Sanctuary Advisory Council

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The Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council enhances awareness and protection of the historic shipwreck, USS *Monitor*, within our nation's first national marine sanctuary through its members' expertise, experience, and ties to the surrounding communities.

Purpose

Recognizing that national marine sanctuaries belong to all of us, community involvement and advice are vital components to successful management and long-term protection of the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary Advisory Council provides a public forum for consultation and deliberation on issues affecting our underwater heritage and resources, and it offers community-based advice to the Sanctuary superintendent. Council meetings are open and participatory processes that ensure continued public input to management decision-making, while at the same time expanding public awareness about the Sanctuary.

Specifically, the Advisory Council's objectives are to provide the sanctuary superintendent with advice on the following:

⇒ Protecting underwater cultural heritage and resources within the Sanctuary;

⇒ Identifying and evaluating emergent or critical issues that could affect Sanctuary use or resources;

⇒ Identifying and realizing the Sanctuary's research and monitoring objectives;

⇒ Identifying and enhancing educational and media opportunities to increase public knowledge and stewardship of the Sanctuary environment; and

⇒ Assisting with developing an informed constituency to increase awareness and understanding of the purpose and value of the Sanctuary and the National Marine Sanctuary System.

Membership

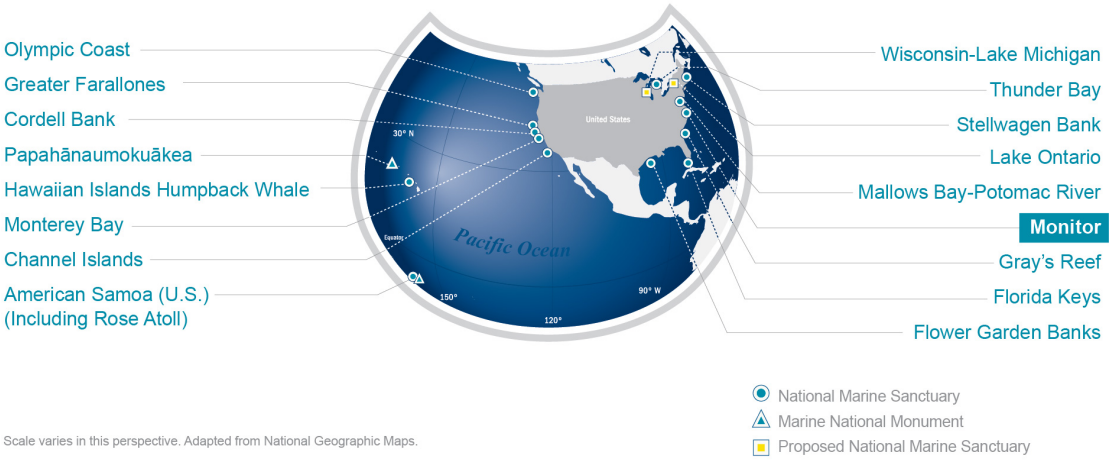
One of the Council's most important strengths is its diversity of membership. The Council consists of 21 members and 9 alternates, representing a range of constituencies and agencies. The in-depth and varied knowledge of all participants brings together a collective body of valuable expertise and experience.

Non-governmental Council members are appointed competitively by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and serve voluntarily for two-year terms. Community members represent regional interests and stakeholders, from recreational divers and commercial fishermen to maritime archaeologists and heritage tourism interests, among others. Government seats are related to the Sanctuary's mission and include local government entities.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Seats

Citizen-at-Large	Student Seat
Conservation	National Park Service
Economic Development	NC Department of Natural & Cultural Resources, Office of Archaeology
Education	NC Department of Environmental Quality
Heritage Tourism	NC Local Government - Dare County
Maritime Archaeological Research	NC Local Government - Town of Beaufort
Commercial / Recreational Fishing (2 seats)	U.S. Coast Guard
Recreational Diving (2 seats)	U.S. Navy, Underwater Archaeology
Ocean Sports	VA Department of Historic Resources
The Mariners' Museum	

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



Recognizing the strength of advice built on input from a variety of informed viewpoints, the Sanctuary Advisory Council provides a model for developing agreements based on shared values and common interests.

Working Groups & Subcommittees

Community involvement in Sanctuary management is further enhanced through the Advisory Council's establishment of working groups and subcommittees. These groups are created by and operate under the purview of the Council. Subcommittees are comprised of current Council members, while working groups bring in additional non-member stakeholders and experts to focus on specific issues. In 2009, working groups were created in preparation for the Management Plan review, concluded in 2013. Former groups included the following:

- Archaeology Working Group
- Boundary Expansion Working Group
- Education / Outreach Working Group
- Facilities Working Group
- Human Remains Working Group
- Monitor / Research Working Group
- Permitting/Access/Enforcement WG
- Youth Working Group

An Open Public Process

The Advisory Council conducts itself in an open, transparent and publicly accessible process, which allows for participation of all stakeholders. All meetings of the Council are open to the public, and each member helps link the Sanctuary and the advisory council process to broader networks of constituencies. The Advisory Council thus serves as the Sanctuary's connection to the larger community of stakeholders, and as an entry point for community participation in Sanctuary management. The Advisory Council meets quarterly in open sessions located throughout the Outer Banks of North Carolina and in Newport News, Virginia.

It's Your Sanctuary… Get Involved!

The advisory council process helps to vest ownership and responsibility for shaping the future management and protection of the Sanctuary in the communities that are most interested in and dependent upon Sanctuary resources. In this way, a sense of community-based sanctuary stewardship is fostered.

All meetings of the Sanctuary Advisory Council and its working groups are open to the public. Please consider attending a meeting or contacting the Sanctuary office to learn more about this community process. Complete information about the Sanctuary Advisory Council, including meeting schedules, can be found on the Sanctuary's website: **www.monitor.noaa.gov**.

To sign up to be notified about Sanctuary Advisory Council meetings or opportunities to apply for membership, please contact Will Sassorossi, the Sanctuary Advisory Coordinator, at (757) 591-7329 or William.Sassorossi@noaa.gov.

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