

La Jolla Cove Sea Lion Issue

Presented by John Leek

Current and Future Action

- On weekends and using overtime pay, Park Rangers are helping NOAA prevent citizens from approaching marine mammals in La Jolla
- “Docents” from Sierra Club help Rangers educate the public about the distance one can safely approach sea lions. (50 yards?)
- That program, and signs with warnings of pup abandonment is a private arrangement between NOAA and Parks and Rec without actual proof of claims. Unfunded.
- The Public Relations cooperation was started in Spring 2017 in private meetings with NOAA Long Beach.

LJTC Took the “Crisis in the Cove” to Mayor Faulconer in Nov 2016

A year later Parks and Rec replied there would be:

- Public education of dangers of proximity to Sea Lions.
- Docents & signs placed to warn the public
- The bluffs will be deodorized regularly
- Gates installed on stairs to keep sea lions on the Cove beach.
- A year long scientific study would create a MARINE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN for the best solution.
 - The study happened. The plan did not.

1995 to 2014, NOAA Scientists Studied California Sea Lions' recovery and eventual spread to the mainland.

- Temporary offshore ocean warming had reduced their prey.
- Pups had abandoned their mothers to swim to the mainland.
- Federal scientists had not seen sea lions breed on the mainland and so assumed they could not.
- Scientists believed the migrants would have to return to the islands to breed. The problem would solve itself.
- It did not solve itself.

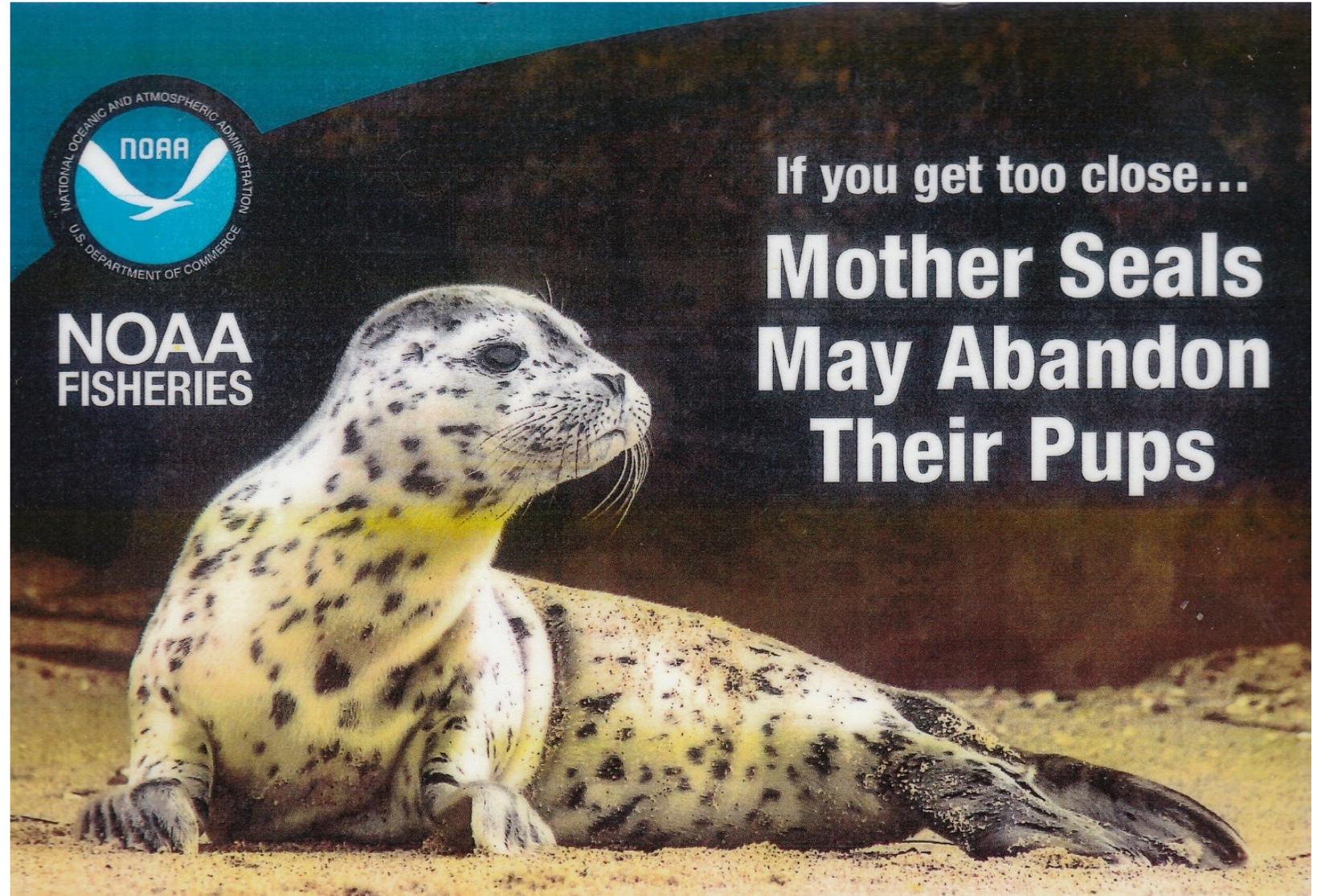
2013 – 2016

Sea Lions Invaded the La Jolla Cove

- Polluting the water with fecal bacteria
- Plundering the Marine Reserve
- Driving away restaurant business above the bluffs
- The sea lions were protected under the federal Marine Mammal Protection Act, our Marine Protected Area and the Coastal Act.
- The City faced bad PR, endless expense, public liability, public safety issues, the “Children’s Pool nightmare” again.
- But tourists liked to look at them.

NOAA Public Relations Fake News Posted

No science:
Slander of
the entire
female
mammal
gender.
Sea lions
too by
inference.



Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA);
Californian Sea Lions are well above Optimum
Sustainable Population (OSP)...Not Depleted.

- 2018 NOAA published; A success story: Protection had allowed Sea Lions to reach the carrying capacity of their environment
- OSP reached in 2000: Sea Lions were NOT DEPLETED
- Last determined in 2020 - Sea Lions are not a Strategic Stock
- The “MMPA Moratorium on Take” of 1972 has no valid application to Sea Lions.

Sea Lions Reached Optimum Sustainable Population (OSP) in 2000 and Saturation in 2013 (Super Abundant)

