



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
99 Pacific Street, Bldg 455a
Monterey, CA 93940

March 29, 2024

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District
Tyler Harris, Manager – Planning, Rules, and Incentives
4567 Telephone Road, 2nd Floor
Ventura, CA 93003

RE: Letter of Commitment/Collaboration for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Opportunity
“Reducing Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds – Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS)”

Dear Mr. Harris:

This Letter of Commitment/Collaboration outlines the shared priorities and intended actions regarding a collaboration between NOAA’s Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District in respect to the implementation grant application for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) for Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds – Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS) as part of the Inflation Reduction Act.

We understand that this letter is not legally binding and does not obligate funding or allocation of resources, assets, or personnel, but rather offers our support to the venture and indicates our genuine interest in our collaboration.

We have recognized shared goals and an intent to work together for the purposes of species and environmental protection and greenhouse gas reduction measures as described in the CPRG implementation application.

MBNMS is collaborating with Ventura County Air Pollution Control District and other agencies and non-profit partners to create and implement a program that incentivizes shipping lines in operation of Ocean-Going Vessels to reduce speeds in areas off of California.

We have discussed and recognized the following shared priorities and co-benefits achieved by this collaborative effort:

1. Significant reductions in endangered whale impacts through a decrease in the risk of fatal ship strikes;
2. Significant reductions in environmental impacts through a measurable decrease in underwater noise;
3. Significant improvements in coastal air quality and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

MBNMS and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, alongside other agency and non-profit partners, intend to continue to work together to implement the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies Program and enhance its impact throughout California. As a collaborator on this effort, MBNMS intends to provide in-kind federal staff support for this program as well as funding to non-profit partners for affiliate staff to support implementation of the work. Through our established stakeholder advisory forum known as the MBNMS Advisory Council, MBNMS will also continue to engage and solicit feedback from community members on these efforts.



To support these efforts, we propose we continue to meet monthly with Ventura County Air Pollution Control District staff to further discuss the shared goals and aspirations in this letter and will additionally work towards the establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement between our entities on this work.

This letter is an expression of collaboration with you to support the grant application for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) for Ocean-Going Vessel Speeds – Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS). We understand that as the collaboration evolves, we may determine additional needs, shared priorities, or intended actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Wooninck', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lisa Wooninck, Ph.D.
Superintendent

