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NOAA E-Mail To Pro-Seal Activist

The following is an e-mail from Joe Cordaro of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to local pro-seal activist Cindy Benner:

You might also want to point out to all the pro-seal people that I'm starting to get a little tired of their fixation on individual animals. If they cannot understand the concept of the good of the entire colony over the good of an individual animal, then they do not deserve having a seal colony in their midst. They can't have it both ways. If I continue to get negative comments from the pro-seal people regarding my management decisions at Children's Pool, I will soon make the following statement in the local media:

"The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has been managing Children's Pool as a harbor seal rookery since February 2001. Due to negative publicity regarding recent management decisions at Children's Pool, the NMFS has decided that the general public will no longer allow us to manage the site as a rookery. Therefore, we are discontinuing our current management policy at Children's Pool and will treat Children's Pool as just another mainland beach. This will allow SeaWorld to rescue any sick or injured marine mammals at Children's Pool, irregardless as to whether the cause is natural or human-caused. This also means that the City of San Diego can forcibly prevent healthy seals from hauling out at this site by designating them as a threat to the public welfare or as nuisance animals under Section 109(h) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act."

Obviously, this is not a road I want to go down. During the last incident, I received heat from the pro-seal folks, the general public, and from within my own agency. It's just not worth all the aggravation.