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Contact: Chris Hines, 912-598-2397

NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary seeks advisory council applicants

NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is seeking applicants for two seats on its advisory council. The council ensures public participation in sanctuary management and provides advice to the sanctuary superintendent.

The sanctuary is accepting applications for the following seats: K-12 education and living resources research.

"The sanctuary advisory council provides a vital place for the community and sanctuary management to exchange ideas, discuss issues and share information," said Sarah Fangman, sanctuary superintendent.

Candidates are selected based on their expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying, community and professional affiliations, and views regarding the protection and management of marine resources. The applicant who is chosen should expect to serve a three-year term. In-person council meetings are held approximately twice per year and typically last the full day. In addition, there are four to six, two-hour-long webinars per year.

The advisory council consists of 11 primary, non-governmental members representing a variety of public interest groups, including fishing, diving, education, research and conservation. It also includes eight governmental seats representing state and federal agencies.

Applications are due by Wednesday, May 31. To receive an application kit, or for further information, please contact Chris Hines, deputy superintendent, via email at Chris.Hines@noaa.gov; by phone at 912-598-2397; or by mail at 10 Ocean Science Circle, Savannah, GA 31411. Application kits can also be downloaded from the sanctuary's website at http://graysreef.noaa.gov/management/sac/council_news.html.

Designated in 1981, Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is one of the largest near-shore live-bottom reefs of the southeastern United States, encompassing approximately 22 square miles. The live bottom and ledge habitat support an abundant reef fish and invertebrate community. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, also use Gray's Reef year-round for foraging and resting, and the reef is in the critical habitat and only known calving ground for the highly endangered North Atlantic right whale.

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On the Web:

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary: <http://graysreef.noaa.gov>

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>