

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



SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Hybrid meeting
Friday, January 20, 2023
Meeting Notes**

Reviewed by OCNMS Superintendent and AC Chair:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Grant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin Grant, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linda Sturgis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda Sturgis, Chair

Advisory Council (AC) Members/Alternates: Steve Shively (Tourism and Economic Development, Secretary), John Shaw (Grays Harbor Marine Resource Committee), Liz Schotman (Conservation), Jan Newton (Research), Julie Ann Kohelinger (Hoh Tribe), Steve Joner (Makah Tribe), Captain Patrick Burkett (US Coast Guard), Jennifer Hagen (Quileute Tribe), Haley Kennard (Makah Tribe), Lorna Wargo (Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife), Dann May (Education), John Hunter (Education), Rich Osborne (Conservation), Mike French (Clallam County), Larry Philips (Fishing), Dan Ayres (Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife), Casey Dennehy (Washington Dept of Ecology), Dawn Grebner (US Navy), Stephanie Sleeman (US Navy), Thomas Mumford (Research), Patrick Gallagher (Maritime Industry), Sean Carlson (Washington Dept. of Natural Resources), Kevin Decker (Tourism and Economic Development), Jennifer Brown-Scott (US Fish and Wildlife), Tami Pokorny (North Pacific Marine Resource Committee), Mike Doherty (Citizen at Large), and Heidi Eisenhour (Jefferson County)

Presenters and Others in Attendance: Katie Krueger, George Galasso, Tommy Moore, Anastasia Kunz, LT Jamie Waterman, Phyllis Bernard, and Amelia Ritger.

NOAA/OCNMS Staff in Attendance: Andrew Torres and Dwayne Hawes (NOAA Fisheries, Office of Law Enforcement), Lindsey Peavey Reeves, Ph.D. (Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, West Coast Region), Rebecca Briggs (NOAA Leadership Competency Development Program (LCDP) XI), Kevin Grant (Superintendent), Emma Htun, (Acting Deputy Superintendent), K Pike Spector, Katie Wrubel, Kathy Hough, Jacqueline Laverdure, Haley Glos, Jenny Waddell, Brendan Rager, and Chris Butler-Minor (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary staff).

Call to Order and Welcome

Steve Shively, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) Advisory Council (AC) Secretary opened the meeting. Steve Shively called the meeting to order and announced that the council chair, Linda Sturgis, was unable to attend due to a flight delay. Steve began with having all attendees introduce themselves.

Internal Affairs

Agenda: Agenda was motioned for adoption by Mike Doherty, seconded by Dann May. Motion was approved.

Meeting Notes: Nov. 2022 Meeting notes were presented for approval. Mike Doherty moved to accept the notes. Dan Ayres seconded the motion. No dissent or amendments were proposed.

Superintendent report

Kevin Grant shared several opportunities and events with the council, including

- This year's Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education Training ([B-WET](#)) Funding Opportunity is open until Feb 7. B-WET is an environmental education program offered by NOAA's Office of Education to support K-12 experiential

learning through meaningful watershed educational experiences ([MEWEE](#)). Priority topics will incorporate traditional ecological knowledge and promote climate resilience;

- Kevin also shared that he will be presenting a webinar on issues and work of the sanctuary on Jan. 24, 2023. [Conversations with the Sanctuary Superintendent on Current Issues](#) is the first of the co-hosted Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and Feiro Marine Life Center 2023 Speaker Series.

Kevin announced that Rebecca (Becky) Briggs will become the new Acting Deputy Superintendent at the end of January. He recognized and thanked Emma Htun for her work and organization and planning for the sanctuary during MPR process during her four-month detail as Acting Deputy Superintendent.

He also noted, Julie Ann has new publication coming out and Jan Newton has received the 2022 Lockheed Martin Award for Ocean Science and Engineering, courtesy of the Marine Technology Society (MTS) for her work on technology development in monitoring ocean conditions.

Member reports

Steve Shively - Locally, the 2022 lodging tax had four counties exceed revenue totals of the previous year, just above 10% of revenue from 2021. Steve believes 2023 will be a difficult year due to budgeting compared to neighboring states and provinces. during the previous legislative session in Olympia, State of Washington Tourism ([SWT](#)) sought support for a \$13.2 million tourism budget over the biennium through Senate Bill Report [SB 5465](#). Oregon, Idaho, and B.C. have budgeted \$30-60 million for their respective tourism budgets. Clallam and Jefferson counties sent out request for proposals in support of sustainable tourism including reducing plastics in hotels, improving transportation, and addressing ocean acidification. Steve also updated the group on the development of a state-sponsored app called [TREAD Map](#)", which aims to manage visitation volumes by providing social media style updates about closures and access issues for visitors .

Dann May - Peninsula college saw an increase in enrollment this semester.

Tami Pokorny – Marine Resource Committees (MRC)s are supported through Washington Fish and Wildlife programs and noted the recent appointment of Chris Waldbillig as Coastal Restoration Coordinator and RFEG Liaison to facilitate MRC benchmarking.

Rich Osborne - Salmon recovery and projects in the last year and a half have been well funded. The outer coast is receiving almost triple the budget of previous years, thus funding is finally catching up to Puget Sound. Projects are cheaper to implement on the coast than around the Sound due to less need to contend and work around existing infrastructure. OCNMS is one of the last “sanctuaries” for salmon.

Larry Phillips - Sport fishing industry groups are advocating in Washington, DC for wildlife recovery act while at the Washington state level, the legislature is in session and

Sports fishers are trying to advocate for conservation policies. Recreational fishing groups are currently planning for 2023 fishing seasons with a [groundfish opener](#) in March

Dan Ayres - Dungeness Crab fishery season has been delayed multiple times. Opening part of the coastal fishery in the beginning of February is likely. The Quinault Head Start Day in December supports co-management with Quinault and honors treaty rights. The rest of the coast will open February 6. The price of crab is to-be-determined; prices will likely be lower this year. Razor clam season has also been delayed due to domoic acid found in tissue samples. One beach near Copalis may be able to open on January 21. The fisheries have made a promise to open clamming whenever it can be safely done. Larry asked Dan about diatom levels that cause domoic acid in the water. Dan answered that levels have gone down, but the fat tissues in the clams hang on to the acid a lot longer than in other shellfish.

John Shaw – European Green crab invasion was the focus of the last meeting for the Grays Harbor Marine Resource Committee (GH MRC). Grays Harbor has pulled 20,000 green crab as of last week. Fishers are alarmed at the number of crabs. GH MRC has also announced a large woody debris study on Westport beaches in support of monitoring beach erosion.

Liz Schotman – WDNR is offering a series of five workshops on [eelgrass and kelp](#) conservation and restoration starting on Jan 31

Mike Doherty – Several [Sea Grant Fellowship opportunities](#) are open. He emphasized Senator Murray’s record being very supportive of conservation in the Pacific Northwest. Mike suggested that recognizing her support and thanking her in some way could be useful.

Jan Newton - Acknowledged appreciation for the support of her research via the [Lockheed Martin Award](#). She reported Oregon State University has completed installation of High Frequency Radar (HFR) assets at Westport State Park. Data will be available via Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems’ (NANOOS). She is continuing to work with Kalaloch beaches and Olympic National Park to deploy HFR there. Remoteness is an issue for set up of the radar. Jan highlighted that the [Backyard Buoy](#) project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), is working with the Quileute Tribe and Quinault Indian Nation. NSF is working with Joe Schumacher and Jennifer Hagan to set up buoys that will be stewarded by the tribes, and information about the project can be found on the NANOOS website. Jan also reported that infrastructure funds were approved to revitalize existing buoys along the coast. The NANOOS website visualization of data has been improved.

Julie Anne Kohelinger– Julie Ann announced that the Hoh Tribe has an active crab fisherman and thus is exercising their treaty fishing rights for the first time in several years. Julie also announced that her paper about oceanographic moorings “[Large and transient positive temperature anomalies in Washington’s coastal nearshore waters during the 2013–2015 northeast Pacific marine heatwave](#)” is being published on

February 1. Julie's paper looked at long-term average temperature data and compared it to marine heatwaves that occurred in 2015 and works to provide context of what happened both along the nearshore and off shore.

Steve Joner – Attended a recent Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) [Marine Resource Education Program workshop series](#) “By fishermen, for fishermen” in Vancouver, WA which provided an introduction to fishing management. Steve encouraged attendance of the next workshop that will be held in April. The 99th annual International Halibut Commission meeting in Victoria, BC is slated for the week of January 23. There have been reports of overfishing from the Alaskan commissioner. Data shows increasing southern populations of halibut as northern populations decrease. Puget Sound anglers tend to catch older fish and so that population may take longer to rebuild. The outer coast has reported sustainable recovery levels. By-catch mortality has reduced from 400,000 to about 70,000 per year. Steve highlighted the involvement of the Makah Tribe in PFMC's Offshore wind marine planning committee. There are concerns of cumulative impact across the west coast from Washington to California related to the development of offshore wind energy. A Federal Register Notice was received by the Makah Tribe about disturbance to marine mammals. During a survey in New York, the proposed take (a less than 2-year period saw drastic numbers of whales affected, ranging from harassment to mortality) was not limited to wind generation platforms and included any activities involved in surveying. (Clarification was offered for council members that numbers were anything from disturbance to mortality, not just mortality). Larry thanked Makah Tribe leadership on the Halibut Commission management.

Casey Dennehy– The Washington Marine Advisory Council (WCMAC) has recommended [offshore wind principals of engagement](#) to the Governor. The goal is to work with coastal communities to identify impacts of offshore wind. The Washington Department of Ecology shared a letter of support for legislation that would give new authority to manage fisheries during disruptions like domoic acid events. The West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA) received authorized funding from NOAA to hire a Tribal Coordinator and a General Project Coordinator to help plan for the upcoming year. WCOA is looking to host three summits which will focus on offshore wind, aquaculture, and working across states for planning and management. Casey also reported that expansion of the ocean health score card is underway. There are currently five identified indicators, however the goal is to develop up to twenty in the next five years.

Kevin sought clarification on whether recommendations by the WCMAC go to the governor's office. Casey responded that, typically, the recommendations do go the governor's office but that this endorsement is to the state legislature.

Stephanie Sleeman– The Navy met last week with OCNMS staff in Port Angeles about US Pacific Fleet plans for testing and training offshore in FY 2024. They also discussed salmon monitoring and tagging along with management plan updates.

Patrick Gallagher– Patrick attended the Seattle Propeller Club “State of the Port” meeting on initiatives relating to port infrastructure. \$522 million in federal funding has

been designated for upgrades for sustainability efforts through scaling up green energy in and around Puget Sound. Patrick is on the leadership committee for Quiet Sound, which will be releasing its final report on vessel traffic slowdowns to protect Sothorn Resident Killer Whales. The initial report indicates a compliance of about 61%, varying by the types of vessels. The ports and WA Maritime Federation meet with legislative leaders. Container ship traffic was down by about 23% but is offset by increased cruise ship traffic in FY22.

Heidi Eisenhour - Jefferson County completed its first major derelict vessel salvage near Indian Island bridge. Heidi also reported Jefferson country recognized the rights of orca whales after efforts of the North Olympic Orca Pod activist group pushed for the county to act on conservation efforts for the whales.

Information, Discussion, and Action Items

Decision Items

Adoption of FY 23 AC Workplan – The Workplan is a roadmap for guidance on areas of focus and goals each year. Emma suggested that later in the year, as the Management Plan Review (MPR) process continues, the AC may want to consider adding related working groups to the plan. Steve Shively asked for motion to accept the FY23 Workplan. Dan Ayres moved to adopt. Rich Osborne seconded the motion to adopt. No motion for discussion was raised. No dissent was voiced and the motion to adopt the workplan passed.

Whale Reporting Group Recommendation – Rich Osborne addressed the council, reminding those in attendance that the Whale Reporting Working Group (WRWG) was created to address various issues related to whales in the sanctuary, including sound issues. Over 50 people were involved and came up with recommendations for consideration in the next management plan. In September 2022, the council accepted the WRWG report. At that time the Makah Tribe requested an addendum to suggest that OCNMS conduct an analysis and review to ensure consistency with the sanctuary's authority and responsibility, identify where recommendations duplicate existing whale protection efforts, and feasibility of implementation based on sanctuary capacity prior to implementing the recommendations.

Steve Shively asked for any questions or discussion by council member about the proposed resolution. Dan Ayres announced support of forwarding the letter to the superintendent and noted the WRWG conducted a thorough process in creating the recommendations. Dan Ayres moved to forward the letter and Dan May seconded the motion. Jan Newton requested the correction of typos in the Table of Contents on page 6. The memo was approved by consent. Rich announced the sunset of the committee upon delivery of memo. Kevin shared that he would be glad to provide updates as they become available. Kevin Grant then thanked the AC for working with the Makah Tribe on the addendum to the memo to ensure all concerns and voices were heard. The information will be particularly useful for management plan review. Steve Shively and Kevin recognized George Galasso (former deputy superintendent) who was in attendance.

Information Item(s)

Monitoring killer whales in OCNMS: Brad Hanson (NOAA Fisheries) – Orcas are most widely distributed marine mammals, with high densities around arctic and temperate oceans. They exhibit specialized diet and foraging behavior by population.

North Pacific Ocean ecotypes include

- Residents that feed on salmon.
- Transients that feed on marine mammals and travel in smaller groups.
- Offshores which are shark specialists and some fish.

Cohesion exists in vocalizations within groups, like dialects in their language. There was little or no pre-historic exploitation by first peoples. This changed in the 1960s and 70s when display of captive killer whales began. Approximately 48 whales were removed from local populations in the 1960s. Whales have been photographically identifiable since the 1970s. This allowed researchers to conduct a census using photo identification. The research yielded recognition of two distinct types of killer whales. Between 1995 and 2001, Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) experienced a 20% decline in population and were listed in the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2001. ESA listing led to the development of a recovery plan to address risk factors and data gaps as well as designate critical habitat. Historically, in the summer, pods frequented inland waters of Washington and British Columbia. By 2005, only 33 sightings had been collected in 30 years. In the meanwhile, researchers noted a data gap in where whales winter over.

Satellite tagging and acoustic recording have been used for coastal location data gathering. Winter range satellite tags linked location data for three different pods of Southern Resident Killer Whales: “J”, “K”, and “L” pods. This data allowed for better designation of critical habitat. J pod spends a large amount of time around Washington state and Vancouver Island, BC while K and L pods head to the California coast. The continental shelf is primarily used by the K and L pods. SRKW do not venture into the open ocean much. They are fish specialists, preying on ling cod, chinook, halibut, and several other fish species. Brad noted that a broader diet in winter is probably due to seasonal changes in prey species populations.

Acoustics show they are primarily stealth hunters and use vocalization more so after their prey is captured rather than for hunting purposes. Locations for sound traps to record whale vocalizations have expanded from two to seventeen over the last two decades. Five of those locations have been monitored long term. Recorders have been deployed in the fall and recovered in next summer. The data undergoes both visual and aural review by researchers to identify stereotypic calls of Southern Resident Killer Whales. The data resulted in greater-than-expected numbers of detections near the Columbia River. Between 2008 and 2017 recording sites expanded from seven to seventeen. These data found that SRKW tend to use the nearshore and southern portion of the Washington coast when compared to Northern Resident Killer Whales. SKRW occurrence in inland waters is changing: the whales are present for fewer days in the spring. As noted in 2017-2021, SRKW only spent an average of 78 days inland during the summer. SRKW near the west entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca is increasing both seasonally and annually while simultaneously decreasing at the Columbia River. From May to October are commonly found around Swiftsure Bank.

OCNMS is used as both a destination and travel corridor for all 3 ecotypes. Each of the three Orca ecotypes is present along the Olympic Coast and Strait of Juan de Fuca to some extent in nearly all seasons. Northern Resident Killer Whales (NRKW) were the most frequently detected killer whales at northern sites while Transient killer whales range from southern California to southeast Alaska. Offshore killer whales range from southern California and the entire way along the Alaskan Coast. Offshore killer whales are sometimes found in deep water, but generally stay near the continental shelf.

Recovery is deemed to be a certain number of years with the population growing at a certain rate. Currently data indicate they are not anywhere near those numbers. Additionally, inbreeding in the population is a problem as well as recruitment of young females. The link between salmon populations and body condition of SRKW is evident in the J pod of whales. No relationship was found in K and L pods. Of note, researchers are much more concerned about competition from NRKW than other types of marine mammals. Chinook salmon population decline is a big problem for SRKW, which eat younger chinook. NRKW are eating older, larger fish. Researchers are now trying to understand whether NRKW are beating the SRKW populations to food by eating the larger, more nutritious fish. For questions or more information, please contact Brad: brad.hanson@noaa.gov

Management Review Plan Public Scoping: Emma Htun and Amelia Ritger provided an overview along with detail related to the upcoming phases of the MPR process. The sanctuary is currently in the Notice of Intent to conduct public scoping (NOI) period which allows for public comment on existing or new priorities for management over the next five to ten years. The sanctuary is notifying: Tribes; State Agencies; Federal Agencies; local, state, and national environmental, outdoor/recreational and tourism groups, Legislative Members, and the public.

Public Scoping Kickoff – Monday January 30, 2023 begins the public scoping process with the publication of the Federal Register Notice of Intent. Content includes

- MRP background
- Link to OCNMS MPR website
- Link to the Federal Register / Notice of Intent
- Preliminary priority topics in the Federal Register notice
- Request for input on priorities
- Public scoping session details
- Comment period ends APRIL 3

Public Scoping Format: Four in person public scoping meetings at four locations and one virtual meeting are planned between Feb. 22-27. Meetings includes an open house segment, a presentation from the superintendent, and breakout sessions for collecting verbal public comments. There will be a website available where individuals may submit comments and will be addressed during meetings.

- Dan Ayres recommended inviting commercial fishing groups to at least one meeting
- Rich Osborne asked about participation numbers in the last process.
 - In 2008, about 400-500 individual comments were received during the public scoping process
- Mike Doherty asked how the Intergovernmental Policy Committee tribes are involved in public scoping aspect.
 - The tribal chairs of each tribe were provided with letters describing the process and offered the opportunity to meet separately either during or outside of the week of public comment in February. Dates of the public scoping meetings were selected to maximize the opportunity for tribes to participate.
- Mike also asked about the opportunity to discuss forward looking perspectives for potential future priority issues, such as changing ocean conditions or invasive species.
 - Some potential priorities for the next management plan have been identified, but there is room for adaptive responses.
- Steve Shively asked about social media or press releases for public comment.
 - Staff have developed roll-out plan for emails, social media, and community announcements to local media to ensure that people are aware of the public comment.
- John Hunter offered to forward information to teachers to make sure the opportunity is available for as many people to participate as possible.

Next Steps:

During the March and May AC Meetings, staff will provide

- Summary of public scoping comments
- General Trends re: interest in priorities
- Discussion: AC engagement in draft management plan development

Public Comment

- George Galasso said that MPR is exciting and hopes for a quicker process than the previous MPR.
- Jan announced that Russell Callendar will be retiring from WA Sea Grant and asked that the AC acknowledge his retirement.
- Larry pointed out that Dan Ayres has continued to work hard and lead by example even 10 days away from his retirement.
- Dan Ayres said his participation in the AC has been a highlight of his professional career and offered to serve as Citizen-at-Large seat in the future.

Standing Item(s)

Kevin thanked Jan Newton, Tom Mumford, and Dan Ayres for their many years of work and dedication in the Advisory Council and presented them each with a commemorative framed National Marine Sanctuaries collection. Jan and Tom have reached the consecutive years of service limit for servicing as Research seat representatives. As noted earlier, Dan Ayres' retirement from WDFW is eminent.

Chris Butler-Minor reported that four council seats will be open: fishing seat alternate, citizen at large alternate, and the primary and alternate positions for the research seats. The Recruitment period will begin with the publication of recruitment announcement on the OCNMS website. Applications will be accepted through March 6 to fill these seats. She noted that if members term out, they must wait one term and then may reapply. These seats are voting seats and cannot be filled by a federal employee. Kevin clarified that federal employees may fill seats, but cannot be voting seats.

Call for future agenda topics

Next meeting March 17 at Forks
No topics offered

Adjourn

Steve adjourned the meeting.