

**Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS)
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting
Telephone Conference
December 10, 2013**

In Attendance or on the phone: David Alberg (MNMS Sanctuary Superintendent), Sara Block (ONMS OLE), Reed Bohne (ONMS NE and Great Lakes Regional Director), Deborah Boyce (Recreational Diving), Jim Bunch (Recreational Diving), Pasqual De Rosa (SRVx Captain), Luran Heesemann (MNMS Research Coordinator), Anna Holloway (The Mariner’s Museum), Joe Hoyt (MNMS Maritime Archaeologist), Stuart Katz (Economic Development), David Krop (Alternate – The Mariner’s Museum), Susan Langley (SAC Chair, Archaeological Research), Ed Lindelof (OMNS Program Analyst), John W. Morris (N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources), Joe Poe (Citizen-at-Large), Shannon Ricles (MNMS Council Coordinator), LCDR Kevin Saunders (U.S. Coast Guard), Wayne Smith (Conservation), Paul Ticco (ONMS NE Regional Coordinator), Tyler Zminkowski (Youth)

Absent: Alexia Catsambis (Alternate – U.S. Navy), Steve Claggett (Alternate – NC Dept. of Cultural Resources), David Conlin (NPS), Braxton Davis (N.C. Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources), Robert Neyland (U.S. Navy), Joanna Wilson (Alternate – VA Dept. of Cultural Resources), Terri Kirby-Hathaway (Education), Jay Kavanagh (Recreational/Commercial Fishing), Brad McDonald (VA Dept. of Historic Resources)

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WELCOME

Susan Langley, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS) Advisory Chair, called the meeting to order. After her opening remarks, the roll was called and David Alberg, Sanctuary Superintendent of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, thanked everyone for coming.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

MNMS STAFF UPDATES

A. Dave Alberg, MNMS Sanctuary Superintendent

1) Budget Update:

Funding for next year's budget is expected to be at the same level or a little less, and things will continue to be tight. Reed Bohne, Northeast and Great Lakes Regional Director, said there will be a reduced budget bill with the possibility of some recovery. The FY13 \$49 million budget for all programs will be cut to \$44 million for FY14. He said that it is amazing that MNMS accomplishes what it does on a limited annual budget of \$650,000 to \$700,000.

2) Museum Funding:

The Mariners' Museum's (TMM) conservation effort cannot continue as before without additional funding. Everyone is working to find a solution to the conservation fund shortage. David Krop, Director of the *Monitor* Center at TMM, said about 60% of conservation work is completed. Ideally, TMM needs \$750,000 a year, but they are scaling back to \$400,000 at 50% capacity. Stuart Katz acknowledged support from the Bronze Door Society. Anna stated that the Bronze Door Society provided funding for the wool coat to be completed and exhibited. Susan reminded everyone that SAC members can't lobby, but as private citizens, SAC members can urge more funding from NOAA for the conservation effort. David Alberg reminded everyone that funding for *Monitor* conservation remains a top priority for NOAA and that Congress still has not passed a FY14 budget, so we cannot commit to any specific funding level for FY14 until NOAA has its final budget.

3) Arlington National Cemetery Marker:

Dave Alberg announced that the final marker at Arlington National Cemetery for the *Monitor* sailors was placed in August and it lists the names of all the 16 sailors lost when the *Monitor* sank. A photo of the marker was available in the materials provided to SAC.

4) Monitor Trail Update:

The second *Monitor* Trail wayside sign was placed at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort, N.C., on August 26th in celebration of the discovery of the USS *Monitor*. The first sign was dedicated for the 150th anniversary at Drewry's Bluff in Richmond. Placement of additional signs in New York, Cape Hatteras, Hampton Roads, and other places is being explored. The signs would denote the construction and early days of the *Monitor*, including the battle and sinking.

B. Lauren Heesemann, MNMS Research Coordinator:

1) NOAA Kiosks and Videos:

Kiosks were installed in October at four different locations: Jeanette's Pier (Nags Head, N.C.), North Carolina Aquarium at Roanoke Island (NCARI), Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum (Cape Hatteras, N.C.), and Hampton Bass Pro Shop (Hampton, Va.). The kiosks highlight MNMS and provide a kid's corner and a weather button with real time weather information. There are also new videos in production for the Outer Banks Maritime Heritage Trail website. Lauren noted that the new videos for the trail include Duke/UNC scientists' stories on fishing, diversity, wrecks as reefs, and the coastal landscape. They will be ready in the spring, along with a video funded in part by NOAA's Preserve America Initiative that will feature the U.S. Coast Guard/NOAA partnership, which focuses on regulatory information.

Lauren also discussed the Diamond Shoals Gallery at NCARI. NOAA provided \$12,000 to support the development of an exhibit that will provide several different experiences for participants including a 3D kiosk. Lauren talked about a partnership with Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) on the "Bringing Shipwrecks to Life" workshop supported by Discovery Diving in Beaufort, N.C. During the workshop, participants learned how to identify fish and conducted fish surveys. The surveys were uploaded to the REEF database. Finally, there was discussion about the MNMS Youth film festival, which is to be held in April at UNC Coastal Studies Institute in conjunction with "Earth Fair OBX III."

C. Joe Hoyt, MNMS Maritime Archaeologist:

1) Battle of the Atlantic Expedition (August 2013):

Thanks to the acquisition of a Klein 3000 side-scan sonar from OCS, we now have the ability to do survey work in house, which will save money and give us more days at sea. In August 2013, side-scan sonar images were acquired at 14 different sites. Three new wreck sites were found, two of which are diver accessible, and at the present time, MNMS is in the process of identifying them. This is the fourth year of funding provided by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to fund the survey work. There is one more year of funding from BOEM.

2) Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) and Battle of the Atlantic Research Expedition Group (BAREG) Update:

The NAS course engaged numerous recreational divers who participated in the surveying of a shipwreck. The training course was hosted at the MNMS and quarry work was

performed at Lake Rollings, Va. After concluding the training, divers participated in a 10-day expedition to conduct a baseline survey of the shipwreck, *Ashkabad*. BAREG, a 501c3 organization, provided volunteers to work on the surveys. The group is headed by Bill Chadwell from the Washington, DC area.

3) Site Update re: Nomination for National Register of Historic Places:

Ten shipwreck sites off the Outer Banks' coast are in the process of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Four shipwreck sites have been accepted and listed, including the *Lansing*, *Dixie Arrow*, *Empire Gem* and the *E. M. Clark*. The next round of nominations will include the U-701, U-352, U-85, HMT *Bedfordshire* and the USS YP-389; all of which are in federal waters. Other shipwrecks will be more challenging because some are not U.S. vessels, but hopefully, it will not be an issue.

4) National Geographic Special:

A National Geographic special, *Hitler's Secret Attack on America*, is scheduled to air in the U.S. in February 2014. The film tells the story of WWII and NOAA's search for the shipwreck of U-576 during the 2011 Battle of the Atlantic Expedition.

In discussion after the presentation, Jim Bunch asked what the registration of the shipwreck sites meant for divers. Joe Hoyt stated that there was no implication other than a repository for information on the shipwreck site and recognition that these sites hold national significance. He said that the listing does not change anything concerning the recovery of artifacts, etc. Jim wondered if it would have any impact on the "expansion" issue. Susan Langley stated that there should be no impact other than helping to obtain funding for work in the future. Dave Alberg stated that the listing helps to brand the area as nationally significant. A listing denotes a unique area and local divers should be proud that their shipwreck sites are so important. He further stated that shipwrecks on the register would allow us to take wrecks to non-divers who are interested in the history of North Carolina and its maritime heritage. Dave also said he would like to work with North Carolina State agencies re: for the additional listing of shipwreck sites. John Morris indicated that the Underwater Archaeology Branch would love to work on this project.

D. Shannon Ricles, Education and Outreach Coordinator:

1) Newport News Maritime Course:

The Maritime Heritage Short Course curriculum is being prepared for schools in the Hampton Roads area. Crittenden Middle School in Newport News, Va. piloted the program that took a group of inner city students into MNMS's backyard for a variety of hands-on events. They mapped shipwrecks, built remotely operated vehicles, deployed buoys and spent time on the SRVx. The entire staff is supporting this program. At the end of the semester, the students defended their recommendation for a fictitious shipwreck. The program was noticed at the highest levels within the Newport News City Public School district. All involved sited that they had a wonderful unique experience. Next summer, teacher workshops will also be held in North Carolina to introduce the new program and curriculum.

2) Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Program:

During November, 2013, 22 teachers attended a short course that Shannon and Lauren taught at the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) conference in Charlotte, N.C. The short course introduced teachers to the *Monitor*, maritime heritage and the STEM behind ROVs and maritime archaeology. It is hoped that the maritime ROV program will expand in North Carolina during 2014.

3) Home School Network:

In an effort to reach more home schooled students, 15 students were invited to participate in a program that taught about the *Monitor*, maritime heritage and ROVs. Students came to the MNMS offices in Newport News for three days. Other home school groups are planned to attend in January and February.

E. Tyler Zminkowski, Youth Seat, MNMS:

1) Youth Working Group (YWG) Update:

The MNMS YWG participated in a retreat last August in Manteo and Hatteras. They explored the local area and were able to ride the SRVx back to Virginia.

2) The One Ocean Student Film Festival:

The 2nd annual film festival is schedule for April 26, 2014, in conjunction with Earth Fair OBX III. The YWG will also host three booths during the event.

3) “Ted” Talks:

The YWG is hoping to have “Ted” type talks in March and would like volunteers to participate in this project to give talks lasting 5 – 8 minutes.

In a general discussion with Tyler, it was noted that the film festival will be open to everyone from all over the country and is being publicized by other sanctuaries. There has also been interest from the teachers in Manteo for a second North Carolina youth working group. There were also discussions concerning last year’s film festival at Beaufort, N.C., and general discussion of support for the Youth Working Group projects.

Sanctuary Administration

A. Overview of Management Plan:

Dave Alberg provided an overview of the 2013 *Final Management Plan and Environmental Assessment*, and reminded everyone that there are eight actions in the accepted plan. The action plan to pursue identification of the two *Monitor* sailors and to have them interred at Arlington has been completed. However, the remaining other seven action plans are ongoing.

B. Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) Program update:

Reed Bohne (North East and Great Lakes Regional Director) began a discussion of the new sanctuaries selection process. A June 13, 2013, Federal Register Notice soliciting public input generated 18,000 comments concerning interest in new sanctuary sites. Of the 18,000 comments, 600 were other than the mass comments from the Sierra Club. ONMS is now working through the process and refining it in order to create a new notice for bringing sites

into the system. Criteria for the new notice will probably come from the final rule itself. However, the MNMS is currently dealing with the question of a possible plan of expansion for the existing site. Therefore, MNMS and Thunder Bay are moving forward in a different manner than a new site proposal. Thunder Bay recently extended its comment period for expansion, and the MNMS could use that experience as a model through its own process. Reed also thanked the council for the letter of support of the Site Evaluation List (SEL) process.

C. Working Groups:

In 2009, the SAC formed working groups to help develop the eight action items for the final management plan. As the site now moves forward to implement the management plan, there is a need to revisit some of these groups, including the expansion working group. The revised expansion group needs to be representative of the community, assuring that all stakeholders are represented. Susan reminded everyone that she sent out a letter asking everyone to think about recommendations for people to sit on this working group. Dave said that the makeup of the working group needs to be transparent and to have outside members sitting on it. Recommendations for this group are needed by the end of the year if possible. It is proposed that there will be three one-day sessions in Newport News and/or in Raleigh for the group to meet and discuss the possibility of sanctuary expansion, and what form any possible expansion may take. Over the next three months, the working group would then present three to six models to the SAC for consideration. After consideration and discussion, the SAC will make their recommendation to NOAA. Dave indicated that he would like to have the group led by SAC members Susan Langley and Jim Bunch, and that staff member, Joe Hoyt could serve as a non-voting technical advisor to the group, but not be a formal part of the working group. In addition, he noted that the group should seek recommendations for other members from outside groups and organizations. Susan Langley noted that it should be a smaller group, which would include external opinions (those of others and members of the council). Dave reiterated the necessity for a variety of people from local communities to participate and be represented. He encouraged everyone on the SAC to collect input from stakeholders and to provide that feedback to the working group. Jim Bunch noted that while he would approach this enthusiastically, a number of the coastal communities that are involved do have concerns about government interference, and that it is necessary for people outside of these local interests to provide input. Stuart Katz opined whether “certain hospitality groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism, etc. would be appropriate.”

D. Overview of DES Process:

Ed Lindelof (ONMS Program Analyst) noted that for the working group to have impact, it would need to have the business community involved and be representative of the larger community. Members of this group are usually well connected and understand coastal users. It is important to put such a group together, as they will be required to develop proposals for the possible expansion of the sanctuary, and then work with the SAC to revise their recommendations.

After the working group’s recommendations are reviewed by the SAC, the SAC expansion proposal(s) will be extended to NOAA, which will review it along with other possible scenarios, including a “do nothing, no expansion” alternative. NOAA will then determine a “preferred alternative” which becomes part of a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS)

analysis through the NEPA process. A revised management plan for any boundary changes and new management actions will then be prepared for public review. This does not mean that what is appropriate for the current Monitor sanctuary is also appropriate for any possible expanded site. The public will have many opportunities to comment on the revised draft management plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement itself before a final plan is approved by NOAA. This is a two to three year process.

In response to a question from Joe Hoyt about expense, Paul Ticco noted that the DEIS process involves time rather than other costs. Jim Bunch raised the question as to whether an expanded MNMS would be an expansion to the existing area or the inclusion of separate areas. Dave Alberg noted that as NOAA had no expansion recommendation developed, we would look to the working group to develop initial concepts. Reed Bohne noted that if a totally new area is to be considered, the process might have to go through the Site Evaluation List (SEL) process. Dave Alberg reiterated that any possible expansion would not require the touching of boundaries of the existing sanctuary in order to be considered for expansion.

Questions were raised by Joe Poe concerning the focus on the shipwrecks off the coast of North Carolina. Specifically, the northern third of North Carolina seems to have been the focus of previous survey work and the bottom half of North Carolina is an area where very little work has been done in the past. Joe Hoyt noted that there has been very little activity south of Beaufort and certainly not in the Wilmington area, because in the past it did not make economic sense to go further down the coast. However, it was pointed out that while the focus is on shipwrecks it should be North Carolina in its entirety that is under consideration, even if at some point recommendations are not made for expansion beyond a certain geographical point. Cape Hatteras has so far been the epicenter of the Battle of the Atlantic surveys, and Dave reminded everyone that the focus of the expansion will center on shipwrecks, which are the main focus of the *Monitor* sanctuary.

E. Establishment of Working Group:

The establishment of the actual working group will be finalized in January pending recommendations and consideration of the appropriate members of the Expansion Working Group.

PUBLIC COMMENTING PERIOD

There were no members of the public present at the meeting and no public comments to record.

NEW AND OTHER BUSINESS

Anna Holloway pointed out that there is a programmatic agreement between NOAA and The Mariner's Museum, which will end on December 31, 2013. Dave Alberg noted that NOAA is eager to renew this agreement but the Museum's position is that they cannot renew the current Programmatic Agreement without an assurance of funding. Alberg noted that the government cannot offer any guarantees of funding without a federal budget as our funding is dependent on annual appropriations from Congress, and we cannot commit funds that have not yet been

allocated. David Krop invited everyone to come by the lab to see the progress that has been made in the conservation effort.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Susan Langley and was seconded by Stuart Katz.