

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY OF AMERICAN SAMOA
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center Conference Room

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

1:30PM – 3:30PM

Participants

SAC Members

Dean Hudson, SAC Chair
Gene Brighthouse, NMSAS
Atafana Fili Ulufale, Community-at-Large: West Side
Jim Bacon, National Park of American Samoa
Sandra Lutu, American Samoa Department of Commerce
Fatima Sauafea-Leau, NOAA-PIRO
Thomas Drabble, Business Seat
Charity Porotesano, Student Seat
Ephraim Temple, American Samoa Community College
Alex Jennings, Community-at-Large: Swains Island
Edwin Seui, NOAA-OLE
Chuck Birkeland, Research Seat
Eric Roberts, US Coast Guard

NMSAS Staff

Wendy Cover, Research Coordinator
Emily Gaskin, Policy Analyst
Isabel Gaoteote, Education & Outreach Coordinator
Tanimalie Letuli, Visitor & Volunteer Coordinator
Alma Roe-Cornejo, Administrative Assistant
Charles Miller, Student Intern
Dalen Jennings, Student Intern

Introduction

Review of Meeting Minutes from May 24, 2012.

Passed and accepted.

Introduce new Council Members:

- Alex Jennings, Swains Representative
- Atafana Fili Ulufale, Community At-Large (West Side)
- Sandra Lutu, American Samoa Department of Commerce, Environment Division
- Charity Porotesano, Student Seat
- Jim Bacon, National Park of American Samoa

Introduce new NMSAS Staff Members:

- Tanimalie Letuli, Visitor & Volunteer Coordinator
- Alma Roe-Cornejo, Administrative Assistant
- Charles Miller, Student Intern

- Dalen Jennings, Student Intern

Sanctuary Updates

Sanctuary Advisory Council Summit

- Annual event will be held in Santa Cruz, California to showcase Monterey Bay Exploration Center
- Summit will focus on linking sanctuaries with tourism
- Updates will be provided at next SAC meeting

Transition Report

- Document prepared by NMSAS staff for new government administration
- Document showcases natural & cultural resources
- Copies shared with Jim Bacon and Atafana Ulufale

Village Strategy

- Strategy to be launched in January 2013
- Plan to develop a film that showcases our natural and cultural resources-about the sites; film will be distributed internationally

Dive Accident Management Week

- Plan to meet with Marine Patrol, National Park, DMWR, and the Coast Guards for regulations and enforcement/protocols

Fatima Sauafea-Leau inquired if Amouli could be included in the natural disasters response because they already have a response plan in effect

Action Plan Implementation

Ocean Literacy, *Malie & Isabel*

- Contains four primary Strategies
- Ocean Center officially opened August 17, 2012 and opened to the public September 10, 2012
- Six month timeline to develop Operations Plan which will include annual events, structural maintenance, and should be comprehensive
- Plan to develop a survey/comment card for visitors to the Ocean Center
- Plan to further develop partnerships with private sectors

Dean Hudson inquired where the donations for the Gift Shop came from [information presented on hand-out].

Malie responded that \$400 was from Manua, \$94 was from the Siva at Moana O Sina, and the rest are from the Cruise Ships and walk-ins.

Charity Porotesano asked if students were the ones who bought the most from the Gift Shop.

Malie responded that we are the best customers.

Isabel noted that NMSAS is working on putting together a communication plan.

Ephraim Temple asked how hard is it to maintain the kiosks.

Isabel responded that they are pretty sturdy. The only one that needed maintenance was the one at the airport. NMSAS is looking in to possibly having additional videos shown on the kiosk.

Ephraim Temple asked how active the environmental club has been in recent years. In the past they did videos, songs, etc.

Isabel responded that NMSAS has been corresponding with ASCC Marine Science coordinator Kelley Anderson about potential activities with ASCC Marine Science club but there are no projects in place at this time. NMSAS is working to develop a marine conservation curriculum with different agencies for teachers to use as a resource. NMSAS has a meeting on December 5 with OCIA (Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Accountability).

Charity Porotesano asked what formal education do you have planned.

Isabel responded that the Ocean Literacy action plan contains activities to expand both formal and informal education opportunities in American Samoa.

Gene added that there are already existing curriculums within the Pacific region (Navigating Change/Ocean Gardens Program) and NMSAS is working to determine what will be appropriate and applicable for students in American Samoa.

Charity Porotesano suggested that schools are a great place to push for that awareness.

Wendy added that the Ocean Swimming/Ocean Science (OSOS) class that NMSAS developed is in its second semester.

Charity Porotesano added that she would really like to see this come in to play. Much of the existing natural science curriculum focuses on regions of the world that are not relevant to local students. She believes students would respond better to curriculum that focuses on natural resources and ecosystems that can be showcased in the territory.

Dean Hudson asked if the Ocean Center is offering curriculum presentations on the SOS.

Gene noted that NMSAS is seeking to create themes for SOS presentations so you can pick and choose your playlist. We want to utilize broadcast, print, and social media to showcase how we can implement those.

Ephraim Temple noted that at land grant, over time it would be useful if teachers could call in and request playlists on different themes related to their curriculum.

Isabel noted that for the OSOS class this semester, we have had other partners who share the same goals of ocean conservation (NOAA-PIRO, DMWR, etc.) present to our students.

Dean Hudson noted that the kiosks are very important but expensive to update. He asked if the TV at the airport go longer.

Community and Cultural Engagement, Gene

- This is the first of eight plans
- The primary purpose is to instill pride and ocean stewardship to the people of American Samoa.
- The Sanctuary has the potential to reach out to the communities and bring out/promote the importance of beautiful reefs.
- We hope to bring attention to these places through our DVD
- We need the support of our village leaders/communities to help us-do it together.
- We are also looking into developing Interpretive Tour Guide Training to reach out to the visitors and capture the stories of each site. We have built project funding to give villages a chance to showcase their unique qualities.
- Each village/site can give us people that we can train as guides-each site must maintain/upkeep their areas. We need to include the village council-people have to be accountable to somebody. We need to get a foot in on tourism to showcase these beautiful places and people.
- NMSAS has created a walking map for cruise ship people (they only have 2-4 hours on land)
- Plan to develop multipurpose boatshed where the villages from the sites can showcase their unique qualities.

Tom Drabble noted that there is a need for a basic visitor's guide on snorkel sites (Tourism Bureau should take the lead in that). Tourists need to know what is available.

Charity Porotesano asked how we can build the relationship and sustain it.

Gene noted that when there's an economic dollar attached, there's a huge interest. Have residents lead the tours. Find those champions and work with them. We're here to support but they have to lead it.

Tom Drabble noted that in Apia , they have personal tours that take you for a charge/fee.

Gene responded that we want the visitors to be able to hear, see, and experience the island. She noted that at this time the plans are only in a draft stage and we are requesting input from the council. The final documents will not be distributed until January. We are looking for support from Samoan Affairs and the village councils. We want them to assign one member from each site that would showcase the special things or the uniqueness of those sites.

Tom Drabble noted they have to take initiative since it is an economic benefit for them.

Atafana Fili Ulufale asked if he could develop something in Fagatele/Fagalua.

Gene responded that there is potential to further develop the trail that leads to Fagalua with interpretive signs.

Conservation Science Action Plan, Wendy

Sanctuary Science Plan

- Part 1
 - Section A
 1. Monitoring resources in sanctuary
 2. Developing sanctuary science plan (prioritize what projects for funding)
 3. Formal arrangement with agencies
 - Section B: continue to assess conditions. Fagatele Bay has 25 years of monitoring done by Chuck.
- Part 2: Interpret and communicate results: work with Education Outreach people to get these out. Have annual meetings with other agencies. Involve the public (e.g. NMSAS launched a drifter buoy with local schoolchildren).
- Part 3: Assess ecosystem responses: Fagatele is now a no-take area: How is that going to affect the ecosystem now?

Dean Hudson asked if there is much funding for research.

Gene responded that the purpose of the plan is to develop a list of projects that would benefit the Sanctuary and use it to identify potential funding sources.

Wendy commented that some things will be funding limited, but the plan will be written to include the high priority items, regardless of funding likelihood.

Dean Hudson asked if Aunu'u is a research area/baseline survey.

Gene responded that NMSAS plans to place in climate focused plan with other NOAA agencies.

Wendy responded that the Aunu'u research area will also be a focus for assessing the effectiveness of newly-established regulations.

Fatima Sauafea-Leau asked if the villages will be involved in a Conservation Science Plan for each site.

Wendy responded that we NMSAS is coordinating with villages.

Alex Jennings noted that there are opportunities to partner for research. For Swains, it's the community, not the reefs, that is endangered. You can conduct an economic impact study. We can coordinate sending a team out to Swains to do research.

Economic Impact Assessment, Emily

A few comments on the previous discussion:

- The SOS developers have put together formal lesson plans that can be used to accompany the visuals presented on the SOS. The lesson plans are available online for teachers to access at their discretion. They include lectures, activities and quizzes. Teachers can coordinate with the Ocean Center to have their lesson plans displayed on the SOS.

- It is very difficult and costly to modify information on the kiosk. NMSAS was aware of this prior to the installation but decided to move ahead with the project by making the information general for the public. Since the sanctuary has undergone a major expansion, we are aware of the need to invest in updating the kiosk. We will most likely be making all of the changes at once and we welcome your input if there is anything in particular that you would like to see changed.

Economic Impact Assessment:

- NMSAS has collaborated with the University of Michigan to determine the potential economic benefits that the sanctuary can provide to people and businesses in American Samoa. The outputs of the study will be to inform a process of economic forecasting to generate new opportunities.
- The economic benefits of sanctuaries has been identified as a priority area for the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and similar efforts are being pursued at other sites, including Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Currently sanctuaries provide nearly \$4 billion for commercial fishing.

Charity Porotesano asked when the results of the study will be available.

Emily responded that the initial results will be available in Fall 2013 but we hope to continue to secure funding to continue the project in future years to monitor change.

Action Items, Gene Brighthouse

We would like to request your feedback on the three action plans presented today as well as any other projects that may be of interest to you.

Ongoing projects:

- Possible trip planned to assess Marine Heritage at Swains Islands.
- Drill Week planned for Oceans Week (May 2013)

Alex Jennings requested a copy of the Economic Assessment project proposal.

Gene notes that in the spring, FBNMS will also be welcoming their first NOAA Corps Officer. She will be working in American Samoa for three years managing the small boat operations and assisting with research efforts.