

## Monument Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Feb. 3, 2022

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

9:00 – An Ethics Attorney Advisor for the Bureau of Land Management gave the MAC members their required ethics training.

9:15 – Matt Christensen from the Oregon State Office gave an introduction to Zoom and best practices for a smooth meeting.

9:20 – Opening remarks were given by the BLM’s Deputy Director of Policy and Programs, Nada Wolff Culver.

9:30 – Tom Reynolds (MAC Chair) 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 Jamie Stephens was appointed unanimously as chair and Tracey Cottingham was reappointed vice-chair. Tom again expressed his displeasure that the MAC was not a part of the public comment period. 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 secretary would fill those positions as quickly as possible.

9:50 – 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 one outstanding MAC position and the upcoming expiring positions should be filled by this fall.

10:00 – Spokane District Manager Kurt Pindel gave an update that the SJINM Manager position should be announced in April. Questions were answered by BLM on Wilderness Characteristics

10:10 – There was a lot of discussion about the protest report and confusion over valid protests.

10:15 – Lauren Pidot walked reviewed the history of SJINM and RMP process to include timelines as well as MAC and public involvement.

10:30 – Break

10:40 – MAC Charter revision review and discussion of suggestions for post-RMP operations.

11:00 – There were discussions about the extended hunting season plans for Monument lands and potential BLM interactions with the state. Ruth Milner will keep MAC informed if there will be an extended hunting season for deer for 2022. Noted there is nothing that BLM can do to change this. General citizens can contact Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

11:15 – Lincoln Bormann from the San Juan Island Conservation Land Bank discussed the Higgins property acquisition and how the BLM could purchase the property with LWCF funds to expand the

Monument. BLM discussed challenges of annexing property into the Monument, but also stressed it is a top priority for the Spokane District.

11:30 – Keepers of the Patos Light and the Turn Point Lighthouse Preservation Society both gave presentations about the properties they look after as well as the history of each organization.

12:00 – Patti Gobin and Sam Barr both spoke about how the Tribes have lived on these lands for generations and their traditions and values must be reflected in the actions taken to conserve the Monument lands.

12:15 – 10 minute break

12:25 – Working Lunch and Public Comment Period. Wendy Mickel from Lopez Island, mentioned her work as a BLM Volunteer Monitor for 28 years and expressed her thanks to BLM, the MAC members and the Land Bank for everything being done to protect the Archipelago.

Cyndi Smith from Lopez Island spoke next and was very disappointed to learn that of the 155 comments received from the community, that the BLM considered only 41 comments to be received in a timely manner, to be complete, and to have standing. Of these 41 remaining protest comments, many from area experts, and organization and government officials, ALL 41 protests were denied.

Tom Reynolds said the MAC hoped that the BLM would consider comments in drafting the ROD.

Next, Asha Lela from Lopez Island spoke about parking issues at Colville and Watmough. She has a plan to help alleviate these issues and will speak to the new Monument Manager about it when they are in place.

Madrona Murphy from of KWIAHT, a nonprofit conservation laboratory for the San Juan Islands, spoke next. She thanked Patti and Sam for their words, and reminded everyone that the landscapes and ecosystems of the Monument are as rich and diverse as they are and worthy of protection because of the stewardship of generations of Coast Salish families.

KWIAHT has detailed concerns about the BLM aggressively promoting tourism on the Islands, not enforcing the existing ACEC and is embracing a failed approach to habitat restoration, in their comments and protests on the draft plan, all of which were summarily dismissed by BLM. At the same time, they have had to watch rare plants and cultural resources in the National Monument continue to be degraded by over-tourism and neglect.

1:30 – 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 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 is already scheduled for May 18 and two others were tentatively scheduled for October and December.

2:00 – Adjourn.