National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Chairs and Representatives Webinar

Thursday, April 14, 2016

During the 2016 National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Summit, advisory council chairs and representatives requested the opportunity to connect with headquarters and one another at additional points throughout the year. The notes below, organized by speaker, document the site updates, questions, and shared experiences that resulted in the first post-summit virtual meeting.

Clint Moore, Chair, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Mr. Moore briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) and its advisory council:

- The site is in the process of a potential boundary expansion; a draft environmental impact statement is tentatively anticipated to publish in June 2016.
- FGBNMS is now, and always has been, heavily focused on research. Moreover, as an offshore site, the sanctuary benefits from partnerships with several universities throughout the Gulf of Mexico.
- An oil and gas platform in the sanctuary may soon be decommissioned; however, questions remain regarding its ultimate fate and potential removal.
- Mr. Moore emphasized the council's interest in looking at the potential for a FGNMS visitor center, particularly regarding opportunities for funding, that could bring more people to this offshore, underwater treasure.
- The council is interested in evaluating the potential for monitoring the entrance of visitors/vessels into the sanctuary (i.e., Visitation Permit Program Subcommittee).
- Along with Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, FGBNMS is a part of the recent 2015 sister sanctuary agreement ONMS signed with Cuba.

Margaret (P.J.) Webb, Chair, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Ms. Webb briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and its advisory council:

- The site is currently under management plan review. In order to refine the number of topics addressed in the plan, MBNMS employed what Ms. Webb referred to as a "public scoping model," where staff worked to engage the advisory council and the broader pubic on their sanctuary priorities at the start of this process in order to limit the plan's scope from its inception. Ms. Webb recommended this model for others anticipating management plan review and would be happy to serve as a resource for others.

- MBNMS is experiencing the effects of storm tides, particularly as a result of El Niño; therefore the MBNMSAC is interested in coming together to address its effect on shoreline erosion.

- Ms. Webb noted the emerging potential for offshore wind and other alternative energy leases that have been advertised south of the sanctuary.

Question: What is ONMS's policy on alternative energy in sanctuaries?

- Response from ONMS: In the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and its implementing regulations, there is nothing that explicitly prohibits alternative energy in sanctuaries. Essentially, the question is, "Can an alternative energy project be permitted within a sanctuary?" That answer is "maybe." Currently, Vicki Wedell, Acting Chief, Conservation Policy and Planning, ONMS and Bill Douros, Regional Director, West Coast Region, are tasked with updating our frequently asked questions and broader policy. In the long term, this is an issue we will have to confront; therefore, we need to establish a comprehensive position across the system and evaluate the potential legal mechanisms in which alternative energy projects could be allowed.

Question: How many bays are being proposed for wave energy projects?

- Response from ONMS [Offline]: Currently, ONMS has not received any permit applications for marine hydrokinetic projects within national marine sanctuaries.

Dean Hudson, Chair, National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa Advisory Council:

Mr. Hudson briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa (NMSAS) and its advisory council:

- This year, the NMSASAC has decided to work on a climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning project. A Climate Change Working Group will take the lead on a twelve-month plan that should lead to the identification of 8-12 resource priorities for the site. The SAC looks forward to working with various experts at Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and ONMS headquarters. Ultimately, the SAC was driven by the Greater Farallones example and "spring board" at the summit in Annapolis.

- In the coming year, another SAC objective will be to increase member participation and attendance in order to consistently achieve a quorum and thus, allow meetings to convene more frequently.

Question: What is the anticipated long-term goal or result of the climate change vulnerability and assessment and adaptation planning project (e.g., an impact on the site's management plan, regulations, etc.)?

- Response: The NMSASAC would definitely like to look at point source pollution and coral bleaching; however, at this point, we are assessing environmental issues or effects and how they will affect the site over time in lieu of requiring or heading towards a specific outcome.

Report from Nathalie Ward, Advisory Council Coordinator, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary on Behalf of Rich Delaney, Chair, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

On behalf of Mr. Delaney, Ms. Ward briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS) and its advisory council:

- The SAC established a Business and Tourism Subcommittee to consider how the site can increase its awareness and encourage responsible use and recreation.
- Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary has been named *Best Place to See Aquatic Life* by *USA TODAY's* 10BEST contest! Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary placed a close second. This acknowledgment is only amplified by the fact that *USA TODAY* is America's most largely circulated newspaper.
- At the March 9, 2016 SAC meeting, climate change became an important issue, especially in response to new studies that show that sea level rise in the northeast could be greater than previously anticipated.
- Ms. Ward noted that all SAC members are interested in and want to evaluate the adequacy of protection measures in the SBNMS management plan.
- Ms. Ward concluded with the notice that the council is actively recruiting for several new seats.

Question: Is the scallop industry saying anything about rising ocean temperatures?

- Response from ONMS [Offline]: Shellfish industries have expressed concerns over rising ocean temperatures and ocean acidification.

Report from William Sassorossi, Advisory Council Coordinator, *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary on Behalf of *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

On behalf of *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary, Mr. Sassorossi briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and its advisory council:

- *Monitor* is currently undergoing public scoping for its proposed expansion. The site has held five public meetings in total, which, overall, were very well attended with good questions and feedback from the public.
- In the upcoming May recruitment, *Monitor* will advertise for eight seats, which include a new seat, entitled Ocean Sports, added through a recent charter amendment. The council is excited to see what new members and council composition could bring to the site.

Solomon Pili Kahoʻohalahala, Vice Chair, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Mr. Kahoʻohalahala briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHWNMS) and its advisory council:

- Mr. Kahoʻohalahala addressed the status of the sanctuary's management plan review. Prior to the summit, the site had been working to convert from a single-species to an ecosystem-based management model in light of a proposed expansion; however, since then, the State of Hawaii and ONMS decided to maintain the sanctuary's current boundaries and continue to focus on single-species management. Mr. Kahoʻohalahala expressed that the HIHWNMSAC was surprised by the decision. Going forward, the SAC wants to be better integrated into the flow of important information and, where appropriate, provide input. Now, the SAC must reassess what the single-species model means, not only for the site's management plan, but its broader future.

- The SAC is revising its charter, including whether seats should be consolidated or there should be any changes in voting rights.

- Mr. Kahoʻohalahala emphasized the travel and financial difficulties inherent in the island's geography to assemble the SAC for meetings.

- All in all, Mr. Kahoʻohalahala indicated that, given the aforementioned items, both the site and SAC are at a pivotal turning point. The SAC's next meeting is scheduled for June, and he hopes that the council will take a hard look at climate change, where he would be interested to learn about similar involvement at other sites because we are all a part of one ocean and what happens at other sites affects Hawaii.

Response from ONMS: Mr. Kahoʻohalahala was very fair in his characterization of the SAC's level of awareness of and involvement in the recent decision in Hawaii; this should not have occurred. Ideally, in the future, ONMS will work harder to keep the SAC in the information loop.

George Clyde, Chair, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Mr. Clyde briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) and its advisory council:

- Mr. Clyde largely structured his comments on Cordell Bank's three priorities as a site, (1.) science, (2.) education, and (3.) resource protection, given the sanctuary's offshore location:
    - First, in science, the site has been utilizing research transects to produce fascinating data on various species and how the environment changes from year to year, especially in the face of climate change. Mr. Clyde noted that almost all of the research at Cordell Bank is conducted by remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and that very few divers have ever even visited the sanctuary. Given the sanctuary's reliance on ROVs, Mr. Clyde opined that this year's limited ROV budget will impact research.

  - Second, in education, Mr. Clyde called out a new exhibit at the popular Point Reyes Lighthouse, which is the closest terrestrial point to the sanctuary. There is also a traveling photo exhibit that features the sanctuary.
  - Third, in regards to resource protection, that sanctuary has been working to reduce and reroute vessel traffic that can impact whales in the area. Notably, one SAC member, a commercial fisherman, has developed a program to recover derelict crab fishing gear and sell it back to fisherman at a price to fund the program.

- Mr. Clyde then indicated that he spoke with John Largier, Chair, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) Advisory Council prior to the webinar because Mr. Largier was unable to attend. Mr. Clyde said that Mr. Largier had nothing to report, but that he would like to call attention to one GFNMSAC working group that is looking at expanding low overflight zones to protect marine species; it is hoped that the working group's recommendation could go before the full SAC and, with approval, the GFNMS superintendent in an attempt to reach out to more pilots. Greater Farallones is also encountering questions about the use of drones or unmanned aircraft vehicles or systems (UAVs/UASs) in the sanctuary, and whether the working group should look at prohibiting UAVs/UASs anywhere in or entirely throughout the sanctuary given the volume of their recreational use.

Response from ONMS: UAVs/UASs could be the subject of their own call because they pose a complicated legal question regarding whether they qualify as "aircraft" under ONMS regulations.

Report from Rebecca Holyoke, National Advisory Council Coordinator, ONMS on Behalf of Dianne Black, Chair, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

On behalf of Ms. Black, Ms. Holyoke briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) and its advisory council:

- Participation in the CINMSAC is very strong with 73% of council members present throughout the previous fiscal year.
- The SAC has three active working groups: Conservation Working Group, Sanctuary Education Team, and Research Activities Panel, and one that recently wrapped up (Marine Shipping Working Group). The latter produced a report containing a number of ideas for addressing shipping related issues, along with the pros and cons of each and a characterization of what level of agreement there was on the working group to support the idea. This report was introduced to the full council at their last (March 18, 2016) meeting and will be considered for adoption at their next meeting, scheduled for May 20, 2016. To date, there are mixed views on the merits of continuing to debate the options proposed within the report and whether a final recommendation as to which way the sanctuary should move forward should be provided by the council. It has been difficult for the council to decide when to stop deliberations and take this (or similar controversial) action to the superintendent. A copy of the report will be shared after the May 20, 2016 meeting.
- Ms. Holyoke noted Ms. Black's interest in seeing the council chairs take up the opportunity to express support for NOAA enhancing enforcement services provided at national marine sanctuaries. The idea

would be that the chairs could sign onto a letter, similar to their approach for the *Joint Call to Action* or sanctuary nomination process.

Response: Sometimes you cannot bring agreement and consensus to a SAC if a question is highly controversial. The best you can do is call out the pros and cons and move forward at some point.

Response: We have two marine shipping members on the CBNMSAC and their insights are invaluable. I recommend that others include marine shipping members as well.

- Question: How were marine shipping members recruited?
- Response: Feel free to reach out to the CBNMSAC and its marine shipping members after this call for more information.
- Response from ONMS: Matson Navigation Company is on the Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council.

Report from Beth Dieveney, Deputy Superintendent and Advisory Council Coordinator, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary on Behalf of Ken Nedimyer, Chair, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

On behalf of Mr. Nedimyer, Ms. Dieveney briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) and its advisory council:

- FKNMSAC added five non-voting municipal elected official seats.
- Current council priorities include a focus on four working groups, one of which is involved in the site's marine zoning and regulatory review that will provide the basis for the site's management plan review, draft environmental impact statement, and potential regulatory changes.
- The site is working to build partnerships with the U.S. National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the South Florida Watershed Management District.
- Offline (via email) Mr. Nedimyer noted the concern the sanctuary and its council have with regard to the impact of Florida Bay on the sanctuary.

Question: Is FKNMS or ONMS seeing any outgrowth of the Cuba agreement?

- Response from ONMS: The next step will likely be to host a delegation of Cubans at Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary; however, communications have been slow thus far. Ultimately, our goal is to establish a working group on education, enforcement, and monitoring invasive species.
- Response: The sister sanctuaries program is a great way to enhance public relations because it is greatly supported by the public-at-large.

Lee Whitford, Chair, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Ms. Whitford briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) and its advisory council:

- Ms. Whitford began with a list of current concerns before the site, including the acoustic impacts of U.S. Navy activities.
- In 2016, the SAC will have to reauthorize its charter; however, Ms. Whitford does not expect significant changes because several revisions were accomplished during the last charter update.
- Ms. Whitford expressed her excitement and gratitude towards ONMS for their support for the OCNMS research vessel, R/V *Tatoosh*.
- OCNMSAC created an ocean acidification (OA) working group that would like Olympic Coast to serve as the first ocean acidification sentinel site. To that end, in February, the site will host an OA workshop for experts that will look at what needs to be identified, how resources should be characterized, and how OA can be communicated and then publicized through outreach. Ms. Whitford commented that this is the SAC's "big push" in the coming year.

Response from ONMS: It is nice to hear about Olympic Coast's efforts and, like Mr. Kahoʻohalahala, HIHWNMSAC said, it is important for ONMS and advisory councils to stay on top of and effectively communicate important issues, like climate change and OA, that affect everyone. ONMS is glad that OCNMS is well informed and engaged on OA, and looks forward to the site's progress.

Question: At FGBNMS, we have two coral banks that serve as OA sentinel sites because they do not experience coral bleaching. We can provide Olympic Coast with the contact information for the ONMS project lead, Emma Hickerson (Emma.Hickerson@noaa.gov), that coordinates with several universities in the Gulf towards that end.

Linda Paul, Vice Chair, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council:

Ms. Paul briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (NHICRER) advisory council and Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM):

- Ms. Paul noted the reserve's marine debris removal program in the summer, where recovered debris acts as fuel burned for energy in Oahu. Research cruises also take place in the summer.
- In order to reduce the transportation of invasive species, the council helped to implement a hull cleaning requirement for vessels that enter the monument.
- Ms. Paul added that the council is interested in a program that would allow students to talk to and engage with researchers.

- Given the federal restrictions for ACs on lobbying and fundraising, the council is evaluating the possibility for a friends group that could lobby and fundraise instead.
- Under its executive order, PMNM cannot recover civil and criminal penalties and natural resource damage assessment and restoration costs like sanctuaries under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Accordingly, the monument is exploring different means in which it might be able to collect fees associated with resource damages.

Response from ONMS: To clarify, advisory council members cannot lobby as an entire body or in their capacities as council members, which would include lobbying with or under an advisory council title; however, these restrictions in no way limit a member's ability to lobby as an individual, separate and apart from the council and not relying on or putting forth his/her council title. Nonetheless, there is still a gray area surrounding whether an advisory council member can lobby as an individual when he/she is on a trip paid for by federal funds; this question requires a clearer answer. ONMS will have to look into case-by-case clarifications in the future.

Response from ONMS: Also relevant is the news of two U.S. National Weather Service (NWS) buoys that were adrift and ran aground on reefs in the monument. ONMS and NWS are working jointly towards their removal; however, as Ms. Paul noted, it would be ideal if the monument was similarly entitled to the legal penalty options enjoyed by other sanctuaries.

Question: Does the buoy grounding put this in the State of Hawaii's jurisdiction and does this affect the monument's ability to collect damages (i.e., Is Neva Shoals in state waters?)

- Response from ONMS: The incident at Neva Shoals occurred in federal waters and thus, the state would lack the jurisdiction to initiate any claim for damages. As of now, NWS has been funding the removal and it is permitted by the monument.

Michael Denmark, Vice Chair, Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Mr. Denmark briefly presented a summary of pertinent items currently before Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS) and its advisory council:

- At this very moment, our chair, Rick DeVictor is traveling to Seoul, Korea, to participate in an international capacity building training related to stakeholder engagement and, more specifically, the role of advisory councils in marine protected area management.
- At present, the council has a team in place to review and update its charter.
- Mr. Denmark remarked that the council has been having a healthy discussion on the effects of climate change on the sanctuary. Varied opinions on how to proceed have emerged; however, the council would possibly like to demonstrate the value of the sanctuary and other marine protected areas in response to climate change. The council also developed a science working group to evaluate climate change messaging.

- Mr. Denmark then said that if the council proceeds with a plan to address climate change, it would be beneficial to follow a national lead or perspective and fit in where it can offer the greatest benefit; he proposed that such a collective approach could prove more effective than if each sanctuary acts alone. He requested that headquarters and councils share any climate change training, if it exists, to enable GRNMSAC and others to make informed decisions and communicate with the public.

- GRNMS is in the early stages of developing a speaker's bureau. The speaker's bureau will prepare presentations for civic groups in and around Georgia in an attempt to overcome the outreach barriers inherent for an offshore site,

- Given the current level of new, and highly qualified applicants at the site, Mr. Denmark asked for any suggestions as to how these applicants can become involved at the site when their numbers exceed the number of vacant seats.

Response from ONMS: This question could be posed to the advisory council coordinators, who can then report back to the GRNMS advisory council coordinator and superintendent; however, advisory councils are not the only way people can engage with a sanctuary. For instance, unsuccessful applicants can still attend council meetings and should be encouraged to participate at the site as a volunteer or with a friends group, if one exists.

- Response: FGBNMSAC made alternates full council members (i.e. two persons per seat) so it did not have to lose or miss out on heavy recruitment possibilities. With two seats, you have the simultaneous opportunity for experience and "new blood." With a larger SAC, a great advisory council coordinator can overcome any fears about reaching a quorum.

- Response: At least this is a good problem for a site.

Email Correspondence from Carol Shafto, Chair, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council:

Unable to speak on the webinar due to technical difficulties, the following correspondence is from Ms. Shafto and presents a summary of pertinent items currently before Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (TBNMS) and its advisory council:

"First, hello from your only fresh water sanctuary – we will say this while we can, looking forward to welcoming a Lake Michigan/Wisconsin site into our fold. I am sorry I could not join you in Baltimore in January. And I am particularly sorry that my sound could not be activated to report on the Advisory Council Chairs Webinar on April 14, 2016. I will be brief on two topics that I think may be of general interest: 1. An entirely new Advisory Council after Boundary Expansion and 2. New resources into the program through our local Friends group.

1. *TBNMS Advisory Council has 15 voting seats and 15 alternates for a very active 30 member body. Thunder Bay underwent a massive boundary expansion, expanding our boarders from 400 to 4,000 square miles. IN SO DOING, we added two counties – one north and one south of Alpena County which had been our land/shoreline focus. Under the old boundaries, we had governmental representatives from each of the four affected jurisdictions – one county, one city, two shoreline townships. With expansion, we added two*

counties, two port cities, and several more shoreline townships. Obviously, all could not have one of our coveted spots – and if they did, the council would be over-represented by government, leaving other important special interests and constituencies without an adequate say in Sanctuary affairs. The four governmental seats we had was 25% of our council. We did not want to exceed that ratio. We decided to completely dissolve the "old SAC" and have everyone reapply for reallocated seats. We maintained four for government, but now had one for each of the counties and one for the City of Alpena where the Heritage Center and Sanctuary operations are located. I would be happy to provide details of which constituencies have seats but they are the traditional ones – education; fisheries; diving; economic development; travel and tourism; charter and recreational boating; etc. We also tried to balance representation by choosing (for example) a teacher from Alcona County, a dive boat captain from Presque Isle County, a tourism representative from Alpena County, etc.

In the end, we had a new group – some who had been on the council for years, some who were totally new. This meant orientation and reorientation to the Sanctuary and our mission, purposes, programs, operations. We also had elections for leadership roles and new members on standing committees. We are now at the end of the first six months of our new council and we are getting to know each other and are working well toward common goals for the future. I thought reporting on this process would add a dimension that may not be typically thought of when considering and undergoing boundary expansion.

2. *We are very fortunate to have a local fundraising and program support "arm" – Friends of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The group has been in existence about three years and we are learning, growing, and expanding our reach and efforts, making a difference. Our superintendent and our Friends staff person attended a week-long training on the topic that has helped diversity our efforts. We are using some traditional methods as well as some that are not as "tried and true". Our Friends dollars are channeled through our local Community Foundation and that has been a very successful partnership. It has provided local veracity which is critical. One of our greatest challenges – and I would be interested to know if others have this – is that we are seen as "the Federal government" and therefore have unlimited resources so why would someone what to join our Friends group and donate $25 a year? Of course, we are working hard to dispel this MYTH, but your experiences and suggestions would be helpful. In addition to adding Friends through donations, we have "Friendraisers." One popular one is Thunder Thursday which takes place in a rotation of local pubs. We also operate the Sanctuary Store, have just completed our annual International Film Festival, and are considering taking over the operation of the Lady Michigan, the glass bottom boat that tours our wreck sites. There are many other small ways that moneys are funneled into the program through the Friends – such as a donation box, bicycle rentals, and the like. Another of our challenges is just "Exposure". Thunder Bay and Alpena is geographically isolated – nearly 100 miles from the nearest freeway. We HAVE TO rely on destination tourism because you cannot stumble on Alpena. Also, it is not easy to come in to port since the Bay is very large and many, many miles from the traditional shipping lanes. So getting people to find us comes first – and then to fund us follows. I think it would be most helpful to have a national coalition of fundraising personnel, staff and SAC members. There would be much to share. Forgive me if this exists and I am unaware of it.*

To tie my two points, above, together, we have just created an ad hoc, non-voting seat and alternate for a Friends Board liaison to the Sanctuary Advisory Council. This is outside of the 15/15 that we have by Charter. By including members of the Friends Board into the SAC, we have a seamless method for sharing information. In

addition, I am both the SAC Chair and a Friends Charter Board Member. Also, the Chair of the Friends Board is a SAC member of long standing. I have been on the Sanctuary Advisory Council since 1997. I held a statutory seat representing the City of Alpena as a City Council Member and then Mayor until I retired from local government. Then I applied and secured a seat as an at-large member. The other SAC/Friends member has also been on for more than 15 years. We find that balancing old and new members works. We maintain our history and yet get new blood and new ideas. Our seats are truly coveted and there is always a lot of competition to be on the Council. We typically have 20+ members in attendance.

It is approaching Spring on Lake Huron so we are busy looking at all that Spring brings – getting our mooring buoys back into the water, getting Lady Michigan ready to take tourists, locals, and groups of school children back on to the "Big Lake", gearing up for our Regional ROV Competition. Life is good in northeast Michigan Come visit us. Although we seem to have five months of winter, our summers are magnificent and we would welcome you to come share our beautiful home community of Alpena and the surrounding areas. Visit our two "new" port cities of Rogers City in Presque Isle County and Harrisville in Alcona County. We also have lighthouses, boat tours, museums, kayaking, paddle-boarding, fishing, diving (of course) and you can pub crawl for charity on Thunder Thursday!!"

John Armor, Acting Director, ONMS:

Mr. Armor: We reached dozens of topics and we are only ten minutes behind schedule. I think this was a great call and success.

Response: I am honestly "tearing up" and appreciate everyone's participation and ability to embrace this concept. ONMS has been taken to a new level in the last six months.

Response from ONMS: While the program has experienced recent growth, ONMS is always working to take the program from a "nice to have" to a "gotta have."

Mr. Armor then moved towards the close of the webinar with three final points about (1.) enforcement, (2.) climate change, and (3.) a request for feedback following the webinar:

- Returning to what Ms. Holyoke, ONMS reported for Ms. Black, CINMSAC, Mr. Armor reminded participants about their lively discussion on enforcement with Jim Landon at the summit. He suggested that, as a program, we light a match under this issue because, right now, it is ripe at the national level and could benefit from council and community-based involvement. He noted that, in the past, advisory councils have weighed in on and supported national issues with great impact; here, enforcement could be the "next big thing." If councils across the system are interested, he would like to see them approach this matter in a coordinated, solutions-oriented response.

- Mr. Armor recalled Mr. Denmark's, GRNMSAC request for an ONMS national or lead position. He said that ONMS has been working to develop that position with its Climate Team Lead at headquarters. As envisioned, ONMS would produce a one-page summary that speaks to the program's role in climate change and what ONMS can do to move the ball forward. Within the next few weeks, Mr. Armor expects to send out the one-page document for review.

- Lastly, Mr. Amor asked the webinar's participants for feedback regarding the webinar, its format, and any other issue that reflect on ONMS's presentation of information to councils. He emphasized that he and headquarters staff want to hear from council chairs and representatives directly so that they feel as valued as they are and their time is used effectively.

Response: These three areas are important, but my personal passion has been to enhance research, like climate change research, especially in lieu of limited budgets. Many elected officials may be interested in research budget requests. Each site likely wants more research funding that can address their own topography, resources, etc.; however, in my opinion, "research is the lead" for our story and an increased funding appeal.

Question: When can we reconnect via this format again?

- Response from ONMS: Unless I hear otherwise, I will say that we are doing this again. When Ms. Holyoke sends out the notes to everyone, we can gauge the availability for another webinar; at that time, ONMS may have a permanent director.

Question: What is the status of the strategic plan?

- Response from ONMS: In anticipation of the ONMS Leadership Team meeting the first week of May, we have a mockup of the draft strategic plan down to the objectives level. At the meeting, the team will spend half of one day on the content and how we plan to share it. We anticipate knowing more in the next month or two.