



U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
Western Ecological Research Center
Santa Cruz Field Station



To: Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

December 7, 2012

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am writing to express my strong support for the 2012 Coastal Conservancy Sea Otter Recovery Program research proposal entitled: **“The dead DO tell tales! Investigating southern sea otter mortality patterns (1998-2012): Identification of “new” diseases, pollution “hot spots,” and health risks for humans and wildlife at the land-sea interface.”**

The broad objectives of the proposed research are to update our collective understanding of disease processes and major causes of mortality for southern sea otters and identify specific high-risk areas for focusing mitigation. Anticipated products include 1) an updated review of mortality trends for sea otters stranding along the California coast; 2) detailed information on novel disease syndromes we have identified since we completed our last comprehensive mortality review more than 10 years ago; 3) identification of high-risk areas for pollution-associated sea otter mortality that we might target for environmental mitigation; and 4) investigation of potential synergistic effects between toxins and pathogens that are commonly present in stranded sea otters.

As the Principal Investigator for the USGS-UC Santa Cruz cooperative sea otter research program in California, I strongly support the need for updated research on causes of mortality for threatened sea otters in California. We look forward to collaborating with Dr. Miller and her team in completing this important work. Data collected during the course of this study will provide invaluable information to guide sea otter conservation policy and help us to more precisely evaluate impacts from land-based pollution on Southern sea otter recovery.

Sincerely,

Dr. M. Tim Tinker
Research Biologist, Field Station Principal Investigator,
and Adjunct Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, UC Santa Cruz

Long Marine Laboratory, UCSC
100 Shaffer Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: (831) 459-2357, FAX: (831) 459-2249



MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM

December 7, 2012

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I'd like to express my strong support for Dr. Melissa Miller's research proposal "The dead DO tell tales! Investigating southern sea otter mortality patterns (1998-2012): Identification of "new" diseases, pollution "hot spots," and health risks for humans and wildlife at the land-sea interface."

The proposed research will update our collective understanding of disease processes and major causes of mortality for southern sea otters and identify specific high-risk areas for focusing mitigation. Anticipated products include 1) an updated review of mortality trends for sea otters stranding along the California coast; 2) detailed information on novel disease syndromes we have identified since we completed our last comprehensive mortality review more than 10 years ago; 3) identification of high-risk areas for pollution-associated sea otter mortality that we might target for environmental mitigation; and 4) investigation of potential synergistic effects between toxins and pathogens that are commonly present in stranded sea otters.

As the manager of the Sea Otter Research and Conservation program at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, I can state that updated research on causes of mortality for threatened sea otters in California represents a crucial need. We look forward to collaborating with Dr. Miller and her team in completing this important work. Data collected during the course of this study will provide invaluable information to guide sea otter conservation policy and help us evaluate impacts from land-based pollution on southern sea otter recovery and nearshore habitat.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew B. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew B. Johnson, Program Manager
Sea Otter Research and Conservation
831-648-7934
ajohnson@mbayaq.org



MONTEREY BAY
AQUARIUM

To: Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

December 7, 2012

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am writing to express my strong support for the 2012 Coastal Conservancy Sea Otter Recovery Program research proposal entitled: **“The dead DO tell tales! Investigating southern sea otter mortality patterns (1998-2012): Identification of “new” diseases, pollution “hot spots,” and health risks for humans and wildlife at the land-sea interface.”**

The broad objectives of the proposed research are to update our collective understanding of disease processes and major causes of mortality for southern sea otters and identify specific high-risk areas for focusing mitigation. Anticipated products include 1) an updated review of mortality trends for sea otters stranding along the California coast; 2) detailed information on novel disease syndromes we have identified since we completed our last comprehensive mortality review more than 10 years ago; 3) identification of high-risk areas for pollution-associated sea otter mortality that we might target for environmental mitigation; and 4) investigation of potential synergistic effects between toxins and pathogens that are commonly present in stranded sea otters.

As the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s staff veterinarian, I strongly support the need for updated research on causes of mortality for threatened sea otters in California. We look forward to collaborating with Dr. Miller and her team in completing this important work. Data collected during the course of this study will provide invaluable information to guide sea otter conservation policy and help us to more precisely evaluate impacts from land-based pollution on Southern sea otter recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J Murray".

Michael J Murray DVM
Staff Veterinarian
Monterey Bay Aquarium



www.seaotters.org

info@seaotters.org

Friends of the Sea Otter
A Nonprofit Organization

P.O. Box 223260
Carmel, CA 93922
831-915-3275

Mr. Doug Bosco, Chair
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

January 17, 2013

Dear Mr. Bosco,

Friends of the Sea Otter (FSO) is writing to express our strong support for the 2012 California Coastal Conservancy Sea Otter Recovery Program research proposal entitled: "The dead DO tell tales! Investigating southern sea otter mortality patterns (1998-2012): Identification of "new" diseases, pollution "hot spots" and health risks for humans and wildlife at the land-sea interface".

The broad objectives of this proposed research are to update the collective understanding of disease processes and major causes of mortality for Southern sea otters in California and to identify specific high-risk areas for focused mitigation. Anticipated products include 1) an updated review of mortality trends for sea otters stranding along the California coast; 2) detailed information on novel disease syndromes that have been identified since our last comprehensive mortality review was completed more than 10 years ago; 3) identification of high-risk areas for pollution-associated sea otter mortality that could be amenable to environmental mitigation and 4) investigation of potential synergistic effects between toxins and pathogens that are commonly present concurrently in stranded sea otters.

FSO has continually advocated for and argued for the need for a program such as the one overseen by Dr. Melissa Miller from the Wildlife Veterinary Care and Research Center through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. It is an obvious and critical need to understand what impacts sea otters and to try and use this information to mitigate threats to the sea otter population in California. FSO strongly supports the need for updated research on causes of mortality for threatened sea otters in California. We look forward to the results gained from Dr. Miller and her team in completing this important work. Data collected during the course of this study will provide invaluable information to guide sea otter conservation policy and help us to more precisely evaluate impacts from land-based pollution on Southern sea otter recovery. And, this work is very important to the advocacy and environmental education work that FSO engages in.

Sincerely,

Jim Curland, Advocacy Program Director
Friends of the Sea Otter
(831) 726-9010



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

January 17, 2013

Doug Bosco, Chair, Coastal Conservancy
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

At its February 14, 2013 meeting, the Coastal Conservancy will consider a staff recommendation to award three grants for funding with the 2012-2013 Sea Otter Recovery Funds. The proposed authorization would provide funding to the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) and the University of California, Davis (UCD) to undertake three separate efforts to aid the recovery of the southern sea otter as described below.

Central Coast Water Board staff has partnered for many years with scientists at UCSC, UCD, and veterinary pathologists with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to learn more about the role water quality issues play in sea otter mortality. As a result of the research led by these scientists, we now understand much more about the transport of contaminants and pathogens from human caused sources to sea otters through the "land-to-sea" connection. It is our understanding that funding cuts have curtailed the critical diagnostic work done on dead sea otters that have enabled us to gain a much better understanding about causes of death. We are strongly supportive of this proposal to provide funding to that effort. Other proposed efforts to relate feeding habitats to prey preference and contamination will aid in making linkages back to sources of contamination. This will ultimately help us better understand what our agency can do to improve water quality for the betterment of the sea otter population. Finally, the public needs to be better informed about the problems confronting sea otters and what they can do to help, and we agree that funding for a web site for this purpose is an important use of grant resources.

If you have any questions about our support or the nature of our partnership, please contact me at (805) 549-3333.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Worcester".

Karen Worcester
Staff Environmental Scientist
Central Coast Water Board