

FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, April 21, 2006
9:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Shell Oil Co., 200 N. Dairy Ashford,
Houston, TX
Building 7, 4th Floor, Rm. 7489

Distributed Materials:

Agenda

PowerPoint Presentation – Vicki Weddell – Developing FGBNMS Goals & Obj.

Letter from Jennifer Morgan regarding the Goals & Objectives work session

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

General Meeting Ground Rules

FGBNMS Goals & Objectives Draft, 2/1/06

PowerPoint Presentation – G.P. Schmahl – FGBNMS Review of 1991 Mgmt Plan

Advisory Council Roster

Excerpt from SAC Charter on officer elections

Excerpt from *Robert's Rules of Order In Brief* regarding voting and elections

Council members present:

Dick Zingula, Recreational Diving

Frank Burek, Recreational Diving (Alternate)

Frank Wasson, Diving Operations

Art Melvin, Diving Operations (Alternate)

Clint Moore, Oil & Gas Production

Tim Gibson, Oil & Gas Production (Alternate)

Irby Basco, Recreational Fishing

John Stout, Recreational Fishing (Alternate)

Joe Hendrix, Commercial Fishing

Ian MacDonald, Research

John Embesi, Research (Alternate)

Haidee Williams, Education

Kristina Hardwick, Education (Alternate)

Page Williams, Conservation

Dana Larson, Conservation (Alternate)

James Sinclair, MMS

Rusty Swafford, NOAA Fisheries

Advisory Council Members absent:

Beth Keister, Coast Guard

*Note: The following seat is vacant: Commercial Fishing (Alternate)

FGBNMS Staff Present:

G.P. Schmahl, Manager

Jennifer Morgan, Advisory Council Coordinator

Shelley Du Puy, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Others:

Heidi Lovett, MRAG Americas

Vicki Wedell, NMSP HQ

Public Attendees:

Sarah Bernhardt

Review of Meeting Agenda and Announcements

G.P. Schmahl, FGBNMS Manager, called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM. G.P. thanked Kristina Hardwick for making the arrangements necessary for the Council to hold the meeting at the Shell-Woodcreek facility. Kristina introduced herself as the Education Director for the Offshore Energy Center. She gave a brief safety moment.

G.P. stated that this meeting was designed to be a working meeting and noted that the last meeting over-agerndized. He added that elections will be addressed later during the afternoon session of the meeting. G.P. pointed out that each Council member received a Lands End FGBNMS Logo tote bag and that Council members will also receive logo-wear shirts with a similar logo. Jennifer Morgan gave instructions for ordering the shirts.

Sanctuary Update

G.P. gave a brief Sanctuary Update. He explained that sanctuary staff have been tracking a bleaching event that began in the fall of 2005. He noted that some corals were recovering from the bleaching in January 2006. During the bleaching event, all fire coral was totally bleached. Fire coral is common at Stetson Bank. *M. cavernosa* also suffered bleaching. In January, divers noticed the beginning of coral disease, or white plague. This disease has also been seen around areas of the Caribbean. G.P. stated that the 2005 hurricane season generated much interest in the state of the Gulf of Mexico. Articles appeared in online versions of NBC and CNN. Coral disease experts have taken samples from the reefs and are attempting to isolate the pathogen.

A March research/monitoring cruise revealed that the disease has spread since January. True white plague is a bacteria. Council members had questions regarding the species of the pathogen. It was mentioned that the disease-causing bacteria may be *Vibrio*. G.P. explained that others have a theory that

the diseased appearance may be caused by bristle worms that are feeding on the coral. G.P. concluded this discussion by stating that the FGBNMS staff has mooring buoy work coming up soon, allowing sanctuary staff an opportunity to monitor the situation again.

G.P. announced that Paul Hammok, who worked as deck hand on the sanctuary's vessel the Point Glass, died as a result of a motorcycle accident in Austin in February. G.P. noted that he was a valued member of our team and will be greatly missed.

G.P. announced that the R/V Point Glass will be decommissioned and sold at auction. The funds gained will be put toward construction of new vessel for the sanctuary. Plans call for a 80-90 ft. catamaran design. The new vessel will be equipped with research and diving equipment. Irby Basco asked if the vessel will have water jet propulsion. G.P. indicated that due to funding, it will have a traditional propulsion system. G.P. explained that funds were earmarked for construction of the vessel. A Gulf coast congressman was behind this effort. However, the vessel must be built in a Gulf Coast shipyard and the shipyards are currently very busy. Page Williams asked how long the sanctuary will be without a vessel. G.P. indicated that it will be about two seasons. He added that Capt. Ken has planned to retire and that nobody will be laid off. During the vessel construction period other charter vessels will be used. Additionally, the sanctuary has access to NOAA vessels such as the Nancy Foster.

At the conclusion of G.P.'s update, Kristina Hardwick introduced Linda Yancy, her assistant, and noted that Cliff Lovelock would be giving the tour of the simulation room later in the morning.

Introduction to Goals & Objectives: NMSP Perspective

Vicki Wedell gave a PowerPoint presentation on developing the FGBNMS Goals and Objectives. [See attached handout]. Vicki reminded the Council that the draft goals and objectives will be included in the state of the sanctuary report. She reviewed examples of goals and objectives from Gray's Reef NMS. One objective from Gray's Reef addressed removal of marine debris. A number of Council members commented on marine debris removal. Dick Zingula asked what kind of debris was often found. Tim Gibson commented on the types of debris found in the Gulf of Mexico and current regulations.

Continuing with her presentation, Vicki noted that its easy to fall into the trap of writing strategies instead of objectives. Jen Morgan added that it may be necessary to back up and think about goals instead of actions to be taken.

Irby Basco inquired about the time frame needed to implement the management plan review. Vicki indicated that it is a 24 month process. G.P. added that Gray's Reef, however, required 6 years to complete their MPR. Irby stated that 24 months is probably realistic. Ian MacDonald asked what resources are

available to the sanctuary to implement the goals and objectives. Joe Hendrix asked if it is appropriate to use other management plans as models.

Facilitated Discussion on Goals & Objectives: Part I

Heidi Lovett began the working session on the goals and objectives by reviewing the National program's goals and objectives. Jennifer Morgan recorded changes, revisions, and suggestions made by the Council members and projected the recorded notes on the screen. Council members worked with the February 1st staff draft of the goals.

Council members noted that goals 1 and 2 refer to the "sanctuary." Irby Basco made a motion to use the phrase Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in place of "sanctuary." Page Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried. Council members emphasized the need to address the regional context of the sanctuary. They suggested that a potential additional goal could address the reefs and banks of the NW Gulf of Mexico outside the sanctuary boundaries. They suggested using purpose/policy 1 as the framework. The Council noted the need to broaden the definition of 'outside the sanctuary.'

A number of Council members noted the lack of a sanctuary mission statement. This was suggested as an agenda item for the next Council meeting. They stated that they would like the mission statement to include language that addressed the desire to have longevity for this and future generations.

3D Reservoir Simulation Room Tour

Following the first working session, the Council experienced the 3D Reservoir Simulation Room with Cliff Lovelock of Shell-Woodcreek as the tour guide.

Public Comment Period

G.P. Schmahl invited the visiting public to comment or add to any previous discussion. There were no comments.

Council Executive Committee Elections

Officers were elected by written ballot. The names of the Council members interested in the position of Chair were presented: Ian MacDonald and Frank Wasson. Each candidate was given the opportunity to address the Council and comment on their philosophy regarding the Council and leadership of the Council. Written ballots were collected. Frank Wasson was elected as Council Chair. Similarly, the names of the Council members interested in the position of Vice-Chair were presented: Irby Basco, Ian MacDonald, Clint Moore. Again, each candidate was given the opportunity to address the Council and comment on their philosophy regarding the Council and leadership of the Council. Written ballots were collected. Following a run-off election between Irby Basco and Clint Moore, Irby Basco was elected as Vice-Chair. The gavel was presented to Frank Wasson.

Jen Morgan requested asked if either the newly elected Chair or Vice-Chair were available to attend the April 25-27 National Chairs and Coordinators meeting in Washington DC. Both Frank Wasson and Irby Basco stated that they were not available. Jen Morgan requested volunteer to attend the meeting. Art Melvin volunteered and was selected.

Facilitated Discussion on Goals & Objectives: Part II

The Council members began a second discussion of the FGBNMS goals following a working lunch. Vicki Wedell recorded the group's suggested revisions. [See the attached draft of the Goals document that was the product of the April 21 Council meeting].

Council members emphasized the need for specific terms used throughout the goals and objectives document to be clearly defined.

Frank Wasson lead the Council in breaking into small teams for further work on the goals and objectives. Each team was assigned a small number of goals. Each team will refine the objectives for each goal. Frank Wasson noted that this assignment must be completed before the June Council meeting. He suggested that Jen Morgan email to the Council the goals as recorded today with reorganized objectives.

The teams were organized as follows:

Goals 1 and 3: Haidee Williams, Kristina Hardwick, Page Williams, Frank Wasson

Goals 2 and 6 (new goal): Ian MacDonald, John Embesi, Frank Burek, Dana Larson

Goals 4, 5, and 7: Tim Gibson, Clint Moore, Art Melvin, Irby Basco, James Sinclair

Others not present will be asked to join the teams.

The following timeline was set for completing a draft of the goals and objectives:

April 26-	Jen Morgan to e-mail the Goals and Objectives as revised today
May 10-	Deadline for teams/subcommittees to submit final goals and objectives to Jen Morgan
May 17-	final version (package/last draft) of Goals and Objectives sent back out to Council
May 30-	Council members to have phone conference/discussion (10 AM) on goals and objectives; all comments must be sent back to subcommittees by this date

Jen Morgan stated that she will make the necessary arrangements for a call-in number for the May 30 phone conference.

Frank Wasson wrapped up the meeting with a review of future meeting dates. The Council agreed that the next meeting will occur on Wednesday, June 14 in Galveston from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The following meeting will be held on August 9 in Galveston. G.P. Schmahl added that the sanctuary will hold three scoping meetings beginning Oct. 8th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.