

**Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS)
Advisory Council Meeting
February 17, 2010**

In attendance: David Alberg (MNMS Sanctuary Superintendent), Mitch Bowman (Heritage Tourism), Scott Boyd (Citizen-At-Large), Jim Bunch (Recreational Diving), Dave Dodsworth (MNMS IT Specialist), Terri Kirby-Hathaway (Education), Dave Krop (Alternate-The Mariners' Museum), Lauren Heesemann (MNMS Research Coordinator), Anna Holloway (The Mariners' Museum), Joe Hoyt (MNMS Maritime Archaeologist), Jeff Johnston (MNMS Historian), Richard Lawrence (NC Dept of Cultural Resources), Shannon Ricles (Council Coordinator), Joe Schwarzer (Maritime Museum), Mark Wilde-Ramsing (Alternate-NC Dept of Culture Resources)

Absent: Timothy Brown, (USCG), David Conlin (National Park Service), Ron Grayson (VA Dept. of Historic Resources), Jay Kavanagh (Recreational/Commercial Fishing), Susan Langley (Archaeological Research), Larry Murphy (Working Group Member), Robert Neyland (US Navy), Wayne Smith (Conservation), Doug Stover (Alternate-National Park Service), and Joanna Wilson (Alternate- VA Dept of Cultural Resources).

Public Guests in Attendance: Vince Cook, Catherine Kozack, George Phifer, Joe Poe, Andy Shephard, Susan West, and Alex Varouxis

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Welcome

Dave Alberg, MNMS Sanctuary Superintendent, called the meeting to order. After Dave's welcoming remarks, roll was called.

Monitor NMS Superintendent's Report

Dave Alberg, *Monitor* NMS Superintendent, provided an update to the council on a variety of topics, summarized below:

- Dave Alberg discussed grants for the upcoming summer expedition in June 2010. He explained that through our 2008 and 2009 partnership with the Minerals Management Service on the Battle of the Atlantic expeditions, the Department of the Interior (MMS) awarded \$100K for the continuation of Graveyard of the Atlantic survey work.
- Dave also detailed that the new 85-foot research vessel, SRVx, will be permanently relocated to the east coast by June 1. The ship will help to support the *Monitor*, Stellwagen Bank, Gray's Reef, and Florida Keys sanctuaries and their missions. So far 100 days of ship time has already been bought. The ship will also be for hire by universities, other NOAA offices, and other organizations that need a research vessel.
- Dave discussed his recent trip to the Richmond Dive Club where he presented to over 40 people. He described the members' responses as very positive for the need of protection for some shipwrecks. During his presentation he relayed that NOAA has no position on expansion, but our sanctuary has had strong recommendations from our council to explore the possibility of expanding the boundaries of the sanctuary. However, any expansion would need to be thoroughly researched and the sanctuary would work very closely with the state and others before considering going forward. Dave also reiterated that expansion would not be about restriction, but rather open access.
- Dave continued to detail the Battle of the Atlantic expedition by saying that the plans are for the expedition to be conducted in two parts. The first leg would begin in June with the focus being on the merchant ships that were sunk during the WWII off the coast of North Carolina. If funds are available, the second leg would be in August, and it would focus on looking at possible environmental threats and conducting corrosion studies on some of the WWII shipwrecks.
- Jeff Johnston said that several people have proposed trips to the *Monitor* for the summer, but no permits have been issued. Joe Poe commented that acquiring a permit for diving on the *Monitor* is often thought to have a fee associated with it and thus people are often confused and don't apply. Jeff encourages people to go to the web site to read about the permitting process, and they will see that there are not any fees associated with receiving a permit.
- Joe Schwarzer also commented that there is a lot of discussion in the Outer Banks on the salvaging of metals from shipwrecks. He said that the local dive club was upset and wants to shut down access to certain wrecks. Dave Alberg explained that the sanctuary has no authority over non-state or military vessels. He commented that education and self-policing among the dive community was best way to stop unwanted actions.
- Richard Lawrence asked for more details on the June leg of the Battle of the Atlantic expedition. Joe Hoyt explained that if funding came through, they would be working with Woodshole on a grant to use 3-D imaging on a couple of wreck sites. He also explained that the technology would have a flat screen interface. In addition, Joe said that they hoped to be able to dive on the *Monitor* during the time they are there

- Andy Sheppard asked if the new SRVx would be able to berth divers and researchers. Dave Alberg explained that the boat can accommodate 12 people for overnight trips. However, for day trips, it could support up to 18. He also said that for the expedition, the boat will be docked at Ocracoke Island or Hatteras depending on where there is dock space.
- Dave Alberg said that several products will be ready soon:
 - The HMT *Bedfordshire* site plan, from the 2009 expedition
 - Dive slates for the German U-boats and the *Bedfordshire*, which will be given at no cost to the dive shops.
 - A photo mosaic of the YP-389 discovered last summer during the expedition onboard NOAA's ship *Nancy Foster* is available for printing.
 - Set of site plans for the U-boats and the *Bedfordshire*. There are limited quantities at this time, but the sanctuary would like to create a poster of the site plans in the future.
- Dave Alberg also explained that the sanctuary is working with a company to create short vignettes that will highlight North Carolina and Outer Banks maritime history, landmarks, and unique features. These vignettes will be available for upload to iPhones or iPods. The sanctuary is also considering purchasing a number of iPods that will be available for Outer Banks visitors to rent. This project would create an interactive trail for visitors to explore the area and thus possibly stay longer. It would also give visitors a better appreciation of maritime heritage and the Outer Banks. The project is projected to cost about \$50K.
- Dave Alberg relayed upcoming events:
 - March 5-6: Battle of Hampton Roads
 - 6th annual artificial reef event—Debby Boyce is the lead
 - April 19-23: Research Coordinators Conference will be held in Beaufort and Manteo, North Carolina. This event will also include a day in Manteo hosted by UNC Coastal Studies Institute. It is proposed that the day will be one of celebration of the life and people of the Outer Banks. All sanctuary advisory council members are invited to attend.
- Dave Alberg explained that our sanctuary's request for additional seats on the advisory council was put on hold. Dan Basta, Director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, felt that the increase was too significant for our staff resources. However, Dan did authorize three additional seats: a second dive seat, a second commercial/recreational fishing seat, and an economic development seat.
- Dave Alberg stopped the meeting to allow for the public commenting period to begin.

Public Commenting Period

Alex Varouxis asked if the U-boat posters that NOAA is producing will have a cost associated with them. Dave responded that they will be free. Joe Schwarzer asked if they could be sold. Dave explained that as a Federal agency we could not sell any products as tax dollars have paid for them. However, there is a mechanism through the Foundation for selling select items, such as limited edition prints with the intent of raising money specifically for the conservation of Monitor Artifacts. Dave pointed out that the purpose of these materials was public outreach however and that the goal was to get these materials into the hands of the public at no cost. Mr. Varouxis commented that he has seen the U-boat poster and wants a copy of it and knows that

many others do also and would be willing to pay. Joe Poe commented that selling the poster to raise money for *Monitor* conservation is good, but he reminded everyone to think about the educational value of giving the poster away for free. He said that the intent of the expeditions is to raise public awareness of maritime heritage, and the poster is something that would help to do so. He said that perhaps there could be a balance between the two ideas. Mr. Varouxis agreed that sometimes when people get things for free, they do not think of it as “valuable.” Joe Poe also said value would depend on the price and that even a \$2.00 charge would create more of an inherent value of the poster than “free.” And people would pay \$2.00 very easily versus \$20.00. Dave commented that it is important to recognize that the work of the expedition was done so as to get the word out about the importance of maritime heritage.

A discussion then came up about NOAA producing Dive Slates for the U-boats. Alex Varouxis asked how the slate cards will differ from the posters. Dave explained that the slate cards would be hard plastic and able to go under-water. A set of four cards would be created, one for each shipwreck documented thus far. Multiple sets would be printed and each dive/boat operator would receive a number of sets for their customers to use while diving the wrecks. These would be returned at the end of each dive and reused. The MNMS would pay for the cost of creating and printing them and offer them free of charge to dive shops and boat operators along the North Carolina coast.

George Phifer, a property owner in Hatteras, NC, commented that he is concerned with expansion of the sanctuary and asked for some clarification about what NOAA’s plans were. Dave Alberg explained that a draft management plan (on the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary) should be ready by summer 2010, and in that plan, there won’t be any significant changes proposed to the site. It will just clarify rules and processes. He stated that to date, NOAA has not had a position on expanding the sanctuary. However, during the management plan review process in public scoping meetings, there were many comments received concerning expansion, both for and against. Therefore, an expansion working group was established and their recommendation was to explore the possibility and implications of expansion in the future through a public forum to include all of the affected constituents in the public process. He said that there has not been any recommendation to limit access, and that the goal would be to help elevate the visibility of the wrecks to build on the rich heritage of North Carolina’s coast. Dave Alberg stated that NOAA is not interested in closing shipwrecks to divers. NOAA is interested in helping to protect the military and historic shipwrecks through the already established Sunken Military Craft Act and through greater education and outreach efforts. He also explained that the current permitting model, used at the Monitor has worked for that shipwreck, but that model of protection makes little sense for other shipwrecks in NC waters and that if the Sanctuary is ever expanded other models that promote rather than limit access, such as the model used at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary would be the model that is pursued.

George asked if that meant if the sanctuary is expanded that mooring buoys would be installed like at Thunder Bay. Dave Alberg said yes, if the sanctuary expands, then we would have the authority to place buoys near the wrecks and would look to find other ways to increase responsible access.

Mr. Phifer asked how Marine Protected Areas (MPA) differ from expansion. Dave Alberg explained that there is a complex system of MPAs in the nation. MPAs can be state or federal and vary from MPA to MPA in their management. In January, NOAA's MPA Center sent out a Federal Register Notice listing three North Carolina sites that had been nominated for inclusion in the national system of MPAs and asking for public comment. They included Cape Lookout, Cape Hatteras, and Queen Ann's Revenge (QAR) shipwreck site. Although these sites were nominated for inclusion in the national System of MPA's, they have nothing to do with any possible expansion of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is not involved in these nominations. Both Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout National Seashores are already MPAs, according to the definition in Executive Order 13158; their nomination would incorporate them into the larger national system for planning support purposes. In the case of Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout, these existing MPAs were recently nominated by the National Park Service to the National System of MPAs, which is a system of independently managed, existing federal, state, and territorial MPAs (national parks, national wildlife refuges, national marine sanctuaries and comparable state sites) working together to achieve common objectives for conserving the nation's important natural and cultural resources. The QAR Site was nominated by the State of North Carolina.

There already are 225 existing MPAs of various types that are part of the National System of MPAs. Approximately half are federal and half are state/territorial. The national system does not bring state, territorial or local sites under federal authority or control. The proposed designation as part of the National System of MPAs does not change the current management of these sites in any way. It is simply recognition that they already protect marine resources and provides an opportunity to work together with other protected areas on common priorities.

Last week several counties in NC expressed concern over a Federal Register Notice nominating Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout to the national System of MPA's. This has resulted in a great deal of confusion and fear amongst the communities along the Outer Banks. David pointed out that the inclusion of these sites does not provide any new regulatory authority to the Federal Govt. If the sites are listed as MPAs, they would remain under their current managing agency, such as the National Park Service and/or the State of North Carolina. Unfortunately, an MPA has a different meaning to many folks and many don't understand what it is to be an MPA. It doesn't change anything other than just to add them to a list. David felt that a better job could have been done articulating what an MPA is and what a designation means. Unfortunately, the Federal Register Notice upset a lot of people in Hyde and Dare County. Mr. Phifer said that the closing of the snapper and grouper fishing at about the same time probably did not help matters.

Dave Alberg expressed his concern and frustration over how little education and outreach effort had been made to better explain the MPA Center process to local communities. David stated that the MNMS has tried very hard to build trust among the North Carolinians and the fallout from the recent MPA Center nominations threatens to erode that trust. He also clarified that all regulations of these sites will be driven by the managing site. Richard Lawrence added that Cape Lookout and Cape Hatteras do not have any ocean area but are strictly land based. Dave Alberg also said that even though MNMS is not involved in the MPA process, he has reached out to the MPA organization to try to help ease people's fears on MPAs. Richard Lawrence noted that even QAR is only a 300 yard circle around the site which was designated in 1997. Dave

acknowledged that Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout are the two sites that have caused the most concern. Mr. Phifer said that with the restriction of access to the beaches and the closing of fishing didn't help matters.

There were no more public comments and the public commenting period was closed.

Report Outs

Youth Working Group

Shannon Ricles, Education and Outreach Coordinator reported on the Youth Working Group. She explained that the group has been actively working on creating two age-appropriate PowerPoint Presentations for students from kindergarten to high school that would convey ocean issues and what they can do to help protect the ocean. She also described how the members of the Youth Working Group plan to organize community events such, as beach clean-up days, sea grass planting, and other appropriate events.

The Mariners' Museum

Anna Holloway shared that The Mariners' Museum their program, "Chemistry in Conservation," went virtual February 11. She also explained the recent kids' art show and talked about the very innovative entries that were received. There will be small presentation for the winner on March 6, 2010.

Conservation

Dave Krop said that conservation was preparing several small artifacts for release. He also detailed the recent rotation of the gun carriages and described a few articles that would be going on display soon, such as the clock gear box. Dave Krop also explained that they are working with several universities and organizations to conduct an analysis of materials. He continued to talk about several upcoming projects, such as a 3-D modeling project, and possibly working with the Children's Museum in Indianapolis and National Geographic.

New Business

Dave Alberg asked if there was any new business.

Dave Alberg discussed how the sanctuary is working to have the remains of the two unknown *Monitor* sailors buried at Arlington National Cemetery in 2012, the 150th anniversary of the sinking of the *Monitor*. He explained that 2012 is also the national year of maritime heritage with several major anniversaries occurring that year.

Dave Alberg discussed two upcoming events 1) the National Sanctuary Advisory Council Chair meeting to be hosted by Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary in May and 2) Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) that will be in Washington DC from June 7-10. During CHOW, the volunteer of the year will also be announced.

Dave also asked everyone to look at their calendar and to let Shannon know what dates they have available in May for the next SAC meeting, which will be held in North Carolina.

Dave Alberg asked if there was any other new business. There was not and the meeting was called to a close.

Meeting Adjourned