

Management Plan Review

Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

Scoping Meetings

What are scoping meetings?

At the onset of a management plan review, the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) holds public meetings to “scope out” or get input from resource users, interest groups, government agencies, and other members of the public on resource management issues. This input will help define the range of issues that the program needs to address during the management plan review.

What kind of comments are we looking for?

Scoping meetings provide an opportunity for people to make direct comments to the NMSP and the Stellwagen Bank NMS on issues related to management of the Sanctuary's natural and cultural resources and overall administration. We encourage interested members of the public to participate in the management plan review and welcome any comments related to the Sanctuary. In particular, we are interested in hearing about the public's view on:

- effectiveness of the existing management plan in protecting Sanctuary resources
- emerging Sanctuary resource management issues
- implementation of regulations and permits
- resource protection programs (such as water quality and enforcement)
- research and monitoring programs
- education, volunteer, and outreach programs
- adequacy of existing boundaries, including zones, to protect Sanctuary resources
- assessment of the existing operational and administrative framework (staffing, offices, vessels, etc.).

How can you provide input?

The NMSP and the Stellwagen Bank NMS encourage interested members of the public to participate and provide comments at one of the nine scoping meetings held in communities throughout the Sanctuary region (see reverse side for meeting dates, times, and locations). Each meeting is equally important. Those unable to attend the scoping meetings in person can mail or fax written comments directly to the Sanctuary's management plan review coordinator. Comments may also be submitted via e-mail at sbnmsplan@noaa.gov. The public comment period remains open until October 18, 2002.

What can I expect at the scoping meetings?

Scoping meetings provide a forum for the public to provide comments to Sanctuary staff. They are not decision-making meetings. Meetings will generally follow a similar format, but they will be flexible enough to accommodate the number of people in attendance and the physical constraints of each location. At the beginning of each scoping meeting, Sanctuary staff will detail the scoping meeting format and answer any questions. Copies of the SBNMS State of the Sanctuary Report will be available. Following the introduction, the group will break up into discussion groups consisting of 10 to 12 people. A group leader will help guide the discussion and ensure everyone has the opportunity to provide comments. Each group will have a recorder who will summarize each of the comments on a chart so the group can see their comments are being recorded.

What's next after scoping?

Comments from each of the scoping meetings, as well as written comments and e-mail comments, will be summarized and posted on the SBNMS website. The Sanctuary will then work with its Advisory Council to prioritize issues to be addressed during the management plan review.

Where will the meetings be held?

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Venue</u>
Sep. 24, Tuesday	Mystic, CT	6:30 p.m.	Mystic Aquarium http://www.mysticaquarium.org
Sep. 25, Wednesday	New Bedford, MA	6:30 p.m.	New Bedford Whaling Museum 18 Johnny Cake Hill Rd. http://whalingmuseum.org
Sep. 26, Thursday	Provincetown, MA	6:30 p.m.	Provincetown Town Hall Auditorium 260 Commercial St. http://www.provincetowngov.org
Sep. 28, Saturday	Falmouth, MA	10:00 a.m.	Sea Education Association 177 Woods Hole Rd. http://www.sea.edu
Sep. 30, Monday	Gloucester, MA	6:30 p.m.	Gloucester City Hall Council Chamber 9 Dale Ave. http://www.ci.gloucester.ma.us
Oct. 1, Tuesday	Portland, ME	6:30 p.m.	University of Maine School of Law 246 Deering Ave. http://www.law.usm.maine.edu/about-dir.htm
Oct. 2, Wednesday	Portsmouth, NH	6:30 p.m.	Yokens Restaurant and Conference Center Rte. 1, So. 1390 Lafayette Rd. http://www.yokens.com
Oct. 3, Thursday	Boston, MA	6:30 p.m.	New England Aquarium Central Wharf
Oct. 5, Saturday	Plymouth, MA	11:00 a.m.	Plymouth Public Library 132 South St.

The public comment period will remain open until October 18, 2002.

For more information, visit the Stellwagen Bank NMS website at: <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>

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