



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary
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60th SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC) MEETING
Virtual GoToWebinar
Wednesday, October 21st, 2020 8:30 am – 2 pm
MINUTES of MEETING

Present:

Bill Adler	Primary: Fixed Gear Commercial Fishing
Michelle Bachman	Federal: New England Fishery Management Council
James Bailey	Alternate: At Large
Terri Birkeland	Alternate: At Large
Kevin Blinkoff	Primary: Recreational Fishing
Andrea Bogomolni	Primary: At Large
Shelley Brown	At Large: Alternate
Tim Brady	Alternate: Recreational Fishing
Jonathan Brink	Alternate: Whale Watch
Shelley Brown	Alternate: At Large
Todd Callaghan	State: MA Coastal Zone Management
Tracey Dalton	Primary: Research
Tim Donovan	Federal: NOAA Office of Law Enforcement
Susan Farady	Primary: Education
John Galluzzo	Primary: Maritime Heritage (Secretary)
Marc Gustafson	Primary: Mobile Gear Commercial Fishing
Allen Hale	Primary: Youth
Laura Howes	Primary: Whale Watch
Les Kaufman	Alternate: Research
Moira Kelly	Federal: NOAA GARFO
Martin Klein	Alternate: Maritime Heritage
Heather Knowles	Primary: Diving (Chair)
Laura Lilly	Alternate: Education
Randall Lyons	Alternate: Business Industry
Marissa Marcoux	Alternate: Diving
Dan Martino	Primary: At Large
Chris McGuire	Primary: Conservation
Conor McManus	Alternate: Research
Frank Mirarchi	Alternate: Mobile Gear Commercial Fishing
Iben Munck	Primary: Conservation
Kimberley Pearson	Alternate: Conservation
Monica Pepe	Alternate: Education
Wayne Petersen	Alternate: Conservation
Kevin Powers	Primary: At Large
Jeff Rosen	Primary: Business Industry
Rory Simpson-Brown	Alternate: Youth
Dawn Stancavish	Alternate: Marine Transportation
Carol Voigt	Primary: Marine Transportation
Mason Weinrich	Primary: Research
Kelly Whitmore	State: MA Division of Marine Fisheries



SBNMS Staff:

Pete DeCola Anne-Marie Runfola Elizabeth Stokes Mike Thompson
Ben Haskell Tammy Silva Anne Smrcina Alice Stratton
Clea Harrelson, SBNMS Intern

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) Staff:

John Armor, Director

I. Introduction and Welcome – John Armor, Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)

John Armor spent a few moments to welcome SAC members and expressed his appreciation for their work and incredible achievements, and pitching in their time to work on the Management Plan Review (MPR) and other critical issues for the Sanctuary. He thanked outgoing members and welcomed new members for contributing their time, talents and service. He stressed that SACs are absolutely critical to accomplishing the ONMS mission and to guide superintendents and staff on very important issues in every aspect for the program. John also took time to recognize Heather Knowles who is stepping down as SAC Chair. Heather has been a fantastic Chair and her leadership is greatly appreciated. Heather will continue to serve on the SAC as Diving Primary member. John further acknowledged and thanked Clea Harrelson, SBNMS intern, for her role in leading the MPR process and for being selected as a Knauss Fellow. He also recognized Aurora Avallone, former SAC Primary Youth, who was awarded Stellwagen Volunteer of the Year 2020. Finally, John talked about preparations that are well underway to celebrate ONMS's 50th Anniversary which will happen in October 2022.

II. Review of Draft 59th SAC Minutes (H. Knowles)

The SAC unanimously approved the Draft 59th SAC Minutes.

III. SAC Business (A.M. Runfola)**i. New Members Welcome (P DeCola)**

- Andrea (Dre) Bogomolni – At Large Primary
Andrea “Dre” is the Program Officer, Island Foundation, based in Marion MA
- Dan Martino – At Large Primary
Owner of Martino’s Seafood, Vineyard Haven
- James Bailey – At Large Alternate
Marine Affairs Graduate, University of Rhode Island
- Jeff Rosen – Business Industry Primary – second 3-year term
CEO, Corona Environmental Consulting, Scituate MA
- Randall Lyons – Business Industry Alternate – reappointed for a second 3-year term
Executive Director, MA Marine Trade Association

- Iben Munck – Conservation Primary
Communication and Executive Manager at Conservation International's Center for Communities and Conservation, and Executive Officer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy
- Kim Pearson – Conservation Alternate
Kim is a Consultant in environmental sustainability and conservation science policy
- Laura Lilly – Education Alternate
Laura is an elementary school teacher and Naturalist at Boston Harbor Cruises
- Dawn Stancavish – Marine Transportation Alternate
Dawn is Chief Innovation Officer/Chief Operating Officer at Massa Products Corporation, Hingham MA
- Marc Gustafson – Mobile Gear Commercial Fishing Primary
Marc is Captain/Owner of Gustafson Fisheries, Scituate MA
- Tracey Dalton – Education Primary – reappointed for a third 3-year term
Tracey is Professor and Chair, Marine Affairs Program, University of Rhode Island
- Kelly Whitmore – State Designee, MA Division of Marine Fisheries
Kelly is the Regional Fishery Policy Analyst based in Gloucester MA
- CDR Jamie Frederick – Federal Designee, First US Coast Guard District Boston.
CDR Frederick is the Chief of Enforcement

ii. Outgoing SAC Member Recognition (P. DeCola)

- John Williamson – At Large Primary since SAC inception in 2001
John previously served as Secretary on Executive Committee from June 2006-June 2016
- Deborah Cramer – At Large Primary: May 2007-September 2020
- Jeanine Boyle – At Large Alternate: May 2014-September 2020
- Howard Rosenbaum – Conservation Primary: May 2014-September 2020
- John Mandelman – Conservation Alternate: July 2017-September 2020
- Tina McMahon – Education Alternate: July 2017-September 2020
- Vito Giacalone – Mobile Gear Commercial Fishing Primary and Alternate
Primary: June 2010-June 2020; Alternate: June 2004-June 2009
- Cate O'Keefe – State Designee, MA Division of Marine Fisheries: July 2016-May 2020

The next SAC Recruitment will take place in early summer 2021.

iii. Volunteer of the Year: Aurora Avallone (AM Runfola)

iv. Officer Election Vote – Chair (AM Runfola)

The SAC elected Todd Callaghan, Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Designee, as the new SAC Chair.

v. SAC Work Plan Review (H. Knowles)

Heather Knowles provided the SAC an update progress to date on goals in the SAC Work Plan. The group reviewed slides with status updates and comments on the goals for this year. The impact of COVID-19 on work item progress was also considered. Overall the SAC did an excellent job meeting goals and performing to plan, especially in light of challenges due to COVID-19 and the need to work in a virtual setting.

Capacity Building Goals: The major objective for the SAC in 2020 has been to lead and participate in Management Plan Review (MPR) subcommittees and working groups. The SAC met these goals with the major read-outs from the MPR SC/WG reading out at the meeting. The other goal concerned “public scoping” which was an activity significantly impacted by COVID-19 such that only limited virtual meetings occurred. As a result this goal was scored “not applicable” since there was a major change in the assumptions making it difficult to achieve.

Education and Outreach Goals: Three goals fell within Education and Outreach and of those, one goal has been achieved to date. The Maritime Heritage WHOI telepresence project occurred as a largely virtual event due to the impact of COVID-19 and weather conditions. The other goals pertaining to a pilot study with ropeless gear for Right Whale protection and water quality are pending and at risk based on the late point in the year and limitations due to COVID-19.

External Support for SBNMS: The primary goal within this category concerned collaboration with MOTT in support of the Plymouth 400th anniversary celebration and associated events. These events were largely rescheduled to 2021 and therefore this goal was scored “not applicable” since there was a major change in the assumptions making it difficult to achieve.

SAC Related Events and Activities: All three goals within this category were achieved. The Work Plan was implemented on time, the SAC participated in the New England Boat Show in Feb 2020 prior to the impact of COVID-19. SAC Chair H. Knowles participated in the SAC Chair teleconference and the new Chair T. Callaghan will participate in the Nov 2020 call.

IV. Sanctuary Business - Management Plan Review (MPR) (B. Haskell, A. Stratton, P. DeCola)

i. Reorientation Introduction

Pete DeCola introduced the MPR session by providing a brief overview of the process and timeline used so far, including the formation of three SAC Subcommittees (Research and Monitoring, Education and Outreach, and Interagency Coordination) and one Working Group (Maritime Heritage) to review and draft Action Plans for the revised Management Plan. Over the past three months, we held 23 meetings with 38 SAC/partner members (65% of the SAC!), resulting in the draft action plans being presented today. While each group had a different focus, staff identified five themes that were common across all the subcommittee/working group recommendations: visibility, adaptation, proactive action, collaboration, and SAC engagement.

ii. Each Subcommittee/Working Group gave a presentation and facilitated a question and answer period for 30 minutes. The Chair of each group wrote a short summary on their session and those will be sent to SAC members for their reference.

V. Reinroduce Sanctuary Vision and Mission Draft Statement (proposal to convene a subcommittee to work on this and present findings at February 2021 SAC meeting (P. DeCola)

Pete DeCola concluded the MPR discussion with a brief review of the Sanctuary Mission/Vision discussion the SAC had at the May 22nd meeting. He presented once more the revisions that staff have proposed and invited input from the SAC.

Action Item: Susan Farady, SAC Vice Chair, agreed to form a subcommittee to provide SAC input at the February 2021 SAC meeting. Pete provided a summary of next steps, including the goal of having a draft management plan available for review and discussion at the February meeting.

VI. Agency/Governmental Reports

i. MA Coastal Zone Management (CZM) (T. Callaghan)

- CZM continues to review the Single Environmental Impact Report from Alcatel for its Amitee telecommunications cable that is planned to run from France to Lynn MA. The preferred alternative route would be just outside of SBNMS, skirting the northwest corner. We have encouraged Alcatel to use its survey information to microsite the cable to ensure that it will be buried in the sediments for its entire length within state waters. Alcatel will be working with the Division of Marine Fisheries and lobstermen to minimize impacts to fishing activities and gear. CZM also worked with Alcatel to ensure that the cable lay vessel will protect mapped core habitat for North Atlantic right and humpback whales in Massachusetts waters through low vessel speed (0.5 knots) and the presence of a Protected Species Officer. We have requested a post-lay bathymetric survey to ensure complete burial of the cable and to identify any disturbance to the seafloor as a result of the plowing activity.
- CZM is supporting the Massachusetts Ocean and Coastal Acidification Commission where there have been discussions on how to leverage existing programs to improve research and monitoring and reduce nutrients entering coastal waters.

ii. Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) (K. Whitmore)

- New MA DMF Director Appointment
On May 21, Dan McKiernan was appointed as Director of MA Division of Marine Fisheries: <https://www.mass.gov/news/daniel-mckiernan-appointed-as-director>. McKiernan had served as the Division's Acting Director since November and Deputy Director since 2003. He succeeds former Director Dr. David Pierce, who retired last fall.
- Shipwreck Patriot Marine Debris Cleanup Project
In August, DMF Diving Safety Officer Vincent Malkoski led a team with WHOI and SBNMS divers on reconnaissance dive of the SBNMS shipwreck *F/V Patriot*: <https://stellwagen.noaa.gov/maritime/patriot.html>, with the purpose of assessing derelict gear on the wreck and determining technical aspects of its removal. The wreck is located approximately

14 miles ENE from Gloucester in 100 feet of water. Divers noted a large net around the reel and smaller piece on the wreck forward of the reel. A small seal was entangled in the netting. Next steps include net removal, retrieval, and disposal, as well as deployment of a DMF acoustic receiver and mooring with a passive listening device for NOAA (the first of hopefully several on offshore wrecks). Vin has organized a team to continue this work on October 22.

- Groundfish

In January, DMF published the Haddock Recreational Fishing Guide, an intuitive guidance tool for the recreational fishery to help avoid catching cod while taking advantage of an abundant haddock resource in the Gulf of Maine. Monthly color-coded maps identify areas where catch rates for cod are low, yet legal-sized haddock are abundant. The maps were developed from 2019 trawl survey data and incorporate species' habitat preference including depth, temperature, and seafloor complexity. Anglers can download the guide for maps, regulations, and fishing tips related to haddock. Stellwagen fishermen are routinely surveyed as part of our MRIP sampling program; data will be used to validate the maps.

Guide available at: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/haddock-recreational-fishing-guide>

Recent MA DMF publication – includes information on cod on Stellwagen: Dean, M.J., S.P. Elzey, W.S. Hoffman, N.C. Buchan, and J.H. Grabowski. 2019. The relative importance of sub-populations to the Gulf of Maine stock of Atlantic cod. *ICES J of Marine Science* 76(6): 1626-1640.

- Acoustic Monitoring

DMF is expanding acoustic receiver coverage on Stellwagen Bank in an effort to assess habitat use by white sharks and other acoustically tagged fish.

- Sand Lance

On May 1, DMF adopted a sand lance possession limit. The 200-pound trip limit is designed to prevent the proliferation of an industrial scale bait or reduction fishery on this important nearshore forage species. This limit will continue to accommodate any small-scale commercial or personal bait harvesting activity that may be occurring with beach seines or other similar artisanal gear. Prior to this rule, sand lance had been an unregulated species in Massachusetts.

- Water Quality Monitoring – Cape Cod Bay

In response to last year's <https://www.mass.gov/news/southern-cape-cod-bay-experiences-lobster-mortalities-related-to-low-oxygen> in southern Cape Cod Bay which cause a localized die-off of lobsters and benthic fishes, DMF initiated a water quality monitoring project to better understand temperature, stratification, and the potential for hypoxia formation in the Bay. To expand on work started last fall, DMF partnered with the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association to collect new data on water column changes and how those relate to lobster catch. More than 20 loggers were deployed collecting dissolved oxygen and temperature data as part of the <https://lobsterfoundationofma.org/projects/> study fleet, which is supported through DMF's 2020 <https://www.mass.gov/news/2020-climate-change-resiliency-grant-program>. Additionally, DMF, in collaboration with CCS and WHOI, was awarded funding through the 2020 NOAA <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/News/Article/ArtMID/1660/ArticleID/2809/Sea-Grant-announces-2-million-in-support-of-2020-American-Lobster-Initiative-projects> for water quality monitoring, review of historical data, and creation of visualization tools to increase our ability to detect and predict the potential onset of hypoxia and alert commercial lobster fishers to changing conditions. Severe low dissolved oxygen (<2.0 mg/L) was detected in southern portions of the Bay in August and September; this work is ongoing through 2022.

- Offshore Wind Energy
DMF staff participates on several regional working groups to address fisheries interactions with regional offshore wind development, including ROSA (Responsible Offshore Science Alliance), MA Fisheries Working Group, and the Gulf of Maine offshore wind task force. The GOM offshore wind task force might meet in the spring. States are working on coordinating together to discuss energy needs and siting recommendations. The question of whether cables can go through Stellwagen (buried in the seafloor) has come up, with the assumption being that they cannot but looking to better understand range of possibilities. Mass Ocean Plan update recommendations are expected this winter, which apply to state waters.
 - Right Whale Protections
The seasonal fixed gear closure in and around Cape Cod Bay was extended one day from April 30 to May 1 due to the presence of right whales in the Bay on April 25 which then departed the area several days later.
- ii. New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) (M. Bachman)
- The Council approved an updated list of research priorities (2020-2024) in June. There are some areas of common interest between the Council's priorities and the strategies discussed for the Sanctuary's management plan update. More information here: <https://www.nefmc.org/library/june-2020-research-priorities>
 - At its September meeting, the Council took final action on Scallop Amendment 21, Groundfish Amendment 23, and Atlantic Herring specifications for the next three years.
 - Amendment 21 includes measures for the NGOM management area, which partly overlaps the Sanctuary, setting an 800,000 pound set aside for NGOM permitted and general category vessels, dividing any allocations above that amount between those vessels and limited access vessels. More information here: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/NEFMC-Adopts-Scallop-Amendment-21-with-Measures-for-NGOM-LAGC-IFQ-Fishery.pdf>.
 - Amendment 23 updates monitoring in the groundfish fishery. It sets a 100% at-sea monitoring coverage target, subject to NOAA Fisheries funding. More information here: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/NEFMC-Votes-to-Send-Draft-Groundfish-Amendment-23-out-for-Comment-with-Preferred-Alternatives.pdf>
 - Atlantic Herring Framework 8 sets annual catch limits of around 4,000 metric tons per year for the next three years, and changes trip limits to allow for harvest of Atlantic Mackerel, which often co-occurs with Herring. More information here: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/NEFMC-Adopts-2021-2023-Herring-Specifications-Adjusts-Herring-Measures-to-Facilitate-Mackerel-Harvest.pdf>.
 - The Council is working on groundfish and scallop specifications for final action in December and January, respectively.
 - The Habitat Committee, Advisory Panel, and Plan Development Team continue work on policies related to the impacts of non-fishing activities on fish and fish habitats. Final Council approval of the aquaculture and cables policies is scheduled for December. The intent is to use these policies and the expertise developed while writing them to engage effectively in pre-application discussions, and to aid in writing formal comment letters. The Council, through these groups,

staff, and via membership in the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance, continues to engage in offshore wind development and fisheries issues.

iii. NOAA Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) (M. Kelly)

- North Atlantic Right Whales

The Proposed Rule and supporting Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the North Atlantic Right Whale Take Reduction Plan are under review. Once published in the *Federal Register*, we will seek written comment and conduct a series of webinars to take public comment and respond to questions. We also anticipate releasing a draft Biological Opinion that covers 10 fishery management plans that interact with right whales, including the American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries. Additional information will be available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/about/greater-atlantic-regional-fisheries-office> when the rule and Biological Opinion are publicly available.

- Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21

The New England Fishery Management Council recently adopted Amendment 21 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Plan. This action includes measures to better manage total scallop removals from the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) management area. (See NEFMC update for details.) We anticipate that the Council will submit Amendment 21 for approval in late Spring 2021, with rulemaking to occur next summer and fall. If approved, these changes would be effective for the 2022 scallop fishing year, which begins April 1, 2022.

iv. NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) (T. Donovan)

- Vessel sanctuary patrols: 11
- At sea boardings: 12
- Investigations (other than compliant boardings): two Highly Migratory Species, one scallop related, one closed area, and three Marine Mammal Protected Areas.
- A special agent continues to collaborate with the Sanctuary and National Marine Fisheries Service on a passive acoustic project to potentially identify types of commercial fishing vessel activity. The agent is working with OLE Headquarters on securing funding for the test project.
- The Northeast Enforcement Division Investigative Support team provided the Maritime Heritage Working group with non-vessel specific VMS data. The data is helpful to determining levels of vessel activity before and after notices of wreck locations were provided to scallopers. Two separate regions in SBNMS were analyzed.
- The patrol vessel will be coming out in a few weeks for maintenance and some upgrades.
- We are updating our FY21 priorities and sanctuary patrols will continue in the fiscal year next spring.

Pete DeCola, Sanctuary Superintendent, expressed his gratitude for the generous support from NOAA OLE for the boathouse pile repair project. NOAA OLE's contribution of \$200K will go a long way to completing a major infrastructure project that supports marine operations not only the sanctuary, but NOAA OLE, Massachusetts Environmental Police (Joint Enforcement Agreement Partner) in addition to the Scituate Police Marine Unit. This teamwork is greatly appreciated!!

VII. Old and New Business: None to report.

VIII. Adjourn: 2:10 pm.