

2018 California Sea Grant State Fellow
NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
HOST DESCRIPTION

Host Location

NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
University of California, Santa Barbara
Ocean Science Education Building 514
Santa Barbara, California 93106

Fellowship Supervisors

Chris Mobley, Sanctuary Superintendent; chris.mobley@noaa.gov, 805-893-6416
Michael Murray, Deputy Superintendent for Programs; michael.murray@noaa.gov, 805-893-6418
Sean Hastings, Resource Protection Coordinator; sean.hastings@noaa.gov, 805-893-6424

Position Description

[Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary](#) (sanctuary) is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) [Office of National Marine Sanctuaries](#). It is located approximately 23 miles off the coast of Santa Barbara and encompasses 1,470 square miles of state and federal ocean waters surrounding Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, Santa Rosa, and San Miguel Islands. The sanctuary waters are a fertile combination of warm and cool currents that result in a highly productive marine ecosystem with diverse habitats, a wide array of fish and invertebrates, 27 species of whales and dolphins, 5 species of pinnipeds, and over 60 species of seabirds. Recognized as an important marine protected area at the local, state, national and international levels, the sanctuary's primary goal under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act is to protect its natural and cultural resources.

The Sea Grant Fellow will play a key role in a multitude of policy, research and outreach activities, working closely with the sanctuary superintendent, deputy superintendent, and resource protection coordinator. The Fellow will research, write and conduct outreach on a wide array of marine resource management issues and will help foster productive relationships with state and federal agencies, academic institutions, and stakeholders. In this position, the Fellow will gain the diverse skills and professional experience necessary to succeed in a natural resource management career. Former sanctuary fellows and interns have become permanent or contract NOAA employees, received the Knauss and Presidential Management Fellowships, or taken research and leadership positions in the private and non-profit sectors.

Working in the capacity of a Resource Protection Specialist, the Fellow will support the following:

Reducing the threat of ship strikes on endangered whales: Since 2007, the sanctuary and its [Advisory Council](#) have been working in collaboration with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Coast Guard, and the shipping industry to develop both short and long-term management measures to reduce the ship strike threat to Endangered Species Act listed large whales in the Santa Barbara Channel region. Management recommendations include continued research and monitoring, mariner education and outreach, incentives for changing vessel behavior, and the utilization of marine spatial planning techniques to protect high whale density areas. The Sanctuary Advisory Council hosted a multi-stakeholder collaborative process to explore solutions that address competing human uses (e.g. military activities and commercial shipping) and impacts to Santa Barbara and the marine environment (e.g. air pollution and whale strikes). Also under consideration are ship lane adjustments, vessel speed reduction zones, and research and education strategies. The Fellow will help advance these initiatives to broader NOAA, the US

Coast Guard, and possibly to the U. S. delegation to the International Maritime Organization. More information: http://channelislands.noaa.gov/management/resource/ship_strikes.html

Management Plan Revision

As mandated by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, the management plan for CINMS must be updated. The Fellow will work with sanctuary staff to develop and implement the management plan revision process. This process requires involvement of the Sanctuary Advisory Council and close coordination among sanctuary staff at the local, regional, and national levels. The Fellow will be involved with all aspects of policy development and rulemaking as guided by the National Environmental Policy Act and Administrative Procedures Act.

Sanctuary Advisory Council

The Fellow will participate and support meetings, held every other month, with the Sanctuary Advisory Council and its working groups, including agenda preparation with the Executive Committee, preparing and delivering presentations, corresponding with council members and the public. The Fellow will support the Council's development of collaborative, innovative policy solutions to complex marine resource issues.

In addition to the above projects, the Sea Grant Fellow's duties and opportunities will include:

- Processing and creating marine mammal sightings maps in ArcGIS during large cetacean season from sightings reported on two whale apps 'SpotterPro' and 'WhaleAlert.'
- Participating in sanctuary staff meetings and other planning meetings on the local, regional, and national level, including occasionally providing progress reports and/or presentations.
- Reviewing and responding to the proposed regulatory actions of other agencies to ensure consistency with the sanctuary's mission and regulations. This may involve producing internal memos of findings based on review of agency documents and drafting comment letters.
- Assisting with the review and development of sanctuary research and salvage permits, including literature review on research methods and potential environmental impacts.
- Contributing to superintendent reports, the sanctuary's annual operating plan, and other required reports, including compilation, information gathering, and document editing/formatting.
- Representing the sanctuary at select meetings and conferences, to observe, learn, speak/present, and assist with follow-up actions.
- Participating in sanctuary research and monitoring activities and communicating findings to a diverse audience. This will involve occasional trips aboard the sanctuary research vessels, assisting on deck, helping with data acquisition and processing, and summarizing information for presentation.
- Helping to update the sanctuary's [website](#) and posting to sanctuary [social media](#) accounts.
- Possible opportunities to visit the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' West Coast Regional Office in Monterey, CA, and offices of the Greater Farallones, Cordell Bank, and Monterey Bay national marine sanctuaries on the central California coast.

A competitive Sea Grant Fellow applicant will have: strong research and demonstrated writing skills; some GIS experience; a personable approach and comfort working with a variety of constituencies in public and occasionally contentious settings; the ability to effectively manage multiple projects; and enthusiasm for ocean stewardship and conservation.