

(March 1, 2012) Secretary of Commerce John Bryson has announced the appointment of seven new advisors to NOAA's Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, bringing the group's membership to the full complement of 21. The Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, or MAFAC, advises the Secretary of Commerce on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce.

MAFAC members draw on their expertise to evaluate and recommend priorities and needed changes in national programs and policies, including the periodic reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act. The members represent a wide spectrum of fishing, environmental, academic, state, tribal, consumer, and other related national interests, and ensure the nation's living marine resource policies and programs meet the needs of these stakeholders.

The new members are:

Julie Bonney, Kodiak, Alaska: Ms. Bonney is the Owner and Executive Director of Alaska Groundfish Data Bank, a consulting, research, management and public relations firm specializing in fisheries and related issues. Her current and past appointments include membership on three North Pacific Fishery Management Council committees, the Kodiak Fishery Advisory Committee, and University of Alaska Fishery Industry Technology Center Review Committee. She is a board member of the Alaska Sea Life Center, Marine Conservation Alliance, and the Alliance's Foundation.

Richen (Dick) M. Brame, Wilmington, North Carolina: Mr. Brame is the Atlantic States Fisheries Director of the Coastal Conservation Association and member of the MAFAC Recreational Fishing Working Group. Prior affiliations are with the Izaak Walton League, North Carolina Wildlife Federation, Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, and Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation.

Michele Longo Eder, Newport, Oregon: Ms. Eder is an attorney who has been practicing law in Oregon coastal communities for over 25 years. She is also the owner/principal of commercial fish harvesting and seafood businesses. Her current and past appointments include a Presidential appointment to the U.S. Arctic Research Commission and an appointment to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee. She is also a member of the North Pacific Research Board, the Consortium for Ocean Leadership, and several committees under the Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Elizabeth (Liz) Hamilton, Oregon City, Oregon: Ms. Hamilton is the founding Executive Director of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, a trade organization of over 300 sportfishing-related businesses. Her current and prior work includes membership on State of Oregon, Governor-appointed salmon recovery and forestry-related boards. She is also the State of Oregon's advisor to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and a member of several committees under the Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Micah McCarty, Neah Bay, Washington:Mr. McCarty is Chairman of the Makah Tribal Council and a Treaty fisherman, tribal artist, and activist. He is also a Makah Whaling Commissioner, an appointed member of the Governance Coordinating Committee to the National Ocean Council, and a member of a number of regional bodies, including the Intergovernmental Policy Council. Mr. McCarty also testifies regularly before the State of Washington, Federal Government Commissions and Senate and House Congressional Committees.

Robert Rheault, Wakefield, Rhode Island:Dr. Rheault is the Executive Director of East Coast Shellfish Growers Association. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of Rhode Island Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Veterinary Services and holds leadership positions in the National Shellfisheries Association and in the Ocean State Aquaculture Association.

Pamela Yochem, San Diego, California:Dr. Yochem is the Senior Scientist and Executive Vice President of the Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute. She is affiliated faculty at the Wildlife Health Center at the University of California, Davis and an adjunct professor of biology at the University of San Diego. Her current work includes membership on the Advisory Board and Scientific Advisory Committee for California's Oiled Wildlife Care Network.

MAFAC is the only federal advisory panel charged with making recommendations to NOAA and the Secretary of Commerce on the department's living marine resource responsibilities. MAFAC members represent commercial and recreational fisheries interests, environmental organizations, academic institutions, tribes, and consumer groups from a balance of U.S. geographical regions.

In recent years, MAFAC helped develop the new Commerce and NOAA aquaculture policies, established a Recreational Fishing Working Group to help NOAA engage more effectively with recreational stakeholders, and provided input on implementation of the new National Ocean Policy. MAFAC's report, "Vision 2020: The Future of U.S. Marine Fisheries" helped shape NOAA's perspective on the upcoming challenges and opportunities in managing our nation's living marine resources.

Established in 1971, MAFAC consists of 15 to 21 individuals who are selected through a comprehensive public recruitment process. Member terms are three years, and members may serve two consecutive terms. MAFAC meets twice a year with supplementary subcommittee meetings as determined necessary by the chair.