



## GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL WEBINAR – MAY 30, 2018

### Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) Attendees

Michael Denmark, Chair  
Scott Noakes, Vice-chair  
Mona Behl, Secretary  
Peter Auster  
SGT Mark Carson  
Mary Conley  
Rick DeVictor  
Ben Hughes  
Warren Hupman  
Jene Nissen  
Tim Tarver  
Suzanne VanParreren

### SAC Members Absent

LT Warren Fair  
Anna George  
Monique Gordon  
Tim Henkel  
Mark Padgett  
Carolyn Belcher

### Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS) and ONMS (Office of National Marine Sanctuaries) Staff

Mandy Harvey (GRNMS volunteer and today's notetaker)  
Marybeth Head  
Scott Kathey  
Jody Patterson  
Michelle Riley  
Kim Roberson  
Danielle Schwarzmann  
Becky Shortland  
Laura Weyman (GRNMS Intern)

### GRNMS Foundation (GRNMSF) Staff

Amy Riesinger

### Public in Attendance

Neils Froelicher  
Matt Gorstein  
Willa McGriff  
David Owens  
Eric Parks  
Jarrod Loerzel

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Council chair Michael Denmark called the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS) Advisory Council meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He welcomed members, staff and public in attendance. Following group introductions, Michael reviewed the agenda and outlined the meeting objectives. The summary of the March 28, 2018 meeting was approved with no changes.

Michael introduced Scott Kathey, who is currently serving as the Acting Superintendent of GRNMS. Scott comes to GRNMS from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, where he is the Regulatory/Emergency Response Coordinator. Scott joined GRNMS on April 9 and will remain until August 9. A permanent superintendent will be named after that date.

### **Council Business**

SAC Seat Vacancies in 2018 – Becky Shortland reminded the group that several SAC terms will soon expire: non-living resources research, university education, charter commercial fishing, sport fishing, diving, and both conservation seats. Recruitment for these seats will open this Friday (June 1) and will close on July 23. Becky will

distribute the recruitment information to the SAC members and the information will also be available on the GRNMS website. Current SAC members with expiring terms are welcome to reapply for their positions.

Status of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and Review – Becky Shortland provided an update on the status of the PEIS being developed by BOEM for the Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The draft PEIS has yet to be issued. Becky will keep the SAC updated. Peter Auster shared some insights from a colleague of his that is affiliated with BOEM, including the fact that the PEIS will not be divided into regions, but rather cover all relevant oceans. Also, the body of the PEIS will be shorter than normal, but detailed information will be included in the appendices to the document. Peter asked if the governor of Georgia has taken an official position on this issue and when told that the governor has not, Peter suggested that the SAC may want to speak with the governor's office about this issue.

Visitor Use Working Group – During the March 2018 SAC meeting, the group decided to investigate the possibility of organizing a Visitor Use Workshop that would bring together relevant experts, sanctuary representatives, and other interested parties. The output of this workshop would be a plan for how GRNMS should move forward relative to visitor use, as well the identification of strategies that could have application at a national level. There were two immediate action items following the March meeting:

1. Michael Denmark discussed the workshop with John Armor, who was receptive to the idea and challenged the organizers to identify non-traditional approaches to quantifying visitor use. John Armor suggested that GRNMS reach out to other SACs, especially those representing the more remote, offshore sanctuaries, to gauge their interest in participating in the planning and execution of the workshop.
2. A working group comprised of Peter Auster, Mary Conley, Michael Denmark, Rick DeVictor, Marybeth Head, Kim Roberson, and Chip Collier of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) was formed and tasked with developing a rough proposal for the workshop. The working group will meet via teleconference on June 6. Michael Denmark encouraged any other interested individuals to contact Becky Shortland to register for this meeting.

Due to funding constraints, the workshop would not take place until fiscal year 2019, which begins this October. Scott Kathey stated that GRNMS efforts to track visitor use will continue in the interim and staff will continue to explore options such as radar, satellites, acoustics, and gliders that would allow for constant 24/7 monitoring of traffic within the Sanctuary.

The "Blue Economy" and GRNMS/ONMS – The concept of the Blue Economy was a topic of discussion during the March 2018 SAC meeting. As a follow-up to these discussions, Danielle Schwarzmann, Economist for National Ocean Service (NOS) and ONMS, was invited to present to the SAC on this issue. Although there is not a standard definition, the Blue Economy generally describes economic activities, sustainable development, and socioeconomic development in the marine and maritime sectors, including living resources, marine construction, maritime transportation, offshore mineral extraction, ship and boat building, and tourism and recreation. NOAA defines the Blue Economy as "sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health". There are 5 categories of the Blue Economy that are monitored and assessed by NOAA. They are seafood production, maritime commerce, tourism and recreation, ocean mapping, and coastal risk reduction. Danielle stated that her talk today will be focused on tourism and recreation, as that is the most relevant to marine sanctuaries. Peter Auster asked if conservation and sustainable use of diversity were factors in the Blue Economy. Danielle stated that these issues are generally management decisions that are driven by the factors outlined above.

Danielle provided highlights of the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, which is a national effort to quantify the value of outdoor recreation, both marine and terrestrial. In 2016, outdoor recreation was valued at \$374 billion, which represents 2% of national economy. NOAA has a similar effort called the Ocean Economy Satellite Account, which is

a specialized tabulation of the ocean economy that is integrated with the Bureau of Economic Analysis' national economic accounts. This partnership will improve current statistics by capturing additional activity that is not readily available and providing insights into the contribution of the ocean economy to non-ocean sectors. Analysis of this data is currently underway.

A separate report from NOAA on the Blue Economy, currently in draft form, will show that National Marine Sanctuaries support \$8 billion annually in local coastal economies. The final version of this report should be available soon. Scott Noakes asked Danielle what methods were employed to capture the data used to arrive at the \$8 billion figure and if off-water activities, such as charter captains purchasing gear and supplies, were factored into the total. Danielle stated that most of the information was obtained from surveys and from data pulled from other agencies like the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and that expenditures such as those outlined by Scott are indeed reflected in the \$8 billion total. Suzanne VanParreren asked how coastal mapping provides economic benefits. Danielle stated that this is not her area of expertise, but that she believes that access to better information allows for the avoidance of problem areas.

From an economic perspective, there are four ways that Sanctuaries add value:

- Conservation to protect the resource and ensure long term viability
- Research and Monitoring to provide information for better management of the resource
- Education and Outreach to increase knowledge and understanding of the sanctuary system
- Community Engagement to help shape management and policy

To estimate the value of the Blue Economy, economists need to understand how people derive value from nature. This represents the nexus between natural science and humans. Four factors, referred to as "Ecosystems Services" are used for valuation. These are:

- Provisioning (Products obtained from ecosystems such as food supply)
- Regulating (Benefits obtained from regulation of ecosystems processes such as coastal protection)
- Cultural (Nonmaterial benefits obtained from ecosystems such as sense of place, consumptive and non-consumptive recreation, and science and education).
  - Note: "consumptive recreation" refers to a recreational angler catching fish for personal consumption while "food supply" refers to commercial fishing activities
- Supporting (Services necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services)
  - Supporting services are not included in NMS valuations because inclusion would result in a double counting of its value

Valuation of Ecosystem Services is not limited to only dollar value. To this end, survey questions measure many non-financial factors such as satisfaction with management strategies or favorite features of the resource. Non-economic indicators are often obtained via Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions surveys, such as the one being conducted for GRNMS this summer with users and non-users of the Sanctuary. This is an update of the 2011-2012 survey and will identify how attitudes and activities levels have changed over time. The results should be available in late 2018 or early 2019.

Another way to estimate value is to conduct a Non-market Valuation Study. This methodology essentially replicates the decisions someone makes when going to the market to make a purchase. However, this is a hypothetical market with costs to improve conditions of each of the attributes in the survey. This approach is beneficial because the values derived from the study can be used for damage assessments to sue for loss of value to the public. There were several questions from the group on this methodology. Michael Denmark asked what the negative numbers mean, to which Danielle responded that they indicate that people would need to be compensated in some way for a change in the resource. Scott Noakes asked how "crowd lovers" were defined. Crowd lovers are people who like to be in a crowd as opposed to "wilderness lovers" who like to be outdoors in wild areas.

Danielle said that the most common questions she receives are related to visitation and stated that it is difficult to produce an accurate economic profile of a resource without visitation information. She is participating in an international meeting next week to talk about the challenges inherent in visitor use monitoring and how emerging technologies can be employed to help estimate visitation. Danielle then opened the forum to questions. Mary Conley asked if valuations generally focus exclusively on water-based activities or if terrestrial activities are included as well. Danielle stated that public events, visitor center traffic, and other relevant land-based activities are factored into valuations. Danielle invited the group to contact her with any follow up questions.

Michael Denmark thanked Danielle for her participation today and invited her to join a future SAC meeting to discuss the results of the GRNMS Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions survey, when they are available.

### **Council Working Groups**

Law Enforcement Working Group Update – MaryBeth Head reported on a meeting of the Law Enforcement Working Group that took place on May 10 at GRNMS headquarters. Loren Remsberg, the attorney from NOAA General Counsel working with sanctuaries, was also in attendance. Key takeaways from the meeting include the fact that Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will double their patrols at GRNMS beginning July 1. The DNR had one case recently for fishing within the GRNMS Research Area, which involved a recreational angler trolling for kingfish. The angler was unaware of the regulations within the Research Area and the case was closed with compliance assistance and a warning. The NOAA Office of Law Enforcement is adding a new enforcement officer, along with a 36' vessel, based in Cape Canaveral, FL. The new officer will conduct patrols from Cape Canaveral to Charleston, SC.

The group also discussed the King Mackerel tournament dates this summer. Staff from GRNMS, Georgia DNR, and NOAA Office of Law Enforcement will attend the captains' meetings for these tournaments and patrols will be conducted on tournament days in collaboration with the US Coast Guard. MaryBeth will provide the dates and sponsors of these tournaments to Becky for distribution to the SAC.

### **Council Member Reports**

NOAA Fisheries Update – Rick DeVictor updated the group on several items. The proposed red snapper season is currently in the rule-making and the amendment approval process. The public comment period is currently open and will remain so until early June. Over 1600 comments have been received to date, most of them in support of the proposed season. Stock assessments of black sea bass and vermilion snapper will be on the agenda for the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC) meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, FL on June 11-15. Neither species is currently considered to be overfished, but the biomass of black sea bass is declining. As a result, there could potentially be a decrease in catch limits. Rick will report back on this issue during the next SAC meeting.

Three planned studies on lionfish harvest using traps were recently cancelled due, in part, to funding issues. However, there is one new study that has been proposed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. This study would operate under an exempted permit for three years and use spiny lobster traps to harvest lionfish at depths of 100' to 300'. Several different trap configurations and bait types would be tested in the Florida Keys to determine the best method to catch lionfish and decrease bycatch of other species. This proposed study will be reviewed during the June meeting of the SAFMC.

Warren Hupman asked if the proposed red snapper season will be voted on during the June meeting of the SAFMC. Rick stated that the SAFMC has already voted and has approved the season, but it is still going through the NFMS process and will then need to be approved by the Secretary of Commerce. This may mean that the opening date of the season will be pushed into late-July or August. Rick stated that the creation of an emergency season as done in 2017 is not a possibility because, according to policy definitions, 2018 does not yet constitute an emergency. Rick invited Warren to call him to discuss further.

Other – Scott Noakes informed the group that the US Coast Guard Cutter *Willow* will be at GRNMS June 27 and 28 and will temporarily pull the buoy for maintenance. They may be able to fix camera during this time.

### **GRNMS Report**

Superintendent's Report – Acting Superintendent Scott Kathey updated the group on the GRROver, or the Gray's Reef Rover. The GRROver, first conceived of by Todd Recicar and Ed Williams, is a remotely-operated underwater vehicle that crawls along the seafloor. It is not connected to the surface support vessel, but rather to a float that sends a wireless transmission back to the surface vessel with a range of up to one mile. This approach eliminates drag from the vessel and minimizes habitat disruption from surface vessel noise. A prototype of the GRROver was tested a few weeks ago at GRNMS to identify additional refinements that are needed, which include an extended arm for the camera and the possible addition of hydrophones.

Jody Patterson reported on the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Southeast Regional MATE ROV Competition that took place in Savannah on June 21. Over a dozen teams competed, and the event engaged over 50 community volunteers, 3 university partners, and the NOAA Office of Coastal Management. This year GRNMS entered into an ongoing partnership with Rotary International District 6920, which is comprised of 62 different rotary organizations in Georgia. Ed Williams was special guest and had the GRROver onsite for a hands-on demonstration. Goals for next year's event include securing additional sponsors and engaging even more local schools.

Kim Roberson reported on the five-year Research Area Synthesis Report, which was submitted last Friday, June 25, for publication in the ONMS *Conservation Science Series*. The report is comprised of 17 chapters representing 17 different research projects in the areas of invertebrates, fish, and oceanography, sediments and marine debris. The report will be reviewed by a minimum of 3 peer reviewers and comments are expected within the next few months. In addition to the research-based content, the report addresses concerns that 5 years is a relative short timeframe in which to assess various biological processes.

Scott discussed the recruitment status for the new, permanent GRNMS superintendent and thanked the GRNMS staff for their patience with this process. The goal was to have the position filled before Scott leaves on August 9, but Scott suspects this could be delayed until early September. Scott also updated the group on the search for the new state program manager. The position will post at the end of this week, pending University of Georgia review. The posting may be distributed through other outlets in addition to the standard University of Georgia channels.

GRNMS Foundation Update - Amy Riesinger, Chapter Director of the GRNMS Foundation, updated the group on *A Fishy Affair*. The event will take place on September 21 at 6:00 PM at the Landings Club. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased on either the GRNMS Foundation website or the GRNMS Foundation Facebook page. Amy invited the SAC members to forward any suggestions for event sponsors or auction item donors to her.

### **Next Meetings**

The next two meetings will be a webinar on Wednesday, July 25 from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM, followed by an in-person meeting sometime in September. Based on group input today, staff will evaluate whether the September meeting should coincide with *A Fishy Affair* on September 21 or take place on an alternate date in September. Becky will email the SAC with an update and will poll the SAC members on their availability, if necessary.

**Public Comment** - There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 PM.