

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY OF AMERICAN SAMOA  
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

---

Thursday, February 14, 2013  
Ocean Center Sanctuary Room  
12:00-1:30PM

---

Participants

Dean Hudson (Chairman)  
Dan Basta (Director ONMS)  
Lelei Peau (DOC)  
Ephraim Temple (ASCC)  
Domingo Ochavillo (DMWR)  
Fatima Sauafea-Leau (NOAA PIRO)  
Jim Bacon (NPAS)  
Alice Lawrence (DMWR)  
Alex Jennings (Swains Rep)  
Kevin Painter (NOAA OLE)  
Michael Macdonald (South Pacific Watersports)  
Gene Brighthouse (NMSAS)  
Michelle Johnston (NMSAS)  
Wendy Cover (NMSAS)  
Tanimalie Letuli (NMSAS)  
Isabel Gaoteote (NMSAS)  
Apulu Veronika Mata'utia Mortenson (NMSAS)

Minutes

**Welcome, *Dean Hudson***

- Welcome council members and Director of ONMS, Dan Basta.
- Roll call of members present.
- Dan's presentation.

**Dan Basta:** Two things:

1). The meeting in Santa Cruz was a major gathering of all chairpersons of SAC and federal advisory committee of marine protected areas. There are 450 SAC members in the program. Subject of our endeavors was about tourism and recreation in the USA and how marine protected areas may further engage, stimulate – jobs and direct connection to the value of special places. No question about where these special places are in the world. President's EO on the Great American Outdoor Initiative never mentions *ocean, coasts or marine protected areas*. We have taken that as a challenge – we have created an emphasis on two aspects: **a)** what oceans and coasts deliver to this country in terms of economic value, tourism and jobs, **b)** *Special places* count in the future of our country, and it is not just about national marine sanctuaries. It is about special places like parks, MPAs, etc. Community is the mecca. Value added to the economy is

how we drive community to step up and take responsibility. This is our answer to where we are relevant.

2) Special Places and how this fits into National Marine Sanctuaries. The impact of the designation of the expanded sanctuary of the NMSAS has kicked off a series of things that would not have taken place without it. American Samoa has spoken volumes with this expansion. Congratulations to the SAC for a job well done. We can now bring additional attention, assets, and programs to American Samoa. It is about eco-tourism and recreational tourism. It's about community and development that fits sustainability and supports culture as it continues to evolve themselves one way or the other. People misrepresent or misunderstand what we do.

It is everyone's job to step up and take responsibility. Projecting places is key. Everything we do is about how we project. Special places excite people. Not about protection – it's about *projection*. Pacific strategy is American Samoa.

**Dean Hudson:** Added to what Dan had discussed about tourism and the make-up of the SAC. Getting the right people to the council is important in getting things done and moving forward. We have the opportunity via the sanctuary system to push forward 'tourism'. Ten top places in the USA and American Samoa is #5. Little things are meaningful.

**Alice Lawrence:** Public was quite confused about the NOAA Fisheries public hearing last night. Sanctuaries were mentioned during the comment period so there is a bit of confusion on the two entities.

**Dan Basta:** This is always a communication issue. We can't change what Caesar wants to do but we can mitigate what Caesar wants to do and we can only do that by creating partnerships. There is so much we can do on the inside so partnerships are important to tackle the issues from the outside. Formulation of strategies in collaboration with partners is crucial in tackling and solving some of these issues.

**Alice Lawrence:** The SAC members need to be aware that the majority of the American Samoa public are disappointed with how the Sanctuary expansion public consultation process was undertaken. The DMWR experienced many problems because the FBNMS public consultations weren't undertaken in a better way. The DMWR MPA programs have been set back at least 3 years and since the expansion process, most consultations with the public or communities now involve some negative discussions and concerns about the FBNMS expansion. Consequently it is difficult to continue the DMWR MPA programs working with communities to establish new MPAs.

**Lelei Peau:** 1988, when Legislation was passed to create ASCMP, there was great opposition from the community and the fono. ASCMP did not become a very popular program then but when hurricane Val came and left, it was the government the people sought help from. This evolution is repeating itself with the Sanctuary program. It took ASCMP 10 years to be finalized and the Sanctuary program 4 years. (Partnership and community are important). We have to be resilient to criticism. We cannot walk away from trying to find a solution. Let's not point fingers when things don't go according to plan. Let's work together. Let's share ideas and move forward.

**Dan Basta:** Success is to build mutual trust. It's about persistence.

**Ephraim Temple:** Hearing comments last night showed that people want the government to stay away and leave us alone and yet the government is expected to be the first responder to any incident. We see this confusion over and over.

**Dan Basta:** In Florida Keyes people were threatening lives, slashing tires, etc. They wanted to get rid of the sanctuaries. Ten years later, the same people who were slashing tires and threatening lives actually advocated for the protection of the Tortugas. We have to be more consistent in how we approach and be receptive to criticism.

**Lelei Peau:** Moliga (chief of Ta'u) showed up at the OSA meeting yesterday – he did not oppose of the sanctuary. He opposed the venue the sanctuary meetings were held at in Manu'a. Organization and logistics were with the Office of Samoan Affairs, not DOC. Traditional leaders decided on the venues of these meetings.

**Gene Brighthouse:**

SAC members represent a seat and a presence to help us build a natural and cultural place that is recognized across and within. Let's put the 'baggage' behind and to help us collectively move forward. What can we do for our communities? Our efforts are meaningless without community.

*Presentation on Sanctuaries Mean Business:*

- Iconic special places for fishing, recreation, research, hospitality, outreach
- Sanctuaries support local economies
- Sanctuary Assets – resources, partnerships, facilities/visitor centers, relationships with national chains and businesses
- Opportunities for Sanctuary communities – small community funds, visitor/community programs, interpretive signs/trails, sponsor events
- Education/Outreach
- Economic Research
- How the SAC can get involved

**Questions:**

1. **Fatima** – asked about the color coding on the NMSAS Calendar of Events.
2. **Michael Macdonald** – queried when the Cruise Ship Day would be.  
**Response:** During Ocean Week in May
3. **DOC** – suggested identifying an event where DMWR & NMSAS/DOC can collaborate.  
**Response:** Perhaps Marine Debris Removal can be one, with a youth component, suggested Dan Basta.
4. **Fatima** – Le Tausagi can assist with efforts noted.
5. **DOC** – OSA to board.
6. **Dean** – Is there a reason we can't visit Fagatele Bay on Sunday's. Can this be changed a little to accommodate other people who want to visit on Sunday?  
**Response:** Nika will ask the family for some leniency on day Dean has requested.
7. **Alice** – What is the status of the hyperbaric chamber?  
**Response:** Dan responded that the chamber is in operation now.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:47pm**