

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Hyatt Place
1996 Overseas Highway
Marathon, FL 33050
Tuesday, April 17, 2018**

FINAL MINUTES

***SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT
(adopted unanimously, December 6, 2005)***

Council Members

Boating Industry: Bruce Popham (Chair)
Tourism – Lower Keys: Clint Barras (Co-Chair)
Citizen at Large – Lower Keys: Mimi Stafford (absent)
Citizen at Large – Middle Keys: George Garrett
Citizen at Large – Upper Keys: David Makepeace (absent)
Conservation and Environment: Ken Nedimyer
Conservation and Environment: Chris Bergh (absent)
Diving – Lower Keys: Joe Weatherby
Diving – Upper Keys: Elena Rodriguez
Education and Outreach: Jessica Dockery (absent)
Elected County Official: George R. Neugent
Fishing – Charter Fishing Flats Guide: Will Benson
Fishing – Charter Sports Fishing: Steven Leopold (absent)
Fishing – Commercial – Marine/Tropical: Ben Daughtry
Fishing – Commercial – Shell/Scale: Justin Bruland (absent)
Fishing – Recreational: Ken Reda
Research and Monitoring: David Vaughan
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration: Pete Frezza
Submerged Cultural Resources: Corey Malcom
Tourism – Upper Keys: Andy Newman (absent)

Council alternates (present)

Citizen at Large – Lower Keys: Stephen Patten
Citizen at Large – Middle Keys: Rachel Bowman
Citizen at Large – Upper Keys: Suzy Roebling
Conservation and Environment: Tracy Allen
Diving – Lower Keys: Don Kincaid
Diving – Upper Keys: Daniel Dawson
Fishing – Commercial – Shell/Scale: Jeff Cramer
Research and Monitoring: Shelly Krueger
Tourism – Upper Keys: Lisa Mongelia

Agency Representatives (present)

Florida Department of Environmental Protection: Karen Bohnsack
FWC Division of Law Enforcement: Capt. Dave Dipre
FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute: John Hunt
Dry Tortugas National Park: Glenn Simpson
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG): LT. Quentin Long
NOAA Office of Law Enforcement: Kenny Blackburn

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL OF DECEMBER DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

MOTION (passed)

A motion to approve the February 2018 minutes was made by Ken Nedimyer and seconded by George Neugent. The minutes were approved. A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Dave Vaughan and seconded by George Neugent. The agenda was adopted without change.

II. MEMBER RECOGNITION

Chairperson Bruce Popham thanked Clint Barras and twooceansdigital.com for providing the leadership and technical support to film and live-stream these meetings. He acknowledged the Sanctuary staff for fully taking over this role as Clinton is now serving as Co-Chair of these meetings.

Co-Chair Clint Barras explained he was invited by the Sanctuary Foundation to travel to Washington D.C. to communicate with elected leaders about the need for more funding for the marine sanctuary program, which has funded at 50 million per year for several years. They requested an increase in the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) budget to 65.5 million for Fiscal Year 2018.

Chairperson Popham reminded everyone that there is a new standing agenda item—Member Updates. If anyone has an update, please let Clint, Beth or him know.

New SAC members were recognized:

- Rachel Bowman who will serve as Citizen at Large – Middle Keys, alternate to George Garret
- Stephen Patten who will serve as Citizen at Large – Lower Keys, alternate to Mimi Stafford
- Tracy Allen who will serve as Conservation and Environment, alternate to Ken Nedimyer
- Daniel Dawson who will serve as Diving – Upper Keys, alternate to Elena Rodriguez
- Kara Rauch who will serve as Fishing – Commercial Marine/Tropical, alternate to Ben Daughtry

Chairperson Popham acknowledged changes in membership of two of our existing members:

- Joe Weatherby who will now serve as Diving Lower Keys Member to Don Kinkaid as alternate. Thank you Don for your long service in the member seat.

- Jessica Dockery who will now serve as Education and Outreach Member. Kasey Fey remains as her alternate.

Recognitions

Bob Smith, Lower Key Diving alternate

Chairperson Popham recognized the long service, dedication and diving expertise contributed to the council by Bob Smith. Bob has served on the council for many years as one of the Lower Keys diving representatives. Superintendent Fangman and Chair Popham presented a plaque to Bob, recognizing his passion for education and diving with the highest standards. Bob thanked the council for giving him the opportunity to serve. He reminded everyone that while it is about contributing to the council; it is also about knowing what is going on in the sanctuary through the council.

Will Benson, Chair of Blue Star Fishing Guides Working Group and SAC Charter Fishing Flats Guide Representative

On behalf of the FKNMS, Superintendent Fangman recognized Will Benson as Volunteer of the Year for FKNMS. As the chair of the Blue Star fishing guide group, Will has worked tirelessly to create a framework for this program, which will launch next month. Superintendent Fangman expressed that she had the opportunity to go on the water with Will and saw his passion and commitment first-hand, especially when he spoke about the Blue Star program. As the FKNMS Volunteer of the Year, Will is invited to attend the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's Ocean Gala event in June in Washington D.C. and will be eligible for National Volunteer of the Year. Will thanked everyone. He considers this a tremendous honor and expressed his appreciation for supporting the Blue Star Fishing Guide program. He acknowledged and thanked Nicole Uibel for her contribution. Will is planning to attend the Ocean Gala where he will represent the council and community of the Florida Keys.

III. ADVISORY COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

FKNMS Senior Policy Analyst Beth Dieveney provided updates on the council activities.

- At the last council meeting, the council finalized and endorse the charter, which has now been signed by ONMS Director John Armor. This charter is valid through 2023 and is found on the FKNMS website (and was sent via email).
- Thanks goes to people who informed the Chairperson and the sanctuary if they were not able to attend the council meeting. This was very helpful from a planning standpoint.
- The Advisory Council Handbook, which applies to all sanctuaries, is available online <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/ac/acref.html>.
- A copy of the new charter can be found at <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/sac/>.
- Recruitment for new positions in the council was completed recently and resulted in some changes to council seats. Two open seats are currently available: Lower Keys Tourism Alternate seat and Charter Flats Fishing Guide Alternate. Several additional seats will be opening in October. Recruitments for these seats will be announced to council members via email.
- At the February 20, 2018 meeting council meeting, the council passed a motion to provide public comment on the Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program. On behalf of the council, Superintendent Fangman submitted the resolution to regulations.gov on February 28, 2018.
- Next year's council meeting dates were reviewed (and are posted on floridakeys.noaa.gov).

IV. BOATER EDUCATION ON-LINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

FKNMS Communications and Outreach Manager Gena Parsons provided an update on the voluntary online Florida Keys boating education course being developed by Eppley Institute at Indiana University.

The goals of this project are to increase awareness of sanctuary resources, knowledge of laws, and engagement of users in interactive online content. To date, the learning needs analysis and instructional design have been complete. This included listing the learning objectives and identifying the intended audiences, as well as stakeholder meetings to gain local knowledge about the resources. Some of the learning objectives include identifying relevant regulations, identifying sensitive resources, knowing how to identify locations of marine zones, and describing the consequences of illegal actions and impacts of boater behavior.

The next steps of this process include completing the instructional design, content and web development, beta testing, and course launch in early 2019 in English and Spanish. The advisory council can help with the beta testing phase and outreach avenues, as well as helping to publicize the course once it launches.

Discussion

- This training will complement and supplement the boating safety courses taught by the Coast Guard Auxiliary and other organizations.
- Will FKNMS consider creating a handout with this information? Yes, as part of the roll-out.
- This effort was championed by the community and advisory council, in applying for the grant funding as well as engaging Eppley Institute.

Note: The driving force for this program was Charles Causey, who is a steering committee member of the Water Quality Protection Program (WQPP). Funding was provided through the Special Studies of the WQPP, through EPA. SAC member Caroline McLaughlin worked with Charlie on this project.

V. HURRICANE IRMA RESPONSE: ADVISORY COUNCIL MARINE DEBRIS WORKING GROUP

Working Group Chairs Elena Rodriguez and Lisa Mongelia and FKNMS' Marlies Tumolo presented an update from the Marine Debris Working Group, and their effort titled Goal: Clean Seas Florida Keys.

Elena Rodriguez explained that a flyover after Hurricane Irma helped identify the locations of lost lobster traps. There are approximately 350,000 licensed lobster traps in the Monroe County. Months after the storm, there are still approximately 90,000 lobster traps unaccounted for in the county, among other debris items. Marlies Tumolo added that the flyover was done through Sea Grant with the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association. An analysis showed that there had been significant trap movement during the storm. The traps on the oceanside moved about 8 to 15 miles and traps on the bayside moved about 3 to 5 miles. Traps ended up in clusters. Fishermen have retrieved some traps, but additional removal is still needed.

The Marine Debris Working Group Members are coordinating these efforts. The group is comprised of people from range of backgrounds and with varying interests. This coordinated effort will hopefully provide a platform for long term, systematic removal of submerged marine debris.

Teams of trained divers have been removing debris items from the reef tract on a case by case basis. Lisa Mongelia explained the importance of proper training. A document containing protocols information on training and permitting has been released, as well as a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation which will provide matching funding for Blue Star dive shops interested in participating in debris removal. Once a dive shop is permitted to perform these cleanups, they can apply for the funds from the Foundation. If a dive shop is interested in becoming a Blue Star recognized operator, they can begin the onboarding process and apply for the permits and funding simultaneously. For more information about the Marine Debris Working Group, visit <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/sac/marine-debris/>.

Discussion

- How will the larger debris piles and trap clusters be handled? The goal is to utilize pending funding to engage the Florida Keys Commercial Fisherman’s Association, commercial working divers, and other partners who have heavy equipment to remove these larger debris clusters.
- Is there an update for collection of lobster traps? Organizations can apply for a volunteer debris trap cleanup to remove derelict traps, and because the season is currently closed, every trap is considered derelict.

Break

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered at this time.

VII. HURRICANE IRMA RESPONSE: CANAL DEBRIS REMOVAL

Monroe County Sustainability Director Rhonda Haag provided an update on Hurricane Irma debris removal in the 513 residential canals throughout the county.

Ms. Haag explained that canals throughout the county were clogged with debris such as motor homes, derelict fishing gear, household appliances, and vegetation. This debris is much more difficult to remove than land based debris, because the process of removing from canals with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is more complex.

Of the 513 canals, 333 of those are in unincorporated Monroe County and 180 are within the city limits of the various municipalities. The debris impacts varied by canal: 97 high impact, 150 medium impact, 139 lower impact, and 127 low impact. Total debris estimates based on aerial images from NOAA flyovers was 100,000 cubic yards with a total cost of \$52.6 million to remove the debris throughout the county. In order to qualify for reimbursement from FEMA, the debris must be hazardous to navigation, which translates to six feet below the surface. The county is requesting the depth be extended to 16 feet, that decision is awaiting FEMA approval.

Since the storm, Monroe County has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for \$10 million to fund canal cleanup, with reimbursement pending from FEMA. DEP has contracted with DRC removal services to begin the cleanup, with Tetra Tech acting as the monitoring agency. This debris removal began on February 16th, 2018, almost five months after the storm. Identifying staging sites and receiving permits caused delays in beginning this effort; however, to date over 3,000 cubic yards have been removed from 20 high impact canals.

On April 4th, Senator Marco Rubio visited a canal in Marathon and pledged to help increase the speed of funding from federal agencies which has been allocated. Moving forward, the county will continue working with FEMA to ensure reimbursement, and continue to identify additional sources of funding from agencies such as NOAA, NRCS, and EPA. For example, a package was submitted to the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for \$45 million to assist with cleanup in 103 canals, pending a decision over the next few months.

Ms. Haag also provided an update on canal restoration and the canal skimming program to remove floating seaweed, seagrass, and debris. The initial demonstration program covers 86 canals in Key Largo, and will last six months for residents to provide comments. In addition, there will be a monitoring program to better understand the impacts of canals on the nearshore waters. There is also one restoration effort underway in Key Largo to backfill a canal in order to ensure proper flushing.

Discussion

- The total estimate for cleanup was approximately \$50 million for all 500 canals, which included sediment removal to restore the canals to pre-storm conditions. At this point, the county has \$10 million allocated from DEP, and needs the remaining funds to continue the cleanup effort after that state funding is spent. The county has not yet been reimbursed for road debris cleanup, so canal cleanup is not possible until funds are available.
- Is there any funding available for navigational hazards that are not in the canals? If the county receives the grant from NRCS, they can potentially redirect the funds from DEP to address nearshore waters.
- Has FWC received funding for marine debris? No, the funding was to address derelict vessels remaining after the initial response, not to fund debris cleanup in canals.
- The NOAA funding package of \$18 million is to be split between affected regions of Hurricanes Irma, Maria, and Harvey. Programs to disperse that funding are forthcoming, and will focus on derelict vessels, mapping projects, and ensuring navigational waterways.
- The seagrass collected during the canal cleanups is separated if possible, to be released in open water. If the grass is too soiled, it will be disposed of with the debris.
- In response to reimbursement guidelines, FEMA will only reimburse for activities that fall under its guidelines. To the knowledge of the county, the guidelines are firm and not open to interpretation or negotiation.
- What was the cost of cleanup from Hurricane Wilma 10 years ago? There was no canal cleanup effort after that storm. However, Hurricane George (20 years ago) canal cleanup was funded by NRCS.

Lunch

VIII. U.S. COAST GUARD WATERWAYS DIVISION

USCG LT Scott Ledee gave a presentation detailing the missions of the Waterways Management Division, including broadcasting notices to mariners, anchorage management, outreach and communications, bridges, and aids to navigation (ATON).

LT Ledee stated that ensuring port safety and coordination during storm events, including closing ports, are also included in the duties of Waterways Management. The office also issues permits and oversees construction of new bridges and removal of old bridges.

The Waterways division coordinates with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) on any development project, marine debris removal, and safe navigation protocols. If there is a hazard to navigation, the Coast Guard will determine it is hazardous, and will then work with ACE to remove the hazard.

Marine events are required to request permits from the Waterways division, which includes a review of human and environmental safety factors. Permit requests should be submitted 135 days prior to a new event, or 60 days prior to a previously permitted event. These permits can allow special safety zones, or closed zones, as necessary.

There are approximately 900 ATONs, whether federal or private. While private ATONs can be permitted, the majority are unauthorized and should face a fine; however, enforcement is problematic as finding the responsible party is very difficult. In addition, maintenance and repairs on these private ATONs can be difficult if the responsible party is not recorded in the Coast Guard Light List.

Outreach includes attending various committees and meetings, including SAC meetings, to coordinate and partner with the community. This effort is important as Florida has the highest number of boating accidents per state, and Monroe County has the highest number in Florida. One suggestion has been to create a Harbor Safety Committee, composed of citizens, industry leaders, and local experts, where community leaders can help facilitate communication with the federal agencies responsible for harbor resources.

Discussion

- The Light List is located on the navcen.uscg.gov website.
- Is there an affected stakeholder analysis as part of the permit process? There is a public comment period as part of the permit process, and port stakeholders will be contacted prior to issuing any permit for an event.
- Is there a timeline on establishing a harbor safety committee? An initial meeting could be facilitated by the end of summer, however the committee would be run by industry, not by the Coast Guard. This could possibly compliment or merge with the Port Advisory Committee of Monroe County.
- To apply for a private ATON, the responsible party should be contacting USCG Waterways.

IX. ADVISORY COUNCIL OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Advisory Council Chair Bruce Popham and FKNMS' Beth Dieveney discussed options to increase outreach and engagement opportunities through the council such as orientation for new members, topical outreach through current members, and targeted outreach regarding the regulatory review release.

To facilitate better orientation for new SAC members, current members can provide input on existing presentations, provide input for FAQ's and lessons learned documents, and volunteer to participate in a webinar to welcome new members. If members are interested in participating in this effort, please contact Beth Dieveney.

Next, topical outreach in the community can include sharing information about upcoming council meetings, resource protection issues, and specific FKNMS information. Are there constituencies that the council is already communicating with, or groups that should be targeted?

Member suggestions include:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Civic organizations such as Rotary Clubs and home owners associations
- Marine Zoning Works for Me group

Specific engagement opportunities for sharing information regarding the marine zoning and regulatory review has been handled mainly through the 'core group' of the SAC. This group can help inform a process for council review of the DEIS, provide feedback on the format of public meetings and comment periods, and identify tools and mechanisms to inform the public of the review.

This core group will reconvene in May, and will remain as a sub-committee until the release of the DEIS to inform sanctuary management about engagement of the public in the process of regulatory review/DEIS release.

Discussion

- The Marine Zoning Works for Me group is one strategic tool the council can utilize prior to releasing the DEIS. Superintendent Fangman has been discussing general sanctuary information, Irma response, upcoming programs, and brief information on the regulatory review process, while the zoning group will focus on marine zoning.
- Why is the council discussing public comment before it closes? This will give the council time to provide the recommendations as members of the public prior to closure of that period.
- A suggestion was made to potentially structure the final advisory council discussion and recommendations over three separate meetings instead of one council meeting.
- The DEIS will be released on regulations.gov and public comments will be accepted online as well as during the public informational meetings.

Break

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were offered.

XI. MEMBER UPDATES OF NOTE

No member updates were provided.

XII. AGENCY REPORTS: SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND AGENCY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:: DEP, FWC-FWRI, FWC-LE, NOAA NMFS SOUTHEAST REGION, NOAA OGCES, NOAA OLE, EPA, NPS, USCG, USEPA,USFWS, and U.S. NAVY

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Karen Bohnsack

- The Governor signed the new legislation to create a “Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area” recognizing the northern section of the Florida Reef Tract as a unique area. No management authority over this area has been established yet; next steps will be determined with leadership guidance.
- The Governor’s recommendation for an additional \$1 million-dollar allocation for water quality and coral disease response in Fiscal Year 18/19 passed.
- Updates from the USCRTF meeting in Washington D.C. in February:
 - Other U.S. jurisdictions (Puerto Rico/USVI) were successful in getting FEMA funding for natural resource recovery following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. This funding is specifically being used to restore reefs and nursery infrastructure, which has not been done prior to this year. Florida will explore this opportunity for future storms.
 - The U.S. All Island Committee (composed of representatives from the seven coral reef jurisdictions of the U.S. and Freely Associated States), has put a call out for the urgent need to develop a coral restoration strategy to be more proactive in assisting with coral survival. This is in response to new science that indicates that corals are at risk of local extinction by 2050, but potentially as early as 2030. While there is research in the areas of genetic selection and hybridization to develop more resistant corals, that is still years away from field application. This “Urgent Action” request is to develop a national restoration working group along with local working groups in each of the 7 jurisdictions, to immediately develop innovative restoration projects to ensure the survival of the strongest, most resilient coral populations and the important services they provide for humans (such as shoreline protection, fisheries habitat, tourism, and biomedical research opportunities). This represents a major shift in management thinking from reactive efforts focused primarily on reducing local stressors, to the proactive identification, cultivation and out-planting of corals that are already locally stress-adapted and successfully living in stressful environments.
- Staff recently received a report of coral disease observed at Looe Key. It is too soon to tell if this disease is part of the larger coral disease outbreak afflicting the Florida Reef Tract or if it is an isolated observation. This week DEP is working with FKNMS, FWC, Mote Marine Lab, and others to conduct an initial assessment of the extent and severity of coral disease at Looe Key and will then determine next steps for a response effort.

FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, John Hunt

- FWC has sentinel sites they are monitoring for signs of coral disease. The Sombrero site has not shown signs of disease, but recently the Looe Key site has shown dramatic increases in disease. FWC scientists will continue to closely monitor these sites.
- In reference to Biscayne National Park, FWC is involved in fisheries management for the park. The park has set a goal of reaching a 20 percent increase in abundance and size of targeted organisms (fish) with the baseline being legal minimum size. The process to determine and implement regulations to meet this goal has begun and involves staff from NOAA Fisheries and FWC stock assessment and other experts.
- The next Commission Meeting is next week in Fort Lauderdale (April 25 and 26, 2018). It

will be held at:

Marriott Fort Lauderdale North
6650 North Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309

<http://myfwc.com/about/commission/commission-meetings/2018/april/25/agenda/>

- There are several items on the agenda that may be of interest to the Sanctuary Advisory Council. They are:
 - Sharks – Review and Discussion – April 25.
 - Overview of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades System – April 25
 - Goliath Grouper review and discussion – April 26
- In addition, FWC staff will be holding a pre-meeting Commissioners Workshop on Tuesday April 24 from 10 am - 4 pm entitled Marine Fisheries 101, also at the Marriot. This will be an open internal discussion. Public comment will not occur; however, the public is welcome to listen and learn.

<http://myfwc.com/about/commission/commission-meetings/2018/april/24/special-agenda/>

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Heather Blough (Beth provided Heather's update)

- NOAA Fisheries is requesting public input on several South Atlantic Council proposals:
 - to reduce red grouper catch limits (comments due May 3);
 - establish new electronic reporting requirements for for-hire vessels (comments due May 13);
 - open the red snapper fishery to limited harvest beginning this year (comments due June 15).

Note: Council staff is hosting informational webinars twice a month for federal for-hire permit holders to provide information about the proposed electronic reporting requirements. Upcoming webinars are scheduled for May 10 and May 29. Advance registration is required through the Council website.
- Also, NOAA NMFS has completed its environmental review of several exempted fishing permit applications to test the effectiveness of alternative trap designs in harvesting lionfish with minimal environmental impact. Two of the three applications have been withdrawn, and the third is undergoing revision, so they have not issued any permits at this time. However, they now have a more efficient process in place to review future applications.
- For any questions or more information, reach out to Heather Blough.

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, Kenny Blackburn and Mitchell Robb

- NOAA Fisheries Special Agent Kenny Blackburn introduced the new NOAA Law Enforcement Officer, Mitchell Robb.
- ASAC Casey Oravetz is the new supervisor at the regional level. ASAC Oravetz has extensive experience in NOAA law enforcement.
- They will be acquiring a 29 sea hunter patrol boat that will be used for SPA operations. In May, they will obtain a metal shark boat, which will be good for pulse operations.
- If people have concerns, please let law enforcement know so they can consider it in the planning process.
- LT. Joe Scarpa, who used to be with FWC and used to run the Gladding vessel, recently accepted the NOAA Supervisory Enforcement Officer position and will be based in St.

Petersburg, FL.

- Some successful cases have been made in the shrimp closed area in conjunction with the State of Florida (FWC) and US Coast Guard.
- Officer Robb added that other NOAA officers may be coming down to help with patrols from time to time. He has been working with USCG on multi-day trips enforcement in the Tortugas shrimp sanctuary. FWC officers will be coming down to conduct offshore patrol vessel patrols and will be focusing on the Tortugas.

FWC Law Enforcement, Captain Dipre

- Tortugas patrols are underway. They are bringing down Offshore Patrol Vessel crew and continue to make shrimp cases.
- FWC is examining safety issues associated with the narrow canals in the Keys. This is because of the recent boating death of Ms. Bustamante in the very narrow wheel ditch in the Whale Harbor area. These areas are being reevaluated and may become idle speed zones, etc. for safety reasons.
- FWC requested 20 additional officers, but was denied due to lack of funding. Agencies have been tapping into various funds to cover hurricane costs. State law enforcement officers were given a pay raise to aid in retention.
- Boater violations are up; huge numbers of people are coming down to the Keys.
- People should report violations to FWC dispatch 888-404 3922. Everyone should have this number in their cell phone.

Dry Tortugas National Park, Glenn Simpson

- Marine Debris Clean-Up-- Volunteers and NPS staff completed another marine debris clean-up from April 10-12., This cleanup took place prior to the beginning of sea turtle nesting season (the previous clean-up occurred in January just prior to the return of the nesting sooty and noddy terns). A total of 780 lbs. of debris was collected from Garden, Bush and Loggerhead Keys. Both clean-up efforts are part of a pilot program funded by donations from the South Florida National Parks Trust and supported by the park's M/V Fort Jefferson.
- Irma Storm Damage Recovery – NPS submitted requests to the Department of the Interior for Hurricane Irma recovery projects for a total of \$11.8 million, which includes repair of the Fort Jefferson Counterscarp (moat wall) and sand removal, repairs to housing, removal of the wrecked sailboat on Bush Key and replacement of regulatory buoys lost during the storm. The park has received a high level of support from the Department and we expect most or all of the park's funding requests will be approved and fully funded. We are currently awaiting final notification of funding.
- Lighthouses
 - Tortugas Harbor Light – One week prior to the landfall of Hurricane Irma, contractors completed installation of an engineered shoring system around the Tortugas Harbor Light. The system was designed to guarantee structural integrity through a Category 2 storm. The Harbor Light Survived the storm well with no damage. The park is currently in the final design document development stage for preservation of the Harbor Light. A key issue identified during the design document development was whether to relight the Harbor Light, and if relighted what would be the characteristics of the new light. The park is currently evaluating relighting alternatives.

- Dry Tortugas Light (Loggerhead Key Lighthouse) – In 2015, USCG decommissioned the Dry Tortugas Light and the process of transferring the lighthouse to NPS. Once completed, NPS intends to relight the Dry Tortugas Light with a modern rotating beacon replicating the historic light characteristics, i.e. 10 second flash. NPS currently has a Private Aid to Navigation permit application with USCG, which is pending final transfer of the lighthouse.
- Entrance Fee Increases – The NPS Washington Office will be providing direction to national park units on increased fees to help parks address the system-wide deferred maintenance backlog. The park is awaiting guidance from the Washington Office and will review it before implementing any fee increases. Fees may also be used for certain environmental restoration projects. Beginning in 2020 the park will begin a 5-year coral restoration project designed to increase recreational fishing and snorkeling opportunities within the area around Garden Key.

US Coast Guard LT. Quentin Long, Sector Key West

- USCG has had had 32 NRC reports since the last SAC Meeting and federalized one case in Lower Matecumbe for \$16,000.
- The Sector is currently putting the final touches on the Hurricane Irma lessons learned and making procedural changes for the upcoming hurricane season.
- USCG conducted a joint law enforcement operation last week with FWC and Monroe County Sheriff's Office targeting vessels that were not adhering to marine sanitation and potentially polluting the waters of the Sanctuary. This resulted in 80 vessel boarded and approx. 20 violations/citations.
- Sector Incident Management Division hosted Hazardous Waste Operations and Incident Command System training this month (in-house).
- The M/V CUDAHY (WWII Vessel located northwest of us, outside of FKNMS boundaries) has some occasional leaks that don't seem to impact the sanctuary or surrounding areas. They will continue to monitor for any changes in its status.
- CDR Blanca Rosas (Chief of Response) and I visited the Turtle Hospital in Marathon recently to conduct a turtle release with Governor Scott and local partners.
- The Atlantic Strike Team visited Key West last month to complete a full review of OSRO (Oil Spill Removal Organizations) equipment, functionality, and response capability to any major and minor spills within the FL Keys. Overall, the OSROs passed with flying colors.
- Sector Key West Pollution Response team responded to a large motor yacht (with the potential of over 1,000 gallons) in Stock Island in March. The owners hired a company to get the yacht off the rocks safely with no spill into the Sanctuary.
- Sector Key West Pollution Response team responded to the F18 crash in Boca Chica last month. There was approx. 500-600 gallons of JP5 spilled in similar sound. Due to the active investigation and fatalities involved, DoD (Navy) was lead for the response and cleanup.
- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter VIGOUROUS released approx. 300 gallons of marine diesel within our CG basin. They hired a contracted company for clean-up and revised our standard operating procedures to prevent a similar incident in the future.
- Steve Werndli and Kenneth Blackburn will be visiting all three USCG small boat stations in the FL Keys this week to provide Sanctuary training and NOAA enforcement training to our Boarding Officers. The intent is to create "Sanctuary" competent Boarding Officers that will be more stringent on Sanctuary infractions from boaters.

US Navy Naval Air Station Key West, Ed Barham (provided by Beth Dieveney)

- Supported Earth Day by coordinating a shoreline clean-up of the Fleming Key shoreline on 13 April, and by hosting an informational/educational booth at the Mote's Ocean Fest at the Truman Waterfront Park on 14 April.
- Started our 2018 sea turtle nesting surveys on 15 April. Volunteers monitored sea turtle nesting activity on the Station's Boca Chica and Truman Annex shorelines.
- Started monitoring on Big Coppitt Key and roof-tops for nesting of the endangered Roseate terns.
- Naval Air Station Key West won the 2018 Secretary of the Navy Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation.

Recognition of LT. Quentin Long for Irma Hurricane Recovery

On behalf of the FKNMS Superintendent Fangman offered her sincerest appreciation to LT Quentin Long for his incredible contributions of professionalism and unwavering dedication and service during and after Hurricane Irma. As the Florida Keys Branch Director ESF 10, LT Long did exceptionally well and served as a dynamic leader to a great team. FKNMS is deeply grateful to him for the environmental benefits to the sanctuary. A recognition plaque was presented to LT Long. Captain Janszen, Commander Coast Guard Sector Key West, was present for the recognition. LT Long thanked everyone and recognized the contribution of agency partners and locals in the recovery effort.

Sarah Fangman, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

- NOAA's Ark Treasures Exhibit Opening Night will be April 20 at the Florida Keys History and Discovery Center. Everyone is invited to the free opening night, which is sponsored by the Sanctuary Friends Foundation of the Florida Keys.
- Monroe County hired a dive expert to thoroughly assess the Spiegel Grove artificial reef since Hurricane Irma. The structure was found to be safe.
- Dr. Patrick Rice and FKCC will be working on a plan to assess the Vandenberg artificial reef on behalf of the City of Key West. The sanctuary is still working on getting input on the Ocean Freeze and Adolphus Bush.
- A new wave buoy was deployed on April 1 by Scripps Institute of Oceanography. The buoy is located in 550 feet of water, 10 miles south of Bahia Honda. It records wave height, direction, sea surface temperature, etc. Key West National Weather Service is receiving information from the station every thirty minutes and broadcasting it on VHF Channels 2 and 5 for mariners. This information is also available on the National Data Buoy Data Center website nbdc.noaa.gov.
- In regards to the Fisheries Service report (given earlier) about permitting lionfish traps, the FKNMS paperwork (part of the environmental assessment) has been completed. FKNMS can now offer permits to projects that fall within the guidelines identified in the assessment. This will facilitate lionfish trap studies, which have been mentioned in previous meetings.

XIII. UPCOMING MEETING AND CLOSING REMARKS

Chairperson Popham noted the next meeting will be in June. He reminded everyone to report marine

debris to C-Ocean (online). The core team subcommittee should watch for an email from Beth regarding an upcoming webinar call in May. If anyone wants to volunteer to update the SAC member orientation, they should give their name to Beth. The updated charter, handbook and sanctuary 101 will be good for new members.

Meeting Adjourned.