

## Monument Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

May 12, 2021

Attending: (MAC) Tom Reynolds, Tracey Cottingham, Erin Corra, Jackie Ferry, Gene Helfman, Rick Wigre, Del Guenthur, Genevie Thomas, (BLM) Kurt Pindel, Rich Bailey, Lauren Pidot, Jeff Clark, Skeet Townley and varying numbers of the public in attendance.

Location: Zoom

8:50 – Anne Marie King, Ethics Attorney Advisor for the Bureau of Land Management gave the MAC members their required ethics training.

9:00 – Matt Christensen from the Oregon State Office gave an introduction to Zoom and best practices for a smooth meeting.

9:05 – Tom Reynolds (MAC Chair) opened the meeting and led a review of the agenda, and an acceptance of the last meeting minutes which were approved unanimously by the MAC. The annual vote for chair and vice-chair were also held and Tom was reappointed unanimously as was Vice-Chair, Tracey Cottingham. Tom again expressed his displeasure that the MAC was not a part of the public comment period for the Proposed RMP. He also said the MAC is handicapped due to the lack of appointment of three members – local government, landowners, and cooperating tribes and hoped the new secretary would fill those positions as quickly as possible.

9:15 – An introduction of MAC members and invited subject matter experts was made. Sam Barr asked if there can be more tribal representatives on the MAC instead of one. Tribal members can be on the MAC in any of the categories so yes, but they will not be under the category of Tribal Representative. The possibility of a separate Tribal Council was also discussed.

9:20 – Status Reports were given out by the BLM. Spokane District Public Affairs Officer Jeff Clark said he'd been assured by BLM HQ that the three outstanding MAC positions would be filled by August. When asked about future call for nominations, he responded that those come out through HQ and it would likely be January or February of 2022.

9:30 – Spokane District Manager Kurt Pindel gave an update on the SJINM Manager position. It has not been advertised yet due to a shortage of human resources personnel in the State Office. There is a backlog of positions needing to be filled throughout Oregon and Washington. Kurt also said the Proposed RMP/EIS is not at the Department yet because it is still being reviewed by other agencies. He also talked about plans to visit the islands in late spring or early summer.

9:50 – Monument Recreation Planner Skeet Townley talked about planned activities for the Monument this summer to include two research projects on the Monument. One on strawberries which would occur across several of the Monument properties and one involving some tree coring at Carter Point on Lummi Island. He mentioned there were not any real vegetation projects planned other than manual removal of invasives plants by youth conservation crews. There are no closures, new Rights of Ways (ROW) or signage planned other than possibly new signs near Agate Beach. There is an existing ROW for power lines at Watmough Bay and the BLM is still trying to secure legal public access to Iceberg Point.

Gene Helfman asked about some disturbances at Watmough bay to include brushing by OPLACO and some Alders that were removed. Skeet explained he had to remove the Alders to allow ambulance access.

10:10 – Chris Sheridan talked about invasive plant species and prescribed burns. Gene asked how budget affects what treatments are used and budget does impact what treatments if any are used year by year. Del wanted reassurance that any herbicide use would have to go through a public comment period, and it would by law. Genavie wondered about commercial timber harvest which is not being considered at this time and is not anticipated to be in the future.

10:30 – Jeff Dimke came on to talk about the BLM's fire program on the Monument which really relies on local fire departments for suppression activities. There may be fuel reduction done by the BLM in the future.

10:40 – Break

10:45 – Phil Hanceford from the Wilderness Society spoke about subcommittees and how the MAC could continue to advise the BLM during implementation of the plan.

10:50 – Jocelyn Torres from the Conservation Lands Foundation talked about ways the MAC could evolve to help the BLM.

11:00 – The MAC members discussed limiting group sizes and group limits. Rick Wigre mentioned seeing “massive” amounts of vehicles at Watmough Bay.

11:25 – Barry Bushue, the BLM State Director for Oregon and Washington, came on the call to address the MAC and other citizens on the call. He applauded the public interest and engagement on the islands and spoke about his desire to meet them all and see Monument lands in person. He answered a number of questions, including the status of the MAC nominations, which he is not privy to.

11:45 – Tracey introduced Christine Minney from who brought up the county's concerns and Tracey then asked about the MAC having input on the Monument Manager position. While they can't have input on which person is selected, they can provide us with the types of qualifications and background they think are critical. The MAC agreed to provide these to the BLM.

11:50 – Break

Noon – Public comment period and working lunch started. Tom Reynolds read comments from Mary Ferm from San Juan Island. Tom Reeve spoke from Lopez Island spoke next. He said the MAC should have input into the selection of the Monument Manager. The BLM must continually consult the MAC, the tribes and the public going forward. Alexandra Gayek echoed the statements of Mary and Tom and thanked the MAC for their engagement. Rhea Miller spoke next and was happy Tom Reynolds reiterated the MAC's concerns about the wording of the draft. She hopes the Monument Manager is community focused. Cynthia Smith was next and echoed all the previous speakers. Chuck Schietinger also agreed with the previous speakers and was concerned with herbicide use. Wendy Mickel wanted continued MAC involvement with implementation of the plan and with selecting the Monument Manager. She does not want drones on the landscape and is uninterested in reverting to pre-contact vegetation.

12:30 – No other people wanted to speak so the public comment period was concluded. Tom Reynolds opened up comments from Tribal representatives and elected officials but there were no takers. He then asked MAC members to give their criteria for the Monument Manager. Tracey agreed to collect the comments from today and any additional that the MAC members come up with and send to the BLM.

12:45 – The MAC had a discussion about the use of drones on the Monument. Drones are prohibited from taking off and landing on the Monument but may fly over it in the draft. The MAC did not recommend changes to that policy.

12:55 – Rich Bailey, Spokane District Archaeologist, spoke about cultural inventories planned on the Monument. He also covered Tribal representation and explained the Tribes are all invited to every MAC meeting and that their input is always sought by the MAC and the BLM. There is a commitment by the BLM and interest from many of the Tribes to have a separate Tribal Committee for the Monument as well.

1:05 – The MAC talked about opportunities to support implementation of the management plan once the record of decision is signed. The MAC had no formal recommendations to BLM and/or DOI. Bin items, action items, agenda items for next meeting. The main thing was to edit the charter to reflect the MAC assisting with implementation of the plan versus just working on the development of the plan. A new meeting was tentatively scheduled for September.

2:00 – Adjourn.