

**OLYMPIC COAST
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY**

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
115 E. Railroad Avenue, Suite 301
Port Angeles, WA 98362-2925

**OCNMS Advisory Council
Virtual meeting**

**Friday, November 17; 2023
Meeting Notes**



**SANCTUARY
ADVISORY
COUNCIL**

Reviewed by OCNMS Superintendent and AC Chair:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Grant', written over a horizontal line.

Kevin Grant, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Linda Sturgis', written over a horizontal line.

Linda Sturgis, Chair

Advisory Council (AC) Members/Alternates:

Kunz (US Navy); Dann May and John Hunter (Education); Steve Shively and Kevin Decker (Tourism and Economic Development); Parker MacCready (Research); Tami Pokorny (North Pacific Coast Marine Resource Committee); John Shaw (Grays Harbor Marine Resource Committee); Patrick Gallagher (Maritime Industry); Julie Ann Koehlinger (Hoh Tribe); Larry Phillips and Charlie Sheldon (Fishing); and Micah Horwith (WA Department of Ecology)

Presenters and Others in Attendance:

John Veentjer; Laura Farwell (Pacific Birds), and Tammy Russell (Nancy Foster Scholar)

NOAA/OCNMS Staff in Attendance:

Dwayne Hawes and Andrew Torres (NOAA Fisheries, Office of Law Enforcement); Sarah Stein (Office of National Marine Sanctuaries); Kevin Grant, H el ene Scalliet, Chris Butler-Minor, Stephanie Haynes, Christine VanDeen, Katie Wrubel, Jenny Waddell, Sarah Luigard, Haley Wilson, and Stori Smith (OCNMS)

Call to Order and Welcome

Steve Shively, Council Secretary called the meeting to order.

Internal Affairs

- Agenda: Steve Shively introduced the agenda, which was modified due to the absence of guest speaker Julia Parrish. Her presentation will be scheduled for a later meeting. A motion to adopt the agenda was put forward by Lorna Wargo and seconded by Pat Gallagher.
- Approval of Meeting Notes: The September 2023 meeting notes were approved by consensus.

Decision Items

- Officer elections: Nominee John Shaw ran unopposed for the two-year Vice Chair position on the council. The vote was put before the council by a motion from Tami Pokorny and a second by Liz Schotman. The council unanimously approved John Shaw as Vice Chair.
- 2024 Meeting schedule: The council approved the proposed meeting dates and venues listed below after John Hunter moved the motion and Larry Phillips seconded.
 - Fri Jan 19 virtual
 - Fri March 15 virtual
 - Fri May 17 in person - Taholah
 - Fri July 19 in person - Port Angeles
 - Fri Sept 13 in person - location TBD
 - Fri November 8 virtual

Superintendent Report:

Kevin shared that this summer's Maritime heritage project is completed. The project was conducted out of Quileute Marina on the R/V *Storm Petrel*. The team did not locate

shipwreck but verified location of two other wrecks. In addition, multi-beam sonar helped locate dozens of previously unknown underwater pinnacles. This highlighted that existing nearshore charting is outdated data based on 1800s estimate using now unreliable measurements. Thus, future efforts call for nearshore mapping.

Other highlights included recognitions of

- Successful student ROV workshop program
- 24th year of mooring program completed. This program is ranked as a high priority for IPC and OCNMS, especially as this long-term data set is important for modeling and testing climate change model scenarios
- Successful outreach during the Port Angeles Dungeness Crab Fest
- Well-received introduction to OCNMS and management strategies for U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program "[International Visitor Leadership Program](#)" hosted visitors from Jordan orchestrated by Chris Butler-Minor
- Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) [funding](#) is available. Application deadline is Feb 1, 2024.
- Government shutdown avoided until Feb 2

Member Reports:

Steve Shively - Tourism and Economic Development

- October 2023 Dungeness Crab Fest was very successful
- Razor clam digs have been successful and very popular
- North Olympic Peninsula organizations are working on 5-year strategic tourism plan to address the ongoing need for responsible and sustainable seasonal tourism in the area. Important topics, determined through significant stakeholder and community input include
 - Calls for ongoing sustainable visitor experiences throughout Peninsula
 - Addressing limited availability of workforce housing and year-round housing, transportation to and from the Peninsula for visitors (bridges and ferries and single lane roads are hard to use)
 - Need to celebrate tourism draws of the Peninsula: Olympic Discovery Trail, culinary and cultural experiences
 - Tribal engagement enhanced through acknowledgement of tribes' sovereignty and cultures celebrated respectfully and responsibly
- Record-setting Lodging Tax funding for tourism this year but possible decrease going into next year

Lorna Wargo - WA Fish and Wildlife

- Dr. Matthew George is new the Coastal Shellfish Manager, based in the Montesano Regional Office
- Razor clams
 - 2023 biomass is down from last year (-about 60%) but still high. The number of diggers has slightly increased since 2021 and 2022.
 - Domoic Acid levels are below hazard threshold

- Have received a proposal from the Quinault Indian Nation proposal to have Mocrocks and Copalis beaches open for digs every day instead of alternate days. There is also a [2023-24 Razor Clam Management Plan](#). Public comment can be sent to razorclams@dfw.wa.gov
- Commercial crab:
 - Record high catch of 28.7 million pounds for 2022-23 commercial and tribal season
 - Switching to in-season recovery of derelict crab pots led to 1086 pots pulled in 2023 compared to previous years of about 800 pots
 - Coastal crab electronic monitoring adopted in October to allow fine-scale view of where fisheries are operating
- New recreational crab monitoring program focused on south coast is fully staffed and funded. The team will focus on improving catch estimates plus enhancement of outreach and education for recreational crabbers related to permitting and other regulations.

Sean Carlson - (WDNR)

- DNR currently Considering additional funding requests from the legislature for
 - Green crab monitoring and trapping throughout WA - need more staff
 - Removing derelict vessels from state aquatic lands
 - Higher numbers at over 300 vessels (vs 125) removed from state waters

Micah Horwith - (WA Dept of Ecology or WDOE)

- Ocean acidification and climate change:
 - New plan for next year to engage with coastal shellfish farmers
 - will have listening session meeting at Sea Grant Conference for Shellfish Growers
 - will share environmental data and trends and how they apply to growers
 - State of Washington [cap-and-invest program](#) goals: emissions reduced 45% during 2023-2030, by 70% during 2031-2040, and 95% by 2050
 - looking to [link Washington's carbon market](#) with California and Québec carbon markets

Larry Phillips-

- Nearshore species monitoring is complex on the West Coast, particularly for fish living in rocky habitats. As an example, the Quillback rockfish species rebuild analysis by NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center indicates Washington and Oregon stocks are above threshold, but estimates the unexploited biomass off of California coast using 2021 data is at 14% (minimum stock size threshold is 25%).
- Need additional resources to monitor and manage near-shore rockfish populations so advocating for NOAA fisheries for support of nearshore rockfish monitoring project

Parker MacCready (research) -

- Just returned from a [Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation conference](#) in Portland - went to a talk about OCNMS mooring data use and challenges.
- Shared link to a LiveOcean [movie](#) showing predictions of aragonite saturation off WA coast
- Posed questions regarding OCNMS mooring data What happens next year? How does it get added into the current database from the moorings just recovered (23 years of data)? How to get that data out to anyone interested in it by not having to request it from OCNMS?
 - Kevin responded that NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information ([NCEI](#)) is working with OCNMS to make these data available on their portal. The project is in year 1 of 3.

Tammy Pokorny (NPC MRC):

- Note an upcoming marine resource committee on Tuesday Nov 21. Daniel Eungard, geologist with the Washington Geological Survey, will present information about the new [Tsunami Walk Maps](#).

Patrick Gallagher - Marine Business, Ports, and Industry

- Results from Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation ([ECHO](#)) Program's voluntary lateral displacement show 87% compliance/participation rate this year.
- [Quiet Sound](#)'s voluntary vessel slowdown rate up is from last year at 75%
- Ship traffic counts this year are overall down,
- Recently met with US Coast Guard, District 13 to discuss Olympic Coast [Area To Be Avoided](#) and their role in vessel traffic incursion notifications in OCNMS

John Hunter - Education

- Pacific Education Institute ([PEI](#)) provided training at end of October using microplastic kits borrowed from OCNMS
- Upcoming Youth Sustainability Summit in 2024

Information Items:

Management Plan Review status and associated Working Group formation

Stephanie Haynes provided a status report on the management plan review

- There will be four subgroups to the MPR working group which are action plan specific.
- 12 individuals have volunteered to participate in subgroups of the working group
- Proposed working group schedule:
 - Kick off meeting with all subgroups
 - Meetings as decided by working groups
 - March 2024 - send recommendations to SAC
 - May 2024 - send SAC resolution and recommendations to superintendent
- Sections drafted by OCNMS and ready for working groups review and feedback
- Regulatory changes under consideration
 - Clarification on overflight regulations - currently over 2000 ft over sanctuary now proposed to be lower for safer takeoffs

- Prohibiting bombing activity
- Reducing discharges from vessels into OCNMS

Decision Item

Adoption of Management Plan working group charter(s)

The council review the proposed Management Plan Review Working Group (MPRWG) charter which outlined the purpose, scope, and structure of the working group and its subgroups. John Hunter offered the motion to adopt the MPRWG charter, which was seconded by Liz Schotman and accepted by the council.

Public Comment

No public comment was received

Standing Items:

- The Climate Vulnerability Working Group is wrapping up its report. The report has not been peer reviewed yet, so the council is asked to treat this an internal (members only) review. The council will be asked to accept the report at the upcoming January 19, 2024 meeting.
- Upcoming recruitment – two Council seats are open. Recruitment for the Research alternate seat and the primary Conservation seat will be open through December 29, 2023.
- Call for future agenda topics – members were encouraged to provide ideas for sanctuary relevant topics.

Adjourn

Steve thanked attendees and adjourned the meeting at 1 p.m. Pacific Time.