

**Minutes of Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee
November 10, 2016, 2:00-4:00 EDT
Via Webinar / Teleconference**

Meeting Opening and Committee Business

The meeting was called to order by Designated Federal Official Lauren Wenzel. She welcomed all members, and then turned the meeting over Committee Chair George Geiger, who chaired the meeting.

Lauren called the roll of members. She also asked *ex officio* members and guests to introduce themselves.

George reviewed the [agenda](#) and asked if any changes were needed. None were required and the agenda was adopted. George then asked for approval of the [minutes](#) of the October 3, 2016 meeting. These were approved without objection.

Updates from Department of State

Jonathan Kelsey provided an update on the Ross Sea MPA, which had recently been approved in October 2016 by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. This international organization is made up of 24 member States, including the United States, plus the European Union. In 2008, CCAMLR committed to the creation of a network of MPAs. One in the South Orkey Islands was created in 2009, but progress on other MPAs has been slow. The US and New Zealand first proposed in 2012 the creation of an MPA in the Ross Sea – a largely intact, and ecologically important ecosystem. The final approval of the MPA in October 2016 was a breakthrough, garnering support from all members. At 1.55 million km², it is the largest MPA in the world, and is designed for biodiversity, ecosystem protection, and scientific research.

Several members expressed strong support for the work to establish the Ross Sea MPA. Brian Baird asked if it could be reversed, and Jonathan explained that it will expire after 35 years, unless the members agree by consensus to continue it. He also offered to share a 1-pager on the Ross Sea MPA. Mark Carr asked if there was an intent to create some zones that allow fishing and some that do not so that the effects of fishing and climate change on the ecosystem can be better distinguished. Jonathan said that this was intended as part of the MPA design, noting however that scientific research to address such questions can be difficult because of the remote, harsh conditions. However, there is a hope that the science community will nonetheless seize on the opportunity to do research in the MPA.

Updates from NOAA

Lauren announced that the position of Director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has been filled by John Armor, who had been serving as Acting Director, and before that, as Deputy Director. George congratulated John on his appointment.

Updates from Department of the Interior

Cliff McCreedy announced the publication of the National Park Service's [Coastal Adaptation Handbook](#), which includes lessons learned from restoration following Hurricane Sandy.

Connectivity Subcommittee

George complemented both Subcommittees on their hard work and on the high quality of their final products.

Mark Carr walked the committee through the comments received on the near-final draft in his [presentation](#). Mark reported that the Subcommittee had agreed to make Sarah Robinson an official Co-Chair to reflect her crucial role in this effort. He summarized some of the “big picture” comments from the FAC, which included the recommendation to combine the different documents into one document to reduce repetition and make it easier to follow; clarifying the alignment between the action agenda and the scientific foundation for connectivity and MPAs; adding an executive summary; and noting that adaptive management is more than monitoring and evaluation. The Subcommittee felt that the issue of adaptive management was very important, and suggested it be addressed in greater detail by the Committee in the future.

Several members commented that they agreed with the broad changes, particularly the decision to combine the documents into a single document. Stephanie Madsen said she had some concerns, but no specific ones. She felt it was a lot of material to digest. Jason Patlis noted that the Committee members had had ample time and multiple opportunities to review the documents. There was some discussion about the concept of adaptive management, and that it should inform decisions to both create or strengthen, as well as to remove or change MPAs. Joe Shumacker moved that the Subcommittee document, with the changes agreed to by the Committee members during the call. Jason Patlis seconded the motion after the Designated Federal Official reminded the chairman he needed a second of the motion before discussion and vote. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Cliff and Lauren congratulated the Subcommittee members on their excellent work.

External Finance Subcommittee

Brian reviewed the changes that had been made to the External Finance report based on comments made during the October 3, 2016 MPA FAC meeting. The changes are summarized in Brian’s [presentation](#). The report was approved in October, with minor editorial changes to be made following the meeting. Brian thanked Joanne and the sub-Committee for their work, and gave specific thanks to Sarah for her excellent editorial comments and suggestions on the draft.

Public Comment

Lauren called for public comment; none was offered.

Committee Business

Lauren and Charlie warmly thanked all of the departing members for their contributions over the years. Upon a member’s request, Lauren agreed to share all email addresses for members. Mark thanked George for his leadership and Sarah for her editorial and organizational contributions to the Connectivity Subcommittee product. Brian Melzian thanked all the members, and noted the links between the MPA FAC and the IOOS Committee, which was recently hosted by some of the tribes in Washington State. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Attendees:

FAC Members

Brian Baird
Mark Carr
George Geiger
Martha Honey
John Jensen
Stephanie Madsen
Samantha Murray
Ryan Orgera
Jason Patlis
Joe Schumacker
Sarah Robinson
Della Scott-Ireton
Pete Stauffer
Trisha Watson

Ex Officio Members

Brian Melzian, U.S. EPA
Steve Tucker, US Coast Guard
Jonathan Kelsey, Department of State

NOAA and DOI Staff

Robert Brock, MPA Center
Gonzalo Cid, NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Joanne Flanders, NOAA Office of Exploration and Research
Valerie Grussing, MPA Center
Cliff McCreedy, National Park Service
Heather Sagar, NOAA Fisheries
Charles Wahle, MPA Center
Lauren Wenzel , MPA Center

Guests

Jeff Deem
Gregory DiDomenico
Marie-Helene Diodati
Alena Feeney
Jim Haussener
Carliane Johnson
Genevieve Neilson
Thomas Rayburn