

Establishment of a Zoning Working Group

Initiative pursuant to the Ecosystem-Based Management Action Plan approved by the Sanctuary Advisory Council on 10/20/04

NOTE: Given context of this activity in the Ecosystem-Based Management Action Plan, intent of this working group is to focus on habitat zoning and ecological function. Bounds are relatively narrow and do not extend to all aspects of potential sanctuary zoning. Other action plans recommend activities to address different zoning considerations (e.g. Marine Mammal Vessel Strike –vessel traffic, approach distance; Water Quality – no discharge).

Origination

Activity 5.1 from the Ecosystem-Based Management Action Plan: Establish a Zoning Working Group (ZWG) to evaluate the adequacy of existing zoning schemes in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary to satisfy the scientific requirements and meet the goals of Ecosystem-Based Sanctuary Management (EBSM) as defined by the Ecosystem-Based Management Working Group (EBM WG) in 2004, and if needed, develop a modified zoning scheme (including a consideration of fully protected reserves) to meet those goals and requirements.

Purpose

The ZWG was established by the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) at its November 2004 meeting for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating data and information as it becomes available through various venues (e.g., New England Fishery Management Council Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment process, other sanctuary efforts) and making a recommendation to the SAC and ultimately to the sanctuary superintendent. The membership of the ZWG shall be of representative stakeholder groups similar to the EBM WG. The ZWG shall begin meeting in January 2005 in order to efficiently utilize the time that the final management plan is in preparation.

The ZWG shall develop metrics for zone performance based on the objectives of the various zones as determined by the WG. These metrics shall form the foundation of a monitoring program designed to determine the efficacy of the zoning scheme and recommend any needed changes to accomplish the goals of the zoning scheme and EBSM.

The ZWG shall make recommendations to the SAC regarding the zoning scheme within two years of the implementation of the final management plan as defined by the publication date for the Federal Register Notice notifying the public of the availability of the final management plan.

Process

1. ZWG convenes and assigns a subgroup to come up with 2-3 operational definitions of ecological integrity with measurable parameters.

2. Subgroup makes recommendation on definition of ecological integrity appropriate for the SBNMS.
3. ZWG evaluates existing zoning scheme based on agreed upon criteria associated with the scientific requirements and goals of EBSM.
4. ZWG makes recommendation to SAC on adequacy of existing zoning scheme.
5. SAC makes recommendation to superintendent on adequacy of existing zoning scheme and future of the ZWG.
6. If necessary, the ZWG continues deliberations to develop a modified zoning scheme (including a consideration of fully protected reserves) for the purpose of meeting the scientific requirements and goals of EBSM within 2 years of final management plan implementation.

Membership

Sanctuary Advisory Council Member Chair (1)	John Williamson
SBNMS Staff Lead (1)	Ben Cowie-Haskell
Academics (3)	Les Kaufman, Boston University Peter Auster, University of Connecticut Lew Incze, University of S. Maine
Fishing Industry (3)	
a. Mobile	Ed Barrett, Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership
b. Fixed	Dave Casoni, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association
c. Midwater	Mary Beth Tooley, East Coast Pelagics
Recreational Fishing (2)	
a. Charter	Tom DePersia, Stellwagen Bank Charter Fishermen's Association
b. Personal	Charles Casella
Conservation (3)	Priscialla Brooks, Conservation Law Foundation VACANT VACANT
At-large (1)	Deborah Cramer, Writer
National Marine Fisheries Service (2)	Allison Rosner, Protected Species Jennifer Anderson
Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries (1)	David Pierce
Mass. Coastal Zone Management (1)	VACANT
Total membership (18)	