

Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Sanctuary Advisory Council Minutes
Monday, March 23, 2009

Welcome

Dean Hudson called meeting to order.

Roll call and introductions.

Review of minutes – accepted.

SAC Chair's Report

- Feedback from Scoping meetings
 - Kevin will consolidate notes
 - National Park Service submitted their comments to Hawaii
- Chairs meeting in Alpena Michigan
 - Topics will be distributed to the SAC for review (i.e. cultural heritage)
 - Paper and/or power point presentation
 - Need to consider constraints on economic situation in Michigan
 - Feedback requested from SAC about what to put forward

Our Sanctuary Challenge

Gene Brighthouse, Superintendent

- Put forward by Dan to address national issues, strategize programs, develop collective solutions, and address a country in crisis
- How do we engage the U.S. Congress?
- Within our mandate to ensure we have a strong climate change emphasis
- Tap into increasing volunteerism in America
- Comments should be submitted to FBNMS within 2 weeks
- Information will be available at the SAC chairs meeting

Discussion

- There has always been a need for surveillance and remote monitoring but there has never been enough money; we need to strategize our priorities
- Right now most of the budget goes to personnel
- Renovations on the convention center is a budgetary priority and it may conflict with requests for national security funding
- Fagatele Bay is a small sanctuary that hasn't developed; this message is a big step and underwater surveillance doesn't seem appropriate
- Staff expansion has occurred but will remain limited as far as contributing to economic expansion
- A simple real time camera is possible
- This should be seen as an opportunity to prioritize and capitalize on opportunities
- Could we work the challenge into the management plan?"
- The challenge refers more to the direction we would like to take the sanctuary
- We should take the themes and identify local relevancy/irrelevancy and funding opportunities
- This is a first call for reactions so that we can begin to pair down plans

- Dan proposed that Fagatele Bay should be the epicenter for science learning in the Pacific
- Sanctuaries funded ASCC to develop a business plan for a science center.
- CRAG has proposed a science center in American Samoa
- The Governor has also expressed interest in a science center
- We need to consider viable economic drivers for research at the sanctuary
 - Attract tourists
 - Set up tour boats
- People visit the sanctuary all the time
- Could we use “The Challenge” as an opportunity to promote the marine science center?
- We could but it would compete with the convention center funding – we are currently engaging a local contractor – we intend to build an office, a learning center, boat housing, and a rental space for public events to generate income
- Can we put additional items on the priority list?
- We can but we have to be careful not to compete with other funding
- National security is not relevant. Our task is to figure out how it can be relevant. I don’t see the connection between camps and national security.
- The goal is to understand the mindset of others
- These are lofty goals tied with national level dreamy type stuff. We need local relevancy and we need to make sure implementation includes tangible programs.

FBNMS Activities Updates

Gene Brighthouse, Superintendent

Preserve America:

- Program was helpful in Maui
- Working towards status in American Samoa
- Application will be distributed to the SAC members
- The Application is due in June and will be submitted by the governor
- Preserve America will help the territory focus on priorities

Hyperbaric Chamber:

- Off-Island company has offered to cover half the price of the chambers and provide monitors and training free of cost
- We have had some issues working with LBJ
- Funding requests will be submitted with the stimulus package
- Operations will be about \$300,000 per year and the initial cost will be about two million
- Everything has been coordinated
- There is a listing for CIP
- We want to move quickly on this to secure the chamber offer
- The board is in support
- The chambers will cost \$70,000 each including installation
- September 30th is the national park deadline to reallocate funds if the chambers are not secured by then

NOAA Holling’s Intern

- Two Holling's Fellows are coming to American Samoa for the summer
- Karl Platzer will be housed at Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Benjamin Frable will be house at the DMWR

Veronika Mortenson, Education and Outreach

Review of workshop program for village mayors

- Part of a series of presentations to increase scope of understanding
- Engage village mayors in enforcement
- Look at marine protected areas with DMWR
- Other agencies are doing presentations so people might get confused
- It is a challenge within DMWR to communicate the difference between the MPA program and the CFMP program – currently the two go to villages together
- At the Scoping Sessions, students suggested that all of Fagatele Bay should be a no-take zone
- Extremely challenging to differentiate between management techniques
- Fisherman pay attention to every detail and map and we should provide them with a zoned map
- Proposal for interagency education
- NPS legislation does not allow no-take, local residents have to make that decision
- NPS can manage fisheries and can decide to take action if serious problems occur

Trail Forms

- Release forms and trail rules available for comment

Emily Gaskin, Special Projects Coordinator

Reproductive Health:

- The Fagatele Bay Office is supporting the Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG) and the Population Local Action Strategy (LAS) by conducting a socioeconomic study of family planning in American Samoa
- The study will focus mainly on reproductive health and contraceptive awareness among married men and women. To date there is almost no information about the effectiveness of family planning in the territory
- A similar study conducted in Western Samoa found that there was an urgent need to immediately increase family planning programs throughout the country.
- The study will include key informant interviews, focus group meetings, and household surveys distributed in selected villages on Tutuila
- The results of the study will help inform education and outreach programs and population policies in the territory

Climate Change:

- In compliance with the National Marine Sanctuaries “Challenge,” and to support current territorial efforts to address climate change, the Fagatele Bay Office is conducting a Socioeconomic Study of attitudes and perceptions of climate change policies in American Samoa
- There are very few climate change adaptation and mitigation policies currently in place in American Samoa. Those policies that are in place are rarely enforced and compliance is generally low

- A socioeconomic study of attitudes and perceptions of climate change adaptation and mitigation policies in American Samoa would help inform more effective and sustainable policy decisions
- The study will be conducted using key informant interviews, focus groups, and household surveys
- The data will be collected in the fall of 2009 and a final report will be submitted by November 2009

Fundraising Opportunities:

- The Fagatele Bay Office is supporting hyperbaric medicine in American Samoa by identifying and applying for Federal Grants. Recently Fagatele Bay worked with LBJ to develop a grant proposal for videoconferencing equipment for the hyperbaric treatment facility
- Videoconferencing equipment is necessary so that off-island operating physicians can diagnose patients and monitor chamber operations
- We do not have the resources or personal to have a trained physician here on island

Management Plan Review (MPR) Update

Gene Brighthouse, Superintendent

- Confusion about expansion
- Can count towards 20% no-take
- Site criteria for comment/core group selection
 - Based on marine sanctuary act and other sites
 - Workshop April to June
 - Larson's provided as example of how this could happen
 - Provide listing by late July
- Mark Monaco and Rod Ehler have ramped up efforts
- Not touching specific regulations
- In management plan we will assess with NMFS to develop "best fit" regulations by 2012
- No enforceable fishing regulations will be established at this time
- Only categories will be established
- EIS will be contracted later this year (\$500K) as required by law
- Dan Basta will be visiting American Samoa in August
- Since the territory is charged with 20% no take, can DMWR use this as a tool for their own needs instead of competition?
- Information seeds better policy decisions
- The biogeographic assessment could theoretically change CFMP locations
- Scoping meeting notes need to be posted on the website
- Summary should be good before SAC chair meeting
- Have to consider expansion to Rose

Action Items

- Parental release form approved

- Presentation for village mayors approved pending cooperation with other agencies and agency review
- Provide leaflet differentiating between MPAs
- Letter of Support for Hyperbaric Chamber to be provided by SAC
- MPR timeline approved
- Core team for site selection/criteria matrix to include NPS, DMWR, and ASCC