

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa

Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Notes

Monday, August 25, 2014
Naumati Room, Tradewinds Hotel
8:00-10:30AM

Purpose: To discuss the Call to Action Joint Statement by the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee and the National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils *"Destination Marine Protected Areas: Sustaining America's Most treasured Ocean Places for Recreation and Stewardship."*

Participants:

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dean Hudson, Chair, Ocean Recreation/Eco-Centered Tourism
Sepp Stephany, Fishing
Tony Ta'ase, Fishing
Teri Peters, Education
Tom Oliver, Research
Peter Crispin, Diving
Betty Cavanaugh, Tourism
Atapana Fili Ulufale, Community-at-Large (West Tutuila)
Alex Jennings, Community-at-Large (Swains Island)
Togiola Tulafono, Community-at-Large (East Tutuila)
Kelley Anderson Tagarino, American Samoa Community College/Sea Grant
Fatima Sauafea-Leau, NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office
Kevin Painter, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement
Allen Tom, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), Pacific Islands Regional Director

EXCUSED

Thomas Drabble, Business/Industry
Dr. Ruth Matagi, Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR)
Keniseli Lafaele, American Samoa Department of Commerce (ASDOC), Protected Resource Division
Eric Roberts, United States Coast Guard

SUBSTITUTES

Domingo Ochavillo, DMWR
Sandra Lutu, ASDOC, Protected Resource Division
Rula Deisher, United States Coast Guard

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Basta, National Director, ONMS
Angela Calos, ONMS

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Dana Wilkes, ONMS

Adam Pack, Chair, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

Peter Eves, DMWR-Enforcement

Va'amua Henry Seseapasara, Fono

James McGuire, BPMC

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY OF AMERICAN SAMOA (Sanctuary)

Gene Brighthouse, Sanctuary

Atuatasi Lelei Peau, Sanctuary

Apulu Veronika Moilo'o Mata'utia Mortenson, Sanctuary

LT. Charlene Felkley, Sanctuary

Isabel Gaoteote, Sanctuary

Tanimalie Letuli, Sanctuary

Alma Cornejo, Sanctuary

Dr. Wendy Cover, Sanctuary

Joseph Paulin, Sanctuary

I. Welcome, *Dean Hudson, Council Chair*

A. Roll Call & Introduction:

- Council roll call was taken and introductions were made for everyone in attendance.

B. Dan Basta, National Director, ONMS

1. Swearing in of council members
2. Swearing into federal service Atuatasi Lelei Peau, Sanctuary
3. Presentation of Award of Excellence in leading sanctuary programs to Gene Brighthouse

C. Review and Approval of March 26, 2014 Meeting Minutes

- Motion to Approve (Dean Hudson)
- Seconded by (Alex Jennings)
- Passed – Unanimous

D. Approval of Agenda

- Members approved the agenda

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E. Reminders:

- i. Council Member Recruitment:
 - The current council member recruitment ends on September 30, 2014. Seats that are available include Community-at-Large Aunu'u, Community-at-Large Manu'a, and the Youth Member (ages 14-25).
- ii. Council Officer Elections:
 - At the next council meeting there will be elections for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The term of each position is 2 years. If you are interested in running please send a brief biography and statement of interest to Joseph Paulin (joseph.paulin@noaa.gov) to be forwarded to the council.

II. Presentations

- A. Dan Basta, Director of Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
 - Dean Hudson summarized the National Marine Sanctuaries Advisory Council (NMSAC) Summit held in Galveston, Texas in June of 2014. Dean discussed how the Joint Statement was developed in joint sessions with the Marine Protected Area-Federal Advisory Committee (MPA-FAC) during the past two National Marine Sanctuaries Advisory Council Summits 2012 and 2014). The MPA-FAC voted to support the Joint Statement in Galveston at their annual meeting. They then asked all advisory council members to take it back to their councils to be discussed and to decide if each council would also support the Joint Statement.
 - Dan Basta discussed how the Joint Statement came about and how it gained traction. The President passed a proclamation called "The Great Outdoors" developed by people in the National Parks System. A goal being to increase visitation to outdoor areas in the US. In the past this really has not included marine areas. The effort of the last two years has included leaders in advising marine protected areas, MPA-FAC and NMSAC representatives, that have provided extensive input in developing the Joint Statement. This is a call to action to support, where appropriate, responsible recreation opportunities in marine protected areas.
- A. Joseph Paulin, Presentation on the MPA-FAC/NMSAC Joint Statement relating to Recreation, Travel, & Tourism (Action Item)

The presentation included:

- How the Joint Statement was formed and more details about Galveston meetings.
- Identifying audiences and disseminating information.
- Ensuring pro-active management, maintaining specialness of areas, maintaining ecosystem health, and encouraging recreational uses.

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- Four Main Themes: 1) Inviting people to play respectfully, 2) Embracing the human dimensions of these places, 3) Sustaining ecosystems of the MPAs, and 4) Engaging recreational users as ocean stewards.
- National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils that have already discussed and supported the Joint Statement.
- Council Action Today: discuss and decide if the council would like to support the statement as is, no additional changes can be made.

Council Discussion:

- Recommendation that a summary of the document be written in Samoan.
- Commend the statement, need to consider the responsibilities of council in striking a balance between working with communities and maintaining sustainability of ecosystems, especially when it comes to sustenance and cultural concerns within communities. Support the chair in signing the statement on behalf of the council.
- In general believe the Joint Statement to be a great document. There are considerations for enforcement. American Samoa is blessed to have healthy ecosystems and fully supports the document.
- The administration will hear the councils with the signing of the Joint Statement.
- We are blessed in having an unspoiled resource and right now we do not have much pressure on it. We need to add to consider our economy and at the same time protect what we have.
- This is a good document as it is pro-active, but what is the opposition we have faced?
- The Hawaiian council's main concern was that they were not able to make changes to it. But it would be difficult to allow all councils to make changes and it would not get to a point to be voted on.
- Some other issues have included thoughts that any activities within some MPAs is bad and stimulating more recreation could destroy the ecosystems.
- Fishing and sustenance fishing should be addressed within the document.
- More local use tourism should be encouraged within the document.
- This is about general ocean stewardship and recreation within MPAs.

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- The statement empowers all the utilizers of these areas and people must come under a special awareness to want to preserve and protect them. This will lead to support from the 'powers that be' in DC.
- Correct, this does not change any regulations, but may lead to more funding and more support for conservation.
- This may be another way to create interest in tourism and recreation. However....Can this lead to a call for expansion?
- We do not want to confuse the Joint Statement with the proposed expansion of the Pacific Remote Island Marine National Monument. That is a different program and process.
- We need clarification on the differences between Marine National Monuments and National Marine Sanctuaries?

Question: What is the difference between a National Marine Sanctuary and a Marine National Monument?

Answer: Both national marine sanctuaries and monuments can be established to protect and manage special marine areas.

New national marine sanctuaries can be designated by NOAA or Congress and are managed by NOAA using the *National Marine Sanctuaries Act*.

Marine national monuments are designated by the President using the *Antiquities Act* and can be managed by NOAA together with other Federal and State partners.

Marine sanctuary designations are extensive, grassroots, community-based processes that typically take three to five years. The designation process depends on a range of factors, including the complexity of the area, the proposed regulations, the level of support from current user groups, and agency resources.

Marine National Monuments do not have such an extensive, multi-year, public process for designation.

- Dan Basta stated that he supports the sanctuary designation process since it is much more involved and allows for many more opportunities for community and stakeholder participation.

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- Information was sent out to the council prior to the meeting describing the differences between the programs and processes. This was in response to a headline in the August 13, 2014 Samoa News that read “*Marine Sanctuary Expansion Looms.*” This headline was inaccurate and the article was actually referring to a proposed expansion of Marine National Monuments by President Obama. The information was also sent to the newspaper and Chamber of Commerce.
- As the ASCC stands the national marine sanctuary has been a huge boost to the Marine Science studies on island. This Joint Statement does even more to encourage opportunities and does not inhibit or change anything. Any opportunities to get students out in the field is good.

III. Public Comment

- Va’amua Henry Seseapasara: Fono member, former sanctuary advisory council member, President of Alia Fisherman Association. We have a saying that we do not play with our food. We do not waste. We eat all we catch. The federal regulations brought into the territory need to respect the people and culture of the territory. The document and discussion speaks of recreation but what about the commercial and sustenance fishing here in American Samoa? Subsistence fishing is one of the biggest topics to bring to any federal table. When we talk about tourism, of course protected areas are good for tourism. How many tourists come here? Do we have a count of how many come here and utilize this area? And then how many people fish here? What is our priority? My priority is the livelihood of my family. Was the document given to other fishing federal regulatory agencies? We are here, as fishermen, to speak on anything that will affect our fishing.
- Council Chair: The Joint Statement addresses recreational activities in marine protected areas not fishing regulations or increasing/decreasing fishing regulations.
- In response to the question regarding the document being given to other fishing federal regulatory agencies Joseph Paulin mentioned that a representative from the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Eric Kingma, was aware of the document and participated in discussions on the Joint Statement at an earlier meeting of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Both Dean Hudson and Joseph Paulin participated in the meeting. Joseph Paulin gave the presentation on the development of the Joint Statement via webinar that was given to the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa Advisory Council today.
- There were no additional public comments or council discussion.

IV. New Business

- Motion (Dean Hudson) to support the Joint Statement and for sanctuary advisory council chair to sign the document on behalf of the sanctuary advisory council.

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- Seconded by (Sepp Stephany)
- Motion Passed

- The newspaper has misrepresented the sanctuary again, stating it to be part of the Pacific Remote Island Marine National Monument proposed expansion. Should the SAC be doing something about this?

- The council is able to form a letter on the subject and ask that superintendent forward it to the director and that the director forward it on. The council can also make a request to be captured in the meeting notes. The council chair will draft a letter on behalf of the council and forward to the National Director through the sanctuary management.

- The council formed a Fishing Working Group to organize a fishing tournament and assist in raising awareness of allowable fishing practices in the sanctuary management areas. There may be possibilities to combine with an existing national tournament known as the Sanctuary Classic. Council members interested in participating include:
 - Peter Crispin, SAC Diving Representative, Fishing Working Group Chair
 - Sepp Stephany, SAC Fishing Representative
 - Tony Ta'ase, SAC Fishing Representative
 - Dean Hudson, SAC Ocean Recreation/Ocean-Centered Ecotourism Representative, SAC Chair
 - Tom Drabble, SAC Business/Industry Representative
 - Betty Cavanagh, SAC Tourism Representative
 - Togiola Tulafono, SAC Community-at-Large Eastside Tutuila Representative
 - Kelley Tagarino, SAC ASCC/Sea Grant Representative

V. Status Updates

- Gene Brighthouse provided a presentation to update the council on recent, current, and upcoming sanctuary programs and events. She also reminded the council of write-ups on programs and events that are included in the sanctuary update report.

VI. Action Items

- At the next council meeting there will be elections for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The term of each position is 2 years. If you are interested in running please send a brief biography and statement of interest to Joseph Paulin (joseph.paulin@noaa.gov) by 2 November 2014 to be forwarded to the council.

- Council Chair Dean Hudson will sign on behalf of the council the Call to Action Joint Statement by the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee and the National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils *"Destination Marine Protected Areas: Sustaining America's Most treasured*

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Ocean Places for Recreation and Stewardship.”

- The council chair will draft a letter on behalf of the council relating to recent inaccuracies about the sanctuary published in the paper and forward to the National Director through the sanctuary management.

VII. Concluding Remarks, Dean Hudson – Closed Meeting.