
Sanctuary Advisory Council

Friday, March 31, 2017
National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa
Rotunda Room, Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center
9:00-11:00AM

Phone Number: 866-813-9056

Passcode: 1392550#

Purpose: To provide updates on sanctuary activities including: climate change project, enforcement, recreational fishing summit, ocean center, hyperbaric chamber operations, Okeanos Explorer, deep water coral and fish surveys, educational programs, and fishing tournament.

Opening Remarks, Atuatasi Lelei Peau

Opening Prayer, Fonoti Simanu

I. **Welcome, Kelley Anderson Tagarino, Council Chair**

A. Roll Call

Members and participants introduce themselves

Council Members (in attendance)

Dean Hudson, Ocean Recreation/Ocean-Centered Ecotourism

Togiola Tulafono, Community-at-Large – East Tutuila

Fonoti Simanu, Community-at-Large – Aunu`u

Va'amua H. Seseapasara – AS-DMWR

Genevieve Gregg, Tourism

Kelley Anderson Tagarino, ASCC / Sea Grant

Valory Gregg, Community-at-Large – West Tutuila

Peter Crispin, Diving

Christianera Tuitele (for Ameko Pato), AS-EPA

Murray Bauer, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement

Allen Tom, ONMS Pacific Islands Regional Director

Scott Burch, NPAS

Fatima Sauafea-Leau, NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office

Council Members (excused)

Sepp Steffany, Fishing

John Raynar, Business/Industry

Peter Houk, Research

David Jennings, Community-at-Large: Swains Island

Council Members (absent)

Keniseli Lafaele, AS-DOC

Togotogo Sotoa, Community-at-Large: Manu'a Islands

Eric Roberts, USCG
Tiara Drabble, Youth Member

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Headquarters

John Armor, Director

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa

Gene Brighthouse, Superintendent
Atuatasi Lelei Peau, Deputy Superintendent
Tanimalie Letuli, Volunteer and Visitor Coordinator
Mareike Sudek, Research Coordinator
Isabel Gaoteote, Education Coordinator
Alma Roe-Cornejo, Administrative Assistant
Joseph Paulin, Conservation Ecology and Policy Specialist

- B. Review and Approval of October 28, 2016 Meeting Notes (Action Item)
- Motion to accept – Dean Hudson
 - Second – Peter Crispin
 - Approved
- C. Approval of Agenda (Action Item)
- Motion to accept – Togiola Tulafono
 - Second – Dean Hudson
 - Approved
- D. Greetings and National Marine Sanctuary System Updates - John Armor, ONMS National Director
- Director John Armor welcomed everyone and expressed that it was good to be back in American Samoa and to have the opportunity to spend time with the council. Director Armor had visited once before as Acting Director in September of 2015, but this was his first visit as Director. He expressed his appreciation to the council and the work they do to help the sanctuary team, local government and communities to protect special places in American Samoa.
 - Director Armor and Regional Director Allen Tom were on island to provide national and regional updates, connect with the sanctuary team, communities and the American Samoa Government.
 - Director Armor updated the council on the processes to develop a federal budget and for the appointment of a new NOAA Administrator.
 - For the first time in 20 years two new sites on the US mainland were put forth for sanctuary designation. Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin put forth a nomination for a site on Lake Michigan and the Hogan Administration of Maryland nominated a site for Mallows Bay.
 - The director was excited to hear the input of the council relating to important issues on the agenda including climate change, enforcement and recreational fishing.
 - Togiola Tulafono thanked Director Armor for joining the council meeting, providing national updates and congratulated him on his appointment.
 - Kelley Tagarino also thanked Director Armor for joining the council and was looking forward to his afternoon presentation and discussion with students at the American Samoa Community College.

II. Updates:

A. Rapid Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies for the National Marine Sanctuary and Territory of American Samoa – Kelley Anderson Tagarino

- This project engaged local and national experts and community representatives to develop recommendations that will lead to action in sanctuary communities and throughout American Samoa for increasing coastal resilience against future climate change related impacts. Additionally, the project will provide valuable information for future climate-related projects in American Samoa including an American Samoa Government project that will take place in 2017.
- This report summarizes the results of a rapid vulnerability assessment (July 2016) <http://ecoadapt.org/workshops/NMSAS-VA-workshop> and adaptation strategy planning (September 2016) <http://ecoadapt.org/workshops/NMSAS-AS-workshop> workshops for 10 focal resources in the Territory and National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa by engaging with stakeholders, including village leaders, community members, resource managers, local government representatives, and business owners that rely on the resources with the goal of increasing climate resilience in the region. The project was a collaboration that included the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa and Advisory Council, Eco-Adapt, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, ONMS Headquarters Climate Program and funded through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Project participants also included Village Mayors and Community Representatives (Aunu'u Island, Futiga, Vaitogi and Leone), Atlantic Pacific Marine Inc., and Boys and Girls Club of American Samoa as well as technical experts of the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program, American Samoa Community College and Land Grant Program, American Samoa Power Authority, National Park of American Samoa, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Regional Office Protected Resources, American Samoa EPA, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, American Samoa Coral Reef Advisory Group, American Samoa Department of Education, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. The final report has been posted on the **Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange** [CAKEx.org](http://www.cakex.org) and can be downloaded at <http://www.cakex.org/virtual-library/rapid-vulnerability-assessment-and-adaptation-strategies-national-marine-sanctuary>.
- Council Discussion of Recommendations (Action Item)
- Peter Crispin stated that ASPA is working on mangroves and water quality. They are also working on community marine debris clean-ups and putting in septic tanks.
- Kelley Tagarino stated that ASPA Executive Director Utu participated in one of the project workshops and that those actions are captured in the “already happening” section of the final report.
- Togiola Tulafono inquired about the rankings in the report including sea turtles.
- Kelley Tagarino explained that definitions are included in the final report and that experts ranked items based on their knowledge and experience in American Samoa.
- Togiola Tulafono asked about follow-up related to the project. He also expressed concern that policies in Washington D.C. were rolling out fast and that climate change would not be a priority.
- Kelley Tagarino explained that follow-up is being planned and that adaptation strategies that were developed can be implemented in American Samoa.
- Dean Hudson discussed that the project was modeled after a similar project that was done in the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary that was presented at the 2016 ONMS Advisory Council Chair's Summit. The report on this project is a baseline for American Samoa and it's great.

- Kelley Tagarino asked if there were any additional comments or discussion.
- Joseph Paulin mentioned that this project was designed in cooperation with representatives from the Coral Reef Advisory Group and the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources so that it could feed into and inform a project that is being planned by the American Samoa Government.
- Kelley Tagarino pointed out that the participants of the project were listed in the beginning of the project report along with an executive summary.

B. Enhanced enforcement across the National Marine Sanctuary System letter – Kelley Anderson Tagarino

- Kelley Tagarino discussed the letter and that it was developed by a working group of national advisory council representatives following a presentation from the Director of NOAA Office of Law Enforcement and a discussion with ONMS council representatives at the 2016 ONMS Advisory Council Chair's Summit. The letter promotes the enhancement of collaborations with ONMS and NOAA OLE including enforcement efforts across the ONMS system.
- Kelley Tagarino asked if there were any questions relating to the letter.
- Va'amua Seseapasara mentioned that he had not had a chance to read the letter yet and that he would abstain from commenting on it. He also mentioned a meeting that took place earlier in the week with Director Armor and the Governor's Office and that that the American Samoan Government is working on a new MOA with ONMS.

II. Public Comment

- Kelley Tagarino asked if any members of the public wished to participate in the public comment period and comment on any of the agenda items.
- Brian Loma participated and mentioned he had heard about the council meeting on the radio and that he follows the sanctuary Facebook page. Mr. Loma commented in support of climate change efforts and is interested in enhancing marine debris removal efforts in American Samoa.

III. Further Discussion on Action Items

- Kelley Tagarino asked if there was any further council discussion on the climate change project or the enforcement letter.
- Peter Crispin asked if the enforcement letter was national or just local.
- Dean Hudson explained that all ONMS advisory councils were considering the letter.
- Director Armor stated that the letter had already been supported by 12 of the 14 ONMS advisory councils.
- Kelley Tagarino asked if there was any further discussion on the action items and there was not.
- Kelley Tagarino asked if there was a motion for the council to support the recommendations of the Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies for the National Marine Sanctuary and American Samoa project that are included in the project report.
- Dean Hudson made the motion for the council to support the recommendations of the Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies for the National Marine Sanctuary and American Samoa project that are included in the project report.
- Valory Gregg seconded the motion.
- The council approved the motion.
- Va'amua Seseapasara wished to abstain from voting on any action items as he was new to the council.

- Kelley Tagarino asked if there was a motion for the council to support the letter for enhanced enforcement across the National Marine Sanctuary System.
- Togiola Tulafono made the motion for the council to support the letter for enhanced enforcement across the National Marine Sanctuary System.
- Peter Crispin seconded the motion.
- The council approved the motion.
- Va'amua Seseapasara wished to abstain from voting on any action items as he was new to the council.

IV. **Updates Continued:**

A. 2016 National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Recreational Fishing Summit – Dean Hudson

- Dean Hudson discussed the highlights of the 2016 National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Recreational Fishing Summit that took place in Ft. Lauderdale FL last December. Dean represented the council as Sepp Steffany and Peter Crispin weren't available to attend. Dean explained that it was a very informative meeting and all participants were fishing seats or involved with recreational fishing or the fishing industry. Dean covered discussions, participant input, and the minutes of the meeting that were previously distributed to the council. The overarching thing is all these people wanted to protect the resource. Dean Hudson and Joseph Paulin were invited to present at the meeting on the student fishing derbies that the council has helped plan the last several years and 2016 Buds and Suds fishing tournament that included fishermen from the alia and game fishing associations in American Samoa. Dean also discussed how fishermen were involved in discussion on fishing-related issues during the management plan review process that led to changes from the proposed to the final rule for the 2012 sanctuary expansion. There have been a few follow-up calls with ONMS leadership and advisory council members in the region that were unable to attend. ONMS and NOAA Fisheries will continue the dialogue and look for opportunities to collaborate. Dean Hudson was invited by NOAA Fisheries to participate in a Pacific Islands Region Recreational Fishing Round Table in Honolulu in May 2017.

B. Okeanos Explorer – Gene Brighthouse

- Gene Brighthouse acknowledged and thanked the council members that were able to participate in the ship tours during the Okeanos first research cruises in American Samoa. This expedition to do deep-sea remotely operated vehicle dives throughout the territory and the national marine sanctuary was 3-years in the making. This was also an important opportunity to share information with youth and the community during ship tours and via live-streaming during the research dives. There are also now video clips of never before seen deep sea areas of American Samoa that can be shared with the community and visitors at the Tauese P. F. Sunia Ocean Center. Millions of people around the world have also view the clips online and participated in live streaming of the dives. The dives were showcased live for almost 200 students at the Ocean Center. The Okeanos team also provided professional development workshops and provided toolkits for 50 teachers.
- Sanctuary Education Coordinator Isabel Gaoteote played a 2-minute video clip of a dive at Rose Atoll.
- Kelley Tagarino mentioned that a student from American Samoa was able to participate in one of the research cruises around the territory.
- Allen Tom stated that he though the footage was amazing and said he would like it made available to the council members.
- Genevieve Gregg would also like the footage made available for future cruise ship tours.

- Togiola Tulafono asked if the images are considered public domain. He thought that it would be great if the images of Rose Island and Vailulu'u could be put on post cards and sold to support the sanctuary. They could also be shown to kids so they could see what is on the other side of the ocean. It would be good for the gift shop. It will sell. Maybe we should create our own foundation for the sanctuary. I put forth motion for staff to capture images for use.
- Kelly Tagarino asked if there was a motion for the staff to look into the possibility of using Okeanos images for post cards that could be sold in the gift shop. Togiola Tulafono made the motion that was seconded by Genevieve Gregg. The motion was approved by the council

C. Ocean Center and Hyperbaric Chamber Update – Atuatasi Lelei Peau

- Atuatasi discussed an encouraging meeting with Governor Lolo and Va'amua working on looking at an MOA to highlight and capture priorities from administration and outline key issues for the partnership between the American Samoa Government and the sanctuary.
- Atuatasi also provided an update on hyperbaric chamber needs and related projects. This includes a partnership between the public and private sectors. LBJ Hospital has hyperbaric chamber that was provided by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. The chamber can be used for wound care and dive emergencies. It is also important to have an operating chamber for the developing dive tourism industry as well as the professional and recreation divers on island. The sanctuary will work with partners to work towards addressing this need for territory and will be working with a chamber operator from the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument to provide a training.
- Dean Hudson asked if the local hyperbaric chamber was working.
- Atuatasi Peau mentioned that it has been tested it and is working, but there is a need for certified operators.
- Peter Crispin mentioned that we have people trained in the operation of the chamber, but it's the medical side where we need training. If the sanctuary could help in getting certification for that would be great and we would love to be part of it.
- Atuatasi Peau said that there have been 5 patients who have gone through the wound treatment and they did not have their limbs amputated. LBJ Hospital wants to have more people certified. We hope that the sanctuary program can help support this.
- Togiola Tulafono comment that if we are successful in getting funding for this training, could you consider establishing an agreement with all those that will be trained that they will respond in the event of an emergency, no matter where they are employed. Large scale training calls for cooperative efforts to ensure commitment in the event of an emergency.
- Valory Gregg mentioned that one of the things we have in the core group of partners is that we are trying to keep everyone accountable for things. We have tried to list out first responders. If someone is going diving, then we know who the first responders are.
- Gene Brighthouse said that there are benefits to having both the LBJ and Industrial Gases chambers and we'll need a group that could operate both chambers.
- Valory Gregg said it's a good thing to have a group of capable chamber operators on the island.

D. 2017 American Samoa Mesophotic Research Project – Mareike Sudek

- From February 14-27, 2017 the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa team collaborated with fish and coral experts visiting from the NOAA's Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science in South Carolina and Bishop Museum of Hawai'i. These specialized closed circuit rebreather (CCR) divers conducted fish and coral surveys at depths ranging from 250-330 feet as a follow-up to preliminary surveys conducted

in 2015. The project will build a species inventory of the deep coral reef fauna of American Samoa, which will be shared with local resource managers and marine scientists. Due to the fact that deep coral reefs in American Samoa have not been extensively studied, the team expects to discover many species which have previously not been recorded in this area, including possible species which may be new to science, but additional lab work will be required to determine this. The team discussed their findings at a presentation open to the community on February 27th at the Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center.

- The team conducted 8 dives in American Samoa and 6 out of 8 within sanctuary boundaries. They spent a total of 21 hours underwater between 160-330 feet. The team documented a rich and diverse ecosystem with *Gorgonians* or fan corals and collected 104 specimens of coral including 14 black coral and 12 new records for American Samoa. They also recorded 118 species of fish and about a dozen new records and potential new species. So why are these important to us? We know little about this system. We should know and learn about the value of these deeper reefs as they share species. They are not as impacted by climate change and may serve as a source to replenish degraded shallow ecosystem.

E. Educational Programs – Isabel Gaoteote

- Isabel Gaoteote provided updates on sanctuary education programs. Taiala o le sami (stewards of the ocean) started in 2015 and is a successful pledge program. We work with schools adjacent to sanctuary sites. The students collect data and share it with different high schools on. There will be an elementary field trip and exchange program between schools (Aunu'u and Lupelele/Manulele). The summer programs have transitioned from the Ocean Center out to communities near the sanctuary sites. The Sanctuary summer Science in the Village Program started in 2016. During the course of the 2-week class the students will do science projects and hands on activities. We use materials available rather than ordering high tech supplies. To end, it is said that a picture is worth more than 1,000 words. So sit back and enjoy. Isabel showed a short video clip. Isabel said that to her science is very critical. In order for kids to realize the importance, they need to know the science.
- Togiola Tulafono recommended clarifying numbers used for the education and visitor programs.
- Kelley Tagarino said that as an educator she can see the difference in the students that have come through the sanctuary education programs and visited the Ocean Center. She sees a higher level of understanding.
- Togiola Tulafono suggested inviting DMWR to participate in more of the outreach programs as well as engaging the administration. As a co-manager of the sanctuary he believes they have the same interest. There is still room for collaboration.
- Isabel Gaoteote thanked everyone or their comments.
- Va'amua said that the MOA we are putting together will clear up our co-management. DMWR also has an education division.
- Atuatasi said it's more than education. It's also the science science. We reached out to the whole territory. We can't do it without local partners. I am encouraged.

F. Buds and Suds Fishing Tournament - Tanimalie Letuli

- Malie Letuli provided an update on the Buds and Suds Fishing Tournament. There were 17 boats registered, 100 anglers participated, and about 200 community members can to the events. It was a great event and we had a lot of volunteers. The major sponsor was South Pacific Distributors. It was an event that also worked to raise awareness of allowable fishing practices in sanctuary waters.

- Peter Crispin commented that it was a very good tournament. Everyone enjoyed themselves. He is looking forward to next year. Job well done by everyone.
- Malie Letuli said that it was amazing and due to everyone in this room who made this event a success.
- Togiola Tulafono asked when there will be another tournament.
- Malie Letuli said she believe the weekend before Thanksgiving would be the best time so it doesn't conflict with the l'e Lapoa fishing tournament.
- Gene Brighthouse recognized Malie for her 5-years of service to the sanctuary.

G. Additional Council Member Updates

- Murray Bauer provided his last as he is leaving for a new assignment in June. NOAA OLE will have two uniformed officers on island and a new marked vehicle (f-150). There will be a visual presence during future patrols. OLE is also trying to get another vessel. The goal is to increase patrols of the sanctuary. OLE also provided funding to DMWR to get their boat back up and new motors are being purchased. NOAA OLE is also using new technology to assist monitoring of remote areas including AIS. There was a \$50,000 penalty for a vessel fishing in monument area.
- Togiola Tulafono asked that if this technology is used to detect light, could they use infrared light on the boat and still be detected.
- Murray Bauer said its run out of Colorado. The boats have to light up in order for them to retrieve their gear. They don't see anything in the daytime.
- Togiola Tulafono asked if Murray had looked at using drones versus satellite detection.
- Murray Bauer said that he is a pilot. When drones came out he looked into that, but it can be difficult to get the necessary approvals. We were looking at unmanned surface vessels (uvs).
- Togiola Tulafono asked what's wrong with using drones.
- Genevieve Gregg said that some operators needed to get FAA certification.
- Murray Bauer said the requirements are higher.
- Togiola Tulafono said that NMFS were putting devices in water that could detect motor sounds on the north shore and Swains Island. Is that a useful tool to identify the vessel coming in to the sanctuary?
- Murray Bauer said you can identify what kind of vessel it is, but no other data. The value is pretty limited and they are in the process of exploring different technology.
- Peter Crispin asked that with the expansion of the international fishing fleet in Samoa, have you seen any effect of that for our EEZ?
- Murray Bauer said that they have seen a lot of vessels transiting through our waters. We want to see if they are transiting or lingering through. Highly fished areas by foreign fleets and working on other country for fishing in to our waters. We do have limitation with Sky Truth as we see the fleet popping in and leaving.
- Genevieve Gregg asked do these fishing vessels have a set route.
- Murray Bauer said they go out and work with sister fleets, there's no set route for these.
- Allen Tom what are you seeing?
- Murray Bauer said not much lingering in that area, just coming straight through. Our EEZ slants out, but for the most part, they are transiting.

IV. **Public Comment**

- Brian Loma encouraged the sanctuary to publicize events on social media.

VI. **New Business**

A. Council Recruitment

- There is an upcoming recruitment for the Swains Island Seat and Ocean Center Recreation and Eco-Tourism Seat on the council.

B. Upcoming Events - Okeanos Explorer Tour – April 25th

VII. **Concluding Remarks**, Kelley Anderson Tagarino

- Kelley Tagarino thanked everyone for their participation.
- Next Council Meeting – Friday June 16th at 9:00 am

DRAFT