

**C O N N E C T I O N S**  
**Newsletter of the National**  
**Marine Protected Areas Center**

**January 2003**

The mission of the National MPA Center is to provide information, tools, and strategies for the effective design and management of the nation's system of marine protected areas. Connections was established to meet continuing calls by agency and external stakeholders for information about MPA Center activities.

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**Commerce and Interior Departments Select Candidates  
for National Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee**

On January 3rd, the Department of Commerce, with assistance from the Department of the Interior, named final candidates for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee. Required as part of Presidential Executive Order 13158 dealing with marine protected areas (MPAs), the 30-person committee represents a broad stakeholder community, including scientists, academia, commercial and recreational fishermen, resource users and managers, and environmentalists.

The advisory committee's duties include providing advice and recommendations to the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior on implementation of aspects of the MPA Executive Order. The members may establish working groups, subcommittees, or task forces as needed to fulfill the committee's goals. They also will create a scientific working group of experts in marine and ocean science fields, which will assess the conditions of natural and submerged

cultural resources within the nation's MPAs. The members will serve for two or three-year terms, and will elect a chairperson from the group.

“Marine protected areas are important resource management tools,” said Commerce Secretary Don Evans. “We look forward to strong leadership from these individuals in helping us determine how best to continue our efforts, balancing conservation needs with commercial and recreational interests as we move forward to protect the marine environment for present and future generations.”

The committee will be supported by the National Marine Protected Areas Center, established by NOAA in cooperation with the Department of the Interior, as required by Executive Order. The MPA Center is charged with providing federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local governments with the information, technologies, training, and strategies to coordinate federal activities related to MPAs.

Final candidates for the MPA Federal Advisory Committee are:

- Dr. Tundi Agardy, Sound Seas; Bethesda, Md.
- Mr. Robert Bendick, Jr., The Nature Conservancy; Altamonte Springs, Fla.
- Mr. David Benton, North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Anchorage, Alaska
- Dr. Daniel Bromley, University of Wisconsin; Madison, Wis.
- Dr. Anthony Chatwin, Conservation Law Foundation; Boston, Mass.
- Dr. Michael Cruickshank, Marine Minerals, Technology Center Associates; Honolulu, Hawaii
- Mr. Ernesto Diaz, Puerto Rico Coastal Zone Mgmt. Program; San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Ms. Carol Dinkins, Vinson & Elkins Attorneys At Law; Houston, Texas
- Dr. Rodney Fujita, Environmental Defense; Oakland, Calif.
- Dr. Dolores Garza, University of Alaska; Ketchikan, Alaska
- Mr. Eric Gilman, National Audubon Society; Honolulu, Hawaii
- Dr. Mark Hixon, Oregon State University; Corvallis, Ore.
- Mr. George Lapointe, Maine Department of Marine Resources; Augusta, Maine
- Dr. Bonnie McCay, Rutgers University; New Brunswick, N.J.
- Mr. Melvin E. Moon, Jr., Quileute Natural Resources Department; LaPush, Wash.
- Mr. Robert Moran, American Petroleum Institute, Washington, D.C.
- Dr. Steven Murray, California State University; Fullerton, Calif.
- Mr. Michael Nussman, American Sportfishing Association; Alexandria, Va.
- Dr. John Ogden, Florida Institute of Oceanography; St. Petersburg, Fla.
- Mr. Terry O'Halloran, hulaRez Inc.; Kalaheo, Hawaii
- Mr. Lelei Peau, Dept. of Commerce of American Samoa Pago Pago; American Samoa
- Dr. Walter Pereyra, Arctic Storm Management Group, Inc.; Seattle, Wash.
- Mr. Max Peterson, International Assoc. of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Washington, D.C.
- Mr. Gilbert Radonski, Sport Fishing Institute; Cape Carteret, N.C.
- Mr. James Ray, Environmental Ecology and Response Shell Global Solutions (U.S.)Inc.; Houston, Texas
- Ms. Barbara Stevenson, Portland Fish Exchange; Portland, Maine
- Dr. Daniel Suman, University of Miami; Miami, Fla.

- Capt. Thomas E. Thompson, USCG (Ret.), International Council of Cruise Lines; Arlington, Va.
- Ms. H. Kay Williams, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Vancleave, Miss.
- Mr. Robert Zales, II, Bob Zales Charters; Panama City, Fla.

Committee members were nominated by organizations and individuals. Potential members are offered membership into the committee and then must undergo a background check. These candidates were selected by a panel of experts from both agencies seeking to ensure that the committee's membership represented the broad spectrum of interested parties throughout the nation.

NOAA is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. NOAA Fisheries ensures the sustainable use of marine fishery resources, protects marine mammal and sea turtle populations, and promotes the health of coastal and offshore marine habitats.

Marine protected areas are one of several management tools NOAA Fisheries uses to prevent decline and promote recovery of marine fish, mammal and sea turtle species that fall under the agency's stewardship responsibilities. In partnership with the eight regional fishery management councils, NOAA Ocean Service, states, fishermen, and coastal communities, NOAA Fisheries combines protected areas with other marine resource management tools to ensure a healthy and bountiful ocean for all Americans.

The Department of the Interior is the nation's principal conservation agency. Interior serves as the steward for approximately 426 million acres of America's public land, representing about 19 percent of the U.S. land surface and 66 percent of all federally owned land. Interior also manages mineral development on the 1.48 billion acre U.S. outer continental shelf. Interior's National Park Service currently manages 385 parks and serves about 285 million visitors. Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service is the primary federal agency responsible for the protection, conservation, and renewal of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats, and manages 538 refuges and 37 wetland management districts throughout the U.S.

For more information online:

Department of Commerce - <http://www.doc.gov>

NOAA - <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA Ocean Service - <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>

NOAA Fisheries - <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

National Marine Protected Areas Center - <http://www.mpa.gov>

Department of the Interior - <http://www.doi.gov>

National Park Service - <http://www.nps.gov>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - <http://www.fws.gov>

Minerals Management Service - <http://www.mms.gov>

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### **Did You Know? New Feature to Improve Search Capability on mpa.gov**

The MPA online library has added a new feature to make searching for information easier. Users can either search all library collections at once, or narrow the selection criteria by bibliography, institutions and organizations, websites, or conferences and workshops. Users can further break down a search by typing in information regarding the author, title, date, abstract or keywords.

To check out the improved, extended searchable database, visit <http://www2.mpa.gov/mpa/mpaservices/library/mpasearch.lasso>

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### **NOAA Unveils Comprehensive Website on Coral Reefs**

NOAA has launched a Coral Reef Information System (CoRIS) website which serves as a single point of access for online data and information on coral reefs. The website provides users with search tools to help them discover data and information on coral reef ecosystems and adjacent habitats and communities.

Over the years, NOAA has conducted many coral-related activities that have deepened scientific knowledge about coral reefs and produced a broad array of data types. Now, data from projects such as coral reef mapping, biodiversity studies, biological population surveys, climate studies, monitoring and coral bleaching forecasts, can be found on CoRIS.

CoRIS was created for many reasons. The Coral Reef program wanted to accomplish several tasks, including providing a rich and varied content of data and information; demonstrating rigorous scientific integrity; being factual; providing direct access to well-documented data through a united interface; making use of existing operational coral reef information systems; and providing metadata-enabled access to data and information. The website was developed by NOAA's Ocean Service and the National Oceanographic Data Center.

The website provides access to 19,000 aerial photos, 400 preview navigational charts, tide stations, paleo-climatological studies, photo mosaics, coral reef monitoring, bleaching reports, and other information. Before CoRIS, users faced an array of more than 50 NOAA coral reef websites. The website also features information on NOAA's data, coral reefs in general, professional exchanges, and a glossary.

Once on the website, users have two different ways to access information. The first method is a textual search of metadata records. This method is very effective for users who want to learn more about the data, or have questions about specific data offerings. The second is a spatial search that results in direct access to many products. This search engine is for users who are familiar with Arc IMS applications, have some idea of what they are looking for, or have a specific geographic area in mind.

CoRIS will be updated regularly. Check out CoRIS by visiting <http://www.coris.noaa.gov>.

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### **MPA Center and Gulf of Maine Council Co-Sponsor Ocean Zoning Workshop**

In early December, the MPA Center and the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment co-sponsored a Gulf of Maine Ocean Zoning Forum in Boston. The objective of the forum was to introduce people to the concept of ocean zoning. The full day workshop included panelists from U.S. federal agencies, the Canadian government, state government, private sector, environmental organizations, academia, and local communities. More than 100 people from the region attended the workshop.

An information-only session, the forum featured an overview of federal and state authorities and perspectives, an academic overview of the challenges related to zoning marine waters, case studies on local, regional, and national scales, and discussions about next steps.

The forum was organized to support the Gulf of Maine Council's review of coastal and ocean management tools.

Marine protected areas may be considered as part of a larger ocean zoning scheme in the future, since MPAs are based on regulating uses.

To learn more about the Gulf of Maine Marine Protected Areas Project, visit <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/library/mpas/mpa.htm>. To read some examples of Gulf of Maine marine protected areas sites currently included in the MPA inventory, go to [http://mpa.gov:80/mpaservices/inv\\_status/sup3\\_st.html](http://mpa.gov:80/mpaservices/inv_status/sup3_st.html).

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### **Question of the Month: What is the Purpose of the MPA Federal Advisory Committee?**

The MPA Federal Advisory Committee is charged by the MPA Executive Order (13158) with providing advice to the Departments of Commerce and the Interior concerning implementation of Section 4 of the Executive Order. This includes:

--development of a National System of MPAs (a network of federal, state, territorial, and tribal sites); and

--the provision of information, tools, science, and strategies to strengthen the stewardship of the nation's marine protected areas.

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### **Upcoming Events and Conferences**

### January 2003

6-9: Coastal Geotools Conference, Charleston, SC. The goal is to promote understanding and applied uses of geospatial data and tools for studying and effectively managing the coast:

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/GeoTools>

27-31: Southeast Coastal Ocean Science Conference and Workshop, Charleston, SC. Scientists, resource managers, and others are invited to attend this gathering to discuss science and management issues in the South Atlantic Bight. This region of the U.S. Atlantic coast extends from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina to West Palm Beach, Florida.

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/secos>

### April 2003

14 - 18: George Wright Society Biennial Conference, Protecting Our Diverse Heritage: The Role of Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites, San Diego, CA:

<http://www.georgewright.org/2003.html>

### May 2003

11 - 16: The Fifth Annual Science and Management of Protected Areas Association (SAMPAA) Conference, Victoria, British Columbia: [http://www.sampaa.org/sampaa\\_conference.htm](http://www.sampaa.org/sampaa_conference.htm)

### July 2003

13-17: Coastal Zone '03, held in Baltimore, Maryland. Theme is coastal zone management through time: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz2003>

### August 2003

10-14: American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, Quebec City, Canada. Theme is aquatic protected areas as fishery management tools. Abstracts are due February 24, 2003;

[http://www.fisheries.org/apa\\_symposium/homepage.htm](http://www.fisheries.org/apa_symposium/homepage.htm)