



GREATER FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY  
 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
 Wednesday, December 1, 2021  
 9:00AM – 1:30PM  
 Virtual via Google Meet

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**  
[Link to Full Meeting Presentation](#)

Note: The following notes are an account of discussions at the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Copies to: Bill Douros, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, West Coast Regional Director

**Call to Order: Roll call**

Meeting called to order at: 9:00am

VOTING MEMBERS: 12 present (quorum met)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| At-Large Marin: George Clyde                                  | Education: Bibit Traut (Vice Chair)                               |
| At-Large Mendocino/Sonoma: Cea Higgins                        | Maritime Commercial Activities: John Berge                        |
| At-Large SF/San Mateo: Kris Lannin Liang<br>(for vacant seat) | Maritime Recreation Activities: Abby<br>Mohan (Chair)             |
| California Natural Resources Agency: Absent                   | National Parks Service: Ben Becker (for<br>Craig Kenkel)          |
| Commercial Fishing: Barbara Emley                             | Research: Vacant  |
| Conservation: Francesca Koe                                   | U.S. Coast Guard: LT Chris Bell                                   |
| Conservation: Kathi George                                    | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: Gerry<br>McChesney (for Chris Barr) |

Alternates Present: 2 present

|   |
|---|
| Education: Mary Miller                      |
| Maritime Commercial Activities: Julian Rose |

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: 1 present

|  |
|--|
| Channel Islands NMS: Absent                      |
| Monterey Bay NMS: Dawn Hayes (for Lisa Wooninck) |
| National Marine Fisheries Service: Absent        |
| Youth Alternate: Absent                          |

GFNMS staff present: Maria Brown, Superintendent; Jordan Gorostiza (Affiliate), Advisory Council Coordinator; Olivia Johnson (Affiliate), Administrative Assistant; Rietta Hohman (Affiliate), Greater Farallones Kelp Project Coordinator; Max Delany, Resource Protection Specialist (Permits, Enforcement, and Emergency Response), Sara Hutto (Affiliate) Greater Farallones Climate Program Coordinator

Other ONMS and NOAA staff present: Katie Denman, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries National Advisory Council Coordinator

Others present: Deb Self, Greater Farallones Association; LTJG Nicholas Buch, U.S. Coast Guard

### **Welcome, Roll Call, Review Agenda**

#### **SAC Business**

Abby Mohan, SAC Chair

Jordan Gorostiza, SAC Coordinator

#### **Introduction to new Advisory Council Coordinator**

Maria Brown introduces Jordan Gorostiza as the new Sanctuary Engagement Coordinator/Advisory Council Coordinator for both Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.

#### **MOTION: Approve May meeting highlights, with requested edits**

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion passes.

#### **Joint Ship Strike Working Group progress update**

Julian Rose, Working Group Co-Chair: Progress continues, we are in the home stretch collaborating on the final report. We hope to be doing final editing over the next few months. We have another meeting tentatively scheduled for the 10th of January hoping to finalize the report.

#### **Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent's Report**

Maria Brown, GFNMS Superintendent

#### **Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) Updates**

- Two House members have teamed up to create a bipartisan National Marine Sanctuary Caucus that will aim to promote the preservation of marine and freshwater habitats in Congress. The co-chairs of the caucus, Reps. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) — who heads the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife — and Garret Graves (R-La.) said they've already lined up 32 other House members — 27 Democrats and five Republicans — to join their effort. In a statement, the congressmen said that sanctuaries now generate \$8 billion annually in local economies and support jobs and businesses related to fishing, diving, tourism, recreation and scientific research. They said

the caucus will coordinate efforts “to raise congressional awareness and understanding of national marine sanctuaries and their role in sustaining healthy oceans.” “National marine sanctuaries are treasured areas that protect natural, historical, and cultural places in the oceans and Great Lakes,” said Huffman, who has two sanctuaries in his district. Graves said the caucus will expand on the nation’s conservation efforts, adding that “productive coastal economies in Louisiana and across our country are dependent on fishing, tourism, recreation and scientific research.”

- New Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent is Lisa Wooninck. Thanks to Dawn Hayes who was acting during the search.
- Notice of intent to designate Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) has been published. This past spring GFNMS SAC sent a letter supporting CHNMS to continue to be on the nomination list, and now the site is in the process of going through designation. You can comment publicly through the portal if you have any comments on the notice of intent (issues such as boundaries, programs, regulations).
- Notice of intent to designate Papahānaumokuākea as a National Marine Sanctuary in addition to its Marine National Monument designation. You can provide comments on that designation as well.

*Mary Miller: What are the implications for offshore wind energy for CHNMS?*

*Maria Brown: You can submit a comment to that effect if you are concerned. NOAA is seeking input on the regulations for the site.*

*Cea Higgins: There are aquaculture leases in the CHNMS area, and I’m wondering if there is any discussion of that?*

*Maria Brown: If you have a concern or interest in the aquaculture leases please feel free to submit a comment about that. NOAA is still in the information collecting phase.*

*Dawn Hayes: The next MBNMS SAC meeting is at 10am, next Friday. We will have a presentation on the designation process and you can get a lot of info on CHNMS.*

### **GFNMS Operations**

- We’ve been approved by HQ for 3 new positions for the sanctuaries – Research Lead position will be announced in the next few months. Then, a Resource Protection Team Lead and an Education Team Lead.
- Regarding COVID 19 reentry plans, we are slowly moving back to field operations. We are still not in-person at the office, but we have received news that we can go back in January, barring new developments in the virus. SAC had written a letter of support for the GFNMS campus on Crissy field. HQ has required an updated facilities assessment to review whether this is the best placement for GFNMS campus.

### **Conservation Science**

- Conservation Science staff completed the first phase of training 18 new volunteers for the Beach Watch project. With this new class of volunteers, Beach Watch now has 157

volunteers and surveys 67 beaches every two weeks, from Point Arena in Mendocino County to Año Nuevo in southern San Mateo County (northern portion of Monterey Bay sanctuary). The new volunteers will continue to undergo another 30 hours of field training by Beach Watch staff and veteran volunteer mentors for one to four more field surveys, as well as winter bird identification field classes. Much of the Beach Watch data will be used in the status and trends Condition Report for the sanctuary.

- The Beyond the Golden Gate Research Symposium hosted by Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries and several other co-sponsors is accepting abstracts and registration for the January 19-21, 2022 virtual event. The virtual symposium will take place over three days and highlight research focused on oceanography, ecology, geology, and cultural and maritime heritage throughout the sanctuary waters between Point Arena and Point Año Nuevo and central San Francisco Bay. This event provides an opportunity for the science community to share research findings and is open to the public providing a great learning opportunity for broad sanctuary communities. Abstracts for presentations are due December 17, 2021. (Link shared in chat: <https://sfbaynerr.sfsu.edu/BGGRS>)

## **Education**

- Sharktoberfest 2021 in September (virtually), up to 688 views from around the world from the date it was posted.
- Greater Farallones naturalists offered a one-hour virtual field trip on October 16, 2021 for 37 Environmental Volunteers. The Environmental Volunteers organization connects over 10,000 students to the natural sciences each year through outdoor programs. Our trip departed from San Francisco, traveled under the Golden Gate Bridge, and out to sea for the 27 mile journey to the intriguing Farallon Islands. Wildlife such as humpback and blue whales, seals, sea lions, porpoises, sharks, seabirds such as the tufted puffin and common murre, and other ocean wildlife were seen along the way! Maritime Heritage and research in the sanctuary were also highlighted. Participants learned about the National Marine Sanctuary System and the wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources that Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary protects as one of the most diverse and bountiful marine environments in the world through photos, videos, stories, games, trivia, and live animal cameos.
- The sanctuary education team continued delivering Kindergarten-University virtual marine science programs for the month of October. These 8 different engaging and dynamic “virtual programs” support continuity of science education within the sanctuary communities. Sanctuary educators coordinated and conducted 17 one-hour ocean science programs serving 368 students. Program elements included virtual sanctuary tours, student participation in crab “dances,” ocean acidification demonstrations, live interpretation of shark artifacts from the sanctuary visitor center, interactive quizzes, marine mammal soundscapes, and live-streaming of plankton samples. Classes ranged from kindergarten to University and communities served ranged from rural schools along the sanctuary boundary to urban schools in San Francisco.
- On November 6, 2021, Cordell Bank and Greater Farallones national marine sanctuaries and the Greater Farallones Association education team produced a virtual Deep Sea Soirée, featuring researcher and sponge expert Amanda Kahn, PhD. of Moss Landing

Marine Laboratories and San Jose State University. The event drew over 90 real-time attendees, and as of this meeting 289 people and rising, have watched the presentation.

### **Ocean Climate Program**

- On October 26, 2021, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary staff conducted a webinar for the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the National Marine Protected Areas Center webinar series to over 300 participants titled “MPAs as part of the climate solution: The role of blue carbon”. Staff communicated the importance of blue carbon to global mitigation goals, and presented the results of the Blue Carbon in MPAs 2-part series report.
- On Saturday, November 6, during the Nature Day at the COP26, ONMS (MPA Center & GFNMS) co-organized the event “Ocean and Climate Ambition: International Partnership on Marine Protected Areas, Biodiversity, and Climate Change,” which was hosted at the US Center. The event's purpose was to increase awareness of the International Partnership and the important role that MPAs play in mitigating climate change, particularly among the climate change negotiators and the international climate change community gathered at the COP26. The speakers highlighted the road from the COP25 to create the Partnership and to elevate the ocean in the international climate change negotiations; showed the importance of conserving and protecting MPAs to address climate change; presented specific case studies on blue carbon developed as a result of the partnerships (including GFNMS); and communicated the role, activities and the way forward of the Partnership, including future work and new membership. This hybrid virtual and in-person event was co-organized by ONMS with the Partnership’s national agencies from Chile, Costa Rica, France and the UK.
- Following COP26 Greater Farallones/Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Staff presented to an in-person audience of 80 and a virtual audience of over 300 at the International Blue Carbon Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. The presentation highlighted results of the first blue carbon assessment in a federal marine protected area using the newly published Blue Carbon in Marine Protected Areas Storymap. The presentation elicited great enthusiasm and interest from participants, and led to an engaging discussion of novel blue carbon processes quantified in the assessment. We would like to present the findings of both Blue Carbon manuscripts and the story map at our next SAC meeting in February.

### **Ecosystem Protection**

- GFNMS submitted comments to other agencies regarding proposed actions that could affect sanctuary resources or have overlap with our jurisdiction. The first was on the National Park Service Air Tour Management Plan and requested consistency with recommendations on the FAA sectional chart for 2000' AGL over sanctuaries and avoidance of specific concentrations of wildlife. The second was on the 2021 California Climate Adaptation Strategy, which will be rolled out as a website-based plan with a link to the California Adaptation Clearinghouse, which is the State of California’s consolidated searchable database of resources for local, regional and statewide climate adaptation planning and decision-making.

- The Shotgun Wad project is still making headlines in the hunting community. California Waterfowl Magazine published an article by Phil Bourjaily, who is the long-time shotgun columnist for Field and Stream. The article promoted approaches to shooting near waterways that included the messages from the report and included an image of the signage we produced that requests hunters pick up shotgun wads.
- The final draft of the Seabird Protection Network Action Plan should be released soon.
- GFNMS is advising the Greater Farallones Association on the development of a Request for Proposals for a study to determine the feasibility of a living shorelines project at the south end of Bolinas Lagoon.

## ONMS

- The ONMS has launched a campaign to celebrate the program’s 50th anniversary. Throughout 2022, we’ll use our 50th anniversary to reflect upon the past and chart a new course that will better allow us to meet the challenges and opportunities we face now and will experience in the coming decades. ONMS is updating our brand identity with an updated whale tail logo, a new system video, a series of 50th anniversary graphics, and a new commemorative poster series. The national program invites you to check out our 50th anniversary webpage to see what’s happening now and what's on the horizon in the coming months. While we have some activities and opportunities already planned, we are open to any suggestions as to how you or your organization would like to be involved. We will provide an opportunity at the next council meeting for you to provide your ideas. In the meantime, we have some great images and messages you can share throughout this year-long anniversary campaign in the partner social media kit available on [the ONMS website](#).

## Sanctuary Response to SAC’s Recommendations Related to Diversity, Inclusion, and SAC Recruitment

- Recommendations for how to increase diversity and inclusion for the GFNMS Advisory Council were submitted to Maria in May 2021. The recommendations document can be seen here:  
<https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20210321-recommendations-for-council-recruitment.pdf>
- Recommendation #1: The SAC recommends the new online SAC application that is currently in progress, which includes two added questions aimed at helping us track outreach efforts and assess applicants’ interest in or commitment to JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) topics, be made available for recruitment as soon as possible.
  - *Sanctuary response: We agree. We will continue to engage with ONMS headquarters on the progress of this new online SAC application. We commit to using the added questions to help track outreach to assess the communities we are reaching with the announcements and assess applicant interest in JEDI topics.*
  - *The two added questions are: “Describe how you will engage diverse and underrepresented communities to ensure their voices are represented on the advisory council? Please be sure to include any past experience you have connecting with these communities.” and “How did you hear about this opportunity?”*

- Recommendation #2: Changes to the GFNMS website: add diversity statement, more photos that reflect the diversity of the community the sanctuary serves, and start adding upcoming seats that are opening soon so that more people can anticipate if they might want to apply.
  - *Sanctuary response: A diversity statement has been added to the SAC webpages, we are in the process of updating pages across the website & will take photos into account, and we will begin an effort to add upcoming seat openings to the website in advance.*
- Recommendation #3: SAC members help identify opportunities for recruitment/outreach; if interested, make themselves available to applicants for insights.
  - *Sanctuary response: We will encourage members to assist with outreach; provide updated email addresses on the SAC members webpage.*
- Recommendation #4: Sanctuary staff seek community events to spread awareness about the council/recruitment; engage diverse groups.
  - *Sanctuary response: This has been an effort underway across ONMS, we will continue to take steps toward engaging diverse groups of stakeholders in sanctuary activities; attend events when possible/ as resources permit.*
- Recommendation #5: Offer travel reimbursements; explore hybrid in-person/virtual meeting options.
  - *Sanctuary response: Travel reimbursements are available on a limited basis (see SAC Charter). We will continue to assess options for in-person/virtual council meetings.*

### **Sanctuary Response to SAC's Recommendations For Engaging Youth in Sanctuary Programs**

- Recommendations for how to engage youth in sanctuary topics and programs during the virtual setting and beyond were submitted to Maria in May 2021. The recommendations document can be seen here:  
<https://nmsfarallones.blob.core.windows.net/farallones-prod/media/docs/20210321-recommendations-for-sanctuary-education-youth-engagement.pdf>
- Recommendation #1: Focus on creating new partnership programs or events with local community centers (such as city youth centers, YMCAs, JCCs, boy/girl scout troops, and/or boys and girls clubs).
  - *Sanctuary response: We will continue to create new partnerships; increase these efforts pending staff capacity.*
- Recommendation #2: Create a public-facing events calendar for scheduled events and open programs; promote the event calendar on social media at the end of programs and events.
  - *Sanctuary response: We agree. We do have an events page on our website and will explore options for a more robust calendar/outreach pending staff capacity.*
- Recommendation #3: Create a list of potential mentorship resources for students with a variety of interests to post on the website. A space for volunteers to contribute as mentors (for example, members of the advisory council, or scientists who can speak to their career experiences and/or “scientist spotlights”).

- *Sanctuary response: While we like this idea, staff currently have very limited capacity & we can not recommend mentors to youth that have not been thoroughly vetted, so we will be unable to pursue this at this time.*
- Recommendation #4: Release a newsletter via the sanctuary to local school districts updating students on opportunities.
  - *Sanctuary response: We like this idea but do not have the capacity at this time. Will revisit.*
- Recommendation #5: Focus on potential long-term online opportunities in events & outreach, with a focus on not just the Bay Area but other geographic areas as well.
  - *Sanctuary response: We are pursuing this through our online education programs.*
- Recommendation #6: Put an emphasis on interactive activities and/or software (apps that help engage participants) for online events and youth programs.
  - *Sanctuary response: We are doing this as much as possible through our online programming and will continue to do so.*
- Recommendation #7: Create a variety of one-time all-age events in the style of Sharktoberfest to promote youth/teen outreach in the Bay Area and beyond if resources allow.
  - *Sanctuary response: We like this idea and will pursue as much as resources allow.*

## **Permits**

*Cea Higgins: Question about the NASA permit. Will those instruments be using sound technology and emitting noise in the sanctuary?*

*Max Delaney: Technology is gliders that are remotely controlled, then they retrieve the gliders days to weeks later, they have minimal to no noise at all, it's just to collect oceanographic data.*

*Cea Higgins: As far as recruitment, have we reached out to differently abled communities? There is a lot of valuable information in these meetings, and I know we get notes, but can these be recorded and shared with SAC members?*

*Maria Brown: We are required to engage in all types of abled communities, if you have any suggestions on organizations we should reach out to, please forward them our way, we would be happy to reach out to any organizations or groups of people. Unfortunately, we have not been able to record meetings as of late due to protection of privacy issues, we can look into it again due to the increase in webinars and virtual meetings.*

## **Sanctuary Enforcement Update**

Max Delaney, GFNMS

LT Chris Bell and Lt Lelea Lingo, USCG

## **Recent Enforcement Activity**

Max Delaney

- *American Challenger – 90 ft vessel grounded on the Marin coast on March 5, 2021 – response is still ongoing including a salvage contractor to remove accessible pollution*



onboard and weather-proof the vessel for the winter. The Coast Guard is still the lead federal agency on this response.

- The *Perfect Cast* – Sunk near SE Farallon Island. 35 ft pleasure craft, 4 persons on board (POB) rescued, and approximately 80 gallons of fuel on board. Estimated it sank in about 300 ft of water. The owner had insurance, so the owner and insurance company are working on a search plan to look for the vessel on the seafloor. They still haven't located it. We have forwarded the case onto the office of law enforcement now.
- *F/V Marian* – sunk in Tomales Bay. Derelict vessel sank on 9/14/21. We worked with USCG and the California Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) to place boom around the vessel. Response agencies removed 150 gallons of diesel. GFNMS funded salvage of the vessel. The *Marian* owner has been found guilty and fined.
- Aluminum Vessel adrift in Tomales Bay – 20 ft long boat broke anchor and drifted into another moored vessel. Responsible party obtained a mooring lease, but never installed a mooring.
- Capsized vessel near Tomales bay – 18 ft fiberglass boat with single outboard engine, 3 POB rescued. USCG notified NOAA Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) to model a drift trajectory and the vessel has still not been found.

*Kris Lannin Liang: Is there an update on the seal attack at Fitzgerald?*

*Max Delaney: We don't have an update yet, but we have referred it to the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE). We haven't heard back on next steps for that incident.*

*George Clyde: On vessel Marian – how much does it cost to engage in that salvage operation? We all knew that this would sink, it's been talked about for years. Is there anything that we can do to remove a boat like that before it sinks?*

*Max Delaney: NOAA essentially spent \$30,000 on the salvage of this vessel. USCG paid the bill to float and tow the boat which made it less costly for us. Your second question, I will save for during our derelict vessel presentation later.*

*Cea Higgins: In general, all of the money spent by the sanctuary on these issues, that's info that would be really valuable to us. We can discuss this later when we talk about recommendations.*

*Bibit Traut: I'd like to know more about what we're doing to be proactive instead of reactive as well.*

*Cea Higgins: At one point in time for SAC, there was a spreadsheet that listed all the SAC members with emails, phone numbers, listed who was voting and non-voting, it would be wonderful if, once we bring on new members, we can create a new spreadsheet. The last time this was revised was in 2020.*

*Jordan Gorostiza: As soon as we get our new members recruited, I can create that and circulate it.*

*Bibit Traut: There are some issues with google account for these meetings, so if you have a choice of providing an email and we have a Gmail would you prefer that?*

*Jordan Gorostiza: I think it's whatever works best for each of you, if Gmail is more compatible for you then I can use that, but it's personal preference.*

## **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) Superintendent's Report**

Dawn Hayes, MBNMS Deputy Superintendent

### **Management**

- Named new superintendent, Lisa Wooninck, on Nov 8, 2021. Wooninck was previously the West Coast Region policy coordinator and a National Marine Fisheries Service fishery ecologist.
- Published final MBNMS Management Plan on Nov 15. Thirteen new and updated action plans with community input. Minor changes to some regulations – clarify ability to approve beneficial use of suitable dredged material for habitat protection or restoration, modify 4 year-round Motorized Personal Watercraft (MPWC) zone configurations, and change prerequisite for MPWC zone use as seasonal zone. Link to management plan webpage: <https://montereybay.noaa.gov/intro/mp/welcome.html>

### **Resource Protection**

- Seabird protection: endangered short tailed albatross hanging around. There are cruises to find and observe the bird, working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and International Bird Rescue.
- MBNMS Whale Watching guidelines released in November.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

*There were no public comments.*

### **BREAK**

## **Presentation: Report Back on Progress Toward Kelp Recommendations**

Rietta Hohman, Greater Farallones Kelp Project Coordinator

### **Presentation Highlights:**

- Extensive loss of kelp forests habitats in the sanctuary – substantive loss 2015 – 2019. In 2020 and 2021, there was a modest uptick in kelp density. Extensive loss was due to multiple factors - marine heatwave and extensive explosion of urchins. Our methods are to tip the stable state urchin barren back towards healthy kelp forest.
- Sonoma-Mendocino Bull Kelp Recovery Plan is listed as a guidance document for the CA Sea Grant Kelp Recovery Research Program.
- Active recovery – establish a network of kelp oases, reduce urchin grazing pressure, enhance kelp (outplanting/seeding)
- Monitoring and Research – development of cost-effect, long term kelp canopy mapping program, investigate characteristics or resilience and persistence

- Community engagement – enhance engagement with stakeholders and increase communication and uniform messaging.
- Plane based kelp surveys ceased in 2016 leaving an information gap. In 2019-2021, the joint program teamed up with TNC and academic groups to initiate one of the largest drone mapping projects to ever take place in California.
- Data from surveys help inform restoration site assessment – identified important primary restoration sites and understand current kelp community structures.
- Developing a report that will outline remote sensing tools for kelp canopy assessment to inform decision making processes for kelp restoration and conservation in California.
- 2021 showed a modest increase in kelp cover, but showing high urchin densities still. But it shows that there are still viable kelp populations in coastal areas. We are working with commercial urchin divers to tackle logistical challenges on restoration planning.
- Moss Landing Marine Lab and Sonoma State University are testing bull kelp culturing and outplanting methods for kelp enhancement.
- Community engagement – monthly KELPRR calls, create consistent messaging. Proposal to team up with Fishermen in the Classroom and LiMPETS programs to teach youth on the north coast about kelp restoration.
- Currently well positioned to lead kelp restoration efforts but need funding – working on two proposals to begin restoration. There’s also \$2.5 million in the Senate Commerce bill for the Greater Farallones Kelp Recovery Project. It has not yet gone through Congress though.

*Bibit Traut: In areas where there is active culling of urchins, what are you seeing in those coves?*

*Rietta Hohman: They’ve seen some initial success of bull kelp growing where they’ve been removing urchins, this year we’re seeing an increase in a few areas. We will see success over the longer term with removing urchins, but it’s important to understand what the resilience is going to be and understand what that urchin removal effects were going to be.*

### **Presentation: Report Back on Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Recommendations**

Max Delaney, GFNMS/CBNMS Emergency Response Coordinator

Presentation highlights:

- In May 2021, the GFNMS SAC provided 10 recommendations on Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADV) to the Sanctuary.
- Key Points from recommendations:
  - Better agency coordination - oil spill response partners, local stakeholders and landowners
  - Increased funding for salvage and removal – vessel registration fees, grant programs, dedicated funding
  - Address the problem of uninsured vessel owners – new insurance requirement, commercial and recreational
    - Of the 7-12 abandoned vessels we deal with each year, more than half are uninsured.

- More enforcement, more compensation for the personnel that are responding to these issues.
- Types of Incidents:
  - Abandoned / Derelict Vessels – vessels that are no longer taken care of and pose a threat to people and the environment
    - Federal and state agencies have different definitions for what constitutes a derelict or deserted vessel – number of days left in place (10-45), location, moored vs anchored, navigational hazard or not.
    - In GFNMS, most likely to occur in Tomales Bay
  - Grounded/sunken vessels – vessels that have run aground or sunk within the sanctuary.
    - No legal definitions, these are extremely time sensitive and involve a lot of triage. Factors that cause groundings include weather/sea state, operator negligence, vessel malfunctioning.
    - In GFNMS these incidents can occur anywhere
- GFNMS prohibited activities (§ 922.82(a) Prohibited or otherwise regulated activities):
  - Discharging into sanctuary
  - Discharging outside the sanctuary that enters the sanctuary and injures a sanctuary resource
  - Abandoning any structure on or in the submerged lands of the sanctuary
  - Deserting a vessel aground, at anchor, or adrift in the sanctuary
  - Leaving harmful materials aboard grounded or deserted vessel in the sanctuary
- Challenges:
  - No single responsible lead agency – depends on whose property and whose jurisdiction. Also funding. It's about collaboration and cooperation.
  - Location of incident – some areas are easier to salvage than others; road access; where the vessel is grounded.
  - Jurisdiction/enforcement authority – could be anchored on lands where no agency has authority
  - Weather/state of the sea
  - Type of vessel (small vs fishing) affects cost of removal
  - Lack of insurance requirements
  - Lack of coordination from responsible party (RP)
  - Lack of salvage fund available
- GFNMS Response to SAC Recommendations:
  - Preventing and responding to vessel incidents is beyond the scope of what GFNMS can do as a stand-alone agency, we need statewide or national changes in scope.
  - Vessel incidents are complex.
  - Regional/national coordination is necessary.
  - Many solutions require legislative changes (insurance, dedicated funding sources, agency authorities).
  - Opportunities exist for the public to work on vessel issues.
- GFNMS Recommends the Subcommittee address the following:
  - GFNMS SAC Subcommittee process

- Provide recommendations to raise awareness with local, state and federal stakeholders about current limitations.
  - Provide recommendations for ways to improve coordination and preparedness.
  - Review known issues with ADVs in GFNMS.
  - Identify opportunities for expanded and new federal funding sources (Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund) and state funding.
  - GFNMS / Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) West Coast Regional Office (WCRO) can provide incident case studies and data about costs and impacts.
  - Laws and regulation in Washington State can be useful for California to consider.
- Individual action
    - SAC members (as members of the public) can contact local and state legislators about insurance and registration requirements and funding sources for salvage.

*John Berge: You mentioned gaps between insurance for commercial vs recreational, for a full scale list of recommendations, is that applying to both commercial and recreational?*

*Max Delaney: I would have to dig a little deeper to find the difference between commercial and recreational insurance requirements. Some grant funding opportunities for salvage have only been available to recreational vessels. Damage from commercial vessels can be much higher so it could be more difficult to have insurance or to salvage. More discussion to tease out details of what policies exist for both categories of vessels is important. Also, the issue of out of state vessels coming to California and are not insured here.*

*John Berge: Hurdles to consider because recreational fishers are a lobbying force here in the state. For vessel sales, there are certain minimum requirements that the vessel is somewhat seaworthy, and I wonder if that's one of the things this group has proposed as well.*

*Maria Brown: Great points you've brought up on the complexity of this issue and how it's out of the scope of the GFNMS. We don't have the authority to address these really critical topics that you're bringing up. What would be most beneficial to GFNMS would be to focus on where GFNMS has authority and focus the conversation on our sphere of influence. There are areas that we've identified and areas we have influence and have asked the SAC to keep it focused on where we can have an impact. As a part of the subcommittee's charge, the sanctuary is requesting that the subcommittee take on these six activities as a part of their charge so that the subcommittee can provide recommendations to the full council to discuss and forward to the sanctuary.*

*Cea Higgins: There should be some clarification on the subcommittee coming up with these recommendations, we agreed to form this subcommittee, but we never really got to. I did my best to bring this forward, but there are multiple actions and recommendations that are not on this list that are within sanctuary jurisdiction. I want to point out that this is a regional sanctuary issue as well. I understand we want to come up with something we can do, but I don't want to limit it to*

*that, so before there's an action item I think we need to establish who wants to be on this subcommittee to see who can contribute. I don't feel like we've looked at all the possibilities yet. There is a lot of stuff that isn't here, and I'm worried about taking a vote before we have a full subcommittee developed, and that we can have a lot more recommended next steps on this list.*

*Maria Brown: The first thing regarding the scope of the subcommittee, we were reminded from HQ a couple years ago that our recommendations from SAC can only come to me, they cannot be recommendations to any other sanctuary. You can provide a recommendation to me requesting that I work with other sanctuaries in California, you can request that I work with WCR on an issue, you can request that I request the WCR work on an issue, but our recommendations cannot be recommendations for the WCR. The subcommittee was voted on and formed, it's already established, at any time, you can open it up and request to have additional SAC members join. If you'd like to do that today, you can. In terms of action items, this is not a vote to take a recommendation to the sanctuary right now, the sanctuary's request to the subcommittee is that the subcommittee address these issues. If you choose to address additional issues, and widen the scope of the subcommittee's charge, you will need to bring the request back to SAC for approval.*

*Cea Higgins: When we're looking at cost and impacts of grounded vessels and looking at what the cost might be for staff support for this subcommittee, in the long run it would be money saved for the sanctuary and all involved. These are huge impacts to sanctuary resources; I want to say that if we are doing the subcommittee, I'm asking that this be a staff supported subcommittee.*

*Maria Brown: The sanctuary committed to supporting this group. We have a policy to only staff support two working groups/subcommittees at a time. We were supporting four this past year, three have concluded and we now have the capacity to support the ADV subcommittee. Moving forward you will have the staff support as the SAC has chosen this as one of the two working bodies of the SAC at this time.*

*Cea Higgins: Thank you for the support, great news, and thank you to Max for putting all this together and providing resources, and hopefully Max and Karen can advise the working group.*

*Maria Brown: They can provide technical information and answer questions, they can provide information on the issues impacting the sanctuary. The subcommittee will provide recommendations to the SAC.*

*George Clyde: I appreciate Max and Maria for their support. I think what needs to be a part of the subcommittee work is the subject of enforcement, which is within the scope of the sanctuary when it happens to sanctuary resources. Someone saying they don't have insurance seems to be a complete response. There is a symbolic step that if we take action on someone who is uninsured then the message would get out that people without insurance won't be protected. I always try to reach out and see if there's been follow up with the uninsured people, and it seems there hasn't been. We need case studies on uninsured vessels like American Challenger and Marian. I think this is within the scope of the sanctuary regulations and should be a part of the subcommittee.*

*Cea Higgins: I would hope that there are other bullet points that need to be covered during the subcommittee process, I don't want to see this rushed today. We have been the leader on climate action and blue carbon and sediment management, and because this is an issue that affects the whole WCR, I feel there are more bullet points we should add here. Before moving forward on an action, I'd like to ask if there is anyone else who wants to join the subcommittee, and could we just add a bullet point that the subcommittee come up with additional recommendations, so this isn't necessarily the complete list, but we don't need to complete that list today.*

*Abby Mohan: Hopefully, we'll have a more robust set of subcommittee results now that we will have staff support. Now that some other subcommittees have disbanded a little, I would like to revisit who is on this subcommittee and open it up to see if anyone else has interest or capacity.*

*Cea Higgins: We will also get new members soon and would love to offer it up to them as well.*

*Abby Mohan: Maybe what we can do, in addition to welcoming new members at the next meeting, we can set aside a couple minutes to allow opportunities for engagement for the new members.*

*Maria Brown: I would like to note that you can invite individuals to present to the SAC or subcommittee as technical experts if you would like. In terms of process, if you don't have any tasks to add to the charge, these bullets would be the charge of the subcommittee, and if you want to add to them, you can bring it back to the next SAC meeting requesting approval to broaden the scope of the subcommittee.*

*George Clyde: I have a bullet point I'd like to add, but I think it can be held off for now for the subcommittee to reevaluate.*

*Cea Higgins: Can we begin the process of creating our next subcommittee meeting. To look at the timeliness of the issue, is there an intermediate step of recommendations or actions?*

*Maria – any intermediate steps or actions would need to be brought today to the SAC. You can start meeting now as a subcommittee, my recommendation is that Jordan reach out to the subcommittee with a poll to schedule the first meetings, and at that meeting develop a timeline for when you'd like to meet and how often and develop what to bring to the Feb SAC meeting.*

*Bibit Traut: It would be useful for the subcommittee to put together a brief overview of what the subcommittee is about, so new members can be brought to speed if they want to join. Ideally that could go out before the meeting even.*

*Maria Brown: For working groups we have more guidelines on what we can and can't do, once a working group is formed, we avoid adding and exchanging members, but with a subcommittee we don't have as many policies developed, it's more of a fluid body. Ship strike is a working group.*

*Abby Mohan: So, the only subcommittee that is active for new members to join would be the ADVs subcommittee.*

*Cea Higgins: One recommendation here is looking at legislative changes to open up funding, when is your next meeting with the Caucus and is that in our purview to bring that up with them?*

*Maria Brown: We have very strict guidelines on staying within the executive branch, we cannot advise Congress unless asked or going through executive branch, cannot provide recommendations to legislative branch, cannot send requests for them to do any activities, all activities need to stay with executive branch/NOAA. As an individual, you can speak to your member of congress, you can do that as an individual, but not as a member of the SAC.*

*George Clyde: This is the first time I've had a chance to focus on these recommended next steps, even without changing the substance there are things that can be done to make them more useful, seems to me that that's one of the first thing our subcommittee does when it meets rather than adopt them now and then amend them.*

## **BREAK**

### **Presentation: US Coast Guard Port Access Route Study (PARS)**

LTJG Nicholas Buch, USCG

#### Presentation Highlights:

- What is a PARS? Review of fairways, traffic separation schemes, channels, aids to navigation. Studies are required before making changes or removing routing in the waterway.
- This study is off the coasts of Washington, California, and Oregon at major ports. Scope doesn't cover inner port transits, just sea buoy outward. Focus on traffic separation scheme approaches/departures, coastal routing, and offshore transits. Major ports such as: San Diego, CA, Los Angeles/Long Beach, CA, San Francisco, CA, Humboldt Bay, CA, Coos Bay, OR, Yaquina Bay, OR, Astoria, OR, Grays Harbor, WA, and Seattle/Puget Sound, WA.
- What is prompting this study?
  - Commercial and government space launches happening offshore, areas to be avoided are expanding, proposed wind farms, proposed aqua farms, with new demands we want to make sure navigation is safe and efficient. NOAA proposed Area to be Avoided - expansion around Channel Island, Proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.
- Phase 1 is Data Gathering – comment period open until January 25,2022.
  - Determine shipping routes based on AIS, stakeholder and public outreach, gather marine transportation system data, planning guidelines and recommendations.
- Phase 2 – Applying Suitability Criteria – are there areas of higher risk, is it based on areas to avoid
  - Analyze AIS data
- Phase 3 – Modeling and Analysis – develop GIS model to show all current and future development and traffic data, evaluate options if new routing measures are necessary. Identify navigation safety corridor from recommended routes of traffic



- Phase 4 – Implementing Study Results- any recommendation or proposed mitigation measures will be published in a final study, identify routes and alternative routes. Final aspect will be a study published on the federal registrar, and then from there it could become a final rule.
- Docket-USCG 2021-0345

*John Berge: What would be the timeline for this whole process to play out, obviously depending on what the USCG proposes in their final rule, but in terms of adoption of any changes?*

*Nicholas Buch: For this study we are shooting to have it finalized and published in 3-5 years. For after the study when the rulemaking process happens, it's a lengthy process to get these changes finalized, so tough to get an overall timeline, but for the study itself we're shooting for 3-5 years.*

*Cea Higgins: As far as outreach, how have you been getting the word out and how can we help with that. I notice you had all these major ports but what about outreach to smaller ports?*

*Nicholas Buch: We are focusing on larger organizations that can help distribute like NMS and harbor safety committees. Beyond that, our sectors are distributing it to their own inspections and facilities teams. Any lists we're able to get our hands on at the sector level, we are taking advantage of that. For you all helping, the fliers we provided have all the info on them. We also have social media and a pacific marine magazine that published the study there.*

*Maria Brown: Nice intersection between USCG PARS process and SAC council process, if there is any information the SAC feels the sanctuary should provide to the Coast Guard you can bring that forward. To touch base on the timeline for ship strike recommendations, we are anticipating receiving those from the SAC in February. I just want to confirm that if those recommendations come in February, is that still within the data collection timeframe for the USCG PARS process.*

*Nicholas Buch: It is a little after our goal, but we will still accept data. The study seems very broad, so we are hoping to help narrow people down into specific areas and provide initial data to help initiate comment in areas we are trying to identify. We're hesitant to recommend specific topics at this point, because we don't want to bias the comments.*

*Bibit Traut: Agree about using the whale ship strike report to help inform this, especially when setting up lanes. Not sure if you're establishing lanes or changing, but are you incorporating species range shifts into the decision-making process?*

*Nicholas Buch: Data collection as well as data availability when this happened 10 years ago was limited, adapting potential changes to shipping lanes isn't unheard of for the final list of solutions.*

*Maria Brown: During this public comment period for the USCG, I think we have an opportunity today, if any of the SAC members have a request for the sanctuary to submit information, you can provide that recommendation to us now, and it sounds like the Coast Guard would be amenable to receive information after our February meeting.*

*Kathi George: I put forth a recommendation that the sanctuary puts forth a recommendation to the USCG of navigational safety around whales and conserving sanctuary resources. I can put forth a report on whale strikes and deaths that can help support any additional information there. Just since September there have been six whale deaths, no determined cause of death.*

*Maria Brown: If you would like us to formally include SAC recommendations, we can take input that you've given us recommendations, but if you would like to be recognized it would need to be an official action.*

*Abby – I think we want to officially recommend. I recommend that the sanctuary work with The Marine Mammal Center (TMMC) to send the USCG appropriate whale ship strike data to USCG for input to their study.*

*Nicholas Buch: We are working with Michael Carver, and getting a decent amount of ship strike data from various groups.*

*Kathi George: Can we also make an official recommendation that says that we want to encourage the USCG to utilize the data that was provided by Michael and other NMS to be considered when they're reviewing all the public comments, just something official to recommend that.*

*Maria Brown: If you want to be on record as a SAC requesting an action, the SAC can pass a motion to request that the GFNMS provide whale ship strike data to the USCG for their PARS process.*

**MOTION: To recommend that the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary provide whale ship strike data to the U.S. Coast Guard for the Pacific Port Access Route Study (PACPARS)**

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion passes.

*Cea Higgins: Request for sanctuary to inform us of what information they're sharing with the coast guard, does that need to be an official action?*

*Maria Brown: Once we share that information with you, you may request that we provide additional information, but it doesn't need to be an official action*

*Abby Mohan: Let's try and have that request of information shared so we can allow 5-10 min at the February meeting, so we have an opportunity to request additional information be shared with USCG if we want.*

*Julian Rose: During our Whale Strike Working Group meetings we heard from East Coast NOAA that it can make a big difference on Routing Studies whether NOAA participates as a joint*

*federal partner, or simply makes public comments. I was going to ask the LTJG what opportunity there may be for NOAA to assume the more involved role of joint fed?*

*Maria Brown: There are different ways that federal agencies can work together on an official action, it could be a joint action, it can be a consultation. There are multiple ways to work together. Currently Michael Carver is serving as liaison between sanctuaries and USCG providing information. It is an informal role. If the SAC would like to request that I bring up the issue of playing a more formal role in this process, that's an action you can take.*

*Julian Rose: Can I recommend that?*

*Abby Mohan: Does Michael have capacity to do this? I agree we should ask the sanctuary to play a formal role, but it could also create a fair amount of staff burden.*

*Maria Brown: With PARS being beyond the scope of the sanctuary, it probably would be most appropriate if the request would be that I request NOAA to be involved in a formal role in the west coast PARS process. I am not the decision maker, but I could pass the request to the ONNMS.*

**MOTION: To recommend that the GFNMS Superintendent, on behalf of the Advisory Council, request that NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, West Coast Region become a federal partner in the U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Port Access Route Study (PACPARS)**

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion passes.

### **Member Reports**

**Abby Mohan, Maritime Recreational Activities:** End of charter boat season, had our last Eco sail of the season. It was really nice to be back on the water, and see the general public a little bit this year.

**Bibit Traut, Education:** Shared with local schools about COP26 involvement, which was very exciting. Also, sent out a blue carbon report on methane from salt marshes. Also, I shared with the schools about the International Ocean Film Festival because there's a youth film competition, and many people expressed interest.

**Gerry McChesney, US Fish & Wildlife:** Main thing is the federal consistency determination for the mouse eradication project that was submitted to the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The hearing will be on Dec 16th.

**Barbara Emley, Commercial Fishing:** Supposed to have started crab season, but there are whale interactions. So, we never know when we will start. It's been frustrating because they say there's about 8,000 humpback whales on the coast, so it's hard to understand why it's listed as an

endangered species when they are doing really well. It would not be an issue to start crab season if they were not listed.

**Sarah Bates, Commercial Fishing:** Crab season was supposed to start November 15th, but we're waiting for the State working group and Director to tell us we can go when whale populations decrease off the Gulf of the Farallones.

**Kris Lannin Liang, Community-at-Large San Francisco/San Mateo:** Nothing to report.

**George Clyde, Community-at-Large, Marin:** While commercial season is shut down, recreational crab season is allowed with limited gear, so there's been some success in dealing with this new gear that is less impactful.

**Cea Higgins, Community-at-Large, Sonoma/Mendocino:** Thank you, Gerry, for bringing forward that the mouse eradication is in front of the CCC. Want to add that you can go to the CCC website and you can send in a written comment or sign up to speak at the hearing. I imagine it will be an interesting meeting. Report just released by the National Academy of Science on the US Role in Global Ocean Plastic Waste.

**Francesca Koe, Conservation:** The reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act is happening, also the State's Natural Resource Agency has been looking at a draft of natural and working lands climate smart strategy and GFA weighed in and commented on some of their outreach strategies and nature-based solutions.

**Kathi George, Conservation:** Dungeness crab fishery risk assessment meeting is next Wednesday, so we should know more shortly after when the season will be opening. Sadly, we lost one of our research associates this week who was also a part of Cal Academy, Oceanic Society, Surf Community, and much more. He sadly passed away unexpectedly last week, so I just wanted to let you all know and acknowledge what he's done for our community.

**Mary Miller, Education:** Nothing to report.

**John Berge, Maritime Commercial Activities:** Nothing to report.

**Julian Rose, Maritime Commercial Activities:** Nothing to report.

**Ben Becker, National Park Service:** For the past three years with UC Santa Cruz, we've been doing black abalone recruitment monitoring. Wrapping up that work, and have seen some robust recruitment in Southern California. Finished 5th year of eelgrass monitoring in Drake's Estero with report in January or February. Next spring, we will be doing small grants near Tomales Bay and the Point Reyes National Seashore area.

**WRAP UP & ADJOURN: 2:00pm**

*Maria Brown: I want to say thank you, during this time of thanks, for your service to the Sanctuary. The advice you provide us makes us a much more effective sanctuary, and we appreciate your efforts. Also, I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season and New Year. I am very hopeful we will get to spend some time together next year!*

*Meeting highlights prepared by Jordan Gorostiza, Advisory Council Coordinator.*