



Pier Angler Ambassador Program Proposal

Overview

In response to the unfortunate white shark-angler-swimmer interaction that occurred recently in Manhattan Beach, Heal the Bay proposes to expand on its existing Angler Outreach Program to educate anglers and pier visitors about local shark ecology and methods to minimize conflict with sensitive wildlife and ocean users. The program would also collect data on fishing use on the pier. Additionally, we propose to establish a stakeholder group in partnership with local municipalities to collectively develop a comprehensive pier management strategy to prevent negative human-wildlife at piers along the Santa Monica Bay. The management recommendations would be informed in part through the data collected in the outreach program.

Project Summary

We propose to develop a pilot project to educate anglers and pier visitors about local sharks, while collecting data to inform development of management recommendations to minimize use conflicts on the piers.

Specifically, the pilot project will have three elements:

1. **Outreach** – teams of two outreach ambassadors will visit each of the 6 piers in Santa Monica Bay on a rotating basis during weekdays and weekends. We estimate this will include between 8 and 24 hours on each pier each month, targeting the highest visitation days.
2. **Data Collection** – our outreach ambassadors will collect data on the number of anglers per pier, demographics of pier anglers (e.g. ethnicity, city of residence), species targeted and caught, fishing gear used, and whether the angling is for sport or subsistence.
3. **Management Recommendations** – we propose to convene a stakeholder group of pier managers and other relevant stakeholders to develop common-sense recommendations to minimize use conflicts on the pier, while protecting public health and the health of marine life. The recommendations would be informed in part by the data collection conducted by the outreach ambassadors.

Proposed Partners

City of Manhattan Beach, City of Hermosa Beach, City of Santa Monica, City of Redondo Beach, and City of Los Angeles (Venice).



Work Products & Deliverables

- Conduct pier angler outreach 3 days/week, rotating across piers throughout the Santa Monica Bay (August 1 – October 31)
- Conduct pier angler demographic surveys 3 days/week, rotating across piers throughout the Santa Monica Bay (August 1 – October 31)
- Develop outreach materials to provide to pier anglers and users, with target audience and municipality feedback (August)
- Compile preliminary pier angler outreach survey data and share with municipal partners (September 30)
- Present a report to municipal partners including number of anglers reached per pier, demographic information, species targeted and caught on piers, and gear types used (November)

Project Budget

The total budget for the pilot project is estimated at \$30,000, including \$30,000 for the angler outreach and data collection. We are seeking funding from the affected cities and county for this.

Angler Outreach and Data Collection		
Personnel		
<i>Salaries</i>	13,060	Project development and management
<i>Hourly employee compensation</i>	8,640	2 outreach staff/day, 8 hours/day, 3 days/week, \$15/hour for 12 weeks
<i>Subtotal Personnel</i>	21,700	
Non-Personnel		
<i>Travel</i>	1800	mileage & parking (assume 6 trips/week to SMB piers for 12 weeks - 25mi each RT)
<i>Meetings & Events</i>	200	food for meetings, assuming space will be donated by municipalities
<i>Printing</i>	5,000	Outreach materials on color waterproof paper
<i>Misc supplies</i>	1,300	
<i>Subtotal Non-personnel</i>	8,300	
Total Expenses	30,000	

In addition, we estimate that developing management recommendations through a stakeholder engagement process will require an additional \$10,000.



Project Background and Details

Recently, a white shark hooked by a pier angler bit a swimmer in Manhattan Beach. In response, the City of Manhattan Beach and other local municipalities with piers along the Santa Monica Bay have been considering potential pier fishing regulations and restrictions. These cities are receiving pressure from community members and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to prohibit pier fishing. In response, Manhattan Beach enacted a temporary 60-day pier fishing prohibition beginning July 7, 2014. Heal the Bay understands the need for action, however we oppose closing piers to fishing. Piers are one of the only places where people can fish without a license in California, resulting in high numbers of subsistence anglers due to the low cost and easy access. We are concerned about the environmental justice issues presented by prohibiting pier angling, as it is estimated that over 70% of pier anglers fish for subsistence.

Since 2002, Heal the Bay has conducted pier angler outreach on 10 piers throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties to prevent contaminated fish consumption in partnership with the Fish Consumption Education Collaborative. Through this program, we educate about 10,000 anglers each year in four languages (English, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese) about local contaminated fish issues and how anglers can reduce health risk by avoiding certain species.

In response to the recent Manhattan Beach shark incident, we propose to partner with local municipalities along the Santa Monica Bay to broaden this program to include education about local shark ecology and how to avoid interactions with sensitive species, like white sharks, on local piers. Heal the Bay believes further education is urgently needed to facilitate responsible pier fishing, improved human-wildlife interactions, and a balance across human uses along piers, rather than simply prohibiting pier fishing, which will advance serious unintended consequences for subsistence anglers in the Los Angeles region. An ambassador program would also likely help reduce the occurrence of anglers that are intentionally pursuing white sharks on piers, by creating a large base of informed anglers and providing a pier presence.

Specifically, Heal the Bay proposes to pilot test this shark ambassador program from August-October 2014, conducting pier angler outreach on 6 piers throughout the Santa Monica Bay – Manhattan Beach, Santa Monica, Venice, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, and Malibu. Outreach will involve several topics, including local shark ecology, protected species, fishing regulations (e.g. size and catch limits), ways to prevent catching unwanted species, and if caught, how to handle them responsibly. Heal the Bay staff will develop educational materials to support the pier angler outreach, modeled after the contaminated fish outreach materials. We will consult with municipal partners in the development of these educational materials. Through this ambassador program, pier angler outreach would occur three days/week, rotating throughout the three piers within the Santa Monica Bay, with outreach staff conducting education in pairs. Outreach will occur on weekdays and weekends. Additionally, Heal the Bay staff will survey pier anglers to glean information about the number of anglers per pier, demographics of pier anglers (e.g. ethnicity, city of residence), and species targeted and caught.



We recommend that this pilot program move forward as soon as possible, as both pier angler and white shark presence in the Santa Monica Bay is highest during the summer months. As such, we propose that the educational materials are developed iteratively over the first few weeks of outreach, so they can be refined based on pier angler outreach field experience.

In parallel to the ambassador program, Heal the Bay believes a stakeholder approach is needed to develop a comprehensive pier management strategy to prevent conflicts among pier users, swimmers, surfers, and sensitive wildlife. We believe that any potential management measures, such as pier fishing zones or gear restrictions, will be best derived from a stakeholder approach and involve education. In addition to municipalities with piers, Heal the Bay recommends including key stakeholders in this effort, such as, lifeguards, aquaria, angler groups, and relevant state agencies (see Project Partners section). With the municipal partners participating in the ambassador program, we propose to develop an approach to convening such a stakeholder group.

The total cost of the proposed pier angler shark ambassador pilot program is \$30,000 over 3 months plus \$10,000 for the stakeholder process. We request that partner municipalities collectively contribute to support this program.