

Response to peer reviews of the report prepared by Tom Jagielo for the Alliance of Communities for Sustainable fisheries, entitled  
“Consideration of Sanctuary Research Needs with Respect to Existing MPAs Situated in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary”

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Mr. Steve Scheiblauer (ACSF) has asked me to respond to comments that he has received as part of an anonymous peer review that he had requested of the aforementioned report. Judging by the form of the review responses, the reviewers were apparently asked to answer the following (paraphrased) questions: 1) Is this a reasonable approach, 2) Is sound logic used in its application, 3) Are the points made supported by the available information, 4) Are the conclusions applicable to conservation and research needs for all taxa, ecological processes, and research disciplines, and 5) Did the author miss any important issues or points?

In my attempt to tabulate the reviewer’s responses to these questions, my first observation was that the reviews seemed to fall into general categories: 1) those that were directly responsive to the questions asked, and 2) those that were not directly responsive to the questions asked.

*Responsive reviews*

Reviewers 1, 3, and 4 structured their responses along the lines of the questions asked (above); I will respond to these reviews first.

Questions 1 and 2. Reviewer 1 and Reviewer 4 both appeared to agree that the approach taken was reasonable and the logic used was basically sound; however, Reviewer 3 did not seem to think the approach taken was reasonable, nor did that Reviewer seem to agree with the logical basis for the analysis. Reviewer 3 asks: “...How does showing that specific research questions are consistent with overarching goals for MPAs say anything about whether or not those specific research questions can be properly addressed...”. My response is that the report was not intended to be a detailed quantitative analysis, but rather it sought to evaluate whether existing MPAs could *in principle* address the types of research questions posed by the MBNMS. Reviewers 1 and 4 appeared to understand this point; namely, this report was simply intended as a logical first step to determine if the existing state and federal MPAs in the Monterey Bay have the potential to meet the projected MBNMS-MPA research needs, based on the similarities in the language describing the MLPA and MBNMS goals and objectives. I concede the point made by Reviewer 4 that the report could be improved “...if the author provided a better explanation of the criteria that he used to determine how a particular MPA met the MLPA goals, and thus MBNMS research needs. Given more time, this would have been a good thing to do.

Question 3. Reviewer 1 answered “yes” and also notes additional information that could be cited for the Davidson Seamount. Reviewer 3 disagreed with the premise of the report, and did not respond directly to this question (see above). Reviewer 4 notes that, in Tables 2 and 3, it is not clear what criteria were used to assign a “Y” or an “N” for each MPA in being consistent in meeting the Central Coast MPA goals and objectives, or in Table 5, the MBNMS research needs,

and asks: "... Is the author just matching the word description of each MPA to see if it fits within the MBNMS/MLPA goals...". My response this question is basically, yes -- the assignments made were subjective and were based on my interpretations of the words and statements found in the published material. Again I note that, given more time, a detailed discussion by MPA would have been a good thing to do.

Question 4. Reviewer 1 noted (correctly) that all research disciplines and taxa were not covered by the report, nor were they intended to be: the focus was on the MBNMS goals. Reviewer 1 also points out that marine birds and marine mammals should have been given more attention. Also, Reviewer 3 and Reviewer 4 both refer to deep water habitats. As Reviewer 3 noted, the report pointed out that deep water habitats are not well represented in the existing MPAs in the MBNMS. I generally agree with these observations; however, Review 4 also appeared to be concerned about "...the level of progress that has been made towards meeting individual MBNMS research goals..." and "... whether MBNMS research needs are being met ...". My response is that this was not the objective of the report, and it is in fact well beyond the intended scope of the report. The approach taken by the report was theoretical, and it focused on stated intentions, not measurements of performance.

Question 5. Reviewer 3 noted that only one of the three MBNMS management objectives were addressed by the report, and Reviewer 4 notes that the report is limited to an evaluation of the potential for existing MPAs in the MBNMS to meet MBNMS research needs, not whether they actually are meeting these research needs. My response to both these points is that this was by design: the contents of the report are consistent with the limited scope intended.

#### *Other reviews.*

Although Reviewer 2 did not respond directly to the questions asked, a thoughtful discussion was provided. Reviewer 2 listed a set of components for an analysis of how one might determine potential needs for designation of additional MPAs. This is certainly another way to go, it just isn't the approach taken by the report I prepared. Following the approach outlined by Reviewer 2 could very well be useful, but it would be considerably beyond the scope of what I set out to discuss in my report.

Additional comments were provided by Dr. Andrew DeVogelaere (MBNMS) after the anonymous peer reviews were received. While these comments did not respond directly to the questions asked of the peer reviewers, some good points were raised. I agree that 1) the resolution of the habitat map data has limits, 2) there are limitations on the types of research activities that can be conducted in State MPAs, 3) data for certain non-fish species are lacking, and 4) the sizes, replication, and spatial distribution of MPAs are important. While relevant to the issue of MPA designation, these factors do not appear to speak directly to the approach taken by the report. Also mentioned was "...the temporal nature of the regulations..." – I would note here that this issue was in fact addressed in the report.