

Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council
March 23, 2016 Meeting Minutes
Virtual via *GoToWebinar*

Participants¹

- Ms. Elizabeth L. Cheney, Energy Seat
- Mr. Gregory Jacoski, Fishing
- Ms. Elissa Loughman, Recreation Seat #2
- Ms. Sophia Mendelsohn, Other Business Seat #3
- Mr. Rich Pruitt, Travel and Tourism Seat #1
- Ms. Lisa M. Swanson, Transportation Seat
- Ms. Melissa Trotto, Other Business Seat #4
- Mr. John Armor, NOAA
- Mr. Matthew Brookhart, NOAA
- Dr. Rebecca R. Holyoke, NOAA
- Ms. Rosemarie McKeeby, NOAA
- Ms. Elizabeth Moore, NOAA
- Mr. Matthew Stout, NOAA

Members of the Public

- Ms. Carliane D. Johnson, SeaJay Environmental
- Mr. Thomas Rayburn, Lake Carriers' Association
- Mr. Kevin O. Swanson, Michael Best Strategies

Opening and Webinar Overview

Dr. Rebecca Holyoke, National Advisory Council Coordinator, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) convened the Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council meeting at 3:00 pm EDT. She welcomed and confirmed audio for each advisory council representative and public participant and asked ONMS leadership participating from Silver Spring, Maryland, to introduce him/herself. Dr. Holyoke provided an overview of the logistics for the webinar and also walked quickly through the agenda.

Hearing More About Our Direction

Mr. John Armor, Acting Director, ONMS, provided an overview of a few recent announcements and updates to previously discussed initiatives for the National Marine Sanctuary System. He described in detail the discovery of the USS *Conestoga*, a Navy seagoing fleet tugboat lost at sea nearly 95 years ago in what is now Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. He explained how this put an end to one of the top maritime mysteries in U.S. Navy history and provides a sense of closure to the grandchildren and great-nieces and nephews of the 56 crewmembers lost. Mr. Armor also spoke to a January 2016 announcement whereby ONMS is proposing to expand *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and provided updates regarding the status of Flower Garden Banks and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale national marine sanctuary proposed boundary (and scope) expansions. He reminded participants of the proposed designations for Lake Michigan – Wisconsin and Mallows Bay – Potomac River, Maryland, and noted the

¹ Mr. Terry Garcia (Communications and Marketing Seat), Ms. April Crow (The Coca-Cola Company), Dr. Mark Penning (Other Business Seat #2), Ms. Andrea Pinabell (Travel and Tourism Seat #3), Mr. Joseph Stella (Recreation Seat #1) and Ms. Maura Welch (Travel and Tourism Seat #2) were unable to attend.

proposals for two additional sites currently on the inventory of successful nominations: Chumash Heritage and Lake Erie Quadrangle.

- *Question:* Is there any concern with proliferation of national marine sanctuaries that the existing ones would be diluted? Could a lot of small sanctuaries make it so they lose their luster?

Response: Mr. Armor responded by noting that this is a concern he's heard is out there but that he doesn't have that concern. He noted that ONMS' job is to conserve and protect special areas – those areas worthy of focused attention – in the marine environment, and that he doesn't think that job is done. He noted that, while he agreed that at some point this may be the case, what he is seeing now – especially from maritime heritage, conservation, and travel and tourism interests – is an appetite for protecting these places and their resources.

- *Question:* Does the withdrawal of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary proposal help or hurt your relationship with people?

Response: In general, this decision seems to have had a positive impact on our relationship with the State of Hawaii. We could have pushed forward with the original proposal, forcing the Governor to publicly reject it, but instead we listened to our communities. We are, and have always been, providing a benefit to these communities with respect to humpback whales and their habitat, and we're continuing to do so. We took a step over (not back) and are focusing on protecting this resource by continuing our efforts, like our world-class disentanglement program.

As far as other areas or sites, I'm not aware of a specific impact, but I'd assume, if anything, it's having a positive impact. It illustrates that we don't bully.

- *Question:* At the October 19, 2016, meeting I recall a public comment about the nomination proposal for a Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Since that time, I've had additional contact with the California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference. Can you please describe a little more about the process and timeframe from inventory to designation?

Response: The decision to move forward with a proposed designation is not an ONMS decision; rather, it's an agency or even administration decision. Given where we are in this administration, and the public process for two other proposed designations, it's not likely there will be a lot of interest to move forward on a third in the near term. Additionally, if either the Chumash Heritage or Lake Erie Quadrangle, which has 196 significant shipwrecks, were to go forward, there is a lengthy opportunity for public comment during the scoping, draft environmental impact statement, and proposed rule phases.

In the interest of time, Mr. John Armor shortened his overview of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the proposed location for the council's next in-person meeting. He presented the history of this national marine sanctuary, which extends back over 40 years, and the State/Federal partnership that exists in managing this site. He highlighted the passage of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

and Protection Act in 1990, the publication of the final management plan in 1997, the overlay of national parks and wildlife refuges, and current efforts reviewing marine zones and regulations. He noted the importance of diving and sportfishing, along with other activities, to this tourism-based economy and how various activities are considered within the management of this place.

Mr. Armor provided an introduction to the sanctuary's marine zoning and regulatory review, including a description of the key players, available data, associated analyses, and efforts of the advisory council (including over 100 members of the public on working groups), partners, and staff. He mentioned that, like a number of other actions, we anticipate publishing the draft environmental impact statement later this calendar year and that a number of questions can be answered by visiting <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov>. He closed his presentation by noting why their visit to Florida Keys will be a great opportunity to experience the mix of uses and users of national marine sanctuaries.

Potential Administrative Actions

Advisory council representatives were asked to consider adopting the meeting summary for the October 19, 2016, Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council meeting. No revisions or objections were noted verbally or through the question and chat functions in *GoToWebinar*. As such, the draft meeting summary will be updated to reflect that it is a final meeting summary.

Advisory council representatives were also asked to provide their opinion and reaction to an amendment to the current (signed August 15, 2013) charter. No revisions or objections were noted verbally or through the question and chat functions in *GoToWebinar*. As such, an amendment will be prepared for approval by the Acting Director, John Armor, that addresses the following:

- Remove the specific seats identified in the charter, such that members may be appointed from a broader range of professional experiences, interests, and business, sector or industry types and affiliations.
- Revise the term length, such that all members are appointed for a term of three years.
- Provide flexibility in whether a chair or vice-chair is elected (rather than requiring that they be elected).

Dr. Holyoke also used this time to remind participants that the next meeting of the Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council is scheduled for May 23, 2016, in Key West, Florida, and propose that the date, time and format for each subsequent meeting be identified at the preceding meeting. She also reminded advisory council representatives of the expiration dates of their current terms and asked that they confirm with her, outside the meeting, whether they are interested in being reappointed.

Learning from You: ONMS Proposed Efforts to Develop a Business Plan

Ms. Elizabeth (Liz) Moore described how, based on a discussion at the April 22-23, 2015, Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council Meeting, ONMS has been pondering the development of a system-wide business plan. She noted that we have been learning about the National Park Service's experience with Net Impact and their development of these types of plans for about a decade through student internships. She noted that ONMS has selected a graduate student from the University of Ontario who

will be starting next month and that, given the limited availability of (or at least appearance of) this type of plan for marine protected areas, ONMS wants to provide a model with respect to this approach for our field. Ms. Moore also noted that one of the reasons we selected the *Outer Banks Group 2014 Business Plan* as our template is because it covers three operating units (or parks); ideally, ours would cover all sites within the National Marine Sanctuary System.

- *Comment:* This sounds like a great idea. I can envision us – the council – being a resource for the intern to tap as this plan is pulled together. [*S. Mendelsohn echoed L. Cheney’s support for this plan and the council’s ability to be a resource.*]

Mr. John Armor noted that, unfortunately, after looking through the proposed template, he is concerned that we don’t have a lot of the rigorous data – especially with regard to visitation (since we don’t have gated entries) – that they do. Ms. Moore described our thoughts on using proxies (e.g., visitor centers, dive trips, fishing permits, hotel visitors, numbers of tourists) and Mr. Stout noted the few places where it’s easier to estimate visitors, such as Florida Keys and American Samoa.

Advisory council representatives suggested that ONMS consider incorporating climate adaptation, ecosystem valuation, and not be overly conservative in the extrapolation of the data and analyses.

- *Question:* What are your thoughts as far as including climate adaptation strategies in the plan?

Response: Ms. Moore agreed that we could address climate adaptation, especially as it relates to further greening our operations, but that some of it may be more relevant to remain in our management plans.

- *Question:* Are you going to include intangible benefits such as ecosystem services in the plan?

Response: Yes.

- *Comment:* You should consider going physical assets (e.g., facilities, vessels) and incorporate ecosystem valuation. It’s important to know what the American public is willing to pay (e.g., address the value of coral reefs or storm surge abatement). Also, you need to recognize that the issuance of fishing licenses may have nothing to do with where a person is going fishing in the state. For example, you might buy a license in the panhandle of Florida and fish in the Keys.

- *Question:* You often have a common shoreline with a State; do you receive any revenue from the purchase of licenses, etc. for activities along those coasts?

Response: No.

Mr. Matt Brookhart and Mr. Matthew Stout talked about the difficulty of getting data and the challenge of finding the sweet spot in sound assumptions and extrapolation. They also noted that we know that people

are willing to have to have places like national parks and sanctuaries and to get what we need for this plan, and other things, that we are dedicating more resources into socioeconomic analyses.

- *Comment:* From my experience, you are being overly conservative and need to be willing to extrapolate more from the data within the constraints of the environment, of course.
- *Comment:* You may want to reach out to your State counterparts and see what types of information you can share, especially as it relates to the value of the coast.
- *Comment:* You should also look at visitors and the impact they are making while in a sanctuary or along the surrounding coast (e.g., trash, water used). You may want to go beyond the footprint of the visitor center or facility.
- *Comment:* You might also want to tap into SurfRider to get information on surfing, especially in California.
- *Comment:* It doesn't appear as though there is anything in the template on marketing or communications. It clearly has to be in there.

Public Comment

No comments were received verbally or through *GoToWebinar* from the participating members of the public. At the time of public comment, only two of the three public participants were still identified as active participants on the webinar.

Looking Ahead

Mr. Armor wrapped up the webinar by thanking advisory council representatives for their patience and engagement, noting that webinars aren't always the easiest way to communicate. He mentioned that he was excited that they would get to experience one of our sanctuaries firsthand, for the first time, and that he hopes we continue to evolve our approach with and ask the right questions of this group.

Adjourn Meeting

Dr. Rebecca Holyoke adjourned the meeting at 4:45 pm EDT by providing a few logistical details regarding the next in-person meeting in Key West, Florida, and thanking all advisory council representatives for their interest and engagement in the webinar.