

**Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council
- December 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes-**

Date: December 6, 2021

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Google Meet

Meeting Attendees

NOAA: Tane Casserley, David Dodsworth, Mark Losavio, Paul “Sammy” Orlando, Jean Prevo, Shannon Ricles

SAC Members: Eileen Abel, Lee DeCola, Dan Hamilton, Maggie Ostdahl, Joanne Roland, John Stefancik, Lucille Walker, Deanna Wheeler

SAC Alternates: Susan Gerbasi, Lolita Kiorpes, Anne Stark, Ruth Toomey, Sharee Williamson

Government Agency and Tribe Members: Paul Anderson (State of VA), Kelli Beavers (Charles County MD), Phil Hager (MD DNR), Mario Harley (Piscataway Conoy Tribe), Susan Langley (MD Dept of Planning), Elizabeth Moore (State of VA)

Guests: Ryan Abrahamsen, Daniel O’Brien

Media: N/A

WELCOME & SAC BUSINESS:

Eileen Abel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Lucille Walker needed to leave the meeting early and had an update she wanted to share with the council. Eileen Abel motioned to change the SAC agenda to move Lucille’s council update to the beginning of the meeting. Dan Hamilton seconded the motion. The agenda change was approved by the entire council.

Dan Hamilton motioned to approve the October 25, 2021, meeting minutes. Lucille Walker seconded and the meeting minutes were approved by the entire council. These minutes are available on the website <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/meetings.html>.

Lucille Walker spoke about the launch of the Destination Maryland feasibility study. You can see the full report here <https://destinationsouthernmaryland.com/nha-feasibility-study-draft-available-for-public-review-comment/> Mallows Bay is one of the cornerstones of the national approach. Hoping to raise the profile even further. Currently, there are only 55 heritage areas in

the United States, vying to become the 56th. It would cover all of Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's and Southern Prince George's Counties. Please reach out to Lucille if you have any questions, she'd be happy to talk one-on-one. Public comments are being received through December 17.

Eileen introduced Kelli Beavers who is the new County of Maryland Director of Recreation, Parks and Tourism.

Mallows Bay NMS is currently recruiting for three alternate seats on the council – Citizen-at-Large, Recreation and Recreational Fishing, as well as a youth member and alternate.

Applications are due by January 15. If you know anyone that is interested please direct them to <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/recruitment.html> or have them contact jean.prevo@noaa.gov.

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION:

Ryan Abrahamsen from Terrain 360 presented at the last advisory council meeting. Terrain 360 is capturing video footage at Mallows Bay which can be used to develop virtual paddles. These virtual options create new opportunities to tell stories about the area.

Ryan has been working with the Monitor staff on building out some of what he had already developed. They are looking for feedback on what can be developed from this. Ryan has a really great starting point for us but we feel there is a lot more to do.

Ryan showed the updated video which has integrated one of the Chesapeake videos, as well as some shipwreck and 3D models. Ryan would like to incorporate video interviews of people with historical knowledge that could speak about the history of the bay, for example someone that may have been around during the burning of the ships.

A SAC working group would be helpful to help tag things on the trail, and to get footage, pictures and content for the pop ups along the trail and create more detail. He showed some examples of what they have tagged so far, which is about eight or nine locations.

Carolin McManus suggested in the chat box that Don Shomette might be a good source for hard to find photos. Deanna Wheeler suggested Janet Cox has the records of the history of Nanjemoy and Alberta Jones has a lot information and photos. Deanna also mentioned Susan Langley and Don Shomette have a lot of scientific data based on the ships.

Mallows Bay current water trail map can be found at https://chesapeakeconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/060518-Chesapeake-Guide_online-R.pdf. There are 16 points of interest on the guide. Each point includes a picture and two sentences to help interpret. Terrain 360 has recreated that with his virtual map. Sammy would like to hear how the council members would tell the story? What dots should be included on the map? Looking for ideas for either

the walking trail or the water trail map. What kind of multi-media could you provide to help bring it to life for the people?

Some examples that could be elaborated on are the osprey, the ecology or climate change that is affecting the area. This is an opportunity to create a virtual tour with your words, your stories, your heritage and history. Sammy is looking to the council members to help build out those things that would be the paddle tour that you would like to see if you had an audience for the day.

Dan Hamilton – Ryan has anyone attempted to use this on a mobile device? Ryan – yes, it has been used at the site. It is also a great resource for people to use to get background about the sanctuary before they visit the actual site.

An example of one of these trails that has already been developed by Terrain 360 is the <https://lewisandclark.travel/virtual-tour/>.

If you have questions for Ryan feel free to email him at ryan@terrain360.com.

Eileen called for volunteers to form a working group to start putting together ideas with guidance from the Mallows/Monitor staff. The following volunteered to participate on the working group:

Carolyn McManus
Lolita Kiorpes
Lee DeCola
Dan O'Brien

There is definitely an opportunity to showcase this product at tradeshow and booths to help promote the excitement of getting out on the water. It will be a good way to educate people about Mallows Bay NMS not only in Maryland but also around the world. This product is a great opportunity for people that will never get a chance to get on the water.

Education Working Group Update – Shannon Ricles

The education working group met on November 8 to discuss how to use ROVs to engage students and teachers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) activities and also introduce them to Mallows Bay and the sanctuary system. From that meeting Eileen set up a meeting with the STEM coordinator for Charles County schools where they gave her an overview of ROVs and some of the possibilities that can be offered to students and teachers. They also discussed hosting a professional development workshop for teachers and possible summer camps at Eileen's campus. They will meet again after the holidays to discuss moving forward with some of these ideas.

Shannon is considering doing something in the spring to showcase the ROV program with both school districts if restrictions allow. This will be discussed at the next working group meeting scheduled for December 7.

This work is not limited to just the education group. Eileen would like to get some names of people that would like to participate with this in more of a technology aspect. There were no volunteers, but Eileen will continue to reach out to folks in the group.

Susan Gerbasi has scheduled a meeting in January with the Fairfax County science curriculum specialist who is very excited to have teachers use Mallows Bay and the website. Susan has been spreading the word in both Loudoun and Fairfax Counties. Hoping to get good feedback from them on all the things we have been working on.

Mallows Bay NMS website is getting an update. The “Visit” section has been updated, the “Education” section will be updated soon. Shannon is still working on the advisory council page. If you haven’t done so already, please send Shannon your bio and your headshot.

SAC COMMENTS:

Anne Stark shared an update on the New Nanjemoy–Mattawoman Forest Rural Legacy Area. On December 2, 2021 the Maryland DNR and Board of Public Works approved the Charles County nomination of Nanjemoy-Mattawoman Forest Rural Legacy Area (RLA) in western Charles County. This designation is for 64,000-acres.

A Grant of \$1,111,942 to acquire conservation easements to protect forest, natural areas, farmland, and historic properties within the Nanjemoy and Mattawoman watersheds. This includes properties on the Potomac River, Mallows Bay, Nanjemoy Creek and Mattawoman Creek, and is within the U.S. Navy’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) preservation boundary. This is great news for the Mallows Bay-Potomac River Marine Sanctuary since Mattawoman is critical to the success of the Potomac River and Mallows Bay.

Phil Hager from the Maryland DNR shared that the state government recently created an Office of Outdoor Recreation. The former DNR Assistant Secretary Daryl Anthony is going to be serving as the director of that office. There may be opportunities for crossover and cross-pollination with this effort so Phil will invite him to participate in future sanctuary advisory council meetings.

SANCTUARY UPDATE:

Sammy reflected on the history and importance of getting Mallows Bay designated a sanctuary designated in 2019. This designation was very significant because it was the first sanctuary designated in 20 years and the first one using the new designation process.

Here we are two years later. We were designated in September of 2019. There was a community event to celebrate the designation in November of 2019. COVID-19 came along in February/March 2020. It was a year ago tonight that this advisory council had it's very first meeting. In that years' time we have had nine meetings, 10 different informal SAC chats. Jean and Sammy have been on over 100 phone calls with advisory council members. Sammy, Jean, Eileen Abel and Dan Hamilton have met every single Monday since they were voted in as chair and vice-chair in June 2021. This team has been playing out your ideas and ongoing programs to see how best the sanctuary can fit into that. It's only been one year, looking forward to what it's going to look like in 2022 with the visions from this group, the Mallows/Monitor team and our other partners.

Sammy is grateful for this group. Your passion and spirit energizes all of us. Thank you!

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mark Losavio will email the "Save Spectacular" backgrounds to Dan Hamilton and Eileen Abel.

Lee DeCola is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Users Group for ESRI, which is an industry leader in the GIS field. Last week Lee gave a talk on my spatial and temporal analysis of the marine protected areas. If you're interested in learning more about the marine protected areas you can find more information on their website at <https://marineprotectedareas.noaa.gov/>.

ADJOURN:

Dan Hamilton motioned to adjourn the meeting and John Stefancik seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20pm. The next regular meeting is **Monday, February 7, 2022 at 6:00pm.**

Meeting Links shared in Chat Box:

Destination Maryland Draft Feasibility Study - <https://destinationsouthernmaryland.com/nha-feasibility-study-draft-available-for-public-review-comment/>

SAC Applications – <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/recruitment.html>

Water Trail Guide - https://chesapeakeconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/060518-Chesapeake-Guide_online-R.pdf

Lewis and Clark Virtual Tour - <https://lewisandclark.travel/virtual-tour/>

Mallows Bay Website - <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/visit/>

Marine Protected Areas - <https://marineprotectedareas.noaa.gov/>