

SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL FACTS - 2007

- Sanctuary advisory councils are community-based advisory groups established to provide advice and recommendations to the superintendent of a national marine sanctuary. There are more than 400 people (members and alternates) serving on advisory councils.
- All fourteen sites in the sanctuary system have an advisory council. The first advisory council was established in 1990.
- Advisory councils provide advice about sanctuary operations and projects, including education and outreach, research and science, regulations and enforcement, and management planning. They are particularly critical in helping a sanctuary during its designation or management plan review process.
- Advisory councils create working groups and subcommittees to help them get their work done. In 2007 there were more than two dozen of these groups. The most common working groups and subcommittees are those for conservation, education and research. Often working groups are created to help address a specific issue or project, and are disbanded after their missions have been accomplished.
- Individuals from all walks of life serve their communities and sanctuaries as members of advisory councils and advisory council working groups and subcommittees. Council members include fishers, divers, teachers, boaters, business people, activists, protected area managers, scientists, and elected officials.
- In 2007, advisory council members and their working groups volunteered more than 25,000 hours of their time to the National Marine Sanctuary Program. Council members provide expertise on both the local community and sanctuary resources, strengthen connections with the community, and help build increased stewardship for sanctuary resources.
- The 14 advisory councils meet throughout the year. Advisory council chairs meet annually to discuss local, regional and national program issues and projects. Their seventh annual meeting will be held in May 2008. Their upcoming agenda includes: reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, regional case studies, management plan reviews, greening, and recent program evaluations.

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