

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

April 11, 2006

La Concha, Duval Street, Key West

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present

Chris Bergh	Martin Moe
Ralph Boragine	Ken Nedimyer
Jack Curlett	Krueger Nicholson
Todd Firm	George Neugent
Richard Grathwohl	Kathleen Patton
Debra Harrison	Bruce Popham
David Hawtof	Deborah Shaw
Don Kincaid	
Jerry Lorenz	

Alternates Present

Tom Dillon
Bob Holston
David Rice
Jody Thomas

Call to Order/Roll Call/Approval of Minutes of February 21, 2006 Meeting/Adopt Agenda for This Meeting/Introductions

Chair Bruce Popham called the meeting to order at 2:22 p.m. The minutes of the February 21st, 2006 meeting were approved as presented. The agenda was adopted as presented. Mr. Popham welcomed Daniel J. Basta, Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program. Mr. Causey recognized Dr. Marie Colton, Director of the NOAA/NESDIS Office of Research & Applications.

Long-Time Service Awards – Dan Basta and Billy Causey (NMSP)

Pins for Ten Years Service to the federal government were awarded to Joy Tatgenhorst, Patti Hartsing and Bill Goodwin. Pins for Fifteen Years were awarded to Bill Valley and Billy Causey, and a Twenty Year Pin was awarded to John Halas. The Team Member award for 2005 was presented to Fiona Wilmot.

National Marine Sanctuary Program – Daniel J. Basta

Mr. Basta spoke about the importance of commitment to the program, despite an unusually lean budget year. He discussed the important role of regionalization in marine conservation, both for the nation, and globally, with the addition of the North West Hawaiian Islands to the sanctuary program. He stressed the level of support from the administration for the sanctuary program, and the importance of advisory councils to the program. Discussion with council members covered the scale of problems facing the marine environment, the difficulty of engaging the public and the importance of

developing a marine ethic. Mr. Causey recognized David White of The Ocean Conservancy (then the Center for Marine Conservation), a major partner in establishing the Tortugas Ecological Reserve.

Public Comment

Debra Benedict, a 25-year resident of Key West, expressed the opinion that education is one of the most important issues confronting marine conservationists, and cited a number of instances in which the public might be better informed of marine affairs.

H.T. Pontin, master mariner, read the attached remarks into the record.

David White of The Ocean Conservancy thanked those present for helping to create the Tortugas Ecological Reserve, and ensuring that the final piece of the puzzle in Dry Tortugas National Park is in place. He noted that as far as ecosystem management of the oceans is concerned, the Florida Keys is where it started, and the North West Hawaiian Islands is where it continues.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection Report – Stephanie Bailenson (FDEP)

Ms. Bailenson reported on the Gulf of Mexico summit, which produced a priority document for the five member states for the coming 30 months. The top priorities are water quality, nutrient loading, environmental education, habitat characterization and restoration work. She said that the closing date for applications for the Environmental Administrator position has passed and there is an excellent pool of candidates.

It was noted that there is an upcoming meeting on Biscayne National Park Fishery Management Plan, and that the Wildlife Refuges have a new manager, Dr. Anne Morkill.

Law Enforcement Report – Captain Laurie Luher (FWC)

Capt. Luher observed that the morning ceremony to dedicate the P/V Peter Gladding had passed smoothly, and thanked Dave Lott, Dana Wilkes, Angela Calos, Pam Plakas, Cheryl Oliver and David Waller from NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring from the bottom of her heart for all the time and effort they have invested to make it happen.

Preserve America – Cheryl Oliver (NOAA)

Ms. Oliver gave a PowerPoint presentation on this White House initiative to celebrate and promote the nation's cultural maritime resources through a series of public/private initiatives. She described project achievements, including NOAA's Ark exhibit and the designation of Key West as a Preserve America community. Discussion concerned further opportunities for the Keys to participate in the program, expanding to other municipalities, and incorporating a boat building component.

Microbial Communities in Coral Mucus – Dr. Kim Ritchie (Mote Marine Laboratory)

Mr. Causey recognized David Vaughan, Director of the Mote Marine Laboratory on Summerland Key.

Dr. Ritchie gave a Power Point presentation, starting with a classification of living organisms and the comparative importance of the smaller organisms in the living world. She indicated that her research interests have shifted from what causes diseases in corals, to what makes them healthy. She described experimental work done on *Acropora palmata* specimens from Looe Key Reef isolating producers of antibiotics. Her conclusions indicate that coral-associated bacteria produce antibiotics, and that there is a seasonal shift in antibiotic activity when the sea surface temperature goes up – there are less kinds of the bacteria in coral mucus that produce antibiotics, and the corals are subsequently diseased with elevated water temperatures. Discussion concerned management options to utilize this cutting-edge research.

Water Quality Committee Report

The Water Quality Committee distributed copies of actions taken since the last advisory council meeting.

Richard Grathwohl moved, seconded by Ralph Boragine, that the Sanctuary Advisory Council request Sanctuary managers to communicate to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, District 4 and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that the advisory council would like the Water Quality Protection Program Steering Committee to meet at least quarterly in a timely manner, with a meeting to be held before June 1 of 2006. The motion passed unanimously upon roll call vote.

Discussion concerned the role of the advisory council with regard to the steering committee, the status of implementation of storm water and wastewater projects in the municipalities and Monroe County, and a timetable and framework for moving the process forward. Funding and politics were discussed. Council members agreed to try to stimulate the community into re-engaging on the issue, and to help educate the public at large on the accomplishments and achievements that have been realized thus far. An annual report card was mentioned.

5:07 Adjourned

Respectfully submitted by

Fiona Wilmot