

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

Dear Friend of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary:

We are in the process of filling three vacant seat(s)] on our sanctuary advisory council. Beginning immediately, we will accept applications for council membership for the xxx *insert vacant seats* xxx.

The Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council was established pursuant to Federal law to ensure continued public participation in the management of the sanctuary. Established in 1975 as the Nation's first marine sanctuary, the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary is managed by NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program. It is one of 14 marine protected areas and protects the wreck of the famed Civil War ironclad, USS *Monitor*, best known for its battle with the Confederate ironclad, CSS *Virginia* in Hampton Roads, Va., on March 9, 1862.

The advisory council consists of 20 members: eleven non-governmental voting members, eight governmental voting members, and one non-voting youth seat. The council seats represent a variety of regional interests and stakeholders, including: Citizen-at-Large, Conservation, Economic Development, Education, Heritage Tourism, Maritime Archaeological Research, Recreational/Commercial Fishing, Recreational Diving, The Mariners' Museum, U.S. Navy, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, North Carolina Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, North Carolina Local (Town/City/County) Government, National Park Service, Youth, and the U.S. Coast Guard. It is the combined expertise and experience of these individuals that creates an advisory council that is a valuable and effective resource for the sanctuary manager.

The council's objectives are to provide the sanctuary manager with advice on: 1) protecting natural and cultural resources, and identifying and evaluating emergent or critical issues involving sanctuary use or resources; 2) identifying and realizing the sanctuary's research objectives; 3) identifying and realizing educational opportunities to increase public knowledge and stewardship of the sanctuary environment; and 4) developing an informed constituency to increase awareness and understanding of the purpose and value of the sanctuary and the National Marine Sanctuary Program.

The council may serve as a forum for consultation and deliberation among its members and as a source of advice to the sanctuary manager regarding the management of the *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary advisory council holds open meetings to ensure continued public input on management issues and to increase public awareness and knowledge of the sanctuary environment. Public participation at these meetings is welcomed and encouraged.

Enclosed is our sanctuary advisory council application kit, which includes a copy of the council charter and an application form, as well as some information about the sanctuary. Council terms will be for two years with a three term limit.

Please note that if you have been a federally registered lobbyist in the two-year period before your potential appointment date to the council, you will not be eligible to serve as a member of a sanctuary advisory council. Please contact **xxx insert contact information xxx** if you have any questions about this restriction.

We are looking forward to receiving completed applications at our office at ***xxx insert mailing address and date due xxx***. Applications will be reviewed by a preliminary review panel. The panel will help narrow down the number of candidates for each seat to the top three. Of these, a member will be chosen and officially notified of their selection.

If at any point you have a change in circumstance that will not allow you to serve on the council, please notify ***xxx insert contact information xxx***. Also, feel free to contact ***xxx insert contact's name xxx*** if you have any questions about the sanctuary, the council or the council member selection process.

Sincerely,

Sanctuary Superintendent

Enclosures