

FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

# Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2008

The regular meeting of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) Advisory Council was held on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, at 9:00 AM, at the FGBNMS Headquarters offices in Galveston, Texas. The council chair and vice-chair were present. Art Melvin moved that the minutes from the February and April 2008 council meetings be approved as written. The motion was adopted.

G.P. Schmahl, Sanctuary Superintendent, reported on the state of the sanctuary in the 'Sanctuary Update' report. Topics covered included: hurricane Ike recovery, long-term monitoring cruise, International Coral Reef Symposium, threats to coral reef health, monitoring of FGBNMS with YSI and seabirds instruments, R/V Manta dedication by Sylvia Earle, mooring bouy installation, hurricane/storm paths and reef damage, R/V Manta repairs, and affects of current budget under continuing resolution on enforcement.

Emma Hickerson reviewed the 2008 FGBNMS Condition Report and noted that the official release date is today and that the Advisory Council is the first to receive it. The council discussed the usefulness of the document, saying that they would be interested in seeing frequent updates of the 'report card' section.

As requested by G.P. Schmahl, Bea Stong addressed the hurricane impacts to HI 389.

G.P. Schmahl updated the council on recent progress on the draft management plan and draft environmental impact statement (DMP/DEIS). He also reported on a new contract with GeoMarine, Inc. to analyze fishing information. He added that Bob Leeworthy, NOAA economist, is now beginning work on socioeconomic necessary for a DEIS.

Kelly Drinnen provided the council with a review of the web site as many changes have been made in recent weeks, especially in the science section.

A public comment period was offered at 11:30 AM. No comments were made.

Emma Hickerson explained the development of the new Manta Catalogs and the associated research. Kelly Drinnen added information regarding a related education activity developed by Immersion Presents.

G.P. Schmahl provided an overview of the Research Area Workshop that was held in April, 2008. He requested that the council review the written workshop report and provide input. The council engaged in a discussion of the purpose and value of reconstituting a working group on the research area and an experimental closure. Art Melvin moved to table the discussion of a fishing closure and research area working group until new council members are in place. The motion was adopted.

Jennifer Morgan presented the revised Advisory Council charter. Frank Burek moved to accept the charter as written. The motion was adopted after debate. Jennifer noted that and EPA seat

will be created in 2009. She also announced Carmen DeGeorge as the new U.S. Coast Guard representative.

Irby Basco reported on the National Sanctuary Advisory Council Chairs and Coordinators Meeting that he attended in May 2008 in Newport News, VA.

Jennifer Morgan reviewed the agenda for the 2009 National SAC Meeting and the opportunities for council input.

Jennifer Morgan requested ideas for a FGBNMS case study to be presented at the 2009 National meeting. The FGBNMS Boundary Expansion proposal was offered as a topic. Following a brief discussion, the council agreed and asked Bill Kiene, Jennifer Morgan and Frank Wasson to prepare an abstract to submit to Karen Brubeck by Dec. 31, 2008.

Frank Wasson explained the idea of a "National choreography" of councils. The council discussed the organizations that share a common goal with the sanctuary program and constructed a list of those organizations to share with Dan Basta, ONMS Director.

Jennifer Morgan read an announcement regarding the availability of MPAFAC seats.

The council agreed on the following meeting schedule for 2009: January 14, April 15, September 2, November 18. Frank Wasson noted that the council will need to form a research area working group at the next council meeting.

G.P. Schmahl reviewed Executive Order 12962.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Jennifer Morgan, Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator