

Pacific Seabird Group



DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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Dr. Ernesto C. Enkerlin Hoeflich
Presedente
Comision Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas
Camino al Ajusco No. 200, 3er piso Ala Sur,
Colonia Jardines en la Montana,
Tlalpan, México, D.F. C.P. 14210

Re: Biosphere Program in Baja California

Dear Dr. Enkerlin:

On behalf of the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG), we support the proposal to create a Biosphere Reserve that incorporates the Pacific islands of Baja California. PSG is an international non-profit organization that was founded in 1972 to promote knowledge, study and conservation of Pacific seabirds. PSG takes a broad international perspective in recognition that the oceans are tied together by the wandering of seabirds and the flow of ocean currents. Our membership is drawn from the entire Pacific basin, including Mexico, Canada, Russia, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. Among PSG's members are biologists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, government officials who manage seabird refuges and populations and individuals who are interested in marine conservation. PSG has sponsored workshops to train Mexican biologists who work in Baja California in state-of-the-art conservation techniques.

While PSG's primary professional interest is the conservation of over 20 species of seabirds in the Pacific islands of Baja California, we also recognize the importance of this habitat for 37 endemic terrestrial vertebrates and nearly 70 endemic plants. We appreciate that Mexico has a long history of conservation in this region including efforts to protect the Guadalupe fur seal and Northern elephant seal from imminent extinction in the early 20th century. Because of these efforts the northern elephant seal has recolonized much of its former range in the US and Mexico and the Guadalupe fur seal has begun expanding to other breeding colonies. Similarly, the

Pacific islands of Baja California have supported important populations for Peregrine Falcons, Brown Pelicans, and other bird species, enabling them to recolonize the US islands after previous extirpations.

Looking to the future, the threats to Baja California's Pacific Island ecosystems will likely increase with additional tourism, fishing pressures, and island use. The creation of a Pacific Islands Biosphere Reserve will help protect these important islands in perpetuity. PSG appreciates your willingness to listen to our views on this issue.

Sincerely,

Craig S. Harrison
Vice Chair for Conservation