

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

Dear Friend of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary:

We are in the process of filling two vacant primary seats on our sanctuary advisory council. Beginning immediately, we will accept applications for council membership for the following seats:

Recreational/Commercial Fishing and Youth seats.

The Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council was established pursuant to Federal law to ensure continued public participation in the management of the sanctuary. Designated in 1975 as the nation's first marine sanctuary, the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary is managed by NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program. It is one of 14 marine protected areas within the U.S. and protects the wreck of the famed Civil War ironclad USS *Monitor*, best known for its battle with the Confederate ironclad CSS *Virginia* in Hampton Roads, Virginia on March 9, 1862.

The advisory council consists of twenty one members: twelve primary (voting) community members, one (non-voting) youth seat, and eight related (voting) governmental members. The community seats represent a variety of regional interests and stakeholders, from recreational divers and fishermen to maritime archaeologists and heritage tourism interests, among others. Government seats are related to the sanctuary's mission and include the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Office of Archaeology, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, two North Carolina local government entities, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, National Park Service, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Coast Guard. It is the combined expertise and experience of these individuals that creates an advisory council that is both a valuable and effective resource for informed and timely sanctuary management.

The council's objectives are to provide the sanctuary manager with advice on: (1) protecting underwater cultural heritage and resources, and identifying and evaluating emergent or critical issues involving sanctuary use or resources; (2) developing an informed constituency to increase awareness and understanding of the purpose and value of the sanctuary and the National Sanctuary Program; (3) identifying and realizing the sanctuary's research objectives; and (4) identifying and realizing educational and media opportunities to increase public knowledge and stewardship of the sanctuary environment.

The council may serve as a forum for consultation and deliberation among its members and as a source of advice to the sanctuary superintendent regarding the management of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary advisory council holds open meetings to ensure continued public input on management issues and to increase public awareness and knowledge of the sanctuary environment. Public participation at these meetings is welcomed and encouraged.

Enclosed is our sanctuary advisory council application kit, which includes a copy of the council charter and an application form, as well as some information about the sanctuary. Council terms will be for two years with a three term limit.

Please note that if you have been a federally registered lobbyist in the two-year period before your potential appointment date to the council, you will not be eligible to serve as a member of a sanctuary advisory council. Please contact William Sassorossi at (757) 591-7329 or by email at William.Sassorossi@noaa.gov if you have any questions about this restriction.

We are looking forward to receiving completed applications at our office located at 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606 **by Wednesday, May 31, 2017**. Applications will be reviewed by a preliminary review panel consisting of a contingent of current members of the sanctuary advisory council. This panel will help narrow down the number of candidates for each seat to the top three. Of these, a member will be chosen, and officially notified of their selection.

If at any point you have a change in circumstance that will not allow you to serve on the council, please notify the advisory council coordinator, William Sassorossi at (757) 591-7329. Also, feel free to contact William if you have any questions about the sanctuary, the council or the council member selection process.

Sincerely,

David Alberg
Sanctuary Superintendent

Enclosures