

San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Feb. 2, 2023

Meeting via Zoom

9:00 MAC Chair Jamie Stephens provided a welcome and gave a brief introduction to Zoom and best practices. The MAC members in attendance were Chair Jamie Stephens (local government), Tracey Cottingham, Tom Reeve (cultural/heritage), Erin Corra (education/interpretation, J. Havner (private landowner), Ruth Milner (wildlife/ecological), Cyndi Smith (recreation/tourism), Sam Barr (tribal relations) Amy Nessler(recreation/tourism), and Del Guenther (wildlife/ecological).

9:00 a.m. Other attendees: Jim Berquist (Turn Point Lighthouse Preservation Society), Elizabeth Kilanowski (Lummi Island Heritage Trust), Ron Zee (Friends of SJI), James McCubbin (Friends of SJI), Nancy Devaux (Media Journalist), Madrona Murphy (Kwiaht), Amanda Wedow, Doug McCutchin and Aaron Rock (Land Bank), Kirm Taylor (Lopez Community Trails Network), Libby Nelson (Tribal), and Jane Fuller (SJC commissioner).

9:03 a.m. BLM District Manager Kurt Pindel welcomed the group.

9:48 a.m. MAC Council discusses possibility of meeting informally to discuss and share ideas and values. MAC is advised to remain informal outside of official meetings and no official business should take place and that any ideas should be brought back to the official meeting.

9:54 a.m. Rich Bailey led the discussion. The discussion moves to talking about tribal relations and how 100% of the San Juan Island National Monument has been inventoried for cultural resources. Rich explains this inventory provides baseline information for managing cultural resources. The discussion then shifts to noting the storms the Monument has seen since the last meeting, which resulted in deposits of gravel onto the site. But those have again mostly been depositional as opposed to erosion, so the site remains intact. This info is in line with the stabilization measures, which show it is working effectively thus far.

9:58 a.m. The MAC discusses the SJI Resource Management Plan as it pertains to closures. They discussed the best way to keep people on trails during closures to prevent damage and disturbance to the landscape. This included the possibility of signs. However, it was made clear the BLM must preserve, to the best of their ability, the natural landscape.

10:06 a.m. Members discuss an issue about sheep on Stuart Island and signage issues at Cattlepoint. There were discussions of a patrol schedule during baby fox season. More issues and seasonal questions on climbers, employment and engaging with the local community to make people aware of the upcoming breeding seasons and how to help people avoid certain specific areas when necessary.

11 a.m. The MAC discusses rule enforcement of authorized camping areas and flying of drones. The discussion went into how the rules are written into the RMP and how best to inform the public. More information needs to be discussed about this before action can be made as there are a lot of

different rules and agencies involved. The MAC also discussed implementation priorities and implementation considerations and to prioritize imminent or occurring degradation to the resources or public safety risks. Community involvement is highly suggested and further meetings should have brainstorming sessions to determine priorities, with the goal of ensuring the public has a chance to be a part of the process.

11:16 a.m. The MAC discussed determining what is considered an organized group.

11:25 a.m. The “floor” was opened to tribal members and elected officials and their representatives.

11:25 a.m. A tribal member expressed interest in being consulted in the development of interpretive signage, logos, and emergency closures due to negative impacts on cultural resources. They also noted that tribes had signed cooperative agreements with the government for other monument sites and that parts of the San Juan Islands should be considered as well.

11:33 a.m. The Mac Discusses possible future dates to hold a meeting.

11:40 a.m. The MAC discusses how to best get the public more engaged and involved.

11:58 a.m. The MAC agrees that educating the public on the resource management plan is most important and then informing the public of the next steps that are aligned with the RMP.

12:43 p.m. The MAC motioned in order to keep the MAC abreast of current information about the monument. This includes the MAC receive copies of the annual managers’ report and updated information related to monitoring activities mentioned in the RMP and visitation statistics. The motion was approved.

12:49 p.m. Jeff circled back to the legalities of meeting informally and recommended that select members should create a subcommittee to be able to meet legally. The subcommittee can make recommendations based on their meetings and do not require an invitation to the public. However, no decisions can be made in the subcommittee.

12:55 p.m. The MAC meeting ends.