

**DRAFT**

**Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary  
Advisory Council  
- December 5, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
College of Southern Maryland, LaPlata Campus, 8730 Mitchell Road**

**Date: December 5, 2022**

**Time: 6:00 p.m.**

**Location: College of Southern Maryland**

**Meeting Attendees**

**NOAA:** Tane Casserley, David Dodsworth, Mark Losavio, Paul “Sammy” Orlando, Megan Ossmann, Shannon Ricles

**SAC Members:** Eileen Abel, Dan Hamilton, Anne (Youth Seat), Bill Kilinski, Deanna Wheeler, Joanne Roland, Lucille Walker, Maggie Ostdahl,

**SAC Alternates:** Lolita Kiorpes, Sara Ramotnik, Anne Starke, Erin Cooley

**Government Agency and Tribe Members:** Mario Harley (Piscataway Conoy Tribe), Tim Drummond (Charles County), Elizabeth Hughes (MD Dept. of Planning), Elizabeth Moore (Commonwealth of VA), Susan Langley (MD Dept. of Planning), Paul Anderson (Commonwealth of VA), Sam Drury (Charles County),

**Guests:** Joe and Shelly Perrie (Atlantic Kayak), Zelda (Piscataway Conoy Tribe), Jim Fedorko (Charles County Rec and Parks), Carl Sharp (Charles County Rec and Parks), Tara Meadows (?), Darrel Kinsey Jr. (?), Ashley Chenault (Charles County Chief of Tourism)

**Media:** Darnell (Reporter)

**WELCOME & SAC BUSINESS:**

Eileen Abel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Eileen welcomed the two youth seat members, Anne Vazhappilly and Erin Cooley and said that they will be working with the education seats.

Eileen requested input from the SAC to plan for the coming year. She asked about having meetings in-person, virtual, or hybrid. General consensus was that in-person is good, but there is also a need for virtual options in case some cannot make the drive or if weather is severe. Eileen thanked everyone for their input and said that they would take it under advisement.

Eileen asked for a motion to approve the September 12, 2022, meeting minutes. Maggie Ostdahl made the motion. It was seconded by Dan Hamilton, and the meeting minutes were approved by the entire council. The minutes are available on the website

<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/meetings.html>.

## **NATIONAL SAC CHAIR'S MEETING SUMMARY**

National Marine Sanctuaries' Strategic Plan (6 goals) – Eileen Abel

1. ONMS 50th Anniversary - Save Spectacular
  - MPNMS hosted three events at Mallows Park: Juneteenth, Pride in the Bay, and Blue Star Families. There was a lot of energy at each event, and the events showed that we can engage the public.
2. America the Beautiful Initiative
  - Federally- and locally-led effort to conserve at least 30% of land and water by 2030
  - Opportunity for challenge grants
  - Embrace, adopt and apply the AtB principles to the work you do
  - Share information about success using datasets, such as iNaturalist
3. Notes from the Field: Considerations from Dan Basta, former director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, on just what SACs are and what they can do:
  - Part I – Advisory councils have community power and their work is never done
    - Always keep the goal in mind
    - Never rush the community-based process
    - Always take the long view
    - All of us should be conveyer belts for connections, etc.
    - You are expected to be an active participant
    - Government programs come and go but sanctuary programs become part of the community
  - Part II
    - Remain vital and relevant to the quality of life of your community
    - Connect with other advisory councils
    - Build coalitions of common purpose to effect change
    - Advocate for a continuing education program for SAC members
- Closing – What can you do?
  - Interests focus around ecology, safety, education, events, and outreach
  - A few months ago, we asked what do you want to learn and what do you want to do - what's the one thing you can commit to do to support Mallows Bay this year?
    - Dan Hamilton - commit to represent Mallows Bay at Patuxent event (Second Sail in October)
    - Lucille Walker - commit to cross-promote Mallows Bay with Destination Southern Maryland events
    - Deanna Wheeler – Several years ago, Riverfest was held at Mallows with community members - willing to help organize a community day advertised in Charles County

- Lolita Kiorpes - keep getting more youth groups involved at Charles County schools and make new connections

## **SAC UPDATES:**

**Mario Harley** (Piscataway Conoy Tribe) gave the following update:

- The Welcome poster for the sanctuary has been completed.
  - Official welcoming in his language with symbolism – sky, land, water, elders are keepers of the history, the youth are the future.
- The trail signs for Mallows Bay are also completed and will include the native language for Mallows Bay. The signs will be installed next spring.
- Yahentamitsi Dining Hall at University of Maryland campus is decorated with various stories, legends, treaties, and historical moments in Piscataway history.
- Mario will be teaching a Maryland Indigenous History Course at the University of Maryland College Park campus starting in Fall 2023. The course is 16 weeks with nine different instructors. It will put students on the water to see the plants and animals so they can experience the natural world.

**Lucille Walker** (Cultural Heritage)

- Maryland Heritage Area program is one of only three state-based heritage areas
- 13 heritage areas in Maryland - we are Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties
- Heritage tourism is about people, place, and stories that makes us uniquely southern Maryland
- There is also a National Heritage Area Program (55 in the U.S.). To become one requires an act of Congress. We are on track for two years - passed in the House and waiting on the Senate. This area is significant in indigenous history, religious freedom, African American history, women's right to vote, and other events that shaped U.S. history.
- Will keep the SAC informed as it progresses

**Susan Langley**

- Students from last summer's field school will continue to study microbiomes on two of the vessels at Mallows
- Eileen asked if the students could report on the data they collect to the SAC. Susan said yes.

**SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE – Sammy Orlando**

- Welcome message. Sammy thanked everyone for coming, and said he is truly inspired by all that the sanctuary is doing. Especially, when the SAC has only been in existence for two years. He said that our work with all of the SAC is so important because we provide mutual benefit and support to each other.
- Sammy thanked Team Monitor/Mallows for doing all that they do, but he said that strength comes from the SAC and its ideas.

- For the 50th Anniversary National Marine Sanctuaries Act, we held three events at Mallows in collaboration with a wealth of partners. The events were:
  - Juneteenth with Blue Star Families
  - Pride Day at the Bay in June with a multitude of partners
  - Blue Star Families Welcome Week 2022 (September 25, 2022) – over 60,000 active duty military families relocate each year, and the event introduces them to the area and the community resources available.
- Charles County Recreation, Parks, and Tourism - Water Quality Monitoring summer camp was successful and talks are ongoing to include it in future summer programs with the county
- Potomac Riverkeeper Network community science volunteer water quality monitoring program (monitors bacteria levels), Eyes on the Bay, passive acoustic receiver. The buoy collects real-time weather and water data.
- East Carolina University Field School May 2022 – 20 professors and grad students will do a site characterization, create virtual models, and engage in 3D printing opportunities. Susan Langley is the lead.
- The first subaquatic vegetation (SAV) survey was completed with Force Blue and Maryland DNR at Mallows Bay in September 2022. Force Blue was led by former NOAA administrator, Timothy Gallaudet (Admiral, U.S. Navy, Retired).
- Terrain360 – This pilot project has been hugely successful. It offers virtual tours with multimedia content and video to use with VR goggles. We have a congressional earmark for \$95,000 to create and expand this project, which will focus on ecology, with the addition of three virtual hiking trails and a new virtual on-water paddle. We cannot do this without our partners.
  - Lynne Wheeler is leading the way – She went out with staff who recorded her guided bird tour at Mallows for Terrain360 content. Hoping to add more experts this year.
  - Next steps: BioBlitz (April 29 and September 9), virtual paddle and hiking, interpretive guides, education programs, community science, and more
- Working with co-managers on new signage
- Sanctuary Visitor Center – There may be supplemental funds provided through the Courtesy Inflation Reduction Act Funds. We are waiting on OMB to approve a spending plan for a visitor center potentially in Indian Head.
- Opportunity to partner and leverage opportunities with Monitor NMS and The Mariners’ Museum and Park. The USS *Monitor* Center in the museum is an example of a coalition of partners, and we can leverage the partnerships for Mallows.
- Sanctuary on the move with the new exhibit trail - join us at events and programs, and connect us to your communities, programs, and events. Help us leverage programs, funds, interns, and volunteers.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Deanna Wheeler (Education) said that she has given out 10,000 reusable bags that her students designed based on Mallows Bay
- Lolita: Chesapeake Bay is in the process of being designated as a Chesapeake National Recreation Area. Lucille has been lobbying to get a visitor location in southern MD.
  - Can submit public comment at [united4CNRA.com](https://united4CNRA.com)

**ADJOURN:** A motioned was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The next regular meeting is yet to be determined, but an invite will come in January.

**Upcoming 2023 Meetings & Events:**

March 11 – Battle of Hampton Roads at The Mariners’ Museum and Park, Newport News, VA

Earth Day – April 22, 2023

BioBlitz – April 29, 2023

June – LGBTQ Pride Month

SAC Meeting – June 5, 2023

BioBlitz – September 9, 2023

SAC Meeting – October 2, 2023

SAC Meeting – December 4, 2023