



## Pacific Seabird Group

Dedicated to the Study and Conservation of Pacific Seabirds and their Environment

Seaside City Council  
440 Harcourt Avenue  
Seaside, CA 93955

November 12, 2018

Dear Seaside City Council:

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) is writing to express our support for the formation of habitat creation for the Heermann's Gulls (*Larus heermanni*) in your jurisdiction. We support Coastal Administrative Permit CAP-18-01, the proposal to replace the eroded island in Roberts Lake with a floating nesting island for the nesting Heermann's Gulls.

PSG is an international, non-profit organization that was founded in 1972 to promote the knowledge, study, and conservation of Pacific seabirds. It has a membership drawn from the entire Pacific basin. Among PSG's members are biologists and scientists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, government officials who manage seabird refuges and populations, and individuals who are interested in marine conservation. Several of us have had great success in building floating islands for seabird nests.

We ask that the Council grant a permit to create a floating island to fulfill a unique conservation opportunity to help the Heermann's Gull, a migratory seabird that is considered Near Threatened by the IUCN because 95% of their population breeds on Isla Rasa, a tiny island in the Gulf of California, east of Baja California, Mexico. The remaining 5% of Heermann's Gulls breed on other small islands in the area. This makes them extremely vulnerable to climate change. In fact, the Heermann's gulls of the main colony on Isla Rasa suffered nearly complete nesting failure from 2013 to 2016 due to warm ocean currents and a scarcity of food. During those years, juvenile Heermann's Gulls were conspicuously absent across the West Coast outside of the breeding season.

The only exception during these years was on the Monterey Peninsula, where their **only known nesting population** in the USA is in Seaside. The small colony thrived in years that the main colony suffered. The Seaside colony may play an important role in the long-term survival of the species. We urge you to show your environmental consciousness by giving them a safe home on Roberts Lake, the location that they originally chose to nest in, and get them to move off the nearby roofs. We understand there are other competing uses for the lake, and we are confident ways can be found through seasonal closures and barriers that might allow for multiple uses to occur at Robert's Lake.

Thank you in advance for enhancing our wildlife for future generations.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Rauzon  
Vice Chair for Conservation  
Pacific Seabird Group  
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