postal Service** released new postage stamps featuring sharks, sea otters, seals and iconic seascapes to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the **National Marine Sanctuary System**, the USA's national parks of the ocean. The new stamps celebrate these spectacular places, also raising awareness to help preserve them for the future. They include photographs taken by *Daryl Duda, Michael Durham, Mark Sullivan, Peter Turcik, Norbert Wu and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees Wendy Cover, Jeff Harris, Elliott Hazen, Joseph Hoyt, Ed Lyman, Greg McFall, Matt McIntosh, G. P. Schmahland Kate Thompson.*

According to *National Marine Sanctuary Foundation* President and CEO Kris Sarri “The new Forever stamps celebrate the majestic seascapes, wildlife, and underwater wonders that our National Marine Sanctuary System offer. For half a century, our sanctuaries have protected these treasures for all of us to enjoy, explore, and discover. As we mark the 50th anniversary of the Sanctuary System, we must recommit to saving these spectacular places and protecting their splendor for generations to come.” Art director Greg Breeding designed the pane using existing photographs. A map of the *National Marine Sanctuary System* illustrated by Todd Detwiler is printed on the back of the pane. The stamps were unveiled at the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Exploration Center in California.

FISHING LICENSE CHANGES: There is also a move to display of a sport fishing license on a mobile device by 2023. Current regs require a physical license, so E license requires change in regs and technology. The question of E license for ‘water’ is unknown — carry cell phone on kayak????? 😬 Last I knew, no cell service off Sonoma/Mendocino Coasts.

CAN SEA OTTERS BE REINTRODUCED?

Sea otters had dwindled to near-extinction by the 1910s, leaving a population of about 1,000 worldwide and only about 50 in California. With conservation efforts, California's sea otter population has grown to about 3,000. Now, an idea being considered by the federal government could see the otters, which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, reintroduced to habitats in Northern California and Oregon. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service recently completed a feasibility study for reintroducing the otters to former habitats, serving two purposes: restoration of the species and "restoration of ecosystem function." The plan would involve introducing a mix of captured and surrogate-raised sea otters to some of the areas, followed by more than a decade of study. The Fish & Wildlife Service recommends more research be done specifically regarding potential sites and the socioeconomic effects of otter reintroduction.

MAJOR CHANGES TO RECREATIONAL BAG LIMIT 2023: In response to recent scientific information suggesting some nearshore groundfish species are in decline, significant changes to California's groundfish sport fishing regulations are expected starting next year. To reduce pressure on these stocks, fishing seasons will be shorter in nearshore waters, but new opportunities in deeper water are anticipated. The upcoming changes were developed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) over the past year and reflect outcomes of a public decision-making process where the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) worked with fishing industry representatives, non-governmental organizations, and state, federal and tribal governments to balance the need for fishing season closures in nearshore waters with the needs of these communities and industries. The PFMC approved the recommendations for 2023 and 2024 at its June meeting.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has begun the process of amending federal regulations, to take effect January 2023. The California Fish and Game Commission is considering the same changes for state waters. California's sport groundfish regulations divide the state into five "Groundfish Management Areas" – where the fishing seasons, Rockfish Conservation Areas or depth constraints, and bag limits may differ. In 2022, nearshore groundfish fishing season ranged from eight to 10 months, but in 2023, expected to shrink to not more than five and a half months in all areas.

Within the 10-fish daily combined rockfish, cabezon and greenling bag limit, the sub-bag limits of one fish each for quillback and copper rockfish, and four fish for vermilion rockfish will continue in 2023. These sub-bag limits have been in effect since January 2022 and were necessary because 2021 information indicated severe declines of quillback and copper rockfish populations off California and recreational vermilion rockfish catch continued to be greater than sustainable harvest limits.

While groundfish fishing seasons will be shorter for nearshore waters and some bag limits are reduced, new opportunities to fish in deeper water beginning in 2023 will allow anglers to target healthy populations of shelf and slope rockfish in deeper waters, such as schooling mid-water widow and yellowtail rockfish or bottom-dwelling blackgill rockfish. Additionally, the sport fishing seasons for some other federally managed groundfish species such as sablefish (sometimes called "black cod" or "butterfish") will be open year-round without depth constraints. Access to these previously closed depths means new experiences for anglers as they explore new habitats, new fishing locations, new target species, and new gear configurations to assemble and deploy.

To stay informed of in-season regulatory changes, please call the Recreational Groundfish Hotline at (831) 649-2801 or visit CDFW's [summary of recreational groundfish fishing regulations](#).

Phase-out of Printed Regulation Booklets: As part of a broader effort to go paperless, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife is transitioning to a digital format for its fishing regulations booklets. Booklets will no longer be printed and shipped to license agents or customers, but electronic versions of the booklets will continue to be available.

CENCAL UNDERWATER SPORTS:

UNDERWATER HOCKEY

PCCs (Pacific Coast Championships) - LA area Oct 8-9; Castaic Sports Complex Aquatic Center, California; 2 day meet

Play - San Francisco, Sebastopol and World Championships – Australia July 2023

UNDERWATER RUGBY –

play - Mt View

National Championships - Sept 9-11 Connecticut

SKINDIVING SPEARFISHING

PanAmericans – November 2-6 Brazil; qualifier for Worlds 2023 Spain September 7

PCCS - (Pacific Coast Championships) scheduled Oct 8

National Championships – June 13-16, 2023 in Kona, Hawaii

FINSWIMMING –

World Championships: also USOA swimmers, July in Columbia

CALENDAR 2022

SEPTEMBER

Sept 5	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i>
Sept 9-11	UW Rugby National Championships
Sept 11	Patriots Day
Sept 26	Rosh Hashana
Sept 28	CenCal BOD Zoom

OCTOBER

Oct 1	<i>Underwater Society Annual Meeting/Zoom</i>
Oct 2	USOA Annual Membership Meetings - Zoom
Oct 1-2	Boston Sea Rovers Dive Show
Oct 5	Yom Kippur
Oct 8	PCCs Skin Spearfishing/San Simeon
Oct 8-9	PCCs UW Hockey Castaic Sports Complex Aquatic Center, California
Oct 10	<i>Columbus Day Holiday</i>
Oct 13	CA Fish & Wildlife Commission, Truckee
Oct 31	Halloween

NOVEMBER

Nov 1-4	DEMA Show Orlando
Nov 2-6	PamAmerican Skin Spear/Brazil
November 6	Daylight Ends
November 11	<i>Veterans Day Holiday</i>
November 12-13	Finswimming Nationals Boston MA
November 17	CA Fish/Wildlife Monterey Area
November 25	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>
November 30	CenCal BOD Zoom

DECEMBER

December 7	Pearl Harbor Day
December 15	CA Fish & Wildlife Commission, San Diego
December 19-26	Hanukkah
December 25	<i>Christmas Day Holiday</i>
December 31	National Champagne Day

CALENDAR 2023 January

January 1	<i>New Year Holiday</i>
January 16	<i>MLK Jr Holiday</i>

International

May 12-14	Finswimming World Cup, Florida
June 26-July 2	Finswimming Juniors World Championship, Cairo
July 7-15	UW Rugby World Championships, Montreal
July 17-30	UW Hockey World Championships, Gold Coast, Australia
Sept 9-10	Skin Spearfishing World Championships, Laredo Spain

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