

**Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Advisory Council  
- October 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes-**

**Date: October 17, 2023**

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

**Location: Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, 500 W. Fletcher Street, Alpena, MI**

**Meeting Attendees**

**NOAA & Affiliates:** Stephanie Gandulla, Jeff Gray, Kim Gildner, Jason Luther, Daniel Moffatt, Jean Prevo, Cassandra Sadler, Sara Waters

**State of Michigan:** n/a

**SAC Members:** Roger Baumgardner, Nancy Kinney, Steve Kroll, Tim Lee, Don MacMaster, Dan Mitchell, Don Newport, Scott Parkham, Eric Peace, Adam Poll, Carol Shafto

**SAC Alternates:** Michael Beaulac, Jim Dessenberg, Patty Janes, Mike Kelly, Bob Krafft, RC Laugal, Ann-Marie Ruder, Chuck Wiesen

**Non-voting Members:** Beach Hall

**Media:** n/a

**Public:** n/a

**WELCOME AND ACTION ITEMS**

Tim Lee called the meeting to order. The council reviewed and approved the minutes from the August 15, 2023 council meeting.

**2024 Meeting Dates** – Tim and the staff discussed the meeting schedule for 2024. Looking at having five meetings and then having the annual volunteer appreciation event in December. The proposed meeting dates for 2024 are:

January 16

April 23

June 18

August 20

November 12 – was decided on instead of the 19th due to hunting season

December 10 – Volunteer Event

We could explore doing SAC coffees and lunches again on off months. Suggested maybe trying to do them on an as needed basis when special events are happening. Jeff reminded everyone the staff has an open-door policy so there is no need to wait for a meeting to communicate with us. Ann-Marie Ruder motioned to approve the proposed 2024 meeting schedule with five meetings and December being the volunteer celebration. Chuck Wiesen seconded the motion. The council voted to approve and the 2024 dates were passed.

### **SAC CHAIRS MEETING – Jeff Gray**

The annual SAC chairs meeting was held September 26-28, in Oswego, New York. Tim Lee and Steve Kroll were unable to attend the national meeting so Al Moe attended on behalf of the Thunder Bay NMS advisory council. Al couldn't be at the meeting tonight but he submitted a report to Jeff (see attached).

Traditionally the meeting had been held annually but there has not been an in person meeting since 2019. Many of the chairs and coordinators are new to the program since the last time everyone met.

Lake Ontario is close to final sanctuary designation. Had the opportunity to meet community and council members at a social event.

The agenda focused on SAC membership, recruitment, meeting lengths and frequency. System expansion was talked about and what that is going to mean for existing sites. Biggest concern from the group is what that would mean for the budgets of the existing sanctuaries. John Armor, Director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, presented on where the system is going. The members were also pushing John Armor to see what councils could do as a group to advocate for bigger budgets.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Director, Joel Johnson, presented to the group. He spoke about the Foundation's plans to double their efforts to spend more time with SACs and communities. Felt the foundation had drifted too much to national issues and is making it a point to connect at the site level.

Take-a-ways for us – Thunder Bay NMS was referenced so much throughout all of the different topics during the meeting. In May 2024, we are looking at hosting advisory council and community members from Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast NMS, Lake Ontario, Mallovs Bay NMS and Pennsylvania. They are interested in seeing Thunder Bay programs. Ideally, we would like to host them during the annual MATE ROV Competition and Viking cruise ship visit. Those events will give them a good idea of the variety of programs going on at Thunder Bay. This visit will be a big event for us so we may be looking to the SAC for help.

There was also talk of reinstating the exchange program like we did a few years ago with Olympic Coast NMS. Chuck Wiesen participated in the original exchange and said it was worthwhile.

### **MEMBER CONSTITUENT AND PARTNER REPORTS DISCUSSION**

Tim would like members to bring things happening with their constituencies and provide opportunities for each member to share what that group might be doing. Council members learn a lot from each other. Would like to have a discussion to talk about what that might look like or the format.

Jeff mentioned that we had done it before by assigning seats per meeting. Jeff suggested maybe blending that with longer presentations from folks. For example, Eric Peace regarding Great Lakes shipping or Alpena Community College programs/updates. Jeff is also exploring blending in reports from our sanctuary partners like the Alpena County Library, MyMichigan Medical Center, Boys and Girls Club and Alpena Marc.

What worked when we did it before? What didn't work?

Steve Kroll – He thought they worked well before, kind of went by the way side during COVID. Thinks it's worthwhile. Steve is in a different seat on the council then he was before so he has had the opportunity to interact with other people in Rogers City throughout the summer. Steve has started wearing his logo shirt everywhere he goes to promote the sanctuary and start conversations. He has found many people don't know the sanctuary is here. Steve would like to share ways we can communicate to people. He feels it is the council's job to be the spokesperson for the sanctuary and wants to encourage members to not get complacent during the two months there are no meetings. We are the people that need to keep sounding the horn. As the citizen-at-large member he feels it is important for him to get involved in other things in his community to interact with his constituents. The constituent reports generate ideas for interacting with people.

Carol Shafto - We had started those to remind people that you are more than just an individual on the council, you have a relationship with whom you represent. We come and voice our own opinion and forget we are representing a bigger group. It is important to share your constituency's opinions with the group, even it's something we don't really agree with. There is a larger group behind you that you represent.

Nancy Kinney - Presque Isle Township is in the process of doing their five-year plan. She is on the Parks and Recreation committee. Thunder Bay NMS is included in the plan so she has provided them an update. She encouraged the other government folks to check their townships planning processes to make sure they are correct. If they want to apply for grants that involve Thunder Bay NMS, it has to be in the plan. Adam Poll mentioned that NEMCOG has been helping with that 5-year plan so contact them. Make sure they know what we are doing.

Bob Krafft – Was in Lansing a couple of weeks ago and was asked about the shipwreck museum. There are many ways to spread the word, lots of opportunities on social media. He gave some examples like sharing on an RV Facebook page that he is a member of. Bob represents the Economic Development alternate seat on the council. He recently went downtown and wandered the stores. He asked about the cruise ships impact on their business. Restaurants said they saw more crew members than passengers. All feel that more could be done by the Downtown Development Authority. Stores, especially Cedar and Threads, had a lot of success from the ships. The owner of the store made his own "Welcome Cruise Ships" sign to put in his window. He appreciates that even though the sanctuary has their own store, they continue to send the passengers to the downtown to

support other local businesses. Felt that NOAA was doing a great job for the community when the cruise ships come in. There were suggestions for our sanctuary store to carry pharmacy items.

Sanctuary staff will work on getting logo wear for the council or you can take your own shirts/gear to True North Threads and have it embroidered.

Jeff and Tim will contact members to schedule constituent/member reports for the next meeting.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS – Stephanie Gandulla**

**October 25 – Leadercast, Alpena Chamber of Commerce** – hosted at the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center. All day leadership opportunity – virtual presentations from national and international leaders live out of Atlanta, Georgia. Great opportunity to be inspired. Contact the chamber to register.

**October 26 – Sanctuary Update – Association of Lifelong Learners** – open to the public. Jeff will be giving a similar presentation that he gives to the Viking passengers. Powerful presentation of the past 20 years of Thunder Bay.

**October 27, 5-8pm – Halloween Trick or Treat at the Sanctuary** - Thank you to everyone that brought candy or donated money to purchase candy. It's a very fun community event, stop in even if you're not volunteering.

**November 14, 7pm – November Requiem** – Free public event. Stephanie will be posting an event on Facebook that folks can share.

**December 12, 7-8:30pm - Volunteer Appreciation Event** – This is an opportunity for us to honor our volunteers and present the Betty Krueger Volunteer of the Year award. The event will also include a presentation from a former Volunteer of the Year, Hannah MacDonald. A formal invite will be emailed in November.

**January 24-28 – 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Thunder Bay International Film Festival** – Partnering with the Sunset Project for a “Sanctuary Selections” film competition. This is a professional competition with a \$5,000 prize, it is separate from the student film competition. The team from Sunset Project will be promoting this competition around the Great Lakes. See the attached flyer for QR code with more information.

The planning committee strives to include Great Lakes content at the festival. Daniel Moffatt secured the film “Relentless” a true story of people tackling the mystery of why the fish most proxied by people nearly vanished from the largest freshwater ecosystem on Earth: the Great Lakes. This will be the Michigan premier of this film. Stephanie shared the film's trailer. It will be shown at the Rogers Theater on the first day of the festival. Daniel is working on getting the filmmakers to attend.

Grand Valley State University will be bringing students to participate in the film festival again this year.

### **EDUCATION TEAM UPDATE – Daniel Moffatt**

Our education mantra is to get youth - Near the water. On the water. Under the water.

R/V *Storm* – Students took a trip with Dr. O’Shea and Ashley Lemke who are studying archaeology on the Amberly Ridge in early July. Looking at sites that were recommended by the High School students. Great chance to connect students to scientists doing real research on the lake.

4-H Great Lakes and Natural Resources Camp – At Camp Chickagami, kids ages 14-16 snorkel program. Started in Lake Esau and then the advanced class went out to the shipwreck *Albany*.

Outside and Unplugged – High School students ages 13-16. Provided recreation opportunities to get into their sanctuary. No charge to the students, paid for by grants the Friends of TBNMS received. Seven students for four days in August. The camp focused on getting them near the water, on the water and in the water. The kids were given a test at the end of camp to win a prize. Had to recite at least five of the Great Lakes literacy principles. Those principles are:

1. The Great Lakes, bodies of fresh water with many features, are connected to each other and to the world ocean.
2. Natural forces formed the Great Lakes; the lakes continue to shape the features of their watershed.
3. The Great Lakes influence local and regional weather and climate.
4. Water makes Earth habitable; fresh water sustains life on land.
5. The Great Lakes support a broad diversity of life and ecosystems.
6. The Great Lakes and humans in their watersheds are inextricably interconnected.
7. Much remains to be learned about the Great Lakes.
8. The Great Lakes are socially, economically, and environmentally significant to the region, the nation and the planet.

The participants also kayaked at North Point Nature Preserve (NPNP) and snorkeled over the shipwrecks. Transformative experiences that we are trying to offer these students.

Marine Sanctuary Sampler Program - Boys & Girls Club of Alpena along with clubs from around the state participated. Stayed at Camp Chickagami. The program included a *Lady Michigan* tour and NPNP tour. Students collected all types of things during the beach walk including rocks, driftwood, etc.

Hamtramck High School Outdoor Adventure Club in partnership with Detroit Outdoors – Set up camp sites at Ossineke Campground. Each participant had never been to the Alpena area before and

for all but one of them, it was their first time on Lake Huron. The program is introducing them to this amazing place we have.

2023 Michigan Alliance for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) – Educators from around the state attended the conference hosted at Alpena Community College. Reception and tour at the GLMHC.

MiSTEM Directors Meeting – Statewide initiative to enhance STEM programs in the state. Daniel had the participants do the ROV in a box build. Half of those folks had never been to Alpena before.

Educator Film Workshop – Seven teachers learned about using film as an education tool and how to encourage their students to use it. Made connections with local teachers, Oscoda and Posen.

ROV Open House on October 10 for educators, mentors and parents. The Alpena ROV club was there to provide information. Nine adult mentors attended. They were looking for information on how to start a club.

### **Upcoming Education Events:**

Hosting Michigan Environmental Education Curriculum Support (MEECS) Professional Development on Saturday, November 4

Art in the Loft Student Art Class at the GLMHC – November 18, 10am-12:30pm

Student Film Competition – “Life in the Great Lakes” – Grades 6-12. The Friends have received a \$1,500 from the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan to help support prizes. Staff are looking for volunteers to watch and score the films. Please contact Daniel if you are interested.

Daniel attending a meeting at Alpena CRTC to learn about their Starbase program. Starbase is a youth program focused on fifth graders.

Many of the programs Daniel spoke about are because of the Friends group. The kayaks used for the education programs were donated. A family foundation has donated a lot of the money that funds Daniel’s position at the sanctuary. West Virginia University has also given the Friends an education grant. The money generated from community donations, grants and partners is what helps fund these programs.

### **SANCTUARY UPDATE**

Mooring Buoys – The buoys were recovered from the lake last week, along with the last mission at the Middle Island sinkhole. Staff retrieved a big sediment trap that was used throughout the summer to get the samples. They reprogramed it for the winter, then it will be retrieved in the spring.

Last sampling for the acidification program happened today.

The dive team completed a two-week training at the NOAA Dive center in September.

The r/v *Storm* will be heading south to Muskegon for maintenance to be done this winter.

**GLMHC Visitation Numbers:**

2020 – 5,430

2021 – 0

2022 – 56,234

2023 -86,000 – Fourth busiest year since we opened in 2005. Cruise ship is part of it but not the only part of it.

The sanctuary has invested very little into marketing. Visitation has been mostly word of mouth. Going to work with Patty Janes to come up with a marketing strategy. Viking passengers leave raving about this community, if they love it, we believe other people will too. Just need to come up with a robust marketing plan. Hoping to get to 100,000 visitors by the end of this year.

The sanctuary store sales numbers have also been amazing this year. Plan to continue to bring in more new items and grow. Also looking to expand and promote facility rental.

Viking Cruise Ship Visits – 20 this year, 26 next year. Partnership with Viking goes beyond dropping the visitors off here, the science aspect continues to be a real thing. They had a planning retreat with their staff this summer. There has been a breakthrough where some of their equipment can be used with researchers in the sanctuary.

Chuck asked for the draft Viking schedule – Jean will send it out to anyone interested. This is a draft so the dates can change.

Maritime Waterfront Park – Received a \$50k grant to put in rain gardens and bio swells to control water runoff. Thursday the staff will be doing some planting and then on Friday students will plant the native plants.

Friends Raffle – Wooden Paddle Board - \$5/ticket or 5 for \$20. Funds go to help the Friends, split with Tawas Boat Builders that constructed the paddle board. The drawing will be held on September 30, 2024. Tickets can be purchased in the sanctuary store. Please contact Kim Gildner if you would like to help sell tickets.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**ADJOURN:**

Chuck Wiesen motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ann Marie Ruder seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm.

**2023 TBNMS Advisory Council Schedule of Upcoming Meetings:**

December 12 – Volunteer Appreciation Event

**2024 TBNMS Advisory Council Meeting Schedule:**

January 16

April 23

June 18

August 20

November 12

December 10 -Volunteer Appreciation Celebration



Dear SAC Members and Alternates:

Due to schedule conflicts of our Chairman Tim Lee, I had the opportunity to recently attend the National Sanctuary Advisory Council Summit with Jeff and Jean, in Oswego, New York.

The Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary will be the 16<sup>th</sup> Sanctuary in the System, once designated. It will be a Shipwreck Sanctuary that includes wrecks from naval battles of the War of 1812 at Sackets Harbor between the U.S. and the British Navy.

Observations and 'take aways' from the Summit:

Ellen Brady and Jeff presented an extensive overview of the Great Lakes and National Marine Sanctuary designated, in designation status and potential nominations. Their presentations stimulated extensive discussions on TBNMS successes and growth since our designation in 2002.

Our host for our visit was Bill Crist, LONMS SAC Chair. A reception was held to include attendees as well as Bill's SAC and Alternates. This allowed us a great opportunity to meet, greet, mingle, share and answer questions. Additionally, we spent time with the SAC Chair, Scott Huebner from the Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary, the newest designation. Both Chairpersons expressed a strong interest in visiting TBNMS. We have extended an invitation to both SAC's for a combined visit in May of 2024, hopefully to include a Viking stop.

My most significant take away from the summit was the place TBNMS holds in the Sanctuary System. We've heard it before but continued re-enforcement should make us proud of what we have accomplished.

It is exciting to watch the significant contributions TBNMS has made to our regions quality of life, education and economic development.

Let's celebrate TBNMS leadership, staff and our SAC.

Respectfully, Al Moe

P.S. Jeff, thanks for the invite!

10.16.23

# SANCTUARY SELECTIONS FILM COMPETITION

PRESENTED BY **THE SUNSET PROJECT** AT THE  
**THUNDER BAY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

New for 2024, the **Thunder Bay International Film Festival (TBIFF)** has partnered with **The Sunset Project (TSP)**, a Northeast-Michigan based non-profit focused on creative advancement, to introduce a unique film competition. The competition offers filmmakers an opportunity to showcase their work and a chance to win the **"Sanctuary Selection"** title alongside a **\$5,000 cash prize** for their next film. **For more information** on competition details, submission requirements, and more, please visit the QR Code below!

**2024 Theme:** "Representing the Great Lakes region through strong storytelling - with a focus on discovery, authentic experience, and the human connection."

## Dates

- Submission Window: **October 1, 2023 - December 1, 2023**
- Notification Date: **January 5, 2024**
- Thunder Bay International Film Festival: **January 26 - 28, 2024** in Alpena, Michigan
- Sanctuary Selections Film Showcase: **Evening of January 27, 2024**

## Awards & Prizes

- Sanctuary Selection Award: \$5,000 sponsored by The Sunset Project

## All selected finalists (five films in total) receive:

- Two "Thunder Passes", granting them full access to all TBIFF events throughout the weekend
- Accommodations (one room per selected film) provided by The Sunset Project for Friday night (January 26) and Saturday night (January 27) in Alpena, Michigan

## Film Eligibility Requirements

- Must range from 5 to 20 minutes in length
- Must have been released no earlier than March of 2018
- Must be focused on content from the Great Lakes Region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Ontario)
- Must adhere to the established theme
- Must have never previously been shown at the Thunder Bay International Film Festival
- Filmmakers (or at least one film representative) must be able to attend in person on the evening of Saturday, January 27, 2024



## NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS

To submit a film - or for more information on competition rules, submission requirements, and event dates - please visit us at [filmfreeway.com/SanctuarySelections](http://filmfreeway.com/SanctuarySelections) or by scanning the QR code provided.



THUNDER BAY  
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

