

UNDERWATER SOCIETY OF AMERICA
NORTHWEST REGIONAL REPORT 2022
Carol Rose VP

1.0 Northwest Region – covers the following states: California (Monterey North), Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.

1.1 Clubs/Councils in Region are Seattle *SeaHammers* UWH, *Club Puck* CA UWH, San Francisco *SeaLions* UWH, Santa Rosa *Sharks* UWH, *White Seabass*, UWR, CenCal Dive Council (with 10 clubs in addition to uw sport clubs), Corvallis OR *Narwhals* UWH, Eugene OR *Sashquatch* UWH, Newport OR UWH, Portland OR UWH. All the clubs/councils have active websites.

1.2 Attempts have been made to inform/promote USOA by contacting dive stores in Alaska, Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. None are major skin/scuba diving areas.

1.3 Activities: Oregon underwater hockey recently held a rookie weekend. Y'all come

1.4 Contacts – attempting to create email list of dive stores in NW – will also review/contact any NW stores at DEMA fall 2022.

1.5 Vaccination/Pandemic – uw sports played outdoors less impact; more than several indoor venues closed; San Francisco UWH has reopened with proof of vaccination.

1.6 If good idea to make all of California NW, I am not opposed. Reason for division has ceased to exist.

2.0 Poster Contest- Before Covid, *Beneath the Sea Dive Show* hosted an annual national childrens' poster contest. Each year had a distinct theme with the purpose of teaching students about the subject as well as producing art work – past themes Manatees, Octopus, Marine Mammals, etc. Covid closed the show and the contest. BTS is starting up next year (2023) but the contest will resume 2024. I chair the contest for the Western States. It is a yearlong endeavor – notify schools of selected theme, national rules, western rules, deadlines, prizes, judging, so the process will start in March 2023.

3.0 Issues/Concerns

3.1 Marine

3.1.1 Abalone – red, black, white (endangered), pink, green. North of Pt Sur, there are 2 abalone species: black and red. Black only extends to south of San Mateo Coast. There was a black abalone crisis (withering foot syndrome) years ago and season is closed permanently. The red abalone have suffered several crisis since 2012: deadly alga bloom and 2018 a 'perfect storm' warm water blob, death of sea stars, explosion of purple sea urchins, destruction of kelp, starvation of red abalone. As result, red abalone population is 10%, so season is closed until 2026 but likely indefinitely.

3.1.2 Kelp – destruction as part of 'perfect storm,' kelp is key to marine ecology the ocean – including the west coast US and NZ and Australia. It feeds abalone, star fish, urchins and provides safety and shelter for a vast array of marine life. Currently, the north and north central California kelp forest is decimated. Efforts are being made to protect the remaining kelp by culling urchins - local divers gather on scheduled weekends to cull. There are two coves legal for culling – one in Monterey and one north in Caspar/Mendocino Cnty. There are some initial efforts to plant kelp.

3.2 Access – The CA *Coastal Act* of 1976 eventually solved all most all ocean access issues on the California coast. A slow successful and still active process.

3.2.2.1 There is one access thorn –access at Beach & Tennis Club on *17 Mile Drive* in Carmel CA. It is a private club with world famous golf courses. The *Coastal Act* process provided a public pier with bathroom/shower facilities and limited nonmember parking. The Club sits on Stillwater Cover – prime diving area, and the Club tries, regularly and illegally, to limit access, diving and spearfishing. CenCal gets a call once/twice a year complaining; I call the Club and remind them of legality; ‘oh yes’ they say,’ and I request Cal Dept Fish & Wildlife wardens make a call or stop by. Successful until next attempt.

3.2.1.2 One other area is on San Mateo Coast where an access road closed by new owner of property closed road. Issue still in court.

3.2.3 Interesting note: mid 1950s, Oregon bought whole coast – none in private hands.

4.0 National Marine Sanctuaries: Chumash Indians new proposed Sanctuary mid California. At one time, Chumash territory encompassed 7,000 square miles that spanned from the beaches of Malibu to Paso Robles. Chumash utilized resources from both the land and the sea, called “the first people,” and pointed to the Pacific Ocean as first home.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has initiated the designation process for the proposed *Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary* on the central coast of California. With a broad community consortium, the Northern Chumash Tribal Council (NCTC) submitted the sanctuary nomination in July 2015, and NOAA is considering sanctuary designation to protect the region’s important marine ecosystem, maritime heritage resources and cultural values of Indigenous communities. The area proposed is from Santa Rosa Creek in Cambria to Gaviota Creek in Santa Barbara, protecting marine habitat along some 140 miles of coastline - would be the first sanctuary focusing on indigenous culture and history as a primary core value with protection of ocean habitat.

NOAA is still in the early stages of the designation process, having only completed the public scoping period, which is the first step of the designation process. NOAA is currently reviewing all public comments and a team of staff are drafting a management plan and environmental impact statement based on all comments received. In late 2022, NOAA intends to release those draft documents which will give the public another opportunity to provide comment.

This Sanctuary would help with the National, *Make America Beautiful*, and California 30-30 Protection Plan. The first state to set a 30-30 Plan, California is already at 16% ocean protection by existing Marine Protected Areas. Oregon seems mixed on the 30-30 Plan as is Washington State while Alaska appears supportative.

5.0 Calendar:

CALENDAR 2022

AUGUST

Aug 13-14	Euro Fresh Water Spear Finland
Aug 12-14	Women/Youth UW Hockey Denver

SEPTEMBER

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

OCTOBER

Oct 1	<i>Underwater Society Annual Meeting/Zoom</i>
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 31	Halloween

NOVEMBER

Nov1-4	DEMA Show Orlando
Nov 2-6	PamAmerican Skin Spear /Brazil
November 6	Daylight Ends
November 11	<i>Veterans Day Holiday</i>
November 25	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>

DECEMBER

December 7	Pearl Harbor Day
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>

Miscellaneous

June 26-Jul 2	Juniors World Finswimming Champs, Cairo
July 7-15	UW Rugby World Championships, Montreal
July 17-30	UW Hockey World Championships, Australia

5.0 CenCal

5.1 Newsletter – *Odyssey* (an odyssey is a wandering sea journey with many changes of fortune): approximately quarterly. The CenCal website is actively maintained and updated with current and relevant skin/scuba, uw sport, marine ecology issues. Current issue is Summer 2022. Complicated crisis and issues with marine ecology are current hot topics in California diving. Current issue attached – Summer 2022.

5.2 Fewer clubs generally – pandemic and social media contribute to decline, but some long Standers remine active – Aqua Tutus, San Francisco Reef Divers, San Jose Flipper Dippers, Northern Cal UW Photo Society, NorCal Skindivers.