

RESOLUTION NO. NS-28,321

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ  
SUPPORTING THE CALIFORNIA GRAY WHALE AND URGING CONTINUED  
FEDERAL PROTECTION AND ATTENTION FOR THIS THREATENED SPECIES

WHEREAS, the federal government placed the California Gray Whale on the endangered and threatened species list in 1970 when its estimated population was approximately 12,000 and removed it in 1994 when the population rose to 23,000; and

WHEREAS, a major collapse in 1999 and 2000 is estimated to have wiped out one-third of the total population of California Gray Whales; and

WHEREAS, whale watching tourism largely generated by the California Gray Whale contributes more than \$82 million dollars to the California economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2008 the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Joint Resolution 49 requesting Congress and the President of the United States to call upon the National Marine & Fisheries Service to undertake an immediate and comprehensive assessment of the California Gray Whale; and

WHEREAS, National Marine & Fisheries in 2009/2010 conducted the first proper abundance estimate since 2001/2002 and will carry out another abundance estimate in 2010/2011; and

WHEREAS, the results of the 2009/2010 abundance estimate will not be available for at least a year or more; and

WHEREAS, the recent migration season demonstrated the fourth consecutive year of very low cow/calf counts; and

WHEREAS, whale watching captains along the migration route are expressing concern over the low numbers of gray whales and the high percentage of emaciated animals; and

WHEREAS, transient orca predation of calves and juveniles is high; and

WHEREAS, the National Marine & Fisheries Service has failed to include in its current assessment a comprehensive review of the major threats to the California Gray Whale, particularly the impact of climate change on this vulnerable species.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz that it hereby urges the Federal Government to make publicly available the results of the 2009/2010 abundance assessment as soon as possible and to instruct and fund the National Marine & Fisheries Service to undertake an urgent comprehensive assessment of the major threats to the California Gray Whale including the impact of climate change.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor is directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to Congressman Sam Farr, Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Dianne Feinstein.

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PASSED AND ADOPTED this 8<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2011, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Robinson, Beiers, Terrazas, Bryant, Vice Mayor Lane;  
Mayor Coonerty.

NOES: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Madrigal.

DISQUALIFIED: None.

APPROVED:   
Mayor

ATTEST:   
Interim City Clerk