

**Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council
October 2, 2023 Final Meeting Minutes**

Date: October 2, 2023

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual – Google Meets

Meeting Attendees

NOAA: Mark Losavio, Paul “Sammy” Orlando, Megan Ossmann, Shannon Ricles, David Dodsworth, Adam Wright, Dana Sanchez and Jessie Frayser

SAC Members: Dan Hamilton, Jay Haigler, Lee De Cola, Bill Kilinski, Anne Vazhappilly (Youth Seat)

SAC Alternates: Bill Utley, Ruth Toomey, Susan Gerbasi, Sara Ramotnik, Lolita Kiorpes, Anne Stark, Erin Cooley (Youth Seat)

Government Agency and Tribe Members: Mario Harley (Piscataway Conoy Tribe), Elena Gilroy (Charles County)

Guests: Christine Burns (Coastal Planner)

WELCOME:

Dan Hamilton welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

SAC BUSINESS

- Dan asked for a motion to approve the June 12, 2023, meeting minutes. Lolita Kiorpes made a motion to approve the minutes and Sara Ramotnik seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by the entire council. The minutes are available on the website <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/meetings.html>.
- Summary of SAC Chair Summit - Dan Hamilton attended the National SAC chair meeting in lieu of Eileen Abel. He gave an extensive summary of the summit. (See Appendix A for more detail.)

Sammy recognized the importance and significance of having an in-person leadership meeting for the first time in five years. He said that it showed we are all part of one team. Dan was also praised for being willing to represent our SAC and our team.

- Evolution of the Advisory Council - Sammy Orlando
 - Sammy reminded the SAC that we talked in Annapolis about revising the SAC community seats. He gave praise to the council and its members for their dedication and commitment to the SAC. He said that there are members and alternates, but there is very little distinction between the two. Alternates are invited to every meeting; the only distinction is in the ability to vote. But alternates' voices are heard.
 - Sammy said that we want to make sure that we have seats that represent what we are trying to accomplish for our collective good and broaden our representation in the community on our council.
 - Sammy showed a slide (see Appendix B) with the community seats on the left and said that those are the original 15 community seats, which are voting seats. He said that government and tribal seats are non-voting seats because they have a different form of consultation. Community side is primarily voiced through voting.
 - Sammy then showed a slide with the current seats and the new proposed changes. He said that on the right side of the table, there are three proposed changes, which are in yellow.
 - The maritime archeology and history seats have been filled for a long time by Jay and Margo, and at this point in time, we would do well with only one seat and one alternate.
 - The second seat would toggle over to cultural engagement so it is not quite as directed to science. We want to expand it to cultural engagement that could include the arts, music, or any way you think about people, you can think about culture.
 - Conservation would be a new seat where we take one of the business and economic development seats and make it a conservation seat. We have businesses that are working with us, and we would like to expand it, but at the same time, we are missing out on the whole conservation side of our management plan.
 - Communications is also a new seat. We currently have two citizen-at-large seats. We will keep one, but it will have a member and an alternate. So one of the citizen-at-large seats will change to communications to reach a broader audience. We have a lot of products and services for reaching your communities and beyond. A new communication seat would help to further spread the word about what we do.

We will retain the same number of seats and the government seats are exactly the same.

- Timeline: October 2 - Sharing of the final proposed seats with the SAC. The amendment for the proposed seats is currently being cleared by NOAA. Once it clears, then we begin advertising. Over the next 2-3 months, we will solicit

applications and seat new members with the goal of holding a meeting in February 2024. Sammy reminded everyone that the majority of the seats expired in October, as most everyone has been here for three years. He said that with the extension that was granted, each seat is also extended. .

- Sammy said that he hopes everyone will want to be a part of the new council going forward. He also said that if anyone wants to continue and use their last application, then just let Shannon know. However, if anyone would like to update their resume with additional information, then add it and resubmit. He indicated that if anyone feels like they do not want to reapply, then we understand. He also asked that everyone help get the word out to other folks who might make great additions to our SAC. He said that the SAC has had a number of vacancies over the years, and it would really be great to fill all the seats. Sammy also said that once the changes are cleared by NOAA, the information will be sent to the SAC. Sammy then asked for any comments or discussion:
 - Sara expressed that she liked the changes that were proposed and questioned if a description of the new and current seats would be listed? Sammy told her that each seat will have a description.
 - Dan asked if the SAC would elect a new chair and vice-chair. Sammy said that it would be the first order of business at the first meeting.
- Sammy praised the SAC for always showing up for meetings even though they are busy people and the fact that they show up is wonderful and extremely meaningful. Sammy provided numerous examples of where SAC members stepped up to participate in community events. He reiterated that it is so important to bring the council to the people.

SANCTUARY UPDATES

- Fall Mallows Bay BioBlitz - Megan Ossmann
 - Megan shared a slide presentation detailing the September 9th BioBlitz event held at Mallows Bay Park. She said that about 50 people participated along with several of our partners. Megan indicated that there were fewer observers in this event compared to the spring event. However, more species were reported in this fall BioBlitz event with 1,500 observations and 600 species observed.
 - Save the date for the next BioBlitz on April 27, 2024.
 - Dan challenged everyone to go and do an observation on iNaturalist.
- Terrain 360 Update - Sammy Orlando
 - Sammy said that the team is about 98% finished with the site, and that the hope is to present it in December. Sammy asked the SAC to think about the best ways to utilize the site upon its completion and how to best put this out for public use?
 - Dan indicated that having it available at outreach events, on a table accessible via a device, would give great insight into how it can be used.
 - Lolita said it is a great resource for classrooms and Sammy included that it is also a good example of possible career options in media and technology.
 - Sara with the University Center for Environmental Science commented that this site can be used to increase communications or develop a case study.

- Dan offered the suggestion that it could be adapted by the citizen science program.
- Bill Utley asked about an annual award or volunteer recognition and using that as an incentive for community engagement.
- Grant Opportunities - Megan Ossman
 - Megan presented Grant Opportunities
 - NPS Chesapeake Gateways
 - Maryland Chesapeake and Coastal Grants Gateway
 - Megan asked: “How can you take advantage of these opportunities? How do you want these shared with you? Do you have the capacity to apply for these and do you need support to apply for these?”
 - Dan said that he wishes he had more time to consider these grants and recommended making space on the agenda to discuss and possibly apply for some of these opportunities. He would like to see it as a running agenda item.
- Volunteers - Sammy Orlando
 - Sammy said that there has been a lot of interest from people who want to volunteer at Mallovs Bay. However, currently the staff does not have enough for volunteers to do. Therefore, it is being proposed to the council that they submit activities or other tasks where volunteers might help at their organizations. Lolita suggested that it would be nice to have a list of volunteers and what they are interested in so they can be contacted as things in their realm come up.
 - Sammy mentioned that in regards to the communication seat, the seat will offer the opportunity to get the word out about events and can be put on a list of service opportunities.

SAC UPDATES

- Dan discussed an event for families at the Calvert Museum that appreciates the Chesapeake Bay.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Dan Hamilton asked if there were any members of the public who would like to make a comment.
 - There were no public comments.

ADJOURN

As there was no other business, a motion was made by Mario Harley and seconded by Susan Gerbasi to adjourn the meeting. The next regular meeting will be held on December 4. Stand by for more details to come.

Upcoming 2023 Meetings & Events:

SAC Meeting – December 4, 2023

2023 National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Summit

September 26 – 28, 2023

Summary & Briefing

Last week, I had the honor and privilege of representing the Mallows Bay – Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) at the 2023 Advisory Council Summit in Oswego, New York. Unfortunately (for Eileen) Chairman Eileen Abel was out of the Country, and (fortunately for me!) I was the alternate representing our SAC. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and would like to personally thank the hard working and dedicated staff from the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (NMS) and the staff of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) who provided invaluable support and funding. Both John Armor, Director of NOAA NMS and Joel Johnson, President, and CEO of NMSF were in attendance and provided excellent information and updates regarding the status of the National Marine Sanctuary system and programs. Additionally, representatives from each of the 15 National Marine Sanctuary SAC's and representatives from the Business Advisory Council were also in attendance. The following is a brief summary of our meetings and discussions last week:

1. Welcome address from Phil Church (Oswego County Administrator). Discussion of Lake Ontario NMS proposed designation; sanctuaries = special places.
2. Onandaga Nation welcome and perspective by Joe Heath, General Counsel for Onandaga Nation. Discussion of the six native nations in the area – remember the original stewards of our lands and waters.
3. Welcome from National Ocean Service Leadership. Discussion with Paul Scholz, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the National Ocean Service. Sanctuaries have unique approach to connections between people, across ecosystems and between sanctuaries. Discuss new strategic plan, remind all that programs can't function without partnerships.
4. National Marine Sanctuary Foundation address from Joel Johnson, President & CEO of NMSF. Joel reflected on starting his job in July, 2023 on the hottest day of the week during the hottest month on record for Planet Earth. Discussed NMSF vision: "As a source for solutions, we provide strategic funding in the National Marine Sanctuaries to nurture the best ideas possible to protect our Oceans and Great Lakes."
5. National Marine Sanctuaries System Update by John Armor, Director of the NOAA NMS (see slides attached). John discussed history of the program and support by the current Administration; discussed current level of funding for programs which demonstrates recognition of funding gap. However, there are five proposed new Sanctuaries and funding is not increasing at pace with program expansion. John reminded us that we are essentially managing the "National Park System for our Oceans" and requested that we **contact our congressional delegations and demonstrate our support for increased funding. Remember that we cannot represent the SAC in any official capacity when requesting financial support!** John also discussed future of program and transformational change priorities: conservation and restoration; representation (take more aggressive action to expand into diverse communities); relevance (ensure communities understand the significance of Ocean health; effect change, embrace change and make sure we have infrastructure to monitor climate change).
6. National Marine Sanctuaries in the Great Lakes discussion by Jeff Gray and Ellen Brody. Discuss proposed new Sanctuaries (Lake Ontario & Lake Erie) and discuss Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 (management of Lake Michigan by US and Canada).

7. Indigenous and Tribal Engagement discussion led by Carolina Behe. Consider why equitable engagement of Indigenous Peoples is important. “**Nothing About Us Without Us!**” Review Native land Digital website: <https://native-land.ca/>. Discuss focus on relationship health with all parts of ecosystem. Remember that Indigenous Peoples are rightsholders, not stakeholders.
8. Advisory Council Member Engagement discussion. How to recruit tough seats (SAC’s have trouble with “Fishing Seats) and how to engage members in a digital world?
9. Offshore Wind discussion. Current Administration plan is 30 GW by 2030, 15 GW of floating offshore wind. Discuss how wind policies and actions are evolving across the sanctuary system. Discuss precedence regarding cabling in existing sanctuaries.
10. How to make the most of Advisory Council meetings. Discuss best practices for collaborative meetings, processes and requirements for running meetings and examples of success. Discussed value of relationships and communication between SAC Coordinator, Superintendent and SAC Chair/Vice Chair. How to deal with attendance issues and keep content relevant and engaging.
11. Sanctuary Expansion discussion led by Matt Brookhart (see slides attached). Proposed Lake Ontario NMS, Hudson Canyon NMS, Lake Erie Quadrangles NMS, Chumash Heritage NMS and Pacific Remote Islands NMS. Discussed issues with naming conventions, marine debris, funding etc.
12. Barriers to Joining Advisory Councils discussion led by Mike Murray and Sage Riddick. Noted importance of representing our communities and being relevant to our communities. How to increase diversity, inclusion and engagement; some consideration for stipends to assist with SAC member expenses.
13. Furthering Our Engagement in Recreation, Travel and Tourism discussion led by Grace Bottitta-Williamson. Reminder that recreational values are part of specific values supporting why Sanctuaries are designated. Discuss locations of Visitor Centers (15 total) and lack of entrance fees at Sanctuaries or permitting program for special use.
14. About the Business Advisory Council (BAC) discussion led by Betsy Lopez-Wagner and Richard Loomis. 15 seats on BAC with high-level goals from 2020 Charter: provide partnership and advice to ONMS; ensure sustainable, equitable and accessible management of Sanctuaries; elevate focus on recreation and tourism; identify partnership opportunities in the areas of recreational, tourism and stewardship sectors.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Hamilton, Vice Chairman

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



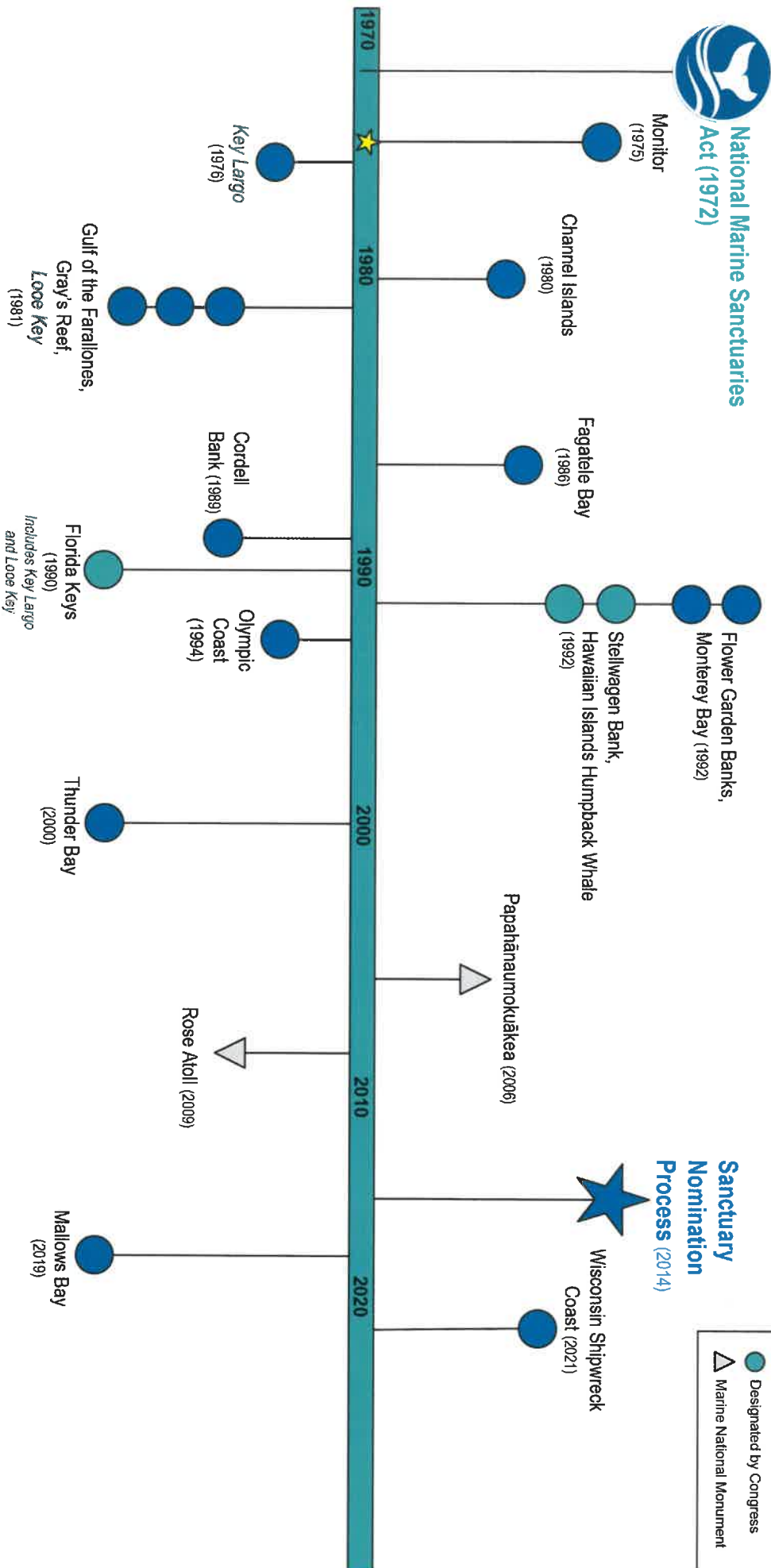
Director's Update

SAC Chairs Meeting
September 2023

HISTORY OF THE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



National Marine Sanctuaries Act (1972)

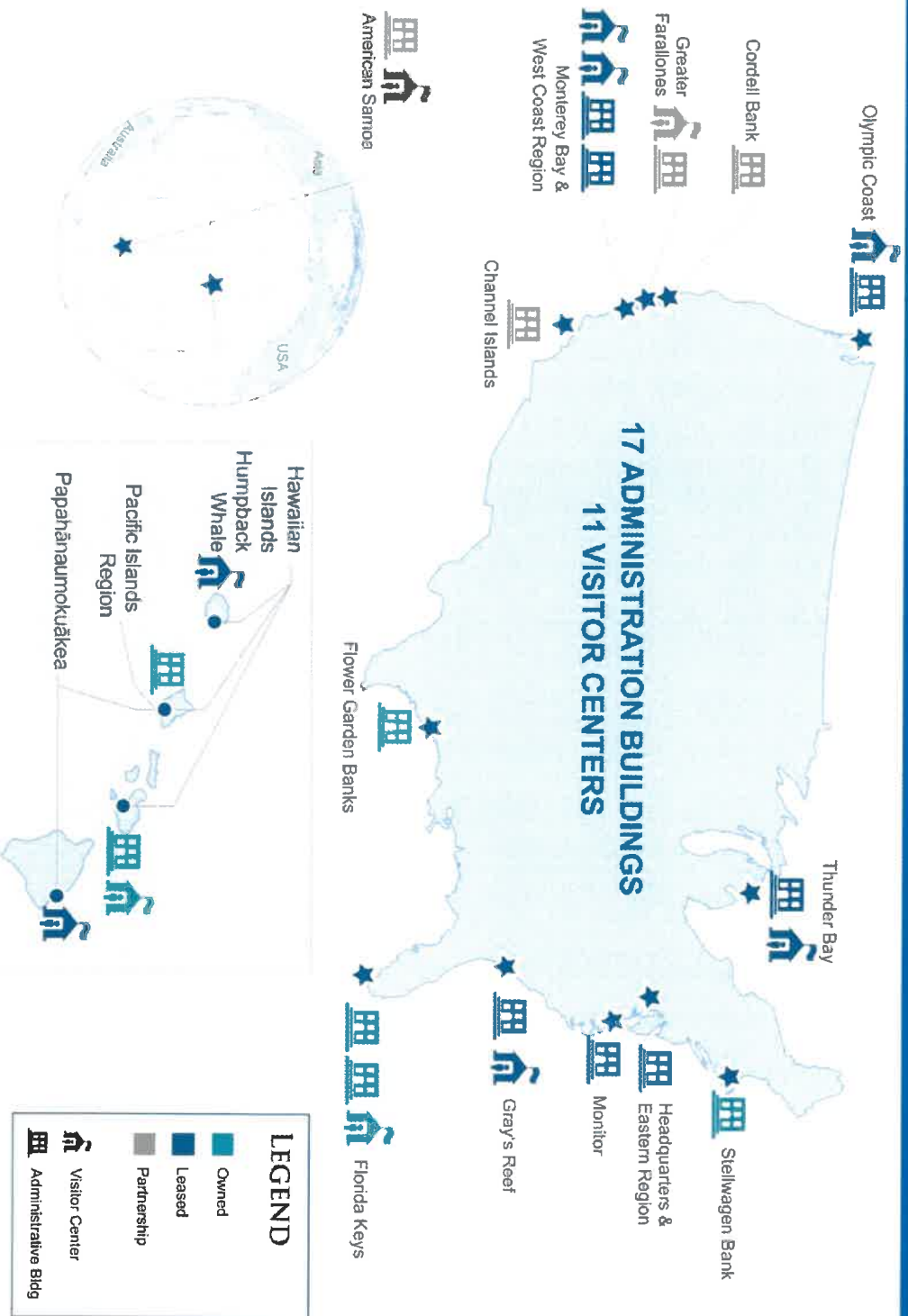


- Designated by NOAA
- Designated by Congress
- △ Marine National Monument

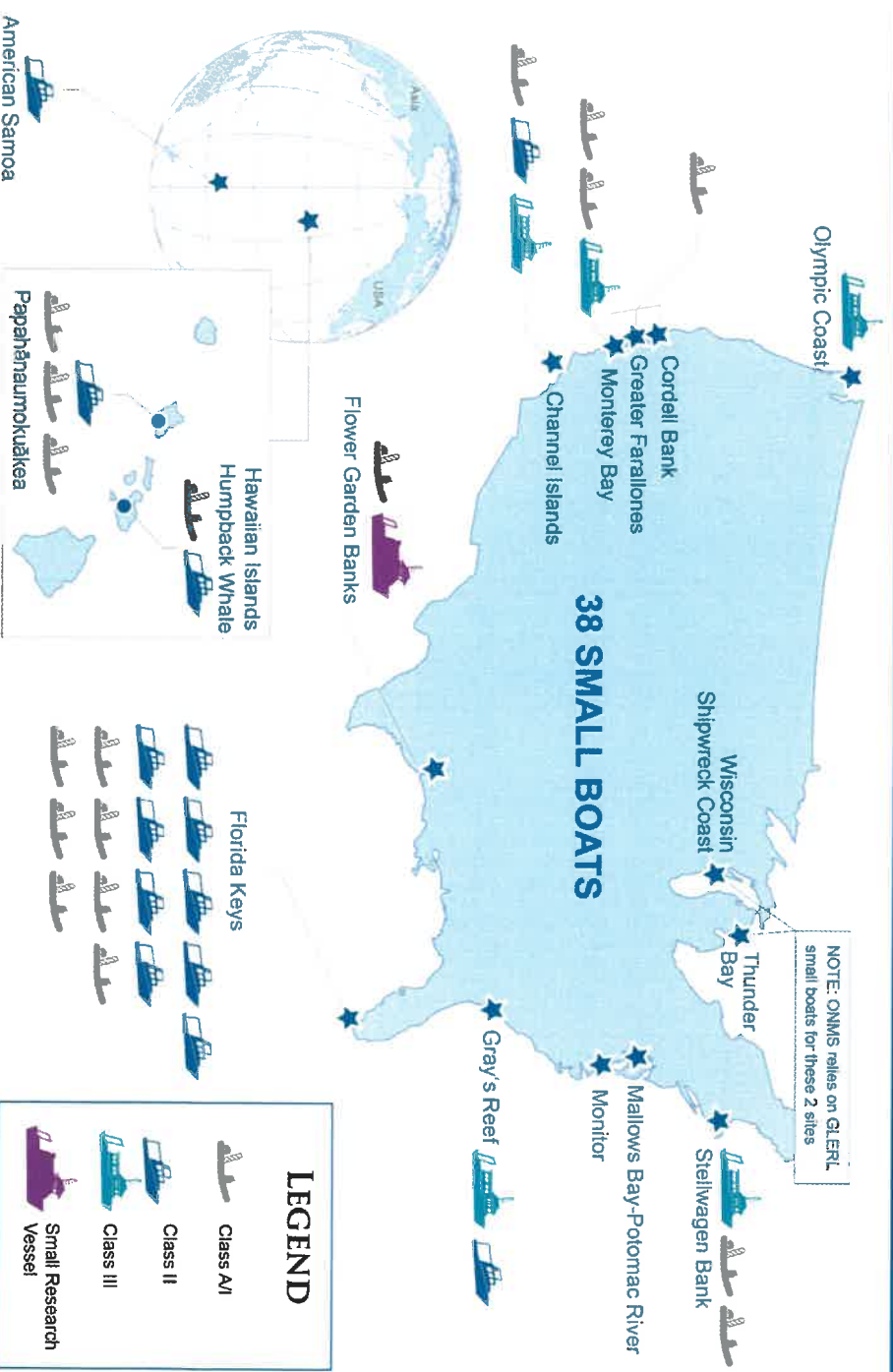
National Marine Sanctuary System



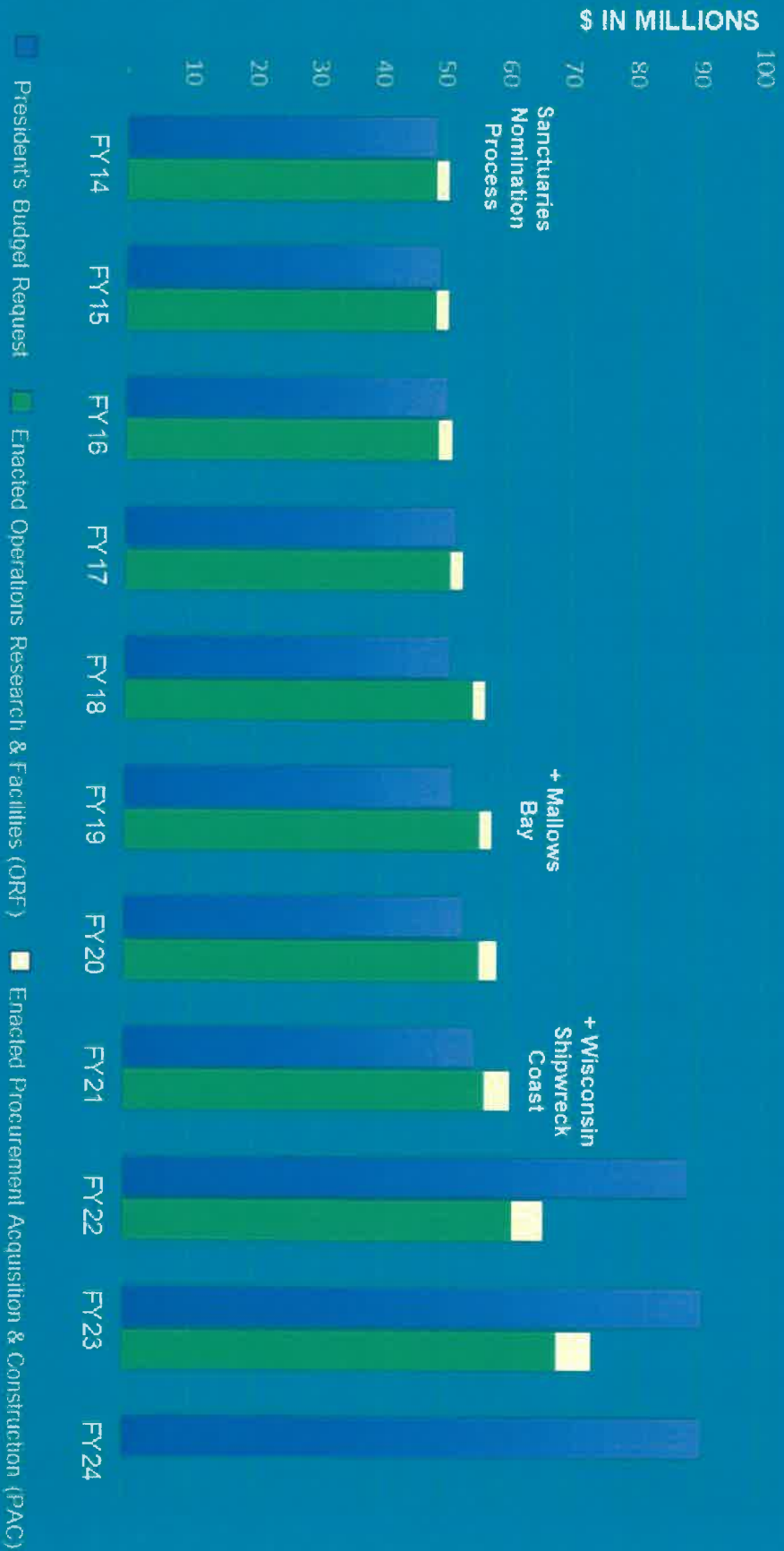
FACILITIES



NATIONAL MARINE SANCTARY SYSTEM SMALL BOAT FLEET



ONMS Budget over time





BIL & IRA investments for ONMS

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) investments totaled ~\$40M to ONMS partners

- Restoring Kelp Forests in California
- Coral restoration in Florida Keys
- Marine debris removal in Hawaii and beyond
- Reducing plastics in watersheds of California

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) investments totaled ~80M to ONMS

- \$50M for infrastructure improvements in Hawaii, California, Hawaii, Maryland, Washington, and Massachusetts
- \$30M to build capacity for new sanctuary designations and expansions
- \$1M to build capacity for permitting and environmental reviews (NEPA)

Approximately \$120 million invested



Future of the Sanctuary System

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



OUR VISION FOR AMERICA'S TREASURED OCEAN PLACES

A five-year strategy for the National Marine Sanctuaries System



Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Department of the Interior



A TRANSFORMATIONAL VISION FOR NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

2022-2042



**National
Marine Sanctuary
Foundation**

Transformational Change

Priorities:

- Conservation and Restoration
- Representation
- Relevance
- Effecting Change

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

Existing Community Seats

Maritime History & Archaeology
Maritime History & Archaeology
Cultural Heritage
Recreation
Recreation
Recreational Fishing
Commercial Fishing
Education (K-12)
Education (Higher)
Tourism & Marketing
Business & Economic Development
Business & Economic Development
Research, Science & Technology
Citizen-at-Large
Citizen-at-Large

Proposed Community Seats

Maritime History & Archaeology
Cultural Engagement
Cultural Engagement
Recreation
Recreation
Recreational Fishing
Commercial Fishing
Education (K-12)
Education (Higher)
Tourism
Business & Economic Development
Conservation
Research, Science & Technology
Communications
Citizen-at-Large

Existing Government and Non-Voting Seats

MD Historical Trust
MD Dept Natural Resources
Charles County MD
US Coast Guard
US Navy
VA Dept of Conservation & Recreation
Piscataway-Conoy Tribe
Piscataway Indian Nation
Patawomeck Indian Tribe of VA

Student (age 14-17)

Proposed Government and Non-Voting Seats

MD Historical Trust
MD Dept Natural Resources
Charles County MD
US Coast Guard
US Navy
VA Dept of Conservation & Recreation
Piscataway-Conoy Tribe
Piscataway Indian Nation
Patawomeck Indian Tribe of VA

Student (age 14-17)

Revision Process and Timeline:

- June 12, 2023 – Update on SAC charter/seat status announced at SAC meeting
- July 2023 – Met with SAC Chair & Vice Chair to discuss proposed changes to the charter.
- August 2023 – Met with SAC Chair & Vice Chair to review proposed changes to the charter
- September 2023 – Reviewed charter changes with co-managers
- **Oct 2, 2023** – Share the proposed charter revisions and seat changes with the SAC at the quarterly advisory council meeting. Discuss applications for renewing seats and applying for new ones.
- Oct-Jan 2024 – Submit charter amendment, clearance and then advertise, clear and seat new council members.
- February 2024 – Hold first SAC meeting of the new council