

# OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary  
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
115 E. Railroad Avenue, Suite 301  
Port Angeles, WA 98362-2925

## OCNMS Advisory Council Hybrid meeting

Friday, July 22, 2022  
Meeting Notes

Reviewed by OCNMS Superintendent and AC Chair:



**Kevin Grant, Superintendent**



**Linda Sturgis, Chair**

**Advisory Council (AC) Members/Alternates:** Casey Dennehy (WA Dept of Ecology, Vice-Chair), Steve Shively (Tourism and Economic Development, Secretary), Mark Ozias (Clallam County Commissioner), Joel Kawahara (Fishing), Jennifer Hagen (Quileute Tribe), Dann May (Education), Linda Sturgis (Maritime Industry), Hannah Blackstock (Washington Dept of Natural Resources), Jan Newton (Research), Rich Osborne (Conservation), Haley Kennard (Makah Tribe), Mike Doherty (Citizen-at-Large), LCDR Keola Velasco (U.S. Coast Guard), Julie Anne Kohelinger (Hoh Tribe), and Steve Fradkin (Olympic National Park).

**Presenters and Others in Attendance:** Bill Peach (Clallam Co Commissioner), John Shaw, John Hunter, and Kennedy Cameron.

**NOAA/OCNMS Staff in Attendance:** Dwayne Hawes and Greg Busch (NOAA Fisheries), William Douros (West Coast Regional Director), Anne-Marie Runfola (Director's Office), Kevin Grant (Superintendent), Haley Glos, George Galasso, Jacqueline Laverdure, Jenny Weddell, Anna Marchand, and Chris Butler-Minor (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary).

---

## **Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting was opened by Casey Dennehy, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) Advisory Council (AC) Vice-Chair.

## **Internal Affairs**

Officer elections for Chair: Former chair Lee Whitford's term limit has been reached. She was commended and acknowledged for her excellent work in serving as the council's chair. Linda Sturgis was nominated for the position. The vote by both online and in-person SAC members at the meeting was unanimous to accept Linda as chair. Consensus was declared by Casey Dennehy. Linda, primary seat for Maritime Industry, accepted the position and introduced herself to those in attendance as a graduate of the University of Washington's school of Marine and Environmental Affairs and a retired Coast Guard captain. She has been involved with the sanctuary and the four coastal treaty tribes for over 20 years. She emphasized that she has a good grasp on the goals and missions of the AC and is willing to host all levels of discussion to ensure that Kevin and his team have the tools they need to be the best stewards possible. Chair Linda Sturgis asked Casey Dennehy to continue to run the meeting, since she was attending virtually.

Agenda: The draft agenda was adopted by consensus with a motion by Casey Dennehy and a second by Mike Doherty.

Meeting Notes: The May 20, 2022 meeting notes were approved by consensus with a motion from Mike Doherty and a second by Joel Kawahara.

Recruitment: Chris Butler-Minor reminded members that recruitment for the Alternate Fishing Seat will begin in mid to late August. She requested members share this information broadly once the announcement is posted online.

Working Group updates:

- Chris Butler-Minor reported that the AC Charter Renewal (ACC) subcommittee has been discussing majority voting versus unopposed agreement in decision making. They are looking for guidance from a national-level working group, which is looking at the benefits and drawbacks of different types of “rules of order.” The next meeting of the ACC will be held in mid-August. Joel Kawahara recognized Anne-Marie Runfola for her contributions to the subcommittee while serving as the Acting Superintendent.
- Rich Osborne, chair of the Whale Reporting Working Group (WRWG), reported that the last meeting was held on July 18th, during which they narrowed their recommendations from 27 to 12. WRWG support staff are now working on incorporating edits to the recommendations. The full report will be shared in the September AC meeting. Rich shared that acoustic monitoring in the Strait of Juan de Fuca has provided recordings of both biotic and abiotic noise sources and also shared that there is currently a voluntary vessel slowdown in the inbound and outbound lanes of the Strait of Juan de Fuca including a portion of the sanctuary for commercial vessels. The current compliance rate is in the high 70s. Joel Kawahara added that cruise lines haven’t been participating in the slowdown, and suggested efforts should be made to get them to comply.

**Information, Discussion, and Action Items**

Management Plan Topical Review: [Collaborative Research, Assessments, and Monitoring](#)

Jenny Waddell, Research Coordinator for OCNMS, presented on the collaborative research, assessment, and monitoring which is a priority issue in the current management plan. Between 2008 and 2011, the management plan review process involved the following key processes: issue analysis, issue prioritization, and working groups/workshops. Jenny emphasized that this was a very involved process, but it got the job done! There were several major priority management needs included in the most recent management plan, including “enhance understanding of sanctuary ecosystems.” Within the management plan, there were four action plans, which include desired outcomes, links to goal, background, strategies, activities linked action plans, and key partners.

The first action plan that Jenny spoke about was “B1. Habitat Mapping and Classification,” which includes four strategies and 12 activities. Previously, the sanctuary produced mapping, but priorities have shifted over time towards regional coordination,

which has helped in gathering a great amount of information. Much of the sanctuary's offshore region has already been mapped, but there remain large data gaps in the nearshore, where mapping is more difficult. Jennifer Hagen suggested that nearshore mapping would be more effectively completed by local vessels. Joel Kawahara mentioned that nearshore mapping would be useful in the near future when offshore wind farms are proposed. Mike Doherty also commented that nearshores mapping information would be very helpful for Washington Department of Ecology and other organizations' marine spatial planning efforts. Jenny confirmed that data would be shared, and remotely operated vehicle (ROV) surveys are taking place within the proposed wind areas.

"B2. Physical and Chemical Oceanography," is the "bread and butter" of the OCNMS science arm. A core activity is the coastal mooring program, which is now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year. This work is only achieved with the collaboration of numerous partners, including Jennifer Hagen and her team, Jan Newton and colleagues, the National Science Foundation Facility, and Ocean Networks Canada. The sanctuary has also been able to make improvements to the moorings over time, including recently updating the oxygen sensors.

"B3. Populations, communities and ecosystems," goals outlined in this action plan call for studying every species in the sanctuary. Successful programs have been established for intertidal monitoring, kelp forest surveys, and documenting deep sea corals and sponges in the benthic zone. Areas to enhance include marine bird and marine mammal surveys. Nancy Foster scholar, Tammy Russel, who spoke to the AC in April is working on west coast data for marine birds and the sanctuary acoustic monitoring program ([SanctSound](#)) gathers some data on marine mammals. When asked how the sanctuary prioritizes between all of these activities with limited staffing, Jenny confirmed that this has been challenging. Kevin shared that the mooring program has been consistently prioritized, and that the sanctuary is expanding its capacity with the new vessel and by bringing on a new marine scientist to support Jenny this year. Furthermore, the AC will help prioritize future activities, as they did most recently in 2018.

The final action plan that Jenny shared was "B4. Data management, sharing and reporting." In March of 2022, a [condition report](#) was published, which includes all of the relevant information. Data are now also available through the webinized condition report ([OCNMS WEBCR](#)), which makes all of the data publicly available via a graphic interface. SanctSound acoustic data are now also available via the [SanctSound data portal](#).

### **Public Comment**

No public comment was received

## **Superintendent report**

Kevin Grant noted that much has been accomplished in the last few months, so provided a forward-facing report for this meeting. He highlighted that the management plan review will be a major focus the sanctuary. The process involves staff pre-scoping to develop a list of priority topics for the next 7-10 years; collecting input from the AC, input from the IPC and tribal councils; and holding public scoping meetings. Working groups will be formed to consider all the feedback on the drafted priorities followed by a draft management plan and then further public comment will be solicited. This whole process is expected to take about two years. Kevin shared that he hopes to work with the AC to draft the preliminary priorities between now and the end of the calendar year. Bill Douros also informed the council that the sanctuaries program overall is moving away from expansive management plans, towards creating plans that are more directed at specific priorities. He emphasized that the management plan is not meant to be an exhaustive list of sanctuary activities so it's okay if not every single project makes it into the plan. Jenny also added that during upcoming meetings, she hopes to share information about some new projects that have recently been funded, which will be relevant to the scoping discussions.

## **Member reports**

Casey Dennehy shared that there is funding for regional partnerships through recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. He noted it provides funding of \$2 million per year, for five years to [West Coast Ocean Alliance](#) for projects including their data portal. There will be a focus on offshore wind, data collection, and sharing between agencies. Casey also shared that Brian Lynn has retired and Bobbak Talebi is now the Coastal/Shorelands Section Manager.

Steve Shively shared that tourism on the Olympic Peninsula is back after the COVID slump. However, the industry is still in recovery due to travel associated costs such as high gas prices and inflation, as well as staffing shortages. He reported that Ruby Beach is closed for parking lot renovations so diverting tourists to other beaches. Lodging stays are up 18% for the peak season from last year, which was also a good year. Last year, Washington households enjoyed tax offsets from visitor spending.

Mark Ozias reported that his team is making progress on two capital investments: new emergency operations center and a climate adaption effort - the Dungeness River off-channel reservoir. He noted that Clallam county is unique in electing the county land use planner and there is an upcoming election. When there is a new director of community development, he will invite them to join these meetings.

Joel Kawahara: shared that the salmon quota is lower for Chinook and increased for Coho from last year. Chinook are more abundant than the projected allocation and the

quota was rapidly met, which impacted La Push and Neah Bay tourism. It has reduced how much poundage received at Neah Bay and La Push compared to previous years. He also shared that forage fish and squid seem to be in good abundance. From his personal observations, halibut also seem to be recovering. Lastly, incidental catch in troll fisheries surveys show that other groundfish species have recovered significantly from 20 years ago.

Mike Doherty reported that the Department of Ecology is doing a study on rescue escorts and suggested that the council should watch for opportunities for comment. He also shared that when the report goes to the state legislature there may be lots of publicity. He commented that the America the Beautiful (30X30) act could influence management plan review priorities.

Dann May announced that he will be giving his first public presentation on earthquake preparedness with a focus on boating.

Jennifer Hagen reported that a year ago, a lander was deployed to help understand hypoxic conditions on Quileute Tribal Usual & Accustomed fishing areas by measuring temperature and oxygen the seafloor. However, there has been significant difficulty in retrieving this mooring, with a fourth retrieval attempt upcoming.

Jan Newton shared that the Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems ([NANOOS](#)) Governing Council. & Principal Investigators.Meeting, which is open to all AC members, will be held virtually on August 3rd and 4th. She reported that NANOOS has also benefited from infrastructure regional funds, and will receive \$582 thousand per year for five years. Some of those funds will be used to keep the current moorings functional. She announced that the National Science Foundation project “[convergence accelerator](#)” will provide small wave buoys “backyard buoys” in the nearshore waters of La Push and Quinault. She emphasized that within a couple of years, there will be wave data for these sites. Since these buoys cost \$5,000 each, the program can be replicated and expanded to other tribes. She noted that anyone can register for the free, virtual National Science Foundation’s Convergence Accelerator 2022 Expo, which is scheduled for July 27-28, 2022.

Hannah Blackstock will be switching positions within the Washington Department of Natural Resources, so the representative on the council will change.

Steve Fradkin reported that management shifts are currently happening within Olympic National Park. The new superintendent, Sula Jacobs will be in place by mid-August. The new deputy superintendent position is yet to be filled. He also shared that they are continuing to see a substantial adult razor clam mortality at Kalaloch beaches. Water sampling is ongoing to determine the cause of this mortality. Intertidal monitoring for the season is wrapping up and has been successful.

Greg Busch shared that they are in the second year of conducting Operation Clean Seas, and thanked the AC for sharing outreach materials on appropriate vessel discharge.

Linda Sturgis: thanked the Quileute Tribe for hosting the meeting on their sacred land, and thanked Casey for chairing this meeting. She also gave a huge shout out to Chris, Kevin, and George for pulling off the hybrid meeting, and a congratulations to the *Storm Petrel* crew. She also acknowledged that Lee did an excellent job chairing the committee for many years.

### **Future agenda topics**

The next meeting is scheduled as a hybrid of in-person and online for September 23 or 30, 2022 with the venue to be determined. A poll will be provided to council members to help determine if the meeting date will remain the 23 or be moved to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Meeting adjourned.**

Many SAC members and staff, including Congressional reps. attended R/V Storm Petrel christening and participated in a brief cruise.