

Executive Director's Report

Russian Delegation

Along with the U.S. Coast Guard report this morning, a delegation of Russian officials will visit and make a brief report to the Council. Members of the delegation include:

- Lieutenant General Nikolai Pavlovich LISINSKY, Chief of the Regional Directorate.
- Captain 1st Rank Igor Lvovich RYPALOV, Deputy Chief of the Regional Directorate - Chief of the Maritime Guard Department.
- Colonel Yuri Vladimirovich BAKNIN, Deputy Chief of the Regional Directorate.
- Colonel Valeriy Tikhonovich RABUNIN, Deputy Chief of Staff.
- Captain 1st Rank Farit Valitovich ZYFAROV, Chief, Group Coordination Center for State Control of Fishing Situations.
- Major Alexei Victorovich VYSOTENKO, Chief of International Treaty Service.
- Major Andrei Ivanovich PAKHOMOV, Officer of International Treaty Service.

BSFAB Meeting

A meeting of the Bering Sea Fisheries Advisor Board is scheduled for later this week, Sunday evening at 6:00 pm in the Aleutian Room.

TRAFFIC Report

Related to Russian fisheries issues, we have a report scheduled for Friday morning from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trading network of the World Wildlife Fund. A report, titled 'Trawling in the Mist: Industrial Fisheries in the Russian part of the Bering Sea', is based on interviews with scientists, fisheries inspectors, and managers, and on examination of customs data, trade statistics, and population assessments. David Cline will be presenting a summary of these findings for the Council.

March Symposium

Item B-1(a) is an announcement for a symposium March 7-8 in New York City titled "Sustaining Seascapes: The Science and Policy of Marine Resource Management". Hosted by the American Museum of Natural History, co-sponsors include Environmental Defense, NOAA's Marine Protected Areas Center, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society, and the World Wildlife Fund. The symposium will focus on large-scale conservation of marine ecosystems.

Admiral Loy letter

Per your direction in December, a letter from the Council Chairman to U.S. Coast Guard Admiral James Loy was sent last month. A copy is included as Item B-1(b).

Sea Otter information

Item B-1(c) contains information from the USFWS regarding the continued decline of sea otter populations in Southwestern Alaska. They are proposing a change in the stock assessment approach, primarily to designate three separate stocks as opposed to a single stock, which would have implications relative to potential future listings. This is informational for the Council at this time and we will continue to coordinate with USFWS to keep you apprised of developments.

April and June Agendas

As was noted in our December newsletter, the Council's agenda over the next few meetings is quite daunting. We have scheduled an extra day for this meeting, and two extra days for the April meeting, in an effort to avoid an extra meeting and still get our agenda items completed. We may need an extra day for our June meeting in Dutch Harbor as well. Hopefully we can get back to a more normal schedule after we get some of the major items completed, including some of the big, litigation-driven issues. A three-meeting outlook is included under D-2 (Staff Tasking) and we can circle back to that towards the end of this meeting.

Retirement Party for Clarence

Don't forget, tomorrow night we have a retirement party planned for Clarence Pautzke in the Chart Room upstairs, beginning at 6:30 pm. Clarence is, as most everyone is aware, taking over as Executive Director of the North Pacific Research Board. There will be snacks and a no-host bar, and everyone is invited to witness the toasting (and a little roasting) of Clarence's 21 year tenure with the Council.

Executive Session

The Council has an Executive Session scheduled for noon today to discuss personnel matters. Later this week we have another Executive Session planned to discuss the issue of temporary, outside legal analysis of the intersection of ESA, MSA, and NEPA, including the Council's role relative to these various Acts.

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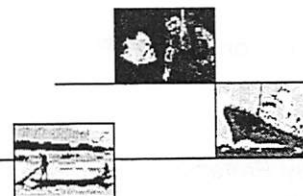


SPRING SYMPOSIUM 2002

Thursday and Friday, March 7 and 8, 2002

Sustaining Seascapes

The Science and Policy of Marine Resource Management



DAY ONE • DAY TWO • PRESENTERS • RESOURCES • REGISTER • PUBLIC PROGRAMS • SPONSORS

Sustaining Seascapes: The Science and Policy of Marine Resource Management will examine the large-scale conservation of marine ecosystems – considering novel approaches to the sustainable management of biodiversity and fisheries. Through theory, reviews, and case studies, participants will explore efforts to integrate natural, socioeconomic, and cultural factors at local and regional scales in response to ongoing threats to both fisheries and biodiversity. This year's symposium is being co-sponsored by a consortium of organizations, including Environmental Defense, NOAA's Marine Protected Areas Center, the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund.



[Download the Sustaining Seascapes Announcement Flyer](#)

[Information on New York and New Jersey hotel accommodations.](#)

TOPICS AND PRESENTERS WILL INCLUDE:

Plenary Addresses:

The Crisis in Fisheries and Marine Biodiversity

Daniel Pauly *Professor, Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia*

Historical Perspectives and Future Directions for Marine Resource Protection

Tundi Agardy *Executive Director, Sound Seas*

Unnatural Oceans: Restocking the Seas for Restoration of Resilience

Jeremy B. C. Jackson *Professor of Oceanography, Scripps Institute of Oceanography*

Panel Discussion:

Future Directions with Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Marine Biodiversity Protection in the United States

Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr. *Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) (invited)*

Fran Mainella *Director, U.S. National Park Service (invited)*

Marshall Jones *Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (invited)*

Presentations:

Fisheries, Trophic Cascades, and Marine Biodiversity

Robert S. Steneck *Professor, School of Marine Sciences, University of Maine*

Oceanographic and Biological Connectivity

Robert K. Cowen *Professor, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami*

The Economics of Coastal Zones

TBA

Dimensions of Conservation Policy in Coastal Zones

TBA

Ethical Perspectives on Coastal Policy-Making

TBA

Cultural Seascapes

Bonnie J. McCay *Professor, Department of Human Ecology, Cook College, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey*

Stakeholder Involvement in Marine Conservation Policy Making

Michael Eng *Senior Program Manager, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution*

Uncertainties in Ecological and Sociopolitical Systems

Louis W. Botsford *Professor, Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, University of California (Davis)*

Linking Social and Ecological Systems

TBA

Modeling the Functions of an MPA Network (Bahamas)

Daniel Brumbaugh *Marine Program Manager, Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, AMNH*

Developing the Patagonian Coastal-Zone Management Plan (Argentina)

Claudio Campagna *Conservation Zoologist, Wildlife Conservation Society/COCINET*

Establishing Marine Protection in the Florida Keys (USA)

Billy Causey *Superintendent, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (NOAA)*

A Proposal for a Regional MPA Network in the Gulf of Maine (USA/Canada)

Anthony Chatwin *Staff Scientist, Conservation Law Foundation*

Lessons from Designing a Reserve Network in the Channel Islands (USA)

Gary Davis *Science Advisor, Channel Islands National Park, U.S. National Park Service*

Implementing a New MPA for Managing Fishing and Tourism (Bonaire, Dutch Antilles)

Kalli DeMeyer *Director, Coral Parks Programme, Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)*

Fisheries, Biodiversity, and Human Impacts of Closures in the Gulf of Maine (USA)

Michael J. Fogarty *Senior Scientist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center and*

Steven A. Murawski *Chief Stock Assessment Scientist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center*

A Representative Network of Marine Reserves (Australia)

Leanne Fernandes *Manager, Representative Areas Programme, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Invited)*

Protected-Area Monitoring and Management (Kenya)

Nyawira Muthiga *Head, Coastal Wetlands Program, Kenya Wildlife Service*

Quantitative Approaches to the Analysis of MPA Success (Philippines)

Richard Pollnac *Professor of Anthropology and Marine Affairs, University of Rhode Island*

Designing a Reserve Network in the Gulf of California (Mexico)

Enric Sala *Assistant Professor of Marine Ecology, Scripps Institute of Oceanography*

Combining Traditional Cultural Values and Science for Marine-Resource Management (Fiji)
Alifereti Tawake *Scientific Officer, University of the South Pacific (Invited)*

Community-Based Management (Indonesia)
TBA

SPONSORSHIP:

Sustaining Seascapes is being co-sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, Environmental Defense, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Protected Areas Center, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund.

Support for the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation's Spring Symposia is provided by the John and Daniel Tishman Fund.

CALL FOR POSTERS: Poster subject must relate to the symposium's themes and may include theory, empirical studies, or case studies. Please limit abstracts to 300 words, and include title, author(s), and contact information for the lead author. Submit abstracts to the CBC's Outreach Program Coordinator, Fiona Brady, at brady@amnh.org. Deadline for submission: February 18, 2002.

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North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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January 24, 2002

Admiral James M. Loy
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard
2100 Second St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20593-0001

Dear Admiral Loy:

I am writing on behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to voice our concerns over the continuing erosion of Coast Guard resources devoted to fisheries enforcement in the North Pacific and Bering Sea regions. We last raised concerns in May 1999 (please see attached letter to Deputy Secretary Downey), about the critical enforcement, surveillance and rescue missions the Coast Guard has off Alaska. Nonetheless, at our last meeting, the Seventeenth District reported that cutter and aircraft patrols have continued to decline on an annual basis (please see the attached page taken from the Coast Guard Report to the Council).

As you are aware, the North Pacific and Bering Sea contain some of the world's greatest fisheries, with an ex-vessel value of roughly \$1.1 billion dollars (2000). These fisheries will remain sustainable only if they are closely managed, and the regulations vigorously enforced. In addition, we are facing a comprehensive set of new regulations protecting endangered Steller Sea Lions. While Vessel Monitoring Systems will be very useful in monitoring our complex system of fishery openings, we also require robust and active patrolling to deter potential violators.

We believe the Seventeenth Coast Guard District is doing the best they can with the resources they have, continuously re-prioritizing as cutter days and hours get cut. However, we remain very concerned about the Coast Guard's commitment and ability to provide sufficient at-sea presence in the Alaska region. Foreign fishing along the maritime boundary line has been intense, and with the expected closure of the Sea of Okhotsk by the Russians, it will get worse. Domestic enforcement has been severely cut back, and we fear it is only a matter of time before compliance rates will suffer. And, of course, reduced Coast Guard presence on fisheries patrols means reduced capability and response to search and rescue, a mission of paramount concern to the Council, Alaskan fishermen and their families.

The Council understands the Coast Guard is being pulled in many different directions. This problem was exacerbated by 9-11, which, very properly, has resulted in diversion of Coast Guard resources to a mission of higher national significance. However, we request that, as you are able, you re-examine and restore the level of resources assigned to the Alaska region to help safeguard our fishermen as well as the health of one of the most valuable fisheries in the world.

Sincerely,

David Benton
Chairman

Enclosures

Update: Sea Otter Population Declines in the Southwestern Stock , Alaska

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Marine Mammals Management
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, AK 99503
Program Contact: Douglas Burn

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will be publishing a Federal Register Notice announcing the availability of the draft sea otter stock assessments in Alaska for a 90 day public comment period. The primary change from the current stock assessment is the designation of three stocks in Alaska as opposed to a single stock. The final stock assessment reports will be completed within 90 days following public comment period.

The Service will be evaluating listing sea otters in southwest Alaska under the Endangered Species Act in 2002. In April, a workshop will be held to identify primary research needs and priorities and a report on the workshop will be completed by summer. The Service, in conjunction with the Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission (TASSC), will be conducting informal public information meetings in rural communities in southwestern Alaska. The Service will be soliciting input from the Council during the Endangered Species Act review process.

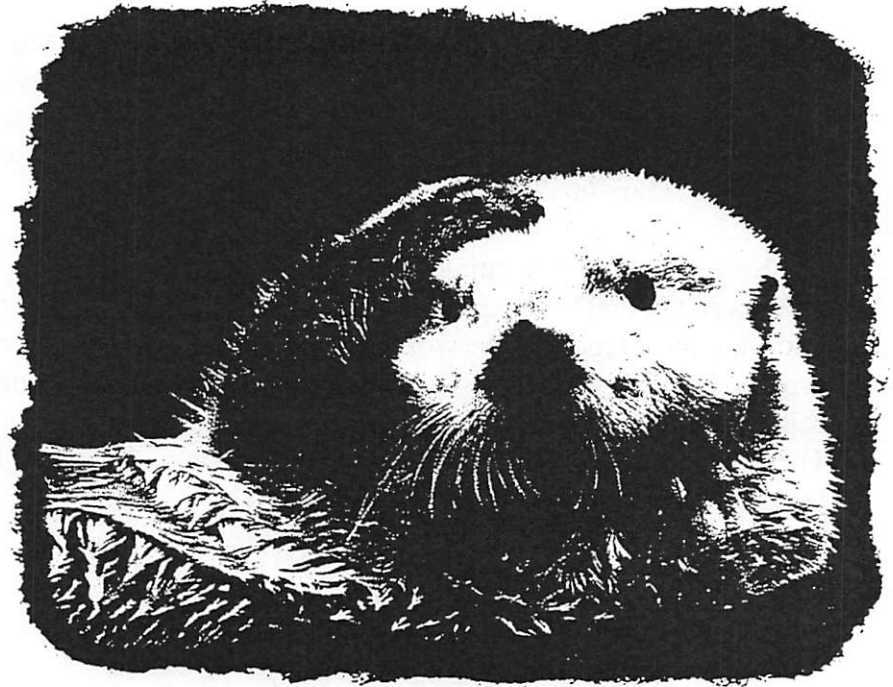


Sea Otter Declines in Southwest Alaska

A Growing Concern

Background

Though sea otters (*Enhydra lutris*) were once hunted to the brink of extinction for their dense, luxurious fur, their populations rebounded spectacularly following protection in 1911. Of the thirteen isolated populations that remained, eleven grew and re-colonized much of their former range. Perhaps the most dramatic recovery occurred in the Aleutian archipelago; a 1,000 mile-long chain of islands located between the Bering Sea and the North Pacific Ocean. By the mid-1980s, biologists believed that perhaps half of the world's population of sea otters existed in the Aleutians. A 1992 aerial survey indicated that while sea otters had re-colonized the six major island groups in the Aleutians, they had unexpectedly declined by almost 50% in the Rat, Delarof, and Andreanof Islands. Skiff surveys at selected islands in the mid-1990s also documented the ongoing sea otter decline. In 2000, the Service conducted another aerial survey of sea otters throughout the Aleutians. The results indicated that the population had declined by 70% in only 8 years, which prompted the Service to designate sea otters in the Aleutians as a Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Additional aerial surveys in southwest Alaska conducted in the past year reveal that the geographic extent of the sea otter decline is even broader than previously believed.



from Unimak Island to Cape Douglas (DeGange et al. 1995). This survey was conducted in April and May of 1989 in advance of oil from the *Exxon Valdez*. As part of the same oil spill study, the Kodiak archipelago was also surveyed by helicopter. In 1994, the Service used

a new aerial survey method to estimate the sea otter population around Kodiak Island. This technique, developed by the USGS/BRD Alaska Science Center, uses strip transects to sample areas of high and low density sea otter habitat (Bodkin and Udevitz 1995).

Baseline Data

In order to examine sea otter population trends in southwest Alaska, we used survey results from the 1980s and 90s as a baseline for comparison with new data. In 1986, Brueggeman et al. (1988) conducted fixed-wing aerial surveys of sea otters on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula from Unimak Island to Port Heiden, and from Unimak Island to Pavlof Bay on the south side. The survey consisted of north-south strip transects extending from the shoreline to the 70 meter depth contour. In addition, they surveyed the shoreline of the Pavlof and Shumagin Islands. The shoreline of the Alaska Peninsula was also surveyed by helicopter in 1989

Table 1. Southwest Alaska Sea Otter Survey Results, 1986 - 2001.

Location	Year	Count or Estimate	Decline
Aleutian Islands	1992	8,044	
	2000	2,442	70%
North Alaska Peninsula	1986	9,061 - 13,091	
	2000	5,756	36 - 56%
South Alaska Peninsula	1986	15,346 - 17,835	
	2001	1,344	91 - 92%
Kodiak Archipelago	1989	13,526	
	1994	9,817	
	2001	5,893	56%

Regional Surveys

In May 2000 and April 2001 the Service repeated the aerial surveys of Brueggeman et al. (1988) using the same study design, similar aircraft, and experienced observers. The results of these surveys indicate sea otters have declined along both the north and south sides of the Alaska Peninsula. In April and May 2001 the Service also flew the entire shoreline of the Alaska Peninsula from Unimak Island to Cape Douglas for comparison with the 1989 helicopter survey. The results corroborate the decline along the western end of the Peninsula, but also indicate that populations have not declined along the eastern end from Castle Cape to Cape Douglas. In June 2001 we repeated the 1994 aerial survey of the Kodiak archipelago using the same study design, aircraft, pilot, and observer as before, and found that sea otters had declined by 40% over the past 7 years and by 56% since 1989.

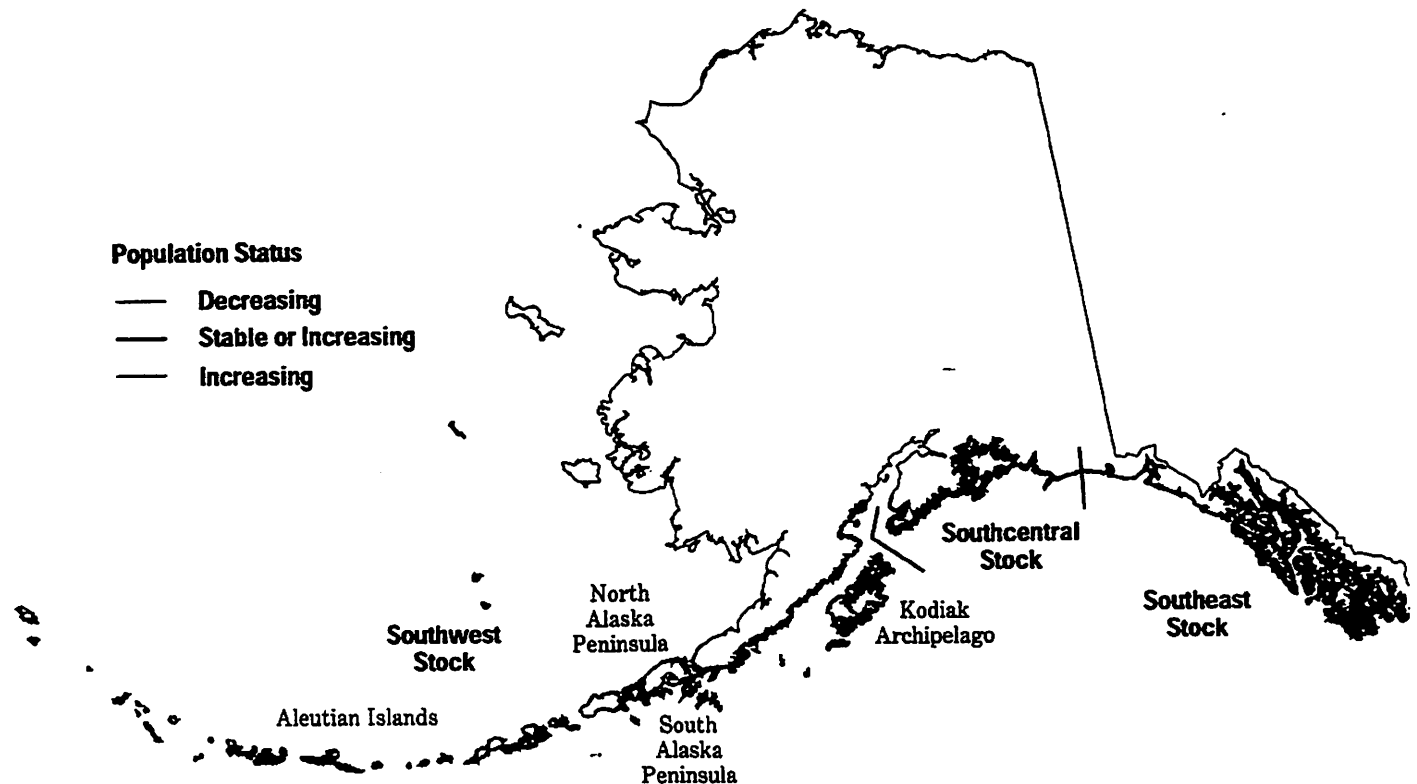
Stock Structure

Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Service is required to prepare stock assessments to report on population status and trend, estimate annual human-caused mortality, and describe commercial fishery interactions with marine mammals. Gorbics and Bodkin (2001) identified three stocks of sea otters in Alaska: southwest, southeast, and southcentral. The results of recent aerial surveys clearly indicate that the southwest stock has declined dramatically in the past 10-15 years. The best available scientific information suggests that the southeast stock, which was translocated to that region in the mid-1960s, continues to grow in numbers and expand in range. The southcentral stock, which includes Prince William Sound, has been extensively surveyed over the past decade and is believed to be either stable or increasing in numbers. Using the most recent survey results and correcting for otters not

detected by observers, the current best estimate of the Alaska sea otter population size is 74,143 with a 95% confidence interval of $\pm 15,739$.

Management Actions

The dramatic sea otter population decline in southwest Alaska is cause for concern. The Alaska Region has requested funding in Fiscal Year 2002 to prepare a proposed rule to list sea otters in southwest Alaska as threatened or endangered under the ESA. The Service is working with partners to evaluate the impacts of human activity and development on the sea otter, and hopefully prevent further stress on the population. Additional resources will be needed to identify what actions can be taken to address the decline, and to better investigate the cause, which is not definitively known.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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For list of references and more information
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Visit the Marine Mammals home page:
<http://www.r7.fws.gov/mmm/index.html>

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