

**GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
INAUGURAL MEETING
September 9, 1999
Gray's Reef Office, Savannah, GA**

Attendance:

SAC Members Present: Anne Lindsay Frick, Jim Henry, Matt Gilligan, Patty McIntosh, Bing Phillips, Doug Rader, George Sedberry, Judy Wright.

Others Present: Joel Williams, Executive Director Coastal Conservation Association of GA (CCA Georgia) NOAA Gray's Reef: Reed Bohne, Bruce Cowden, Marcy Lee, Tom Potts, Ralph Rogers, Cathy Sakas, Alex Score, Becky Shortland.

Distributed Materials:

Agenda
Sanctuary Advisory Council notebooks

Welcoming Remarks

Sanctuary Manager Reed Bohne convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with an appreciation to the new SAC members for serving on the inaugural Gray's Reef NMS Sanctuary Advisory Council. Each member then introduced themselves with a brief explanation of their experiences linked to the marine world and specifically Gray's Reef NMS.

Council Charter

Planning and Outreach Coordinator Becky Shortland identified key components of the Council Charter and requested that SAC members look over the list of addresses, phone and email for accuracy.

Strategic Plan

Reed Bohne reviewed the vision, goals and objectives of the National Marine Sanctuary Program. The strategic plan has been developed to provide an overall guide for the system through the year 2001. He also highlighted elements of GRNMS regulations and the National Marine Sanctuary statute for the Council.

Education

Marine Educator Cathy Sakas reviewed the educational products and programs of GRNMS with an emphasis on the Rivers to Reefs project and Savannah Student Ocean Council.

Research

Research Coordinator Tom Potts reviewed current research and monitoring efforts at GRNMS and noted the National Undersea Research Center (NURC) collaboration with Gray's Reef.

Matt Gilligan asked whether the research priorities of other NOAA agencies, such as National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) were factored into the research agenda. He suggested that Gray's Reef collaborate with Diane Hoskins of SSU who also works with NMFS.

Doug Rader inquired whether socio-economic studies have been addressed; he further offered that it may be possible to have a student from Duke University assist. Reed Bohne replied that the studies may be coordinated through NOAA economist Bob Leeworthy when funds are available after October 1. A meeting has been tentatively planned with Sea Grant, GA DNR and others. Joel Williams noted that the CCA of GA has commissioned a study through GA Southern University to assess the extent of recreational fishing.

Outreach

Becky Shortland circulated the tentative schedule for management plan revision. She also described Sustainable Seas Expedition, the media coverage that occurred during our July 26-August 6 missions and showed a video of dive excerpts.

Enforcement

Executive Officer Lt. Ralph Rogers described the U.S. Coast Guard overflight monitoring and R2 radar system monitoring systems.

Information Systems

Information Systems Coordinator Alex Score discussed GIS efforts at GRNMS and the national program.

Doug Rader asked about side scan surveys and whether or not that information had been gathered for Gray's Reef. Reed Bohne responded that side scan surveys had been done in the sanctuary prior to designation and again in 1996. This survey has been complimented with extensive ROV video surveys of the sanctuary providing a ground truth to the side scan images. The suggestion was made to have a GIS presentation during a future SAC meeting.

Facilities/Vessel tour

Marine Operations Coordinator Bruce Cowden then provided SAC members with a tour of University System campus and the R/V JANE YARN.

Council Officers

After SAC members were reconvened Reed Bohne asked that the SAC consider the question of Council officers. After some discussion as to whether the SAC should defer such decisions until the next meeting, the floor was opened for nominations.

Matt Gilligan nominated Jim Henry for the position of Chair of the Sanctuary Advisory Council; the motion was seconded by Bing Phillips. The motion was approved unanimously by the SAC. Matt Gilligan was then nominated for Vice-Chair by Jim Henry. The motion was seconded by Doug Rader and Anne Lindsay, and approved unanimously. Patty McIntosh was then nominated to serve as Secretary; there were several seconds, and approval was also unanimous.

Meeting schedule

After some discussion of meeting frequency, times and locations, the Council agreed to meet again on Thursday, October 21st, from 10:00 a.m.-noon. The focus of the October 21st meeting will be preparation for scoping meetings, the first phase of management plan review and revision. Jim Henry asked that SAC members be sent scoping information prior to the October meeting.

Joel Williams inquired about the intent of scoping meetings; would a revised management plan be presented at that time. Reed Bohne noted that scoping is only to ask the public and stakeholders for those topics/issues that should be addressed as the management plan is reviewed and revised. A proposed plan will be presented much later in the 18-24 month process.

Priority issues

Newly-elected Chair Jim Henry suggested that Gray's Reef NMS would benefit from a long-term coordinated science plan. This need also applies to education programs and resource protection. Matt Gilligan encouraged strengthening GR linkages with other NOAA agencies, such as National Marine Fisheries Service, as well as universities such as Savannah State University which has similar goals.

Doug Rader suggested that a briefing by the staff of the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council would be very useful because many efforts overlap with the sanctuary. George Sedberry reinforced this need, noting that the sanctuaries are integral to SAFMC mandates. Becky Shortland offered to help educate the SAC on SAFMC mandates and issues.

Regarding the various studies - complete and ongoing - that were reviewed earlier, Bing Phillips asked to be able to see the results so that he and many others can better understand the status of marine resources and direction of the policies of the National Marine Sanctuaries Program. Doug Rader asked whether a bibliography of GR-related research existed. Tom Potts and Alex Score will compile that information for the SAC.

Judy Wright inquired about the Council's role in possible fund raising activities. Reed Bohne responded that there are some provisions now that allow outside fund raising. It is possible to set

up a non-profit or partner with a non-profit to raise funds. We will endeavor to gather that information and distribute it to SAC members.

Jim Henry noted that the first order of business of the SAC should be self education; the SAC meetings themselves should be educational. If a SAC member has pertinent information that they wish to share with other members, please feel free to share that information with written materials, videos, etc.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

The next meeting of Gray's Reef NMS Sanctuary Advisory Council is scheduled for Thursday, October 21, 1999, 10:00 a.m. until noon at the Gray's Reef NMS office of Skidaway Island.

Becky Shortland, Planning and Outreach Coordinator