

**FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
FEBRUARY 19, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Christel Chesney, Sharkey Warrick, Tim Postiff, Brandt Kehoe, Kathy Hurrele, Donovan Marley and Bill Goodger

**ALSO PRESENT:** Marcella Boteilho, Ellen Stoner, Megg McNamee, Carol Adams, Carolyn Skinder, Jim Boucher (BLM) and Michele Roust.

Minutes of the January meeting approved as read.

**CAROLYN SKINDER:** Carolyn reported that the three 2013 eSeal abuse/harrasment cases are under investigation. She also reported that the 5<sup>th</sup> pup was born on San Simeon Beach on Februry 14<sup>th</sup> and that MBNM and State Parks have discussed future of resource protection for that beach (and others). Harbor Seal pupping season has started and will be problematic as the public has direct access to the rocks the seals haul out on during low tides. Coastal Discovery Center will conduct docent training on Saturdays 9-3 in March. April features "Discovery Saturdays" from 11-noon. April 12<sup>th</sup> is the MBNMS fundraiser night at Hearst Theater. April 26<sup>th</sup> CSUMB will host a Currents Symposium in Monterey featuring marine debris. The first 4 Fridays in May will feature MBNMS lecture series and Carolyn is looking for topics. She also addressed the bogus information regarding Fukishima fallout and provided several places to get **updated** information (listed at end of minutes). Ellen will provide some information for the next docent newsletter.

**CAROL ADAMS:** Carol discussed the restoration of native plants at VP3 and the national monument plan. They have already determined which plants are non-native and plan to remove them from the area I the parking lot and along the boardwalk. They have also gathered seeds from the light station area and put them out in the hopes that they will thrive. Lack of rain has been a problem and might prevent the plant restoration project this year. She also said that they will start the process of transplanting plants from the light station area to VP3. The areas will be cordoned to prevent visitor foot traffic. Michele noted that this will be a new awareness for FES as it pertains to the extension of the Outstanding Natural Area. The Vista points are included in the Outstanding Natural Area and will be directly impacted by the plant restoration project. Everyone agreed that it was a good idea.

**JIM BOUCHER (BLM):** Jim explained that there is currently no support available through BLM to manage the Outstanding Natural Area the way it should be. Jim presented a letter authored by Reps. Pete DeFazio and Raul Grijalva of the House Natural Resources Committee. The letter was to the Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell urging her to protect more land under the Antiquities Act in the hopes of establishing more national monuments. 107 other House Democrats co-signed the letter. Jim wanted the approval and support from FES for this Outstanding Natural Area to become a National Monument and would also be looking for support through human resources and financial assistance later on. The goal would be to protect the area (develop trails, etc.) and the wildlife from excessive foot traffic. Jim suggested that a good place to start would be to create a section of trail from above the VP3 paved parking lot to the paved parking lot at the motel. He thinks that a budget for that project (including volunteer hours and supplies from BLM) would be approx. \$350,000. 2/3 of that amount would be spent from the top of vp4 to the light station property boundary.

Motion was made and carried for FES to go on record in support of pursuing the National Monument Designation for Piedras Blancas Outstanding Natural Area which would include the elephant seal rookery. Carol said that they were currently generating a letter to Lois Capps and will make that letter available to docents within FES if they choose to partake in this "grass roots" effort. Michele pointed out that the San Luis Obispo County Business Improvement District (CBID) has launched an aggressive campaign to increase visitation to the unincorporated areas within the county and therefore increase Bed Tax revenues. San Simeon already the largest draw for visitors to see the elephant seals and Hearst Castle. Cambria Tourism Alliance is also actively promoting Cambria. The area is already seeing an increase in visitation and that continued rise will create more

and more human/wildlife interactions. She said that money to fund additional volunteer programs would be another desirable thing in this designation. The next step might be to get CBID and the Cambria Tourism Alliance to “take a position” and become advocates.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT:** Brandt reported that he had attended a CBID meeting and they had re-approved the decision to give FES \$6,000 for the web cam streaming. SSTA will be listed as a sponsor. Brandt got an (unsolicited) email from Josh telling him that the camera would be off today because they are fixing the bridge (the one that they just put in).

**OFFICE REPORT:** Marcella reported that she had heard a lot from the docents regarding the docent appreciation dinner and how nice it was...the best ever. She also reported that she was very disappointed in the logo presentation at the last board meeting. Michele contacted Pierre Rademaker who designed the original logo. Pierre told her would be happy to do it pro bono (as he did the last time). Michele is putting together a comprehensive list of the ideas and thoughts the board and committee have expressed and will give that to Pierre.

Marcella asked about a storage area in the office that has been previously designated as research stuff that contains research jackets and a scope. The jackets will be moved to the storage area and the scope can be used by the interns in upcoming research projects.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Marcella reported that of the YTD \$6,443 Docent Expenses, \$5,280 is for the Elkhorn Slough field trip and that \$2,450 has been collected so far. Ellen stated that FES is currently underwriting approximately \$525 for FES docents. The limit is 44 for the trip and that is what was guaranteed and paid for. There are currently 27 people signed up. Ellen will email other volunteer organizations (light station, discovery center, etc.) to let them know that this tour is now available to their volunteers in the hopes we can meet our guarantee and fill the bus.

**Shark Monitor:** Bill reported that FES has already paid the Iridium charges one year in advance (\$1350) for the shark monitor and that a portion of those unused charges will be refunded. The shark monitor will be taken out in early March and will not go back into the water until late summer. Bill is working with Taylor Chapel (via Barbara Block) to figure out what kind of a boat would be required.

**Internship Program:** Bill noted that regarding the projects this year, Cal Poly has a “teaching mandate” NOT a “research mandate”. Craig Brown (one of the interns) will be doing a video project that will show an actual rescue being done( via a video camera worn on his head) followed by what happens in the triage in Morro Bay and then up to the hospital in Sausalito and will finalize when the animal is released back to the ocean. The finished video presentation will be shared with the docents at the docent pot luck dinner and hopefully these projects will turn into nice summaries for docent education.

Bill plans to pick up 2 large spotting scopes at Cal Poly that haven’t been used in several years. Brian Hatfield volunteered to teach Bill and Brenda Barcelone (intern) information on procedures that need to be done regarding tagging information, how to use the scopes, gathering tag information and getting a data base put together. Bill is hoping that there will be more field work involved and that Brian will consider having Brenda assist him with tagging and/or counting.

Tim has put together some questions needing answers regarding mother-pup bonding, male reproduction and how do elephant seals smell. Brenda will be working on those areas by using our data base of articles and research to answer those questions which will be incorporated into the final docent education presentation.

Bill discussed the idea of introducing a second internship program in the summer/fall. That would make it possible for interns to get involved with Barbara Block (Stanford) during their summer break to learn about the shark monitor, etc. Counting the population during Fall haul-out is another possibility if there was an intern available during that time of the year.

Bill plans to meet with Nicki, Rosena Brand (Director of Advancement at Cal Poly) and the head of Center for Coastal Marine Science to talk about whether or not Cal Poly is interested in having a “chair” in Marine Mammal

Science. A chair could cost approx. \$120,000. Bill will get more information especially to determine if Cal Poly is even interested.

**KATHY HURREL:** Kathy reported that she has spoken with the school group committee and Marcella to determine where the School Group Program problem lies. The school group problem affects the teachers, the office and the docents. The office is extremely busy during January and February (end-of year and beginning-of year tax reporting, etc.) and it is also the busiest time for school bus groups. The task of getting the docents signed up and committed, getting information from the teachers along with answering the phone has become a major issue. Because of their schedules, teachers are very difficult to communicate with, either by phone or email. Kathy suggested a multiple line phone system that 1) could provide directions to people who call, 2) provide information on current beach activities and 3) provide a dedicated line for school groups that would direct them to the on line form and provide further information pertinent to scheduling a school group visit. Parameters could be set up that would lessen the amount of time and lessen the amount of calls that have to be answered. Enlisting docents and getting commitments has been an ongoing problem. Ellen suggested a partial solution that would entail a scheduling area devoted to the "volunteer spot" where docents could see the entire month's schedule and better determine when and where to spend their volunteer time. Additionally the office will send out initial reminders to the school group volunteers along with follow ups. If docent commitments have not been accomplished by one week in advance, Judy will personally telephone docents. Kathy also suggested a paid position (hopefully a school group docent) during the months of January and February to coordinate the entire school group program during those two months. The office would stay tangentially involved but not primarily. The board was in complete agreement regarding the new multi-line telephone system, continuing on with the school group program and offering a temporary paid job offer to a docent during the January and February season.

**TRAINING COMMITTEE:** In Bette's absence, Tim reported that they had received an application from an Ano Nuevo docent with 7 years' experience. With the Board's consent, Bette would go out on the bluff with that person. If everything was all right, training would not be required.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Donovan reported that there are currently 128 members and that he expects to see an additional 20 before the end of this quarter which would put us on the same pace as last year's numbers. Even though this year's acquisitions are down it shouldn't present a financial problem as we are not spending the \$7,000 printing costs for the acquisition pamphlets. He also said that 31% of the budgeted income is in. Sharkey noted that there was a discrepancy between the \$12,407 seen in Donovan's report and the P&L Budget vs. actual report which shows an income of \$5,864. Marcella will research and get back to the Board but suspects it has to do with the \$4,500 membership transferred from last year into the current year. Donovan also said that the "higher" donations were coming in faster than the "lower" ones.

Donovan handed Board members a list of donors and their donations that, according to Barry feels are the best options for solicitation for endowment gifts. Donovan asked if anyone was willing to solicit people directly or to sign a letter to a particular individual for solicitation purposes. A discussion ensued regarding the emphasis on money that FES has taken. It was unanimously agreed to further this discussion at the retreat.

Donovan handed out copies of a letter from Bob Wilkins. The letter stated that "the viability of the organization's internal finances is secured by the revenue from membership and tubes with a comfortable margin of excess." He further suggested that we should "(a) to take the excess that has been accumulated up to \$75,000 and make a onetime funding into the endowment fund; and (b) on a monthly basis, make a close to estimate of the combined total of the public contributions at the table and the net merchandise sales at the table and put it into the endowment." The letter also said that the "3 year incubation period is triggered for those funds" which "gives the money time to generate its own administrative costs and produce an income stream on a substantial basis." It was agreed to discuss this further at the next retreat.

**TIM** presented the new photo CD (containing 96 slides) that is intended to be sold at the table and also given as gifts to new members (instead of the lapel pins). It will retail for \$10. Cost for 100 of the CDs is \$3.50 each, 500 is \$2.00 each and if 1,000 are ordered the cost is \$1.00each. Christel is confident that it will be the #1 best-seller at the table. Marcella also mentioned that it could be marketed at other

locations (Cookie Crock and other places in town). Marcella will check to see if there is a way to make the CD unable to be copied. Either way, she was authorized to order 1,000.

**BRANDT** noted that the Board still lacked a Secretary (voting Board member). Kathy Hurrle volunteered and was unanimously nominated to fill that position. Megg will continue as the recording secretary.

**THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING** on March 19<sup>th</sup> will be the annual Retreat and will be at the home of and hosted by Dave Bauer. Brandt will invite Michele Roust, Mary Lee Becwar and Bill Johnson to attend the retreat.

Respectfully submitted by Megg McNamee

#### **Fukushima fallout references provided by Carolyn Skinder**

##### **State of California**

Wendy Hopkins

California Department of Public Health – Office of Public Affairs

916-650-6864 [Wendy.Hopkins@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Wendy.Hopkins@cdph.ca.gov)

**Radiation information:** <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/Pages/RHB-RadReport.aspx>

##### **EPA and the FDA references:**

**For air radiation monitoring,** contact: Julia Valentine

EPA Public Affairs

Office: 202-564-0496 [valentine.julia@epa.gov](mailto:valentine.julia@epa.gov)

**EPA RadNet system,** which monitors the nation's air, drinking water, precipitation, and pasteurized milk to determine levels of radiation in the environment. You can access monitoring data here:

<http://www.epa.gov/radnet/> and <http://www.epa.gov/japan2011/index.html>

**For seafood safety monitoring,** contact: Theresa Eisenman DA Office of Media Affairs Office: 301-796-2805

E-mail: [theresa.eisenman@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:theresa.eisenman@fda.hhs.gov)

FDA's latest Import Alert: [http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/ms\\_ia/importalert\\_621.html](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/ms_ia/importalert_621.html).

##### **Universities:**

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute

<<http://www.whoi.edu/page.do?pid=83397&tid=3622&cid=94989>