

FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes February 28, 2019

Meeting Attendance Roster:

Sepp Haukebo	Recreational Diving	Present
Jesse Cancelmo	Recreational Diving	Present
Natalie Davis	Diving Operations	Present (webinar)
Frank Burek	Diving Operations	Present
Ruth Perry	Oil and Gas Industry	Present (webinar)
Clint Moore	Oil and Gas Industry	Present
Scott Hickman	Fishing - Recreational	Absent
John Blaha	Fishing - Recreational	Present
Shane Cantrell	Fishing - Commercial	Present
Buddy Guindon	Fishing - Commercial	Absent
Adrienne Simoes Correa	Research	Absent
Larry McKinney	Research	Absent
Brian Shmaefsky	Education	Present (webinar)
Jacqui Stanley	Education	Absent
Joanie Steinhaus	Conservation	Present (late)
Jake Emmert	Conservation	Present (late; webinar)
James Sinclair	BSEE (non-voting)	Present
Mark Belter	BOEM (non-voting)	Present
Mark Zanowicz	U.S. Coast Guard (non-voting)	Present
Rusty Swafford	NOAA Fisheries (non-voting)	Present
Charles Tyer	NOAA OLE (non-voting)	Present
Vacant	EPA (non-voting)	
G.P. Schmahl	Sanctuary Superintendent (non-voting)	Present

Total voting member attendance: 11 of 16 of voting members; 8 votes needed

Others in Attendance:

Leslie Clift, Emma Hickerson, John Embesi, Kelly Drinnen, Marissa Nuttall, Jeb Adame (Backline; audio), Bill Jones, Sharon Kamas, Tom Doolin, David Thompson (webinar), Shalia Roberts (Burners Without Borders), Sarah Tsoflias (Chevron; webinar), Ken Fountain (webinar), April Tovar (webinar), and Greg Boland (webinar)

9:15 Meeting called to order by Advisory Council Chair Clint Moore.

9:15 Welcome and Announcements – G.P. Schmahl

Today's meeting is being run through a webinar, and with a sound system.

9:21 Administrative Business – Clint Moore

Adoption of Agenda – motion from John Blaha, second from Frank Burek, no discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

Adoption of Minutes – motion from Shane Cantrell, second from Jesse Cancelmo, no discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

9:19 Sanctuary Update – G.P. Schmahl

G.P. Schmahl welcomed new seats on the Council (Sepp Haukebo - Recreational Diving and Ruth Perry – Oil and Gas Production) and thanked outgoing Council members (Jimi Mack and James Wiseman). G.P. also welcomed new FGBNMS staff Kelly O'Connell (Research Specialist) and LTJG Melissa Mathes Trede (Vessel Operations Coordinator).

Sepp Haukebo introduced himself and shared a few words about himself.

Update on November 2018 Advisory Council recruitment: 5 applications were received for Recreational Fishing, including incumbent John Blaha, who has served 1 term. For the Education seat, 12 applications were received. Jacqui Stanley served 3 terms in this seat, and as such, is not eligible to re-apply for the Education seat.

Due to the federal government shutdown, two education/outreach events had to be canceled (Ocean Discovery Day and Seaside Chats).

Dr. Neil Jacobs, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction, has been designated to perform the nonexclusive duties and functions of Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator.

Sanctuary expansion update: NOAA intends to proceed with the publication of a proposed rule that will establish boundaries and regulations of new areas to be added to FGBNMS. NOAA has selected a revised preferred alternative ("proposed action") containing 160 square miles across 14 additional reefs and banks, based on the Advisory Council recommendation received in May 2018. Stetson Bank's boundaries

were modified to incorporate existing boundaries. The Proposed Rule is intended to be published in May/June 2019. The proposed rule will not include any changes to regulations identified in the 2016 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). G.P. discussed several requests for exemptions to proposed fishing regulations, including the possession and use of spearfishing and pelagic longline gear. The Proposed Rule will ask for additional public comments on those issues. Based on public input and other factors, NOAA may decide to include the requested exemptions, either through a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement or within the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). BOEM has submitted an analysis of the impact of the proposed expansion on the development of offshore energy resources, as required in Presidential Executive Order 13795. The formal consultation with Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) is ongoing. GMFMC's letter dated November 7, 2018, supported the revised boundaries recommended by the FGBNMS Advisory Council and deemed their previous recommendation of a "tiered approach" is no longer appropriate. Furthermore, GMFMC recommended the current FGBNMS fishing regulations should extend to new areas, with the exception of an exemption to allow spearfishing in new areas. GMFMC also requested the investigation of impacts of weights from bandit rig fishing.

A Recreational Fishing and Boating Memorandum of Agreement was recently signed between agencies at NOAA and several fishing and boating organizations at the Miami Boat Show to "strengthen sustainable fishing and boating in federal waters", including National Marine Sanctuaries.

Research and Monitoring

- Two water quality monitoring research cruises were conducted in November 2018 and February 2019. The 2018 Research and Monitoring Report will be finalized, published soon, and distributed.
- A paper on the 2016 East Flower Garden Bank mortality event was recently published in the *Bulletin of Marine Science* with lead author FBNMS staff Dr. Michelle Johnston. Dr. Suzanne Fredericq (University of Louisiana Lafayette) recently published a paper in *Frontiers in Marine Science* titled, "The critical Importance of Rhodoliths in the Life Cycle Completion of Both Macro- and Microalgae, and as Holobionts for the Establishment and Maintenance of Marine Biodiversity."
- In a partnership with Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration, FGBNMS is planning for a live feed from offshore at FGBNMS in August 2019. The project focus is to provide real time presentation of science conducted within FGBNMS while investigating coral spawning and mesoophotic connectivity.
- Dr. Santiago Herrera from Lehigh University was recently funded to study the connectivity of coral ecosystems in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico.
- Two lionfish invitational cruises are scheduled for summer 2019.

The FGBNMS traveling exhibit is wrapping up its tour at the Alvin Museum and will be relocated to the Port of Galveston's Cruise Terminal 2.

The city of Key West banned the sale of certain sunscreens containing ingredients that could harm coral reefs.

Florida's coral disease outbreak has now reached Key West and is prevalent throughout the Florida reef tract, and was recently identified in the Virgin Islands. G.P. mentioned preventative measures for FGBNMS including disinfection of dive gear prior to diving at FGBNMS. The disease has been named "Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease".

10:40 Working Group Updates

Underwater Webcam Working Group – Jesse Cancelmo

The purpose of an underwater webcam is to achieve greater awareness of the FGBNMS. The continuous, live-streaming webcam would be located on the reef or on the HIA389A platform, and would be made available online at no cost to the general public. Jesse Cancelmo reported on the working group's activities since the last Advisory Council meeting. All parties agree the best solution for reliability and sustainability is to tie into the Gulf of Mexico fiber optic system owned by Tampnet. Moving forward, Brian Shmaefsky will be in the initial phase of vetting a number of potential funding sources. No preliminary budgets have been calculated yet. Ruth Perry volunteered to join this working group. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved.**

Visibility Working Group – Scott Hickman

Scott Hickman is the sole remaining Council member in this working group. Jesse offered an idea for this working group to work with the Houston Marathon's artist Janavi Folmsbee on public street art. Joanie Steinhaus shared the McGuire Dent building's art project by local artist Gabriel. Shane Cantrell recommended the group consider digital billboards, and Joanie mentioned seasonal pricing possibilities. Sepp mentioned a program at other national marine sanctuaries called Vet into Your Sanctuary that works with veterans. Charles Tyer suggested the working group develop an Escape Room theme on FGBNMS. Joanie, Sepp Haukebo, and Shane volunteered to join this working group. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved.**

Visitor Permit Program Working Group – Natalie Davis

Natalie Davis reported the working group has proposed a mandatory visitor permit program, but has been postponed as to not interfere with the sanctuary boundary expansion process. Shane asked at what point FGBNMS could start moving this process forward. G.P. responded HQ requested to hold off until the FEIS has been published. Mark Zanowicz and Sepp Haukebo volunteered to join this working group. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved.**

Visitor Center Working Group

Clint asked for volunteers for this working group and plans to call a meeting after May.

Artificial Reef Working Group

No report but Clint said this working group will meet soon regarding leadership. John Blaha and Frank Burek volunteered to join this working group. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved.**

Advisory Council Charter Renewal Subcommittee

For clarification, Clint motioned to ratify, approve, and affirm the 5 Advisory Council members (Frank Burek, Brian Shmaefsky, Clint Moore, Jake Emmert, and James Wiseman) as the members of record for the SAC Charter Review Subcommittee. In addition, Frank Burek and Brian Shmaefsky are ratified, affirmed, and approved as the original co-Chairs of the subcommittee well. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved.**

11:50 Advisory Council Charter Renewal – Frank Burek/Brian Shmaefsky

At the last Advisory Council meeting, approximately 90% of the work conducted by the Advisory Council Charter Renewal Subcommittee was approved with an amendment to “to carve out the seat recommendation and refer back to the committee for more development and analysis of 1) the size of SAC; 2) the Galveston seat recommendation; and 3) marine transportation seat recommendation.”. After further review, the subcommittee recommends:

- Addition of a non-voting governmental seat for Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau;
- Addition of non-voting governmental seat for Texas Parks & Wildlife, Coastal Fisheries Division, Artificial Reef Program;
- Addition of voting non-governmental stakeholder group for Marine Transportation with 2 seats, equivalent to other stakeholder groups;
- A maximum of 18 voting members (currently 16) from non-governmental stakeholder groups; and
- A maximum of 8 non-voting members from government agencies.

Also proposed to change wording in the new charter from “shall develop an annual work plan” to “may develop an annual work plan.”

Frank made a motion for the following:

- 1. Add additional seats to the FGBNMS Advisory Council:**
 - a. Add one governmental, non-voting seat for Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 - b. Add one governmental, non-voting seat for Texas Parks & Wildlife – Coastal Fisheries Division – Artificial Reef Program.**
 - c. Add 2 non-governmental, voting seats for Marine Transportation.**
- 2. Change the word “shall” to “may” in the “Council Roles” section regarding the development of work plans.**

This motion was seconded by Shane Cantrell.

G.P. said he raised concerns about increasing the size of the Council at the meeting in November, and the Council voted to refer this issue back to the subcommittee for further review, yet the subcommittee’s recommendation not only remains the same, but added an additional seat.

Discussion followed. Charles questioned if the subcommittee considered taking a broader scope, rather than naming specific entities for the seats. Clint responded specific entities were only named for governmental, non-voting seats.

Shane asked G.P. to share his concerns again with the Advisory Council. G.P. responded 16 is an adequate number for an Advisory Council, and he referenced the National Marine Sanctuaries Act's (NMSA) direction of having a maximum of 15 voting members for sanctuaries designated after 1992. In comparison, GMFMC has 17 members but is Gulf-wide with layers of regulations. G.P. suggested two seats per stakeholder group for Marine Transportation is not necessary, and recommended the existing seats be reallocated if additional constituent representation is desired.

Jesse Cancelmo motioned to amend Frank's first motion to postpone a decision on changing the size of the Advisory Council until the next Advisory Council meeting in May 2019, and to invite representatives from the 3 proposed new stakeholder seats so that a discussion can occur. Motion was seconded by Joanie. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Frank's second motion was tabled until after public comment.

1:10 Public Comment and Q&A Period

Shalia Roberts, Galveston County Chapter Director for Burners Without Borders, spoke about this community-led nonprofit which initiates civic works projects and disaster relief in local communities around the globe. In Galveston, Burners without Borders is responsible for the murals painted on the seawall from 47th-62nd Streets. Shalia mentioned wanting to get involved with artificial reefs, and wanting to help FGBNMS.

1:13 Advisory Council Charter Renewal – Frank Burek/Brian Shmaefsky (cont'd)
The Advisory Council discussed changing the wording from “shall” to “may” in the “Council Roles” section regarding the development of work plans. **Motion passed unanimously.**

1:18 Break for Lunch

1:36 Report on SAC Chair Teleconference on 11-9-18 – Clint Moore

Clint reported on the SAC chair summit webinar held on November 9, 2018, including the information he disseminated to this group regarding FGBNMS, as well as information received from Advisory Council Chairs at other national marine sanctuary sites.

1:55 Constituent Updates

Sepp Haukebo – is distributing the Lionfish Invitational information through his social media, and asked about potential scholarships to defray the costs. Also, he mentioned Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi leads a research cruise to FGBNMS each fall.

The organization for which Sepp works, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), recently showed coral diseases can be transported on nurdles (plastic beads).

Mark Zanowicz – reported Coast Guard regular patrols resumed after the end of the federal government shutdown.

Shane Cantrell – GMFMC will wait to consider Coral Amendment 10 until the FGBNMS expansion is finalized. Charter boats in 2020 will be required to electronically report their landings. Galveston Fishing Rodeo in September has added Lionfish to the list of species. Shane reported illegal fishing of groupers at Madison Swanson.

Rusty Swafford – spoke about the requested exemption for the pelagic longline fishery, as well as the numerous oil and gas export terminal requests that have been submitted recently.

Jesse Cancelmo – has been communicating with 7 local dive clubs, and expanded his efforts recently to a dive club in Bryan, Texas. He will be presenting to Aggie Land Scuba next week. *Dive Training* magazine's March issue will feature Jesse's article on mass coral spawning, which has an emphasis on FGBNMS. Jesse will organize with the M/V *Fling* for a 2020 SAC & friends dive trip, targeted for August/September, possibly for coral spawning.

John Blaha – has conducted outreach at local chapter meetings on lionfish and FGBNMS. John suggests the wahoo population be assessed. Also, he reported an artificial reef composed of railroad ties was recently installed off South Padre Island in state waters.

Clint Moore – has been communicating with the oil and gas trade groups on the FGBNMS expansion process. Clint reports W&T Offshore is more likely to reef in place its decommissioned platforms.

Mark Belter – BOEM's Interagency Agreement (IA) with FGBNMS was signed today for long-term monitoring (a 28 year dataset). Mark mentioned BOEM's habitat modeling is underway, and an updated compendium of seafloor impacts is currently being worked on. Also, several habitat focused proposals will move forward in 2019. Lastly, Mark noted a surge in permits submitted to BOEM after the government shutdown.

Joanie Steinhaus – reported the seawall mural won a Parks & Recreation award for the southeast region. She updated the Council on TIRN's (Turtle Island Restoration Network) microplastics project including FGBNMS water samples. Microplastics have been incorporated into school curricula at Oppe Elementary and Ball High School. The city of Galveston passed a resolution for restaurants to not place a straw on the table or in drinks unless requested. The City of Galveston also passed a regulation for all equipment (tents, etc.) to be removed from the beach at the end of the day. TIRN was instrumental in discontinuing the summer fireworks on Sundays in Galveston. Harte Research Institute hosted the first annual microplastics conference and TIRN will host

the 2nd one in October in Galveston or Houston. Artist Boat will host World Ocean Day at Stewart Beach on June 8, 2019, and an event hosted and located at Moody Gardens is planned for that same day.

James Sinclair – reported BSEE has an IA with FGBNMS for Stetson Bank monitoring. Also, he will be working on submitting the next 5-year IA before the end of this fiscal year. He noted Marissa has drafted a document on the historical monitoring of Stetson Bank, with consultations with BSEE and BOEM.

Charles Tyer – worked through the federal government shutdown and monitored for enforcement actions at FGBNMS (none reported). Charles reported a new regulation being finalized is any charter boat with a federal permit will be required to electronically report their catch and will have to use a GPS tracker.

Frank Burek – as Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Club's President, he communicates with divers and supports environmental dive trips such as the Lionfish Invitational.

Natalie Davis – reported on a proposal to dredge the Port of Corpus Christi ship channel to 75+ feet that would allow more VLCCs fully loaded into the port from the Gulf. This could reduce the quantity of vessels around the sanctuary in the shipping lanes, but the vessels will be much larger.

Brian Shmaefsky – gave several school programs on coral reefs, representing FGBNMS at NatureFest on March 2, and disseminating information on FGBNMS at National Science Teachers Association conference in St. Louis in April.

3:15 Work Plan Development Discussion – Leslie Clift

Leslie Clift presented to the Council on Advisory Council work plans, including information from other national marine sanctuaries' Advisory Councils, and queried the Council as to if they were in favor of drafting a work plan for the FGBNMS Advisory Council.

Shane motioned the Advisory Council will develop a work plan. Motion was seconded by Joanie. Along with John Blaha, Shane and Joanie will work with Leslie via email to draft a work plan for the Council's review.

3:40 New Business

Leslie mentioned the request from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation for silent auction donations towards CHOW (Capitol Hill Oceans Week).

Leslie reminded Council members that the Chair and vice-Chair elections for the Advisory Council will be held at May meeting.

Jesse Cancelmo reported that after reading the FGBNMS 2017 long-term monitoring report, he gained a new understanding of the science of how, when, where and why

research and monitoring occurs at FGBNMS. Though G.P.'s sanctuary update given at each Council meeting is good, he realizes the Council members still have much to learn about the tools, methods, and significance of outcomes. Jesse asked for others' perspectives on this subject. Mark Belter urged all Council members to read the monitoring reports in order to understand the background and learn about upcoming changes in FGBNMS monitoring. **The Advisory Council unanimously approved and would like to see a series of presentations to be added to upcoming agendas.**

G.P. revisited the subject of the Advisory Council's recruitment review panel, and requested to not have a standing subcommittee but rather stagger the workload throughout the Council.

G.P. reminded everyone four Council members will have their seat expire in August 2019: Scott Hickman (2nd term), Larry McKinney (3rd term), Brian Shmaefsky (1st term), and Jake Emmert (1st term).

4:03 Meeting Adjourned – Frank motioned to adjourn, seconded by John. All in favor. Approved.

Next SAC Meeting scheduled for May 15, 2019.