



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary  
175 Edward Foster Road  
Scituate, Massachusetts 02066  
TEL: 781.545.8026 FAX: 781.545.8036

**33rd SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**25 May 2011 9:00 am – 3:30 pm**  
**Museum of Science, Boston**  
**MINUTES of MEETING**

**Present:**

Bill Adler	Member:	Fixed Gear Commercial Fishing
Jennifer Anderson	Federal:	National Marine Fisheries Service
Michelle Bachman	Federal:	NE Fisheries Management Council
Priscilla Brooks	Alternate:	Conservation
Peter DeCola	Federal:	USCG
Robert Foster	Alternate:	Diving
John Galluzzo	Alternate:	Maritime Heritage
Heather Knowles	Member:	Diving (Executive Committee, Acting Chair)
Judy Laster	Alternate:	At Large
Maggie Merrill	Alternate:	Business/Industry
Rob Moir	Member:	Conservation
Frank Morton	Member:	Marine Transportation
David Pierce	State:	MA Division of Marine Fisheries
Daniel Pingaro	Alternate:	At Large
David Robinson	Member:	Maritime Heritage
Michael Sosik	Alternate:	Recreational Fishing
Billy Spitzer	Member:	Education
Capt. John Tulik	State:	Massachusetts Environmental Police
John Williamson	Member:	At Large (Executive Committee, Secretary)

**SBNMS Staff:**

Craig MacDonald	Deborah Marx
Ben Cowie-Haskell	Elizabeth Stokes
Brad Cabe	Michael Thompson
Matthew Lawrence	Nathalie Ward

**Others Present:**

Paul Ticco and Rebecca Holyoke, ONMS HQ  
Bill Hoffman and Micah Dean, MA Division of Marine Fisheries

## **I. Welcome, Review of Agenda and Approval of Minutes (Heather Knowles)**

The Agenda was reviewed and approved. The 32nd SAC Minutes were approved unanimously.

## **II. SBNMS Business (Craig MacDonald)**

i. FY2011 Budget Update. SBNMS is operating under 95% of FY10 budget, and with the latest NOAA allocation, the sanctuary can continue to operate for the remainder of FY11 at that same level. This is good because personnel, vessel and facility operations can be maintained for FY11. However, there is no funding available for any contractual services for outreach publications. These publications will be moved on line rather than distributed in hard copy format in the future. In addition, NMSP is trying to make an effort to redistribute some of their support to the sites. To this effort, Ms. Alice Stratton who is a marine ecologist will be added to the SBNMS staff. Her area of expertise is NEPA, habitat restoration and contingency planning. She is working closely with Ben to support work with the Coast Guard. She will remain at her official duty station in CT but will work closely with SBNMS staff. A future need for a marine ecologist was indicated in the Management Plan, so it is very fortunate that Alice was assigned to the staff. Overall, the outcome of the budget is acceptable for the remainder of this fiscal year. SBNMS is on record now to do 55 days at sea, of which more than half of the time is paid for by extracurricular support generated by several partnering organizations as well as NOAA Fisheries in conjunction with NMSF to cover ship costs. FY12 cannot yet be forecasted, but it is doubtful that vessel operations will be sustained as they are under the FY11 budget. Craig explained the difference between ORF funds (core programming) allocation from Congress and PAC funds (capital assets, construction, operations which is a separate appropriation). ONMS has provided some PAC funds to move forward with the renovation of the boat house. Construction should begin in FY12 or FY13. NOAA now owns the property adjacent to the boathouse. The bulkhead repair is now complete. PAC funds were also given to upgrade exhibit kiosks at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center. Craig MacDonald will endeavor to provide SAC members with a written financial report on the state of the SBNMS budget beginning next fiscal year.

### ii. SBNMS VOY

Craig MacDonald announced that Heather Knowles was nominated as SBNMS's Volunteer of the Year (VOY). This award is sponsored by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and presented annually at a ceremony in Washington DC. Craig described Heather's accomplishments that led to her nomination. Heather has logged more than 100 volunteer hours for SBNMS in 2010 beyond her regular duties serving on the SAC. She led the team that installed the diving mooring in the sanctuary, and plays a large role in growing a new diving constituency. There was enormous competition for this award across the sites with extensive volunteer efforts. Although Heather was a very strong contender in the VOY nomination process, Randy Rudd, a diver at Gray's Reef NMSF won the nomination. Craig extended his appreciation to Heather for all her hard work and contributions to the sanctuary.

## **III. SAC Business (Nathalie Ward and Craig MacDonald)**

i. New Members Welcome and Future Recruitment. Craig introduced John Galluzzo, the new Maritime Heritage Alternate. John is the Executive Director of US Life Saving Service, Heritage Association. He has worked closely with Matthew Lawrence and Deborah Marx on maritime heritage projects within the sanctuary for a number of years. John writes articles for several magazines nationally and internationally relating to maritime heritage and Coast Guard history.

Daniel Pingaro is the new At-Large Alternate. He is Executive Director for Sailors for the Sea based out of Newport, RI. Dan brings a new constituency of the sailing public to the SAC.

Craig is very pleased to have John and Daniel on the SAC.

There is an ongoing recruitment for one Research (Member), two Conservation (Alternates) seats, and one At- Large (Alternate) seat. The recruitment deadline was extended to 10 June 2011. SAC members are asked to please inform their constituencies that these seats are vacant.

Mason Weinrich was recognized as a past SAC member. Nathalie Ward provided an update on his status. Nathalie will send out Mason's contact information and encouraged everyone to reach out to him. Everyone looks forward to having Mason back in the groove. He has been an integral part in getting the SAC up and running back in the 1990s, and has been an important figure in recently launching a new and vibrant Council.

#### ii. SAC Challenge 2012

SBNMS will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012. Each SAC member has been asked to consider raising the visibility of SBNMS not just for 2012 but in general. SAC members were encouraged to provide ideas on sponsoring an event, a program, an outreach publication or the like with respect to their seat, or partnering with another SAC member. It is hoped to have ideas from the SAC by 15 August.

Peter Auster is putting together a retrospective of 20 year of SBNMS.

Judy Laster: Director of the Woods Hole Film Festival will organize a Stellwagen Film Festival to be held the week of August 12, 2012.

Wayne Petersen: Mass Audubon plans to conduct a bird meeting in March 2012 that will focus on SBNMS seabirds.

Bill Adler: Mass Lobstermen's Association will feature SBNMS as a regular booth, as well as provide a presentation about SBNMS at their annual meeting in 2012.

Priscilla Brooks: Conservation Law Foundation is working on a project and will provide details as it firms up.

Dan Pingaro: Sailors of the Sea intends to publicize SBNMS through their newsletters and events scheduled from Maine to Rhode Island in 2012. Dates will be provided later.

Heather Knowles: In the early stages of putting together video footage showcasing a number of wrecks in the sanctuary that will tell a story.

John Williamson. Working with *Stellwagen Alive!* Friends group principals on a concept to identify key people and decision makers in the greater Boston community who might be interested in learning more about the sanctuary and becoming long-term champions. John would offer tours out to the sanctuary on his boat and other vessels. He is hoping to set it up and tie it in with the whale tagging program in 2012 and to give people an "on the water" experience within the sanctuary.

Billy Spitzer: New England Aquarium would like to somehow connect whale watching that NEAQ does using sanctuary materials and co-hosting partner events with the sanctuary.

Rob Moir: Ocean River Institute will put the word out in member and e-alerts on featuring SBNMS at the Earth Fest at the esplanade in Boston, and have a table with sanctuary information. An environmental talk show on two internet radio programs will be launched that will feature SBNMS exclusively.

Maggie Merrill works with Marine Oceanographic and Technology Network. It is a trade association consisting of companies that build oceanographic equipment for underwater technology used by some scientists. MOTN could partner with the Marine Technology Society of New England and potentially USGS. The idea is to learn what the technological needs are for the SBNMS research program, and host a session with science and industry panels with a networking session afterwards sometime in spring 2012. This would be promoted through the industry channels, but could be promoted through SBNMS as well.

Frank Morton: Boston Pilots can volunteer their boats to take staff instructors and cadets from Mass Maritime Academy along with environmentalists out to the sanctuary. The plan is to take them out to get water samples and have them analyzed for pollutants. Then maybe have the results of the data published somehow in sample surveys.

John Galluzzo: Plans to write an article on the sanctuary in *South Shore Living* article on the sanctuary. Also plans to write an article for the *Wreck and Rescue Journal* on shipwrecks, and in *Ship's Monthly Magazine* focusing on changing shipping channel, among other events in other locations.

Michael Sosik: Recreational Fishing group with Brad White as the primary user of the group for the Bank, will do a small handout that can be given to fishermen on their charter boats. The handout will have a little background information on the Bank and will include a little token such as a circle hook that is conservation minded and does work. This is an idea that needs to be worked out with the primary user group.

Capt John Tulik: Mass Environmental Police Officers teach boating safety classes throughout MA. They could do a segment on SBNMS at these classes. It would be good to do several public relations events through MA efforts and can get the word out there about boating safety within the sanctuary. MEP will also explore using the Essex Heritage Group as a venue as well to further raise awareness of SBNMS.

Nathalie Ward thanked everyone for their input and is excited about the events and projects that are ongoing. She further added that NGOs and ex-officio members are welcome to join in on the activities. She also reported that a 2012 SBNMS calendar would be published, which will showcase all of the contributions made. Nathalie will get out a firm date on the title of the contributions around August 15 so that work can begin on the calendar.

### iii. SAC Summit Update (Nathalie Ward)

Nathalie introduced Rebecca Holyoke who is the National Program Coordinator for Sanctuary Advisory Councils. Rebecca gave an overview of the SAC Summit that is held annually and attended by all SAC Chairs and Coordinators. This year's summit was held in Savannah, GA in May. Rebecca provided a brief update of this year's Summit. Due to budget constraints, not all SAC Coordinators could attend this year's meeting. However, Nathalie as member of the ONMS Council Executive Committee did attend as the representative for the NE region of the US.

Highlights of Summit: There was discussion about establishing a potential Council Chair Executive Body that would be intended to help and facilitate information exchange; establishing a more broad-scale national advisory council to look at more broad-scale programmatic issues across the system, and also to restructure the SAC Summit priorities and issues. Chairs expressed interest in working more collaboratively; for example, potential benefits on developing higher level website system or database to

facilitate sharing of advice across the sanctuaries. She talked about the role of advisory councils in potential new sanctuaries looking at boundary expansions. A great deal of discussion focused on socio-economics and sustaining local communities. Specifically, “How are the sanctuaries supported? By local communities” i.e., what are the roles they have in local economies and how do they support the tourism industry? The Councils are hoping to highlight these direct connections and the value of sanctuaries to communities re: bringing in revenue to these communities. There is socio-economic staff on hand that has been evaluating this for individual sites. NMSF presented at this meeting, and agreed to provide some information to the Councils regarding local congressional offices and the role the NMSF has and how they can support the SACs and how they can work with the Friends groups. Science was a very large component of these meetings. The west coast has been working on an Ocean Acidification Action Plan and it is currently being reviewed by all the west coast SACs. Once the review is completed, they would like to share it with all the other SACs to see: a) where they incorporated the ideas that other SACs developed in resolutions and motions and letters on ocean acidification, and b) the value this could have on the sanctuary program.

Comments/Discussion:

John Williamson: Sanctuaries can have a big economic plus with the communities that are adjacent to them. This is a really important message to carry into the communities.

Maggie Merrill: Is NMSP considering budgeting money to do this type of socio-economic impact for each of the sanctuary? Can this be done by the SAC for our sanctuary?

Craig: This is a role that NMSF could assist with because a federal agency cannot underwrite something like this with NOAA funding. This would have to be done site by site for example through “Friends” groups. SBNMS is reaching out using the Stellwagen Soundings publication to whale watch boats and tourism offices. There has not, however, been an orchestrated program. If there is a sense that this has potential and should be considered, then the SAC could form a working group that could also involve outside agencies i.e., such as the Chamber of Commerce.

Bill Adler: Is there a component that looks at the fishing value of a sanctuary. This effort needs to be included. This is a very important factor.

Becky Holyoke. There is a great deal of information available on fishing.

#### iv. Programmatic Updates

Nathalie gave an overview of the programmatic briefings that SBNMS staff provides. This report is sent to SAC members before each SAC meeting. It summarizes progress and future steps in the various programmatic areas and is sent by email rather than having staff provide oral briefings at each SAC meeting. Large portions of all programmatic areas of SBNMS often are external grants that staff has spearheaded—these are not NOAA grants. Nathalie will also send out a summary generated from the May SAC summit.

#### v. SAC Youth Seat Subcommittee (Rob Moir)

The SAC Youth Subcommittee is comprised of Rob Moir, Dave Robinson, and Rick Murray. At the January 2011 meeting, the SAC made a motion to amend the SAC Charter to include a SAC youth member seat. The committee has been collecting ideas and input from various areas. The next step to be considered is: What responsibilities should be incorporated in the description of a youth member seat? The position would be announced in the Federal Register Notice. This is still a fact-finding mission and

any comments would be welcomed. The hope is to launch it in fall of 2012. Anyone interested in joining the subcommittee is welcome.

vi. SAC Leadership Award and Sub-Committee (John Williamson)

John Williamson had little to provide as an update. The committee was formed 2 years ago with one leadership award given out in 2010. Volunteers are needed on the subcommittee. General interest has waned a bit and John is trying to reconstitute the committee. At this point, a nomination for this year has not been initiated. John Galluzzo will join the group along with Peter Auster and Steve Milliken.

**IV. Sanctuary Ecological Research Area (SERA) Update (Craig MacDonald)**

Craig MacDonald gave an overview at the last SAC meeting on VTR data from 1999 and other data types that are being used. He felt this was the appropriate data to use. Sanctuary staff has worked extensively with NE Fisheries Science Center, which has had a strong interest in the proposal. NOAA as a whole has expressed support for the proposal. SBNMS staff had considered presenting it to the NEFMC at the June meeting. But until the economic analysis is complete, it cannot be submitted. It was requested that it be presented at the NEFMC September meeting, if appropriate. The NEFMC is working on an Essential Fish Habitat Omnibus amendment process and will be considering Dedicated Habitat Research Areas as part of it. The SBNMS needs to insert its proposal for a research area into the Council's process as soon as possible. Consideration of establishing this ecological research area is a strategy in the Management Plan. As the NEFMC has completed its Phase 1 work, more objective assessments will be made of existing closure areas. The question is: Are these areas still necessary or should they be reconfigured? It is imperative that the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) has a proposal for consideration. The Western GoM closure overlaps with the sanctuary which is the area called the Sliver. It is relatively unimpacted but not a true reference site. Sanctuary staff feels that there is a lot of data available through SHRMP and HABCAM, and is analyzing data that it believes meets the needs for developing this proposal. The staff is not able to present the proposal at this meeting today, but if the SAC's Ad Hoc Subcommittee would like to meet between now and the next SAC meeting in September, then sanctuary staff would be happy to discuss the data analysis done and show the spatial analysis. Lines on the map cannot be provided because this is in the proposal. But staff can familiarize the subcommittee with what has been done with the analysis. There has to be a realistic expectation that there is a process being run by a different agency and a timeline, and that the staff has to keep in line with that process. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee is made up only of SAC members and alternates. There are 9 members that have stepped forward to be part of this subcommittee. Staff could provide the Ad Hoc Subcommittee with a greater understanding of where the data comes from and how it was used. Maybe the Ad Hoc Subcommittee could provide information of added value to the proposal. This meeting is not going to be a public hearing process.

Craig MacDonald clarified that the formation of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee was first raised at the SAC meeting in June 2010 as a supplement to the Zoning Working Group, and was originally referred to as the Ecological Integrity Subcommittee. At the last meeting in January 2011, the purpose of the subcommittee was clarified and the SAC Chair established it as an Ad Hoc Subcommittee consisting of the same people but it took on a slightly different form.

Michelle Bachman provided a timeline of the EFH Omnibus Amendment. (Please refer to Michelle Bachman's constituent report at paragraph VII (iv) below.)

## Comments and Discussion:

Discussion ensued on timing of presenting the proposal to the SAC. It was agreed that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee will meet before the SAC meeting because there is a need for this committee to go over the information prior to the SAC meeting.

Bill Adler: Would it be submitted to the SAC prior to submission to NEFMC?

Craig MacDonald: Yes. That's why we would like to present it to the SAC prior to the public presentation at the NEFMC meeting in September.

John Williamson: It was very early identified that there was a need to create a habitat research area. There is a long list of needs to understand the impact of fishing on marine habitats. Stellwagen came up as a useful area. This concept has been around now for about 15 years and has been discussed with strong support from the research community around which they can build a long-term research proposal. It has been a part of fishery management discussion for some time and how to coordinate implementation of the National Marine Sanctuary Act with the Magnuson Stevens Act. The best way to approach this is for sanctuaries to develop measures at the Fishery Management Council so there is an ability to integrate sanctuary needs into their overall policies. It is a very responsible approach for the sanctuary to work with the NEFMC to maintain consistency.

Heather Knowles: It is more information sharing—more than soliciting input to what goes into the proposal? Then once it is shared with the Council is when the public comment would begin?

Michelle Bachman: There is almost always public comment at any given meeting on almost every issue. There is opportunity and some certainly will comment at the council meeting in September.

Heather Knowles: Suggests scheduling the timing of next SAC meeting to coincide with NEFMC time line so that SAC can get a preview of what can be shared.

Craig MacDonald: It is important to schedule the next meeting to the entire SAC prior to it going to the NEFMC. But prior to that meeting is there an interest on the part of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee that we share the information and analysis with them? There is no opportunity within the process for them to provide input—this is information and a preview only. The purpose is to provide some background information in anticipation of the release of the document so that different constituencies have the opportunity to see the data that was analyzed.

Michael Sosik: Would like to see a meeting beforehand of the ad hoc subcommittee.

Rob Moir: Important that it be emailed or sent out before SAC meeting.

Craig MacDonald: It cannot be made available before it goes public. So the Ad Hoc Subcommittee would be an opportunity to provide background on the analysis.

Bill Alder: The Ad Hoc Subcommittee needs to get together before the SAC meeting. There is a need for this committee to go over stuff.

Craig MacDonald: Reminder: Cannot release anything with lines on the map before it goes public. Can share data staff is working with and spatial analyses but there won't be lines on the map. This is the same process that was followed with the Management Plan release.

Bill Adler: Once you hit the SAC with it, what if we don't like it? Sanctuary is drawing up a plan without the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to be able to manipulate it or change it.

Craig MacDonald: You will be seeing the proposal following the data analysis. Comments and decisions can be made at the NEFMC level not at the SAC level.

John Williamson: Explained that SAC Zoning Working Group (ZWG) had the opportunity but was not able to come up with a set of recommendations. Therefore, the sanctuary is now going ahead with a proposal. We don't have any way or opportunity to manipulate this. During the ZWG meetings/process, there was ample opportunity to manipulate. Not everyone will be happy with it. Give people an ample opportunity to understand this and minimize the impact. Keep in mind that at the NEFMC this will not solely be the sanctuary's proposal but also reshaping fisheries management. There will be a long discussion on shaping the whole fishery management so that decision making is based on facts rather than reaction. It would be helpful to present the datasets to the Ad Hoc Subcommittee for them to understand what specifics have been used to prepare this proposal.

Priscilla Brooks: Ad Hoc Subcommittee should have an opportunity to review and discuss the data that goes into the proposal and secondly to have a preview of the proposal and what's going forward to the Council. Suggests that staff do both and that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee meet as soon as possible and then a SAC meeting be scheduled prior to the September council meeting.

Bill Adler: Other than looking at the plan, what is the SAC's ability to do anything about it? Does the SAC have any influence in adjusting the plan before it goes to the Council?

Craig MacDonald: Regarding managing expectations, the purpose of the presentation to the SAC at the September meeting is to provide the SAC with the proposal and analysis used (with lines drawn on the map), *not* to have a discussion on changing it. This is a proposal that the sanctuary is presenting to the NEFMC. Once it's at the NEFMC, there is nothing to prevent any SAC member or anyone from going forward to the Council and provide comment at that time. If the sanctuary wants to have any consideration in jointly managing how this site deals with habitat research areas and habitat management, we need a "horse in the race".

Michael Sosik: Don't want a meeting date if it is for naught. Appalled to hear this is a done deal. No matter what our thoughts there is no impact. Data out there that is confirmable that shows that the area we have verbally toyed with is used far more than VTRs are going to substantiate. It is not VTR user group that uses it. Forcing recreational fishermen to fish in areas that are unsafe for them and then bring the Coast Guard into it. We need to talk about this in the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. If it has no impact, I'm not in favor. I have to talk to people in my constituency and I'm being backed in the corner. I believe the Ad Hoc Subcommittee can have an impact and provide the sanctuary with new data, and that that data is actually considered. That is what we should be doing. But if there's no impact, then there is no need to meet.

Craig MacDonald: If there is new data then please provide it. We're certainly open to receiving that. Mass Ocean Partnership has new data that they are analyzing and one of our sanctuary economists who is working on the proposal has new data through the MOP study. Hoping that there would be an additional data set on recreational boating that can be analyzed and be built in to this proposal. We will consider new data but if it's anecdotal, it isn't helpful with the analysis. Need to manage the sanctuary to conserve biodiversity. We want the proposal to minimize impacts on fishing.

Michael Sosik: I've been involved in fisheries process for over 15 years and there is no recreational fishing data that is valid. The data is flawed. Have tried to come up with a better recreational model for

the past 7-8 years, you're asking for an element that isn't there. There is no data on the fishing fleet that fishes bluefin tuna. There is no data out there, it does not exist. There are a lot of things that can't necessarily be quantified in figures.

Dan Pingaro. Knows Mass recreational boating survey that you are discussing. Will make sure he gets it to Craig MacDonald so that it is incorporated. Quite impressive and only in Mass waters. Don't know if it's gone totally public yet.

Priscilla Brooks: Think that analysis is just about done and forthcoming. It is an opportunity for Ad Hoc Subcommittee to look at what data is being used or not used and share that information and make comments and additional ideas. That's the time to do it. Whether or not it ultimately leads to a change in what the sanctuary proposes, but it's worthwhile to have that opportunity to comment.

John Williamson: Useful to staff for Ad Hoc Subcommittee to meet to look at datasets.

Craig MacDonald: We think we've captured all appropriate data and have conducted rather rigorous analysis of all the data that was available from fishermen and incorporated it into the proposal. We are trying to minimize the impact on fishing and we have been dedicated to that. Discussion is more useful once the proposal is prepared. There will be ample public process for vetting it. We are willing to be as participatory with the Ad Hoc Subcommittee and the SAC but cannot put lines on the map until the proposal is ready.

Rob Moir: As a SAC member, I would like to hear the proposal at the SAC meeting prior to the NEFMC meeting and also hear from the Ad Hoc Subcommittee at the SAC meeting. Also would like to hear from Ad Hoc Subcommittee at the next Council meeting on how they feel about the data that went into the report.

Bill Adler: Need a SAC meeting. At the same time, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee at some point should meet prior to the SAC meeting to look at it.

Craig MacDonald: The proposal cannot be submitted to the SAC prior to the SAC meeting.

Maggie Merrill: Managing expectations of the SAC—you're not advocating for SAC support? It's just informative at this point—not looking for a consensus? Doesn't mean we like it or dislike it, just on record that we saw it? Then as individual members of the SAC we would have to go the NEFMC process if there's disagreement or to comment on it?

John Williamson: Asks the SAC to constructively receive and support the proposal.

Priscilla Brooks: As a member of the SAC, part of my charge is to share what is going on with SBNMS with my constituents. The more informed I am the better for my task. Part of this is informing the SAC. We get an earlier opportunity to look at the data that is being used, provide comments, and come as informed as you possibly can about this proposal. Need as much info as we can get. As a SAC body we should be as informed as possible because we will be following this proposal.

Consensus from SAC to make motion on scheduling Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting.

***Bill Adler with second by John Williamson: Schedule the Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting before the next SAC meeting so that there is a SAC meeting to review before it goes forward to the Council. Passed unanimously.***

***John Williamson with second by Bill Adler: Rick Murray is added as Research seat to Ad Hoc Subcommittee. Passed unanimously.***

Ad Hoc Executive Subcommittee Members:

Rich Delaney (Chair)  
Priscilla Brooks (Conservation)  
Dave Casoni (Fixed Mobile Gear)  
Deborah Cramer (At-Large)  
Vito Giacalone (Business/Industry)  
David Pierce or Melanie Griffin (MA Division of Marine Fisheries)  
Rick Murray (Research)  
Michael Sosik (Recreational Fishing)  
John Williamson (At-Large)

2011 SAC Meeting Dates. Next SAC meeting date will be in either late August or September. *Update: Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 25 August at the New England Aquarium. The next SAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 14 September, location to be determined.*

**V. Working Luncheon.** “Massachusetts Cod Conservation Zones: Why are they necessary and research that is being conducted” Bill Hoffman, Aquatic Biologist, MA Division of Marine Fisheries. Dr. Hoffman provided an overview of cod spawning, their locations and research being conducted to protect cod spawning aggregations.

#### **VI. National Historic Preservation Act Overview. (Dave Robinson and Matt Lawrence)**

SAC Maritime Heritage member David Robinson and sanctuary archaeologist Matthew Lawrence presented on the sanctuary's maritime heritage program. The sanctuary has a rich human history and holds a variety of archaeological sites that tell stories of the past. Our past shapes our present and future and the history of New England is very much a maritime history. SBNMS sits at the intersection of this history as much of the region's maritime activity passed through or took place in SBNMS. Maritime heritage encompasses a broad swath of people, places, traditions and objects that reflect our past maritime endeavors. Archaeological research has located 45 shipwrecks and future research may reveal information on Native American visitation over 12,000 years ago.

So, why are maritime archaeologists so interested in shipwrecks? Shipwrecks are a physical representation of the region's maritime history. Sanctuary shipwrecks may be some of the most well preserved examples of certain watercraft and are unbiased snapshots of maritime activity at specific time and place. This information can be used to augment or refute historic records that often present a biased record of the past. Unlike time capsules, shipwreck material is generally deposited without forethought and encompasses all the elements of the people's lives, which were on board.

As a program of the U. S. Federal government, NOAA has responsibilities towards historic properties, which includes archaeological sites, as mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This act established the National Register of Historic Places, this nation's official list of significant historic properties. It also directs Federal agencies to inventory historic properties under agency jurisdiction and then to nominate these properties to the National Register. SBNMS maritime heritage research focuses on meeting the agency's mandate by conducting fieldwork to locate and document archaeological sites. Using the archaeological site information and historical research, SBNMS archaeologists have successfully nominated 5 archaeological sites to the National Register.

Nominating a sanctuary archaeological site to the National Register of Historic Places does not invoke special protective measures that apply to members of the public. Instead, it requires Federal agencies (including NOAA) to consider the effects of their undertakings on properties determined eligible for or listed on the National Register. Examples of sanctuary undertakings include: issuance of a permit to lay a fiber-optic communications cable through the sanctuary or deployment of seafloor mounted scientific instruments to study the sanctuary. Sanctuary heritage preservation depends upon the efforts of not only the sanctuary staff, but a variety of other individuals and organizations, such as museums, historical societies, and recreational divers. The sanctuary seeks to partner with other SAC constituent organizations to further protect and promote sanctuary and regional maritime heritage.

## **VII. Partner and Constituent Reports**

### **i. SBNMS Dive Mooring Project Update (Heather Knowles)**

Heather Knowles provided an overview of shipwrecks and diving sanctuary regulations along with the goals of the dive mooring project. Overall, the general interpretation of the language in these regulations is that moorings and anchor lines cannot be secured directly to shipwrecks, and this is what divers are practicing. The reason is that they are very destructive. Therefore, the goal is to develop a mooring system that complies with sanctuary regulations, scuba diver needs, protects from any damage, is representative of sanctuary diving conditions, and a good test site to ensure divers are following sanctuary rules. Heather described the site which is an unknown, unidentified trawler, as well as the dive mooring design and future steps that will be taken to maintain and improve it with feedback from users.

### **ii. Film Presentation: “Stellwagen Sweep - Restoring Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary” (Ben Cowie-Haskell)**

Ben Haskell gave a presentation of the sea debris initiative within the sanctuary and showed a short film titled, “*Stellwagen Sweep—Restoring Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary*”. This project is an ongoing effort to rid the sanctuary waters of fishing gear known as “ghost gear”. If SAC members know of any venues where this initiative would be appropriate to present, please let Ben know. The next priority actions for *Stellwagen Sweep* will be to retrieve derelict fishing gear in an area of the SBNMS south of Gloucester that has been surveyed with high resolution sonar. The sanctuary is currently using HabCAM remotely operated vehicle data to detect derelict fishing gear. For more information visit the *Stellwagen Alive!* website: [www.stellwagenalive.org](http://www.stellwagenalive.org).

iii. **NOAA Fisheries Regional Report (Jennifer Anderson)** Jen Anderson presented the NMFS report and provided the following summary for the 33rd SAC Minutes. Anyone interested in information on a specific topic should contact Jen and she will ensure an update is provided.

### **Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP):**

- Framework 46 to the FMP was approved by the Council and has been submitted to NMFS where it is under review. The action is expected to be implemented around fall 2011. This framework would increase the amount of haddock allowed to be caught by the herring fishery and modify the method of monitoring the herring fishery catch in order to derive an estimate of total haddock catch in the fishery. It is expected that the action will allow the herring fishery to fully utilize the available herring quota while ensuring that haddock bycatch is adequately controlled and monitored.
- As part of the development of Amendment 18 to the FMP, at its April meeting the Council voted to establish an ad-hoc Groundfish Accumulation Limit Committee to conduct a facilitated meeting on accumulation limits and submit a suite of options to the Council for consideration.

- NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center recently released a study indicating that revenues for the groundfish fishery increased for the first nine months of the 2010 fishing year compared to the same period in 2009. While it is still too early to determine how sector management has affected groundfish businesses and communities, an annual report with additional details will be released this fall.

#### **Atlantic Herring FMP:**

- The Council is scheduled to adopt the draft environmental impact statement for Amendment 5 to the FMP at its September 2011 meeting.
- Measures under consideration in Amendment 5 include: (1) establishing a catch monitoring program for the Atlantic herring fishery; (2) address river herring bycatch; (3) establish criteria for midwater trawl access to groundfish closed areas; and (4) address interactions with the Atlantic mackerel fishery.
- NMFS is preparing a regulatory amendment to address catch reporting in the herring fishery. The goal of the catch reporting rulemaking is to improve monitoring of the annual catch limit and sub-annual catch limits in the herring fishery. Requirements under consideration include: daily reporting via vessel monitoring system for limited access herring vessels, weekly reporting via the interactive voice response system for open access vessels, and weekly submission of vessel trip reports for limited access and/or open access vessels.

#### **Increased Harp Seals in Northeast Waters:**

- As of March, NOAA reported that there had been a large influx of harp seals into Northeast region waters. Harp seals typically are found from the Arctic to the southeast coast of Atlantic Canada, but they have been known to venture much further south.
- In the spring, the Western North Atlantic harp seal population migrates to the waters around Newfoundland and Gulf of St. Lawrence to give birth to their young on pack ice. However, this past winter, the most southerly reported sightings have occurred off North Carolina, while last year there were seven harp seal sightings reported off Virginia during this same time period.
- Two juvenile harp seals recovered from New York beaches by the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation were fitted with satellite tags in February. As of March 7, these animals were reported to be in the deep waters of Hudson Canyon, having travelled distances of 213 miles and 155 miles respectively. The reason for these increased sightings is not currently understood.

#### **Mid-Atlantic & Southeast Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Subgroup Meeting & Update:**

- The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) conducted a meeting of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team Mid-Atlantic/Southeast Subgroup (Subgroup) meeting April 5-8, 2011, in Baltimore, Maryland. The meeting focused on the following :
  1. Provide updates on overall Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) implementation and activities;
  2. Review the co-occurrence model and consider its implications for an overarching management strategy to address vertical line entanglements;
  3. Provide status report on an ALWTRP monitoring plan and other related activities; and
  4. Articulate intended next steps in the development of revisions to the TRP, including scoping and refinements to the co-occurrence model.
- The Key Outcomes document is available online on the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan website. [www.nero.noaa.gov/whaletrp/](http://www.nero.noaa.gov/whaletrp/)

- NMFS will hold public scoping meetings along the east coast for vertical line entanglement risk reduction measures starting in July 2011. Specific dates and locations TBD.

**Whale SENSE Program Update:**

- The Whale SENSE program is beginning its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of implementation.
- Four companies from Massachusetts and one from Virginia are currently enrolled. Two companies from New Jersey and a company from Gloucester, MA have also asked to participate in the program.
- Whale SENSE is a voluntary, educational and recognition program for commercial whale watching companies that aims to conserve large whales through conservation, education, and stewardship.

iv. NEFMC Update (Michelle Bachman)

NEFMC voted in April to expand the scope of the EFH Omnibus Amendment to include evaluation and possible adjustments to the groundfish areas (implemented via the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan). This will extend the timeline of the action beyond expected implementation in Fall 2012, and also will change the way it is being developed in terms of the committees involved. The likely scenario is that the habitat PDT and committee will continue to develop options to minimize the effects of fishing on EFH, including options for research areas, through the fall. Late this year, the groundfish PDT and committee will begin evaluation of the current groundfish closures. The current plan for SBNMS to present the SERA proposal to the Council in September seems to fit well with this timing. She also mentioned that there is a groundfish accumulation limits workshop next week on June 9.

Nathalie Ward offered to new members the opportunity to give a constituent report to familiarize the rest of SAC members on research, monitoring, and education outreach, as well as upcoming events within their organizations or agencies.

**VIII. SAC Issues. None.**

**IX. New Business. None.**

**X. Public Comment. None.**

**XI. Adjourn. 2:15 pm**