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November 30, 2020

Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruhl
The California Ocean Observing Systems
Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System
Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System

Dr. Newton
Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems

Dear Dr. Anderson, Dr. Ruhl, and Dr. Newton:

On behalf of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, I enthusiastically endorse the valuable data and services provided by the Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS), the Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System (CeNCOOS), and the Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS), located at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego (UCSD), the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI), and the University of Washington, respectively. I'm writing today to further support these IOOS Regional Associations in their proposals to include an Ocean Sound Observation Network in their next five years of funded activity.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the national non-profit partner to the National Marine Sanctuary System, and supports research and related activities in sanctuaries. Efforts to monitor underwater soundscapes in sanctuaries are already connected to the Foundation in several ways, including through funding from a cooperative agreement between NOAA and the Foundation that supports the West Coast Soundscapes Coordinator staff position (as of November 2020), and in other areas. The West Coast Soundscapes Coordinator is supported through funding awarded through a cooperative agreement with NOAA/NOS/Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (NA17NOS4290190 and NA19NOS4290190A). The Foundation also holds an MOA with NOAA/NOS/ONMS (MOA-2019-075) that states that the two organizations will work collaboratively to "[a]dvance conservation of national marine sanctuaries including through the support and development of scientific research, data collection and monitoring, and use of innovative technologies."

As a science-based decision support program, the west coast Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS, CeNCOOS, and SCCOOS) collaborate with local, state and federal agencies, tribes, resource managers, industry, policy makers, educators, scientists and the general public to provide data, models and products that advance our understanding of the current and future state of our coastal and global ocean. These IOOS regional associations focus on high-priority regional requirements to provide the information necessary to address marine operations, coastal hazards, climate variability and change, and ecosystems, fisheries, and water quality. I believe that the inclusion of underwater sound within these regional information systems will advance the interests of many stakeholders, including the Foundation.

Sustained funding for SCCOOS, CeNCOOS, and NANOOS is crucial to the maintenance of the state's ocean observing network and to continue the delivery of important data products and services that these observing systems enable. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at allison@marinesanctuary.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Allison Alexander", is written over the typed name.

Allison Alexander
Vice President