CLIFFSIDE SEAT

Margaret Ewings

"Then you can hear it—a vast pulsing harmony—its notes, the lives and deaths of plants and animals; its rhythms spanning the seconds and the centuries."

Aldo Leopold

Man cannot own the sea. No true inheritance comes to us free. Only those who are an intrinsic part of the balanced exchange of sea life can accept it as their own. Man himself is often no more than a small but powerful prowler and exploiter in these moving waters. But this year, a bold step has been taken—not to exploit but to protect a small band of threatened sea otters through capture and translocation from the mainland shores of central California out to San Nicolas, the most remote of the Channel Islands and a safer refuge from increasing coastal oil drilling and tanker traffic.

Few wildlife issues in this country have received the attention focused on this small sea mammal, so rare in the evolutionary chain. The magnitude of the task has included years of scientific research; the establishment of priorities; committees, commissions and hearings; heavy reports containing vehement opposing opinions; complex political strategies—all necessary to obtain the final gift of authority from federal and state jurisdictions. And then, the culmination—the remarkable achievement of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish & Game—the restoration of more than 50 Southern Sea Otters to their ancestral home, San Nicolas Island.

After their flight from the mainland, the otters had been placed in floating holding pens at the island. On August 29, 1987, they were released from their confinement and at last were free to explore. Soon they were swimming about in the near-shore kelp beds. Sea lions barked curiously at the new arrivals and gulls wheeled overhead, their voices sharp signals in the soft winds. Yes, it had come to pass. More than a century after their merciless massacre by fur traders, the otters had returned home. Now, once again, this island will become the landscape of their universe, and a wave of new life will penetrate the fiber and marrow of the shoreline's rocky shelf.

Yes, it has come to pass. Thanks largely to the work of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologists who have studied San Nicolas for eight years, walking its lonely shores, examining it as an appropriate habitat for a secondary population of sea otters, scanning the sea with their binoculars, willing the day they would spy a raft of otters in the undulating offshore kelp beds. Today they can return to that shoreline with what Sigurd Olson would have called: "a certain sense of wholeness and contentment."
SAN NICOLAS AT LAST!

Carol Fulton

It is the classic scene from “Casablanca.” The old prop plane waiting on the tarmac, swirling fog caught in the airport lights overhead, an almost stealthy bustle of activity as men and women move quickly, quietly, intent on loading their precious cargo. Anticipation, repressed excitement, adrenaline levels high, yet rigorous attention to every detail. The steps are retracted into the belly of the plane; the propellers coaxed into blurred circles. The aircraft taxis away towards the end of the runway, disappearing in darkness. A seemingly interminable delay until it roars past, wheels lifting off and nose pointing heavenward just as dawn lightens the sky over Monterey Bay. It is 5:20 a.m., Thursday, August 27, 1987, and a little band of otter pioneers is homeward bound at last.

The first otters had been captured on Monday, August 24, just 6 days after the California Fish & Game Commission’s final August 18th vote of approval (3-2) on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s proposal to reestablish a reserve breeding colony of California sea otters at San Nicolas Island. Pete Bontadelli (who we are pleased to note has just recently been appointed Director of the California Department of Fish & Game) and Deputy Director Bob Fletcher were both very helpful in obtaining the Commission’s concurrence. But two important pieces of unfinished business still remained.

State Legislature Moves to Protect New Colony

By August 19th a move was underway to insure that the protections that the California State Legislature has secured for the otters within their existing central coast range would also be extended to them out at the island. As the legislative session was drawing to a close, Assembly Member Sam Farr agreed to include in his Assembly Bill 2442 two critical provisions. The first would ban entangling fishing nets in all waters surrounding San Nicolas that were less than 20 fathoms in depth. The second would ban the discharge of firearms throughout the translocation zone.

Racing against legislative deadlines, Senator Henry Mello successfully amended the provisions into the bill on the Senate floor. When AB 2442 was returned to the Assembly for approval of the sea otter amendments, a last minute attack from Assembly Member Gerald Felando (an outspoken opponent of sea otter protection) was defeated by Assembly Members Farr, Jim Costa and Byron Sher. Thanks to the California State Legislature and Governor Deukmejian’s September 18, 1987 signature on AB 2442, there are now stringent prohibitions on shooting and gill netting in the waters encircling San Nicolas.

Fishing Industry Strikes Out Three Times

in Lawsuit to Block Translocation

While the August 25th editions of newspapers across the nation and around the world carried front page photos and

"I am glad that the Navy has been able to help in your efforts to preserve San Nicolas Island and provide a home for California’s sea otters."

James H. Webb, Jr.
Secretary of the Navy

"The Fish & Wildlife Service looks forward to the viable restoration of this population along the California coastline and could not have completed such a successful translocation effort without the strong support of your group."

Frank Dunkle, Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

stories heralding the previous day’s commencement of the otter move, state and federal wildlife agencies were still awaiting word on the lawsuit that an attorney for the fishing industry had been threatening to file almost every day since the Fish & Game Commission’s vote back on August 18. But it wasn’t until Friday, August 28, after 22 sea otters had already been flown to San Nicolas and placed in holding pens at the island, that the suit was finally filed in California Superior Court, Ventura County. The plaintiff, “California Ocean Resource Preservation,” is apparently a loose association of many of the same fishing interests which have long been working against the translocation, but so far “CORP” has declined to identify its specific members.

The suit sought a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to prevent the California Fish & Game Commission, the Department of Fish & Game and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service from capturing any more otters, moving any otters already in captivity out to San Nicolas, or releasing the otters already being held at the island. It was denied, and then submitted to the federal U.S. District Court in Los Angeles where the fishermen were again denied a TRO on September 14 and a Preliminary Injunction on September 29. Friends of the Sea Otter has been allowed to intervene in the case on behalf of the state and federal defendants, and our attorney Stuart Somach made extensive arguments in support of the translocation in both the state and federal courts.

A status hearing is scheduled for January 25, 1988, at which time it should be determined if the case will proceed to full trial. We have every confidence that the court will uphold the translocation proposal, and believe the otters are fortunate indeed to be represented by counsel of the caliber of U.S. Attorney George Wu, Assistant Attorney General for the State of California Pam Cytan and of course, the otters’ own personal advocate, Stuart Somach.

Background of Translocation

The daily possibility of a catastrophic oil spill within the otters limited mainland range, the chronic degradation of the otters’ marine habitat due to discharges of toxic wastes and the continuing malicious killings of sea otters all con-
tributed to the need to establish a reserve breeding colony in an area less at risk from man’s activities.

Nor was there any question that if the California sea otter was ever to be restored to a non-threatened status, there would have to be more otters occupying a larger range. The question then became — would it be achieved by natural range expansion into the Santa Barbara Channel and northern Channel Islands — an area of heavy oil activity and the most important Southern California shellfishing area . . . or would it be achieved by giving the otters a boost up and over the Santa Barbara Channel, out to San Nicolas, a far less important shellfishing area that is also far removed from many of the human disturbances which pose risks to otters? After years of controversy, opposition from the oil and fishing industries and hesitancy on the part of the State of California, a compromise was achieved. The otters would be restored to San Nicolas, but contained there, and not be allowed to reoccupy the rest of the Southern California right. Any otters found outside the San Nicolas Island translocation zone would be returned to the Island or north back to the mainland population along the central California coast.

The Bitter with the Sweet

All but six of the otters captured for translocation survived. But the loss of six animals, in spite of tender loving care and painstaking planning at every step of the way, was heart-breaking. Yet to put it in perspective, we know of at least 6 otters that have been shot in Monterey Bay alone this year — approximately 20% of the dead otters recovered range-wide were due to malicious human activities. For over a decade we were losing roughly 100 otters a year in fishing nets, and, should a major oil spill occur, we could lose hundreds and hundreds of otters. (In fact, the losses during the translocation reaffirmed our greatest fears about our inability to safely capture, transport, clean and rehabilitate otters should they already be stressed and weakened by oil contamination.) But the deaths of these animals, sad as they are, do not diminish either the need for another breeding colony or the remarkable achievement of safely restoring more than 50 of these fragile creatures to San Nicolas Island.

Life at San Nicolas

As the otters begin to establish their daily patterns of life at the island — establishing rafting sites in the kelp beds, scouting out favorite foraging spots, forming small groups for their mid-day siestas — they are watched by island-based, USFWS researchers, and watched over by a small cadre of special USFWS law enforcement agents. Most of the animals appear to have remained at San Nicolas after their release, although two have been found dead on the Southern California mainland (investigations are on-going to determine if they died of natural causes or human interference).

One brief shining moment occurred in mid-October when biologist Brian Hatfield, scanning the kelp beds for a mature female he had been monitoring for about two weeks, suddenly spied her with a newborn clinging pup! Although every attempt had been made to avoid moving pregnant animals (and several obviously pregnant females had been released at their capture sites), this otter had fooled everyone. The news of San Nicolas Island’s first native-born son or daughter was met with great rejoicing; but alas, as is not uncommon in the wild, after a week or two the tiny pup was not seen with its mother again. It was as if a star had suddenly dropped into the sea, and we had to remind ourselves that the otters’ hope lies in the bounty of nature that produces life again and again.

In early December good news came from the mainland: preliminary results of a full-range census indicated possibly the highest fall count in several years, even though the count was taken after removal of 60 animals for the translocation project! And what about the future of the otters at San Nicolas? It will take years before we can determine if the colony will be a success or failure. But as for now, the otters are apparently enjoying their romantic island hideaway for amorous activities abound, and who knows what the spring will bring . . .

Dr. Betty S. Davis Conservation Award

At Friends of the Sea Otter’s October 17, 1987 Annual Meeting, we were honored to bestow our Dr. Betty S. Davis Conservation Award on the scientists from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG), and Monterey Bay Aquarium, who safely restored more than 50 California sea otters home to San Nicolas Island.

The award has been given only once before—to three graduate students at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories who devoted countless long, cold, wet and often dangerous hours at sea to obtain the first irrefutable proof that sea otters were indeed being drowned in fishing nets.

This year the award again went to those who spent countless long hours—some cold, wet and in physical jeopardy; some shouldering heavy responsibilities, making life and death decisions for sea otters; some persevering through innumerable roadblocks to clear the way and insure that actions necessary for the sea otters’ survival would not be denied. They have our heartfelt gratitude.

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

Working out of a cove north of Morro Bay, biologists used dip nets, underwater diver-held traps and tangle nets (not shown) to capture San Nicolas-bound California sea otters. After being weighed and sexed, the otters were transferred to a shuttle boat which brought them to shore. They were placed in specially-modified kennels and carried up from the beach to waiting air-conditioned vans for the drive to the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Upon their arrival they were examined by a veterinarian before being placed into holding tanks. Kept under careful observation to insure they were feeding and grooming properly, upon receipt of a clean bill of health the otters were placed in their kennels and loaded into a moving van for their trip to Monterey Airport.
Carefully secured on the chartered aircraft, they were flown out to San Nicolas. Once at the island they were quickly offloaded, driven to the release site and then transported out to offshore floating holding pens in rubber Zodiaks. After two days in the pens, the straps holding the net sides were cut and the otters allowed to leave at will. Researchers are now observing sea otters in San Nicolas waters for the first time in more than a century.

Photos by Jeff Foot, courtesy U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Chris Harrold (plane, island & sign); Julie Eliason (plane interior); Rachel Saunders (cove) and Richard Bucich (otter).

Homeward Bound: The Otters’ Journey Back to San Nicolas

Rachel T. Saunders

"... It was pulled off with the kind of precision usually reserved for secret military operations."

The Times (London), August 31, 1987

An apt description indeed of the extraordinary efforts undertaken by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) biologists to ensure a safe and successful homecoming at San Nicolas Island.

It was on the bright Sunday afternoon of August 23, 1987 that more than two dozen men and women, some from as far away as Florida and Washington, D.C., gathered at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Piedras Blancas Field Station (just north of Morro Bay) to exchange smiles, handshakes and expressions of anticipation and disbelief that a translocation project conceived over a decade ago was finally about to become reality.

Early the next morning four teams of otter catchers departed from the "command post," a sheltered sandy cove at the base of steep cliffs. Rubber Zodiacs ferried them through mist and surf to larger capture boats moored just offshore. Onshore, final preparations were made to receive the captured animals and special radio and telephone lines were strung to provide vital links between the cove, the capture boats, the Monterey Bay Aquarium and San Nicolas Island.

Remarkably, the first otter was captured within just twenty minutes and within two hours four male sea otters were on their way to the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Within two days, twenty-four sea otters (twelve males and twelve females) had been captured—the first of several groups who would make the journey to San Nicolas. The animals had been scooped up in dip nets, caught in diver-held traps or captured in surface tangle nets. After they were weighed, sexed, and assessed to be good candidates for translocation, the capture crew would radio for a shuttle boat to relay the otters back to the cove.

Once onshore, otters were placed in specially-modified individual kennels. Plastic-coated grates suspended the otters above ten pound blocks of blue ice which were slipped beneath the grates to keep the otters cool. (They were also given large chunks of block ice to chew on.)

The kennels were carried up steep steps from the beach and placed into air-conditioned vans whose side windows had been blocked with cardboard to protect against the sun's rays during the two-and-one-half hour journey up the rugged Big Sur coast to the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Two people in each van shared driving and otter-tending duties—gently spraying the otters with water if they soiled themselves or providing extra ice through small holes drilled in the tops of the kennels. (Inquisitive otters often patted and explored these holes with their tiny paws.) The otters usually settled down fairly quickly, apparently lulled by the whir of the air-conditioners. Lying on their backs they slept, groomed quietly, or chewed on the ice they held on their chests, only occasionally issuing piercing reminders to their chauffeurs of the supreme importance of their task. A backup van travelled close behind on almost every trip.

Upon reaching the Aquarium the otters were transferred into small water-filled pools where they could more thoroughly groom themselves, then examined by a veterinarian (with blood and tissue samples taken for further health assessment) and tagged for future identification.

The otters were then placed in twenty-foot-diameter holding tanks equipped with wooden haul-outs and continuous running water. Each tank held a maximum of twelve otters, with males kept separate from females. Working around-the-clock in four hour shifts, Aquarium crews fed the otters clams, squid and live crabs four times a day, carefully skimming the pools to collect any food or fecal matter that could soil their coats, and watched carefully for any signs of stress, illness or discomfort. Although captivity was certainly stressful for the animals, the companionship of other otters was clearly reassuring. Indeed many otters adopted a buddy or two, holding, nuzzling and nudging each other as they stared back at the captors who were so intent on understanding and meeting their needs.

During the early morning hours of each flight day, amidst much squirming and splashing on the part of the uncooperative otters, the animals were dip-netted out of the pools; given a vitamin shot of B complex, liver and iron; quickly placed back into their ice-cooled kennels (which now had loose plastic flaps over their doors to reduce disturbance to the animals); and loaded onto a moving van. The kennels were marked so that animals who had "bonded" at the Aquarium could be placed together in the same floating pens at the island.

After the short trip to the Monterey Airport the kennels were off-loaded and carried up the stairs of a chartered airplane more routinely used to transport U.S. Navy personnel out to San Nicolas. Most of the seats were folded back against the wall so the kennels could be slipped down in two long rows straddling the center aisle. USFWS biologists and a veterinarian accompanied the otters on the flights. In the words of Dr. Glenn VanBlaricom, "... for each flight, but especially the first, takeoff was a moment of extreme emotion, elation and fear combined into one ... I'll never forget the feeling at 6:44 a.m. on the 27th of August when we brought sea otters back to San Nicolas."

And so, descending through a halo of clouds, the otters returned to the island to be met by biologists who helped unload the kennels and place them on flatbed trucks for transport to "Sissy Cove," a beach on the north shore where gentle swells permitted safe and easy access to the water. The kennels were carried down to the beach, loaded four-at-a-time into rubber Zodiacs, then shuttled a short distance offshore where the first two groups of otters were released into well-anchored floating holding pens. (Later arrivals were immediately set free in order to minimize the stress of captivity.)

Under 24-hour guard from the USFWS support vessel SHAHA RAE and a virtual armada of CDFG patrol boats, the otters were fed and allowed to acclimate to their new island environment for two days before the straps that had held the netting taut on the sides of the pens were cut, and the otters home free at last.

Our Staff Biologist, Rachel Saunders, was given a leave of absence from Friends of the Sea Otter to work for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the translocation project. Because of her knowledge of sea otters, experience in caring for marine mammals in captivity, and involvement in oil spill contingency planning, she was well qualified for the undertaking.
Sinking Ship Spills Oil Off California Coast After Freighter Collide

Additional Collision with Nearby Oil Drilling Rigs Narrowly Averted

On September 21, 1987, while attention focused on the dramatic return of a small band of sea otters to San Nicolas Island, another drama at sea unfolded just 80 miles to the northwest—bringing fears for the safety of more than 10,000 fur seals, sea lions and a critically important seabird nesting area on the island of San Miguel in the northern Channel Island chain.

At 6:23 a.m., two foreign-flag freighters collided in dense fog 12-14 miles southwest of Point Conception off the Santa Barbara county coast. (A radar operator on Texaco’s nearby oil-drilling rig Platform Harvest apparently tried to warn the vessels that they were on a collision course but received no response from either ship.) The 594-foot-long Panamanian car carrier ATLANTIC WING severely damaged the 564-foot-long Liberian bulk carrier PACBARONES which was carrying 21,000 metric tons of copper concentrate and which sank less than 10 hours later into Pacific waters more than 1,750 feet deep.

As much as 40,000 of an estimated 364,000 gallons of the vessel’s diesel and intermediate grade fuel oil may have spilled, initially appearing on the sea’s surface as a brownish rainbow-colored plume stretching as far as 20 miles from the spill site and eventually coming within 10 miles of San Miguel Island, a marine life haven on the western boundary of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Although the heavy fog initially prevented spotter aircraft from assessing the magnitude of the slick, boat clean up operations began quickly. Yet as is so often the case, only a token amount (less than 10%) was recovered. Building sea chop and the light volatile nature of the fuel oil eventually rendered recovery techniques ineffective. As strong winds started to drive the oil south towards San Miguel, the spill was sprayed with dispersant, a controversial combination of chemicals which, rather than skimming oil from the surface, act to break up the slicks by dispersing the oil into tiny globules in the water column. Yet according to on-scene government observers the results of applying almost 400 gallons of dispersant were inconclusive at best and totally ineffective at worst. Indeed, it was only another fortunate shift in the wind that took the oil off to the west and spared San Miguel a disaster.

Even more disturbing are reports that before sinking just six miles south of Chevron’s Platform Hermosa, the PACBARONES had drifted so close to the cluster of offshore oil drilling platforms that it had to be taken into tow to prevent another collision of potentially far more catastrophic proportions.

* Not only did this accident provide still additional confirmation of the on-going oil spill threat from ship and tanker traffic along the California coast (the primary motivating factor behind the sea otter translocation), but it also reaffirmed the decision not to move the otters to the northern Channel Islands because of the islands’ proximity to the major tanker routes in the Santa Barbara Channel. (See map, page 2.)

Just How Safe are U.S. Oil Tankers?

The deplorable safety record of many foreign-registry tankers has long posed a significant threat to the health of the world’s oceans. But the dismal performance of one U.S. vessel in particular raises serious questions about the safety of American oil tankers, the adequacy of U.S. Coast Guard inspection and certification procedures, and the commitment of the U.S. oil and shipping industries to assure that hazardous cargos are transported in the safest manner possible.

According to the October 19, 1987 issue of the Oil Spill Intelligence Report (OSIR)*, an American-owned, American-operated, American-chartered, U.S. Coast Guard-inspected tanker was responsible for two major oil spills in U.S. waters within a ten month period earlier this year. It also had a track record of 13 prior casualty incidents and the lowest possible rating from the Tanker Advisory Center of New York’s 1987 industry publication, “Guide for Selection of Tankers.”

The U.S. supertanker STUYVESANT (1,098 feet long and weighing in at 228,274 dead weight tons) is owned by the Wilmington Trust Co. of Wilmington, Delaware; operated by Bay Tankers of Inglewood, New Jersey; and chartered by BP America/Standard Oil Co. (Ohio). She was fully laden with 1.5 million gallons of North Slope Alaskan crude oil owned by SOHIO Supply Co. of Cleveland, Ohio, a subsidiary of BP/America, when she encountered heavy seas while departing Valdez, Alaska on October 2, 1987 enroute to Panama.

The structural damage she sustained resulted in the spillage of more than 600,000 gallons of Alaskan crude into the Gulf of Alaska. Fortunately the vessel traveled between 100-200 miles offshore and a fortuitous combination of winds, currents and heavy seas apparently helped dissipate the oil and prevent as many as six resulting oil slicks confirmed by Coast Guard overflights from reaching the coast.

* Written by the Center for Short-Lived Phenomena in Cambridge, Massachusetts; published by Cutter Information Corp.

Just ten months before, in January, 1987, the OSIR reports that the STUYVESANT had suffered similar damage in another storm, eventually resulting in the loss of an estimated 630,000 gallons of crude oil into Alaskan waters. Yet according to the tanker’s charter company, following the January incident the ship had been inspected and recertified as seaworthy by the U.S. Coast Guard.
Prosecutions for Killing Sea Otters Underway

The bad news is that a lot of sea otters are being killed: some shot, some clubbed, some drowned in illegally set fishing nets. In Monterey Bay alone this year, at least six otters are known to have been shot; another six otters have been reported killed in the southern portion of their range.

While the malicious killing of sea otters has been a chronic problem, the California Department of Fish & Game confirms that this is "many times the long-term average rate for shootings."

Worse yet, there hasn’t been a conviction for killing a sea otter since 1970.

But that might be about to change. The good news is that as we go to press there are three active prosecutions underway, thanks to the perseverance of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Special Agent Bill Talkin and California Department of Fish & Game Wardens Eric Wang, Doug Huckins and Paul Maurer, the cooperation of the U.S. Coast Guard, the commitment of the Monterey and San Luis Obispo County District Attorney’s offices and some timely coincidences . . .

• On May 21, 1987, the body of a partially-skinned sea otter was found dumped in a gutter in Salinas. Investigation determined that it had been killed on a beach near Moss Landing (presumably struck with the butt of a fishing pole), dragged into the suspects’ car and then discarded after an unsuccessful attempt to skin it. Warrants have been issued for the arrest of two Salinas residents who failed to show up for their October 7 arraignment in Monterey County Municipal Court.

• On June 17, 1987, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologists monitoring otters along the Big Sur coast notified the Department of Fish & Game that they had seen gill netters setting nets within the 20-fathom closure area which had been enacted to protect otters from drowning in entangling fishing gear. Early the next morning state and federal wildlife personnel watched from the cliffs as the fishermen pulled in their nets—nets bearing the lifeless bodies of three sea otters. Charges will be filed in both state and federal courts.

• On August 9, 1987, researchers from Sea World San Diego had stationed themselves on a bluff at Cayucos (just north of Morro Bay) to observe a raft of otters when three sport fishermen pulled up in a boat and began shooting at the animals. The biologists called the Coast Guard which dispatched a boat and intercepted the suspects’ skiff. On board were spent shells and a rifle. The fishermen were positively identified by the researchers (who also had taken photographs of the trio). Soon after, a dead sea otter with a gunshot wound was recovered in the same vicinity. Charges have been filed in state court by the San Luis Obispo District Attorney’s Office, and are expected to soon be filed in federal court.

Under state law, conviction for killing a sea otter carries a penalty of up to $1,000 and 60 days in jail. Under the federal Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection Acts, conviction can result in a fine of up to $20,000 and a one-year prison term.

Welcome BLUEFIN!

A hearty thanks to the California Department of Fish & Game for permanently re-assigning its 63-foot patrol boat BLUEFIN to the fishing port of Moss Landing — the midway point on the shoreline of Monterey Bay. Her active presence is hoped to be a strong deterrent to those responsible for illegal gill netting activities and the malicious killings of otters and other marine birds and mammals from Monterey Bay, south along the Big Sur coast, to the Morro Bay area. We are also very grateful to our members, the Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society, the Monterey Bay Chapter of the American Cetacean Society, State Senator Henry Mello, Assembly Member Sam Farr and the Monterey and Santa Cruz County Boards of Supervisors who all were involved in the effort to bring a seaworthy patrol boat back to Monterey Bay.
Alaska May Seek to Regain Control of State’s Sea Otters, Walrus and Polar Bears

As we go to press, the State of Alaska is still debating whether or not to petition the federal government for the return of management authority over the state's walrus, polar bear and sea otter populations. Since the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) in 1972, management of these three species has been the responsibility of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.*

Prior to the passage of the MMPA, Alaska had a mixed record with regard to its sea otter population (which the state estimates to be in excess of 100,000-150,000 animals). Alaska pioneered their reintroduction into areas where they had abondoned prior to their decimation by the eighteenth and nineteenth century fur trade, but still encouraged killing the animals for their pelts.

Similarly, today, resumption of state management could result in some benefits but also major risks for Alaskan otters. Under state management, Alaskan Natives would no longer be able to kill otters for making "handcraft" items (as they currently can under the provisions of the MMPA). Rural Alaskans (including Natives) would only be allowed to kill otters for personal or family consumption. As subsistence use of sea otters has been very limited, and today is almost non-existent, this would reduce the number of otters now being killed by Alaskan Natives.

On the other hand, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game would most likely implement a zonal management program to reduce or prevent otters from competing with certain shellfisheries. Unlike the zonal management program devised for sea otters in Southern California, however, Alaska would probably seek to use lethal means to control the animals. And as one of Alaska's identified goals in regaining management of its marine mammals is to expand economic opportunities for Alaskans, how long would it be before sea otter furs would again be on the auction block?

Another concern raised by Alaska's renewed interest in managing its marine mammals is the trophy hunting of polar bears and walrus—an issue which has led the Alaska Wildlife Alliance to oppose return of management to the state and raised a red flag for wildlife conservation groups across the country. Should Alaska decide to proceed with its request for return of management of these three species, it will undoubtedly trigger a major national debate.

* With the exception of walrus, whose management was briefly regained by the state from 1976 to 1979.

Fishing Industry Trying to Gut Marine Mammal Protection Act

"Marine mammals have proven themselves to be resources of great international significance, aesthetic and recreational as well as economic, and it is the sense of the Congress that they be protected and encouraged to develop to the greatest extent feasible commensurate with sound policies of resource management and that the primary objective of their management should be to maintain the health and stability of the marine ecosystem."

The United States Congress, 1972

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, one of the most far-sighted and comprehensive wildlife conservation and management statutes in the world, is up for reauthorization in 1988 and the fishing industry appears to be gearing up for a major attack.

The Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission (PMFC) has released a 55-page draft report on its recommended amendments to the Act. Stripped of its euphemisms, "the intent of the report, with its proposed amendments, is primarily to facilitate the killing of marine mammals, purposefully or incidentally ..." according to Greenpeace attorney Bo Brinkley. The PMFC is joined in its dubious crusade by a new organization with the ambiguously misleading title, "Americans for Marine Eco-Balance," which claims that "The effect of current MMPA policy on the fishing industry is potentially disastrous."

The primary underlying assumptions of these groups appear to be (1) if more marine mammals could be legally killed, there would be more fish caught and higher profits for fishermen, and (2) protection of marine mammals is somehow inconsistent with maintaining healthy, stable marine ecosystems.

Some of the species which the fishing groups have singled out as particular "problems" are killer whales for eating black cod, sea lions for eating salmon, sea otters for eating shellfish and apparently any marine mammal that loses its life in a fishing net. ("Entanglement in fishing gear has precipitated restrictions and area closures, seasonal and permanent. Such closures can curtail or eliminate fisheries. Livelihoods are jeopardized by present MMPA policy.")

Congress is hearing from the fishermen. Now they must hear from those who value our nation's marine mammals and take pride in their legal safeguards.

PLEASE WRITE TODAY. URGE REAUTHORIZATION OF A STRONG ACT WITH NO WEAKENING AMENDMENTS.

Hon. Gerry Studds, Chair
Subcommittee on Fisheries, U.S. House of Representatives - Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Walter Jones, Chair
Subcommittee on Fisheries, U.S. Senate - Washington, D.C. 20510

The Hon. Ernest F. Hollings, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation
U.S. Senate - Washington, D.C. 20510

Friends of the Sea Otter is pleased to announce that we have retained
Donald C. Baur,
formerly General Counsel, U.S. Marine Mammal Commission,
now with the firm of Perkins, Coie in Washington, D.C.,
to represent the sea otter's interests during the upcoming reauthorization of the
U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Federal Government Intensifies Assault on California Coastal Commission

In a move sure to add to the ever-widening rift between the Reagan administration and the State of California over management of the state's coastal resources, federal authorities have upped the ante in their hostile campaign to cripple California's Coastal Commission.

Despite recent efforts by California's congressional delegation and Senators Cranston and Wilson to negotiate with federal officials, on November 23rd the Department of Commerce's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management issued a highly critical report which threatened to decertify the Commission, revoke its federal funding and strip it of its operating authority if it does not comply by January 1, 1988 with federal directives for handling such controversial issues as offshore oil drilling.

The report is viewed by many as still another poorly-disguised attempt to destroy California's legal ability to resist the massive leasing and drilling scenarios put forth by the U.S. Department of Interior. Indeed, the oil industry has often characterized the Commission as an unreasonable impediment to its grandiose offshore oil development plans, and it was Interior Secretary Donald Hodel himself who first prevailed upon the Department of Commerce to challenge the Commission's actions with respect to offshore oil drilling.

The vital role the Commission plays as the only state agency empowered to regulate federal offshore oil activities and onshore coastal development must not be taken for granted. California is now in real danger of losing its most effective tool for preserving the state's spectacular and productive coastline. Those who value the Commission's work must again come to the Commission's defense before it falls victim to the oil industry and Interior Secretary Hodel.

Legal Battles Underway in War Over Offshore Oil Drilling

Coastal States and Environmental Groups Go To Court to Halt Federal Offshore Oil Leasing Plan

In an effort to prevent the wholesale giveaway of offshore oil leases proposed under the Department of Interior's recently-finalized 5 Year Offshore Oil Leasing Plan (see Raft #37, Summer 1987), the coastal states of California, Massachusetts, Oregon, Florida and Washington, numerous local governments and a coalition of environmental and fishing groups (led by the Natural Resources Defense Council and including Friends of the Sea Otter) have taken their case to federal court.

The suit, filed in August in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, District of Columbia, seeks to invalidate the 5 Year Plan for failing to adequately analyze the Plan's impacts on some of this nation's most sensitive and valuable coastal and marine resources and for failing to properly balance those impacts with the potential for discovering additional offshore oil reserves.

The first actual lease sale date for tracts off Northern California is scheduled for February, 1989; tracts off southern and central California (which include waters adjacent to the southern one-third of the sea otter range) are scheduled to be sold to the oil industry in September, 1989.

Big Oil Attacks Local Controls on Offshore Oil Development

Flexing their legal and financial muscles, the Western Oil and Gas Association and the National Ocean Industries Association (representing oil companies and oil-related businesses) have filed suit against 13 California coastal communities in an effort to overturn recently-adopted local ordinances that either require voter approval of proposed onshore oil support facilities or prohibit them entirely.

At the heart of the matter is how much control local governments will have in any operation that relates to the development of oil reserves off their shores. Seeking to deny local authority over these onshore oil support facilities, the oil industry lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in August, claims that the local initiatives are unconstitutional, violating the oil industry's rights and the "due process, federal supremacy and commerce clauses" of the U.S. Constitution.

Sparked primarily by U.S. Interior Secretary Donald Hodel's irresponsible drilling plans which threaten to drastically alter the unique character of California's shoreline communities, a total of 17 cities and counties have adopted ordinances to insure local approval prior to construction of the onshore processing and transport portion of the offshore oil drilling process.

These coastal communities are now gearing up for a vigorous and united defense in what promises to be a hard-fought legal battle. At the request of California's State Lands and Coastal Commissions, they will receive additional support from California Attorney General John Van de Kamp who has moved to intervene on behalf of these local communities who should clearly be guaranteed a significant role in shaping the future of their own coastal environments.
Our New Sea Otter Center

Nestled in an inviting courtyard in The Crossroads Shopping Center, Friends of the Sea Otter has found a bright, cheerful new home with plenty of room for our educational displays, literature racks, and colorful array of otter toys, books, jewelry, T-shirts, stationery and other gift items. Sea otters in many engaging poses peer down from framed prints, photographs and posters while our friendly volunteers answer all manner of otter inquiries. Thanks to the magic of videotape and the dedication of Ed Arnow who produced the video for us, we now have otters in motion right in the heart of our Center.

We’re very grateful for ten wonderful years in our previous location in the Barnyard, and look forward to having old friends and new stop by and visit us now in The Crossroads on Rio Road at Highway One, at the mouth of Carmel Valley. We’re open daily from 10 to 3 (Sundays noon to 3). We also need some new additions to our trusty crew of dedicated volunteers. If you’d enjoy sharing your enthusiasm for the otters while selling otter-related merchandise to help support our work, please call Jo Nix at 625-3290.
"The Greatest Show on Water"

"P.T. Barnum called his circus ‘The Greatest Show on Earth,’ and people by the millions paid to see it. The Greatest Show on Water’ is one that even Barnum never dreamed of. This show goes on constantly in Monterey Bay, and it’s free. “Close to the shoreline and in clear view from beaches that are easily accessible to the public, the clowns of the sea are ‘on stage’ almost without stop. These are the California sea otters, whose playfulness and resourcefulness have won the hearts of everyone who’s ever seen them.”

So begins the full-page feature by Ed Arnow in the September/October 1987 issue of Motorland Magazine. Complete with a map of the best sea otter viewing locations, the article points out that “...a pair of good binoculars assures a front-row seat without getting wet. Sight-seeing excursion boats from Monterey’s Fisherman’s Wharf provide still another opportunity for watching otters in the wild.” This lively article should entice many binocular-wielding members of the California State Automobile Association (whose membership exceeds 2,700,00 MEMORIAL GIFTS

In memory of Nora Brice from the Womack Family
In memory of Irene Barrett from Joan Weiss
In memory of Richard D. Crumrine from Robert and Irene Akers Jean Moy Mugavero Family Allen, Elisabeth, Chrissie and Beth Towne
In memory of Mr. Horace A. Fey from R. Walter Fey
In memory of Art Fink from Sharon Lovejoy and Jeff Protopovich
In memory of Spencer Halverson from Joan Weiss
In memory of “Heine” from Kathy Whitehair
In memory of Jocelyn Kempe from Carol Fulton
In memory of John Noel from Rob Feiss, M.D.
In memory of Brita Ohmer from R. Walter Fey
In memory of Jim Shaughnessy from Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Shaughnessy
In memory of George Stefan from Sharon Lovejoy and Jeff Protopovich
In memory of David Stephens from Sharon Lovejoy and Jeff Protopovich Jack and Louise Yeates
In memory of Billie Lynn Thomas from Kathryn T. Dann
In memory of Della Whitely Williams from Howard and Helen Williams

Gifts of Love

Life member Jeanne Irwin of Upland, California, has lovingly created and donated hundreds of elegant Christmas ornaments, decorative baskets, keepsake boxes and many other sea otter gift items to Friends of the Sea Otter, thus contributing thousands of dollars to the otters’ cause (and creating several small stampedes at our Annual Meetings where her Christmas wreaths and decorations are sold!).

Special Thanks

Major financial gifts from the following people have greatly enhanced our efforts on behalf of the otters. We are very grateful to Mr. & Mrs. William Robert Burns, Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Dillon, Mrs. Spencer R. Keare, Mrs. Ralph F. Maxwell, Mr. & Mrs. Brooks McCormick, Marge Siirila & Joe Phares, Mrs. H. R. Stratford, and Mrs. Philip S. Weld.

Matching Gifts

No, we’re not talking about his and her matching bathrobes! We’re talking about doubling the strength of your contribution to the otters with a matching gift from your employer. As part of their own corporate giving programs, many companies will now match their employees’ gifts to non-profit charitable and educational organizations such as Friends of the Sea Otter. Wouldn’t your employer like to be a Friend of the Sea Otter too?

Row, Row, Row Our Boat...

And a bonny boat she is too, given to us by Life Member Steven Gilbert. A trim little 12-footer with her own trailer, just perfect for sea-going visits with the otters. Our thanks to Mr. Gilbert, and also to Mike Maiorana who keeps her safely stowed for us at his new Monterey Bay Boatworks in the Monterey Marina.

A BEQUEST

from a warm and caring friend

Ms. F. WALDO JEWELL

Joining us in 1969 and periodically sending us generous contributions over the years, F. Waldo Jewell benefited our work for the otters and gave us renewed faith in ourselves. A college educator at Brown University, she was a student of the classics, sensing intuitively a way of looking at life with a perspective that goes deeply into value judgements.

Ms. Jewell lived many years at Arvada, Colorado. She devoted much time to world travel, noting the passing decades seemed dedicated to the ravaging of the ancient values and our environment. To quote from one of her letters, “...at this point in my life I find that the thing I care about most is trying to preserve our planet and its life from destruction...my concern in making out my will has been motivated chiefly by my wish to give as much as possible to the cause of conservation.” We are proud and grateful to be a recipient of her bequest.
Children's Book Review

Otters, Octopuses, and Odd Creatures of the Deep

By Randall A. Reinstedt
Illustrated by David F. Aguero

A "bor-ing" rainy Saturday when there's "nothing to do" turns into a fascinating adventure when two young school children explore the Monterey Bay Aquarium with a retired fisherman as their guide.

Filled with facts and fun to read, imparting a strong conservation message with a light touch, the book tantalizes with mysteries while presenting sound information on the marine life of Monterey Bay in an easy-to-understand manner. It will be enjoyed by those who have not yet had the pleasure of visiting the Aquarium as well as those who return again and again.

We particularly enjoyed Mr. Reinstedt's deft handling of the debate between the skeptical old sardine fisherman and one of the children on the value of the sea otters and their role in California's history.

Otters, Octopuses, and Odd Creatures of the Deep, 64 pages, hardcover, for children ages 8-12, is available from Friends of the Sea Otter for $9.95 plus $2.00 shipping. California residents please add $.50 sales tax.

Thanks to Our Otter Center "Angels"

Robert and Nancy Stephens donated display and storage cabinets as well as the services of professional movers to save our backs and make our whirlwind transition from Barnyard to Crossroads possible; David Stocker of Stocker and Allaire installed our track lighting; Charles Nix donated our television, Bill Yeates donated our VCR and both helped with painting and carpentry; Margaret Owings gave our handsome sign; Bobbie Harms helped make order out of chaos and Ed Arnow spent many, many hours preparing our sea otter videotape. Overseeing the entire production, our own human dynamo, Sea Otter Center Director Jo Nix, who hopes to never see another paint brush as long as she lives.

All she wants for Christmas . . .

Our membership secretary, Tony Wenner, would be a truly happy woman if not one of our members would ever even think of moving to a new residence without first sending her a change of address . . . Not only does she feel neglected when you move without telling her, but it also offends her parsimonious spirit — it costs us an additional $1.33 (ouch!) whenever a RAFT is returned and we have to send another to a new address.

THE SILVER CIRCLE
We associate the widening circles from an otter's dive with the growing accomplishments of our work and its growing needs. Many of our Life Members have continued to make substantial contributions, thus helping the circles continue to expand.

The names listed below are those who have added still another silver circle to the otter's dive:

Robert and Adaire Aldama - Long Beach, CA
Natasha Antonovich - Montebello, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Bassett - Mill Valley, CA
Dorothy W. Bell - Pentwater, MI
Dr. Georgette Bellucci - Pittsburgh, PA
Dr. and Mrs. Douglas R. Berg - Los Gatos, CA
Mr. and Mrs. John Borgsteadt - Palo Alto, CA
Mrs. Perry E. Bradley - Memphis, TN
James M. Brett - Big Sur, CA
Dr. and Mrs. W. J. Cavin, Jr. - Las Vegas, NV
Alice C. Davies - Honolulu, HI
Mrs. Howard A. Diller - Orinda, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Dillon - Milwaukee, WI
Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Ellington - Carmel, CA
Mrs. Thomas H. Endicott - Manchester, MA
Mathea Falco - New York, NY
Lee and Richey Grude - Sunnyvale, CA
Robert and Mary Hackstaff - Denver, CO
Linda H. Hamilton - Seattle, WA
Jane M. Harry - Upper Marlboro, MD
Dan and Mary Hicks - Fremont, CA
Mrs. Betty A. Holt - Carmel, CA
Dr. and Mrs. Emmet T. Hooper - Apts, CA
Mark F. Hopkins - San Jose, CA
Jeanne and John Irwin - Upland, CA
Mrs. Spencer R. Keare - Highland Park, IL
Mrs. John W. Leslie - Evanston, IL
Shirlee A. MacDowell - Downey, CA
Dixie Mage - Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Ken and Pam Manders - Corpus Christi, TX
Milene Marion - Woodland Hills, CA
Emily Marschak - West Palm Beach, FL
Ms. Kathleen C. Mason - San Francisco, CA
Mrs. Ralph F. Maxwell - Palo Alto, CA
Mrs. Clifford C. McAleenan - Branford, CT
Dr. and Mrs. Frank M. McCarthy - Pasadena, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Brooks McCormick - Chicago, IL
Peter C. McLees - San Dimas, CA
Harriet and Arthur Mitteldorf - Pebble Beach, CA
Mr. E. P. Morgan - McLean, VA
John F. Morthland - San Bernardino, CA
Terence and Linda O'Neill - Ventura, CA
Margaret Owings - Big Sur, CA
Janis and Bruce Penslar - Los Angeles, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Richard G. Powell - New York, NY
Juliet and Ferdinand Ruth - Pebble Beach, CA
Mrs. Leonard R. Sargent - Corwin Springs, MT
Ellie Schiff - Los Angeles, CA
Mrs. Brewster Sewall - Kennebunk, ME
Marlyn G. Seyler - Mansfield, OH
Marge Siirila and Joe Phares - Oceanside, CA
Barbara L. Spaulding - Saddle River, NJ
Julie R. Spencer - Stinson Beach, CA
Donna Sprinkle - Long Beach, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Stephens - Carmel, CA
Mrs. H. R. Stratford - Cody, WY
Mrs. L. W. Sweetser - Carmel, CA
Kathy Tonnessen - Livermore, CA
Louis R. van de Velde - Wickford, RI
Dr. and Mrs. J. Hugh Visser - San Francisco, CA
Dean Vittetoe - Carmel, CA
Jane L. Walpole, D.M.D. - Portland, OR
Mrs. Philip S. Weil - Gloucester, MA
Mrs. Joe Williams - Las Vegas, NV
Alan R. Young - Moraga, CA

NEW LIFE MEMBERS
We welcome Life Members contributions of $100 or more.

Andrew Blaxter - Whittier, CA
Larry and Janet Brown - Morgan Hill, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Robert Burns - Paradise Valley, AZ
Cammi Charlton - Monterey, CA
Ed and Sylvia Conrow - Manhattan Beach, CA
Ramona J. Crooks - Gualala, CA
Betty Eillet - Pacific Grove, CA
Marjorie Fontana - Carmel, CA
Nancy Gingrich and Gwen Boudreaux - Santa Rosa, CA
Mrs. Connie M. Griffin - Richmond, CA
Terry Halverson - Los Angeles, CA
Betty A. James - San Diego, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth C. Kidd - Corvallis, OR
Susan A. Kogan - Carmel, CA
Dr. and Mrs. George A. Liebler - Pittsburg, PA
Gene E. Lindquist - Chicago, IL
Kimberly Louie - San Jose, CA
Scott A. McCoy - Malvern, PA
Leslie Meredith - New York, NY
Mrs. Barbara M. Mulespaw - San Bernardino, CA
Bryan Olson - Delavan, WI
Larry Perlberg - Memphis, TN
Ann Prather - Santa Barbara, CA
Guy and Gabrielle Rear - Carlisle, MA
Judith A. Reich - Fort Wayne, IN
Robert T. Shimizu - Long Beach, CA
Helen M. Sprinkle - Long Beach, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Stegner - Los Altos, CA
Arthur and Trudy Troutman - Cambria, CA
Kathy Whitlehar - Fountain Valley, CA
Jack and Louise Yeates - Wilmington, DE
Mrs. Cindy Zeilinsky - Woodland Hills, CA

NEW PATRON MEMBERS
We deeply appreciate Patron gifts of $50 or more.

Catherine E. Bengston - Big Sur, CA
Mrs. Arthur W. Berry - New Canaan, CT
Larry, Diane and Jem Bjarnson - Provo, UT
Mrs. F. S. Boerick - Carmel, CA
Kathy Braune - Fremont, CA
Thomas E. Brown - San Francisco, CA
Rita Brunton - La Mirada, CA
Jeff Canin - London, England
Pat Chapman - Huntington Beach, CA
Connie Chen - Sacramento, CA
Richard Christopher - Rancho Mirage, CA
Ken and Osa Coffey - Washington, DC
Lee S. Cole - Novato, CA
Janet Cove - Pacific Grove, CA
Mrs. Ralph Davies - Woodside, CA
Mrs. June Dixon - Costa Mesa, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dolder - Haiku, HI
John and Joan Fergus - Los Angeles, CA
Kathryne Glass - San Anselmo, CA
Dr. Natasha Gore - Skokie, IL
Roy and Carol Greenaway - Alexandria, VA
Katherin J. Hamilton - Long Beach, CA
L. R. Hawkins - Seaside, CA
Judd Hopwood - Hacienda Heights, CA
Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Hunsdorfer - Laguna Niguel, CA
Floyd and Sue Johnson - Walnut Creek, CA
Linda S. Keener - Phoenix, AZ
Kenneth Koch - Modesto, CA
David and Mary Lake - San Francisco, CA
Joan E. Lane - Vienna, VA
Katalin A. Langianese - Van Nuys, CA
Mrs. Kenneth Leventhal - Los Angeles, CA
Mel and Diane Leydecker - Tujunga, CA
McVarish Children - Livermore, CA
Starr Mohle - Des Plaines, IL
Pat Moody - Memphis, TN
Kaye D. Murdock - Salt Lake City, UT
Rozella E. O'Byrant - Long Beach, CA
David and Nancy Olson - Tujunga, CA
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Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Roberts - Rochester, MI
Tamar Schnitman - Sherman Oaks, CA
Francis Shaw - Stanford, CA
Roger F. Smith - Bloomfield Hills, MI
James and Susan Spitzer - Alameda, CA
Michelle and Charles Staedler - Apts, CA
Paul Steckel - Berkeley, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sterling - Carmel Valley, CA
Anne Tewksbury - Monterey, CA
Jean C. Theisen - Pebble Beach, CA
Mr. and Mrs. Ripley Thompson - McCrory, AR
Starley L. Thompson and Penelope J. Boston - Boulder, CO
Flora Torres - San Francisco, CA
Cathie Wartelle - Castro Valley, CA
Rita Williams-Brown - North Hollywood, CA

Otter Mail

"The work you have undertaken on behalf of this endangered species is invaluable. We are all diminished in part when a fellow inhabitant of the planet becomes extinct. We all owe you a vote of thanks for your efforts."

State Senator Art Torres
Los Angeles, CA

"I strongly believe that the translocation project will help to insure the existence of this endangered species in the future so that generations yet to come may be enchanted by its beauty and amazing adaptations."

State Senator Rebecca Q. Morgan
Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties

"While we will persist in our on-going efforts to protect the otters' central coast range from offshore drilling, we recognize that the animals will continue to be at risk from coastal tanker traffic. Therefore returning a small group of otters to San Nicolas Island seems a prudent and necessary action to insure that the entire population would not be jeopardized in the event of a major oil spill."

Karín Strasser Kauffman, Chair
Monterey County Board of Supervisors

"I (Connie) have been a member of Friends of the Sea Otter since I discovered your sea otter center on a trip to California in 1985. When we received the invitation to the Annual Meeting and learned you were showing pictures of the translocation, one call to the airlines on the off chance we could afford tickets to a trip to San Francisco, Carmel and Monterey. Just seeing the otters swimming in the ocean, hearing the tap, tap tapping of crab being opened on the pink rock on the otter's chest, seeing the mother and her pup and the two otters 'playing' was exhilarating. Thank you for such a good show, meeting and boat ride. We will be back someday when we can spend more than a weekend!"

Connie & Dave Mayta
Independence, Missouri

"ROLM Corporation is pleased to enclose a check for $100 to Friends of the Sea Otter. This amount matches the gift of Mark Perkins, a ROLM employee, and represents our expanded support of educational and non-profit charitable organizations selected by our employees."

ROLM Corporation
Santa Clara, CA

"I am sending you this letter for the sea otters so they will not die. I want to send this letter to you because there are not many of them left. I am 8 years old and this is my birthday money."

Matt Smith
Oakland, CA

Membership Dues to Increase

We regret having to raise our membership dues for the first time since 1981, but trust our members will understand we are forced to do so due to increased operating costs and the major efforts we have undertaken on the otters' behalf over the past several years (primarily our work to stop the sea otter drownings, make the sea otter translocation a reality, and reduce the otters' vulnerability to oil spills). We value our long-time members and will be pleased to honor your renewal at the old rate if you are unable to increase your contribution.

FRIENDS OF THE SEA OTTER

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DR. ROBERT ORR — First Vice President
DR. WILLIAM FRANCIS — Treasurer

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CAROL FULTON — Executive Director, Editor THE OTTER RAFT
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JO NIX — Sea Otter Center Director/Volunteer Coordinator
JULIA WENNER — Membership Secretary

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
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William Bryan — Lawyer, diver, photographer, Salinas
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Dr. Victor B. Scheffer — Zoologist, author, Washington
Judson Vandevere — Sea otter researcher and naturalist, Monterey
Dr. Edward L. Walker — Psychologist, Pebble Beach
Dr. Thomas Williams — Veterinarian, Monterey

("Executive Committee Members"

SEA OTTER CENTER
In "The Crossroads" Shopping Center, Rio Road at Highway One, at the mouth of Carmel Valley.
P.O. Box 221220, Carmel, CA 93922
(408) 625-3290 Open Daily 10 to 3, Sunday 12 to 3

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(Tax Deductible)

(Foreign Membership Minimum $15.00 U.S. Funds)

Checks may be made payable and mailed to:
"FRIENDS OF THE SEA OTTER"
P.O. Box 221220, Carmel, California 93922

NAME ____________________________
ADDRESS __________________________
ZIP ________

TELEPHONE ________________________
August 27, 1987 — A Birthright Restored

The Southern Sea Otter, *Enhydra lutris nereis*, is returned to its ancestral home, San Nicolas Island, after an absence of more than a century.