

Dept. Of Interior: Bureau of Land Management
San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Dec. 7, 2023

9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Meeting via Zoom

Council members present:

1. Jamie Stephens | Local Government/MAC Chair
2. Tom Reeve | Cultural/Heritage
3. Tracey Cottingham | Cultural/Heritage
4. Shirley Williams | Wildlife/Ecological
5. Ruth Milner | Wildlife/Ecological
6. Erin Corra | Education/Interpretation
7. Sam Barr | Tribal Interests
8. Owen Ellis | San Juan Islands Outdoor Recreation Planner
9. Amy Frost | Public-at-Large
10. Richard Wigre | Public-at-Large
11. Amy Nesler | Recreation/Tourism
12. Cynthia Smith | Recreation/Tourism
13. Jane Fuller | San Juan County Council Member
14. *Unconfirmed* J. Marvin Havner | Private Landowner

Staff of the BLM present:

1. Steve Small | BLM Spokane District, District Manager, Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
2. Carrie Richardson | BLM National Advisory Committee Coordinator
3. Brie Chartier | BLM San Juan Islands Monument Manager
4. Rich Bailey | BLM Cultural Heritage Program/Tribal Liaison
5. Travis Edwards | BLM Spokane District Public Affairs Officer

Members of the general public present:

1. Charles Schietinger | Public
2. Mary Ferm | Public
3. Christa Campbell | Public (San Juan County Conservation LandBank Board Chair)
4. Peggy Bill | Public (San Juan County Conservation LandBank Board Member)
5. Nancy DeVaux | Public (San Juan County Housing Advisory Committee/Writer for Salish Current)
6. Tom Cowan | Public (Former San Juan County Commissioner)
7. Connie Holz | Public (Lopez Island Library Board Member)

District Manager Update:

During the meeting, several motions were passed, and new information was presented. The meeting began with the approval of minutes⁽¹⁾ from previous meetings and the introduction of MAC members representing various interests.

Steve Small Opened with an update to the transition of the MAC, explaining that its current authority had expired. He explained that the Secretary of Interior acknowledged the MAC's accomplishments and requested the establishment of a new MAC as soon as possible. A final draft charter was presented, outlining the proposed structure and purpose of the new MAC, which would focus on providing information and advice on implementing the Resource Management Plan (RMP). The charter had already undergone review and approval at various levels within BLM and awaited final approval by the BLM director before proceeding to the Department of the Interior.

Request for clarity and motions for continuity:

Tom Reeve shared his request to add verbiage to the charter to allow for more continuity with the MAC and BLM working together⁽²⁾.

Carrie Richardson explained the reasons behind the changes in the MAC's structure and charter, emphasizing the BLM's commitment to reopening the MAC as soon as possible. Members raised concerns about the sudden changes and the lack of consultation in the process. A motion⁽³⁾ was unanimously passed to request the continuation of the current MAC until the new one is established.

The meeting then covered various topics, including a recent hunting incident, hunting regulations, grant opportunities, volunteer programs, interpretive planning, and cultural resources. Rich Bailey provided a detailed report on cultural resources, highlighting the importance of working with tribes to identify and manage cultural sites.

New MAC Charter Review:

Tom Reeve initiated a discussion on expanding the MAC's membership to include descendants of indigenous people, which resulted in a unanimous motion⁽⁴⁾ to revise the charter's language. The importance of inclusivity and broadening representation within the MAC was emphasized.

Environmental work and concerns: The meeting also discussed trail management, safety, and environmental concerns, with members proposing solutions and ideas for preserving the monument's natural resources. Several requested were rolled into one motion⁽⁵⁾ that was introduced, including one requesting communication of recommendations passed by the MAC to any new MAC and another urging BLM to conduct public meetings with local communities.

Shirley Williams emphasized the role of presidential proclamations in guiding environmental work and the importance of connecting descendants of historical village sites. The topic concluded with a discussion on a recent hunting incident and public comments expressing concerns about the MAC's future, hunting safety, and community engagement.

Tom Reeve highlighted the need for effective communication with the public^(*), especially regarding the SJINM's activities and developments, and sought clarity on closure statuses outlined in the RMP. He emphasized the importance of keeping MAC members informed on various topics and better information sharing between the BLM and the MAC. Although no formal motions were made in this section, participants agreed on the importance of improved communication in future MAC meetings.

Five motions and one request were made during this meeting. All motions were approved unanimously.

1. Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from the past three meetings.
 2. One motion to forward to the Secretary of the Interior is a request that the following language be added to the MAC Charter: *“To assure continuity of engagement and trust between the BLM and the local San Juan Islands community, and the public at large, the San Juan Islands, national monument advisory committee authorized by executive order, dated September 29, 2023, requested the department of interior insure this monument advisory committee, remains active and able to function and perform its duties as set forth in the presidential proclamation establishing the San Juan Islands national monument dated March 25, 2013, and the San Juan Islands national monument advisory committee charter, dated December 7, 2021, until the new monument advisory committee proposed by BLM can be constituted and able to meet and perform its duties or until September 30, 2025, as authorized by executive order of September 29, 2023.”*
 3. Motion to forward to the Secretary of the Interior a request to continue the MAC and meetings as scheduled until a new charter is approved, members are selected, and approved.
 4. Motion for the BLM to broaden the definition of tribal representatives to be inclusive of non-federally recognized tribes on the MAC. This motion includes a sentence requesting that the recommendation be forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior.
 5. Motion to recommend that all proposals or requests passed by the MAC since the finalization of the RMP (Resource Management Plan) be communicated to any new MAC at its first meeting, and that the BLM address any follow-up or status at that meeting.
- *. A series of requests for updates and actions by BLM locally, including conducting public meetings with local communities to brief them on the RMP implementation, answer questions, and engage in discussions about community priorities related to the RMP and monument management.