

GFNMS Advisory Council Involvement in the National Campaign of Engagement

In December, 2012 SAC Chairs, coordinators, and Sanctuary superintendents participated in a summit on the national Campaign of Engagement which seeks to emphasize that:

1. “sanctuary means business” in the economic and “GoodFellas” sense of the term.
2. the “sense of the place” that is a sanctuary must be recognized by name and meaning

To achieve these goals the sanctuaries need to reach out to all their constituents:

Existing communities – giving them the sense of urgency necessary to strengthen the sanctuary system (e.g., Tomales bay Vessel Management Plan).

New Communities – reaching out to constituencies we have not heard from, people we have not connected with, not just in our coastal communities, but in the other parts of the nation (e.g., partnership, and tourism).

Businesses – looking at businesses as integral to the fabric that makes up the sanctuary communities, and help them contribute to the vibrancy of these public places (e.g. travel and tourism industry).

In short this campaign strategy should help the sanctuaries create an unforgettable experience to its visitors.

In a NOAA conference call on March 25 the SAC chairs reported on their progress for implementing this strategy. On behalf of GFNMS-SAC I first recognized existing GFNMS engagement with visitors of the region, specifically through America’s Cup events and the San Francisco Ocean Film Festival. I also reported that I was conducting preliminary inquiries with local institutions and businesses directly and indirectly involved in tourism and that I would bring a discussion of this issue to the SAC at our next meeting (today!).

As such I talked with “our” Maria, Dan Howard, and Cicely Muldoon and tried (and will) talk with the President of the Marin County Chamber Of Commerce. I received suggestions from them to reach out to the recreational fishing and diving community which is important in the proposed northern expansion area. I was also reminded of the “science on the sphere” at PRNS that may be used to better promote sanctuaries and ocean conservation. I mostly heard that because of our region’s many protected areas (e.g., GFNMS, CBNMS, MBNMS, PRNS, GGNRA, State Parks) it is incumbent on us to extend the campaign of engagement to these organizations and carve out a consistent message.

With this in mind we need to discuss the future role of the SAC in this effort: Indeed, the SAC engagement in this campaign is critical because, as a local community based effort that spans the entire country, it significantly weighs in Washington, as was for instance, last year’s recommendations to reactivate the Site Evaluation List (SEL).

To start this discussion I propose the following suggestions and questions:

- a. Should the SAC consider a retreat with outreach to the tourism industry as a theme?
- b. Should the SAC consider inviting tourism professionals to give presentations about the status of the industry in the region, the opportunities for collaboration, and communication channels available?
- c. Should the SAC schedule a brainstorm session beyond today (either as part of a meeting or as an online forum) to address the strategy of the campaign of engagement?
- d. Should the SAC constitute a Working group or a sub-committee to decipher these issues before bringing it for discussion in a SAC meeting?
- e. Should the SAC consider creating a tourism seat on the council?
- f. What other ideas would SAC members like to consider in future meetings regarding the relationship of GFNMS with the tourism industry and with other agencies involved with the tourism industries?

Feel free to suggest other ideas, criticisms or concerns (via email? dominiquerich@gmail.com) before the meeting if you are so inclined or even later if you cannot attend it.

Thanks. See you there.

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