



Marine
Resources
**Advisory
Council**

BULLETIN

18 September 2012

Volume XXII, No. 5

Meeting of the Marine Resources Advisory Council

Robert Danielson

John Davi, Jr.

Melissa Dearborn

Paul Farnham

Thomas Jordan

Joseph Paradiso

John Renaldo

Paul Risi

Karen Rivara

Christopher Squeri

Charles Witek

Dean Yaxa

Chairman Wise began the meeting at 2:07 pm. Brief introductions were made by Chairman William Wise, James Gilmore, Director of the Marine Bureau of the NYS DEC, and the Councilors present. There was full Council presence for the day's meeting. Chairman Wise went over the meeting agenda.

Public Comment

Mr. John Mihale questioned if the agenda item "Conversation with John Bullard, New Regional Administrator for NMFS" would include a question and answer session and he was assured it would.

In an ongoing effort to reach a greater reading audience for the MRAC public bulletin, several people came forward to help with this endeavor. Mr. Emerson Hasbrouk from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County stated that they have formed an entity called the Squid Trawl Network through their marine program and he offered to share the Council's bulletin and contact information on their website <http://squidtrawlnetwork.squarespace.com/>. Councilor Bob Danielson offered to reach out to *The Fisherman* magazine with the Council's contact information in a news brief to also try and solicit more interested readers. Mr. Wise thought both were good ideas.

Minutes, 17 April 2012 & 17 July 2012 Council Meetings

The draft minutes for both these meetings were unanimously approved as written.

Conversation with John Bullard, New NMFS Regional Administrator for NMFS

Mr. Gilmore introduced Mr. John Bullard, who has replaced Ms. Patricia Kurkul as the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service in the Northeast. Mr. Bullard began his position in August.

Mr. Bullard introduced himself. He has spent most of his time since he began his post traveling and getting to know the different user groups in the

William Wise
Chairman

Kim Knoll
Staff Assistant

Northeast. He confesses to not being a scientist; his degree is actually in architecture. However, he feels confident in his ability as the Regional Administrator to be the voice for many in the fishing industry. This confidence comes from his deep respect for both the recreational and commercial fishing industry. He knows and understands the value of a busy and prosperous waterfront community and seaport. While serving as Mayor of the City of New Bedford, Massachusetts, Mr. Bullard worked with both recreational and commercial fishing industries in many instances. As Mayor, Mr. Bullard was responsible for building a second water treatment plant for the city. This was met with much resistance; although his constituents knew it was needed, no one wanted it in their own backyard. The placement of the plant had to be within city limits in order for it to work and Mr. Bullard feels that it cost him the next election. He made the point that although he wasn't re-elected he was happy with his decision to build the plant because it was needed and necessary and he feels that it was in the best interest of the city. The city now has plenty of clean water and a new shell fishing industry was able to grow while it hadn't been able to before the treatment plant. He cited this example to demonstrate that he is not afraid to make tough decisions and stand behind them.

Mr. Bullard's next job was to run the federal Office of Sustainable Development at NOAA during the Clinton administration. While in that office he thought the best way to find out what areas needed improvement would be to hear it from the public itself. He created open meetings and people came and talked about where their concerns and/or problems were. This helped Mr. Bullard come up with a better understanding of the public's concerns which is what he hopes to accomplish by attending meetings such as this Council meeting. He'd like to start a conversation and find out where improvements are needed and come with a list and prioritize it. He recognizes that times are tough; things are more difficult in general. Years ago, it was more of a one-dimensional problem such as overfishing. Problems now seem to be more complex, we have less fish now, climate change can be factored in and even the funding situation has changed - for the worse. We are in a crisis situation and he is looking for ideas from the public for ways in which he can help in his official capacity.

Many in the audience were very happy to be able to have a sounding board for their concerns. The first to speak was John Mihale. Mr. Mihale fishes exclusively by rod & reel and his first suggestion was a way to save money in the National Marine Fisheries budget by limiting their mailings. He doesn't object to receiving mailings for areas of his interest, however, he receives mailings for items that are of no concern to him. He thought perhaps when it comes time to renew a person's federal permit; there could be a listing with areas of interest and a place for folks to check off items that are pertinent to them. In addition to the money saved in postage, this would also save time and effort by NMFS' staff.

Mr. Mihale's second suggestion was more specific to rod & reel fishermen. He referenced a letter he sent to Kurkul in October 2011 in response to proposed restrictions on upgrading the size of a commercial fishing vessel. He feels if someone who was willing to relinquish forever their right to fish commercially with anything but rod & reel it shouldn't make any difference what size vessel they had.

Councilor Paul Farnham, a commercial fisherman since 1978, stated that he did not agree that our marine fisheries are in poor shape. Our waters are vibrant and healthy and the fish numbers are up. The only problem he sees is that the fisheries can't be accessed due to all the regulations. He feels that New England is a completely separate area; their stocks may be in trouble he isn't sure. Mr. Bullard replied that he made the statement about having less fish now and the stocks being in trouble because New York said as much by asking to be included in the current request for "fishery disaster" designation. Mr. Farnham also feels New York needs better representation at regional fishery management meetings. Mr. Farnham is happy to hear that Mr. Bullard wants to be an advocate for the commercial fishing sector. He thinks that commercial fishermen need to be thanked and treated as heroes because they are responsible to putting food on people's table.

Mark Hoffman, a former member of MRAC who currently sits on advisory panels for the ASMFC, said that when he attends meetings of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (ASMFC), the meetings usually begin with a statement that the fish stocks are healthy and they're not being overfished. Yet, the next step is frequently a notice from the technical committees recommending a reduction in catch limits because the spawning stock biomass didn't measure up in their samples. He questions where these committees get their information. A second concern brought up by Mr. Hoffman is regarding Omega Protein Corporation. 80% of the menhaden catch along the Atlantic Coast is for reduction to produce fish oil and he worries that, when bunker get fished out, the rest of the fish will disappear. Mr. Hoffman's third pet peeve is blackfish. He believes that an improvement in the condition of tautog stocks requires the registration of commercial fish pots and the institution of a fish tag program as is present in the commercial fishery for striped bass.

Councilor Charles Witek agrees that the Atlantic is a bountiful ocean but it is such **because** the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council introduced hard controls whereas the New England Fishery Management Council perpetuated over fishing problems with relatively soft restrictions that could be gotten around. The use of hard catch quotas to help rebuild fish stocks and prevent overfishing works. Mr. Witek noted that it is now time to figure out how to manage a recovered fishery, which is a lot different from managing a depleted one. We're on new ground, we've never had the pleasure of working with a recovered fishery before and it's going to be trial and error. He commented that, right now, we are using state allocations that derive from 25 -30 years ago when stocks were declining. They have nothing to do with the abundance of fish today or the demographics of the fishery; that needs to be revisited. Mr. Witek stated that a lot of catch statistics are being based on bad information and questionable data. Mr. Bullard agreed that you cannot base management measures on one year's statistics. He also believes that with regional water temperatures changing the fish are moving and we are going to need to take into account opportunities that show up and opportunities that disappear at a much quicker pace.

Councilor Robert Danielson said that he thinks it was a wonderful decision for the hiring committee to hire Mr. Bullard *especially* since he is NOT a scientist. Mr. Danielson's main concern is the data produced by the NMFS' Marine Recreational Fishing Statistical Survey (MRFSS). These data have been described as of "questionable" quality, but Mr. Danielson believes the situation is worse than that and that a major change needs to take place.

Chairman Wise said that his chief concern is that the Council always seems to be at the tail end of conversations and management plans. Too often the Council is made aware of a situation where action is needed and most times, needed quickly. To further complicate matters, many times a decision is made without having all the facts, tables or statistics because they aren't available. All too often a decision is reached yet at the following meeting, revised figures are available or new facts surface which only brings about a new discussion and quite possibly a different decision. Many times the delay in reaching an agreement makes it necessary to enact "emergency rule making", compounding the problem yet again. Every year it seems that most of the regulations needs some sort of alteration and some decisions take months and months of discussions here at the meetings and for the overworked staff at the DEC. Fisheries management is admittedly a complex issue but it just seems that we are constantly lurching from crisis to crisis.

Councilor John Davi said his biggest peeve is the inequality between states as far as allocation of commercial catch quotas. He used North Carolina as an example; he said they have such a large quota for fluke and then when they hit a peak, allowing the other states to come up to the point where they are. Mr. Bullard wondered how to implement a change. He asked if you would figure out trades, or change the way so you don't deal with state boundaries at all. He went on to say that one of the purposes of his trip is to find the top 5-10 items that people see as the biggest problems. He would

like to educate himself on those issues and find solutions to them. There is no way he can accomplish 100 things but he hopes to find a light at the end of the tunnel for at least 5-10 of the most important.

Pat Augustine, a New York Commissioner to the ASMFC, said the fluke allocation decision was made in 1999 and it was based on previous years of commercial reported harvest, nothing to do with the recreational fishing industry. There is a movement underway to develop a new amendment to the Mid Atlantic which would address the scup allocation. Mr. Augustine wanted people to keep in mind that if they plan on attacking the quota setting, and try to bring the New England Council to thinking the way the Mid-Atlantic Council thinks, the Mid-Atlantic Council is selecting 3-year time frames for quota settings to be looked at every year.

Mr. Augustine further commented that we don't know how to manage success. There are environmentalists and conservationists who want to protect, protect and protect and as long as we're faced with single species management each species must be dealt with individually. We need to move away from this. He agreed with Chairman Wise, that the Council needs to receive information in a more timely fashion. Mr. Augustine cited the current bluefish fishery management plan as something to be emulated. The bluefish FMP provides that, if the recreational fishery doesn't reach a certain harvest a percentage of the poundage it is allocated will be transferrable to the commercial fishery. That is an example of adaptive management. If the bluefish harvest isn't reached by either sector over a period of 2-3 years, that percentage could be transferred for one (or possibly two) years to the other sector. Unfortunately the Magnuson Stevenson Act doesn't allow this, so the first thing would be to try and change that. Councilor Danielson spoke against an approach that would transfer allocation between recreational and commercial harvesting sectors.

Jim Hutchinson of the Recreational Fishing Alliance and President of the New York Sportfishing Federation, thanked Mr. Bullard for coming to listen. He reminded everyone that MRFSS employs a telephone-based household sampling system which has been described as "fatally flawed" by the National Research Council (NRC). Quota allocations and rigid accountability measures are being based on random telephone calls and random dockside samplings. The NRC's review of MRFSS had a variety of suggestions as to how the survey could be improved and changes were to be implemented by January 2009; however, nothing was done. Now NMFS' Marine Recreation Information Program (MRIP) has been put in place and things aren't any better. Mr. Hutchinson suggested that the NRC take a close look at MRIP now; he feels they won't be any happier with this new survey. He also feels there needs to be a change in the way the fisheries are viewed. The commercial fishery and the recreational fishery are two very different industries, one is in numbers and one is in pounds, and yet they are managed the same. They should be treated individually and allocated the same.

Councilor Karen Rivera raised the topic of shellfish and her main concern: maintaining good water quality. She would like to see water quality more highly prioritized when funding issues are being decided in the future. She believes in the important role that commercial shellfish farmers play in maintaining the water's quality. They are the ones who physically put the animals in the water that are responsible for improving water quality by acting as filter feeders. This service is provided to the estuary without any cost to the taxpayer. However, when there are harmful algae blooms, which Long Island is noted for, this creates bad water quality, which in turn prevents culturists from providing their service. Ms. Rivera stated that aquaculture on Long Island is growing industry on Long Island and they have a very good relationship with the DEC.

Emerson Hasbrouk of Cornell Cooperative Extension is encouraged by Mr. Bullard's attitude and remarks regarding the importance of a working water front. He feels that the uncertainty is one of the

largest of the stumbling blocks in the fishing industry. We rely so much on the data and models but because the science isn't perfect the allocation amounts are often wrong. How can people plan into the next year when they have no idea what the limits are going to be – will they even be able to fish? He advised that precautionary approaches need to have flexibility built into them. The science needs to be brought up to what's being asked of it.

Councilor Paul Risi feels that fisheries management has been very successful with the resources, however, not the people. It has become too restrictive; the process has become a very cumbersome, slow-moving machine. Stocks have proven that they can rebound from a pretty depleted condition. He understands that you cannot deplete it until it's almost gone but he believes NMFS is too quick to close a fishery and usually waits too long to open it back up again.

Dr. Nancy Solomon of Long Island Traditions suggested that social science assessments should be done before the implementation of a management action or regulation. The most important thing that should be kept in mind is that fishermen are not just numbers. Decisions made, whether good or bad, affect people's lives and livelihoods. She stated that at some of the regional gatherings for social science, it has been said that close to 75% of the New England fishermen are unemployed because of catch shares.

Mr. Bullard expressed concern with consolidation in our marine fisheries: one day folks may wake up and the groundfish fishery will be owned by just 3 or 4 people. He doesn't think this is what the public wants. He hopes to bring this topic to the front burner and create more dialogue about this shortly.

Mr. Reed Reimer is recreational fisherman, he is also president of his small fishing club which has about 40 members and he is also on the Board of Directors of the New York Sportfishing Federation. He believes that NMFS has an integrity problem. There are things that are being done that appear to have no common sense – i.e., catch share funding, burning RSA money, and closing the fishery for black sea bass when the stock was considered healthy by most folks in the industry.

Councilor Melissa Dearborn said she is happy to hear that Mr. Bullard wants to help both the commercial AND recreational fisheries. She feels that more emphasis and concern is placed on the commercial sector and not enough on the recreational side. She believes MRFSS & MRIP should be on the top ten list – they are clearly the most important – these statistics impact the fisheries more than any other because of the trickle down effect.

Hank Lackner is a commercial fisherman out of Montauk. He personally owns a couple of draggers but he was involved a few years back with a trawl advisory committee that used the research vessel the "Henry Bigelow." He believes many of the problems today can be attributed to the calibration coefficient of the net used on that survey boat. He also advised examining the discrepancy between science and what's actually going on in the ocean; statistics and the science are 5 years behind what is actually going on. Mr. Lackner spends 300 days out on the ocean and observes many things. Stocks that according to the survey are in high abundance are actually depleted. Fluke and scup are in high abundance; however, they are down from a couple of years ago. He believes that the dogfish stock is rebuilt. There are plenty of dogfish out there but people were just looking at the wrong areas. When he told this to NMFS, they expanded the trawl survey and they found plenty of dogfish, in deeper water. What they thought was going to be a 15 year rebuild was accomplished in just 5 years. Inequity in state-by-state allocation of commercial catch quotas can be addressed by allowing flexibility in the landings of fish caught in Federal waters if you possess a license from that particular state. Mr. Lackner brought up the collapsing groundfishery. He hopes that thought is given to the Mid-Atlantic and where the fishery will be in 15 years. He has suffered long and hard on his squid boat and he would hate to see 700 boats displaced from the groundfishery catching his squid.

Mr. Bullard thanked everyone for their comments and time and welcomes further communications, they can be sent to his email address: John.bullard@noaa.gov

Final Report, Commercial Foodfish Landing License Subcommittee

Chairman Wise gave this report on behalf of the Subcommittee, which agrees with the view that the recent dramatic growth in the number of commercial food fish landing licenses issued is a cause for concern. The extent to which this is a major problem in New York's attempts to manage the tautog fishery remains unclear and this determination will require more data and information on that fishery than was available to the Subcommittee. However, it is clear that this license has its origins in a very particular set of circumstances. It was created to meet a very specific need. None of the current holders of the license are using it for its original purpose (Fishport). However, there are legitimate commercial fishermen, resident and non-residents, who do not fish in New York State waters but wish to land fish here and the Subcommittee finds no compelling reason to ban that possibility entirely.

The Subcommittee recommends that the Council promote a precautionary approach to this issue. This approach will buy New York State the time to more fully determine what changes to the commercial food fish landing license are necessary in the interests of the State's marine resource management program and give the State the ability to implement these changes in timely fashion. Specific recommendations include:

- DEC should set a regulatory control date on the commercial food fish landing license
- DEC should draft a program bill for consideration by the State Legislature. This bill should do two things:
 1. Put a moratorium on the issuance of new commercial food fish landing licenses, preferably effective on the above control date
 2. Confer on DEC regulatory authority to develop measures to control the issuance of this license, including possible numerical caps, eligibility criteria, etc. and direct the Department to develop a set of regulatory proposals over an 18-month period

Mr. Wise commented that, since these recommendations were developed by the Subcommittee, he has been informed by DEC that it does not feel that it has the authority to set the suggested control date; this places the responsibility on the Legislature itself to do so. Councilor Bob Danielson suggested drafting a program bill that would put a moratorium in place and then set eligibility requirements, etc. The moratorium will forestall any permanent decision. Councilor Davi was hesitant to put a moratorium in place because from past experience he knows how difficult it will be to lift it. Mr. Danielson noted that a moratorium would only discontinue issuance of new food fish landing licenses temporarily; within 18 months a more formal approach has to be put in place. Chairman Wise said the idea of a moratorium is just to buy time.

Councilor Paul Farnham spoke against these recommendations, saying they would hurt fish docks by denying people the access to unload fish caught in federal waters, denying interstate commerce. He worries that should one of the boats from out of state or perhaps one of the new fishermen that are buying boats try to get this permit, they will be unable to. Shouldn't someone have the right to land federally caught fish in their own town or state? Mr. Wise acknowledged that there are legitimate purposes for folks to have this permit. Mr. Farnham said the Subcommittee should make a list of fish that can be landed with this permit. Mr. Danielson said that if you put in an eligibility requirement in the law which wouldn't preclude them, wouldn't that satisfy Mr. Farnham's need. Mr. Farnham said no because they will still have to buy this permit and what if they're not able to afford it.

Councilor John Renaldo thinks that people who have federal permits should not be denied the ability to land their fish. He does understand the issue surrounding tautog and perhaps we should have a combination where if you had a federal license for certain species but if you want to land tautog maybe there should be some sort of income requirement. We're trying to prevent the people from harvesting offshore who are skirting around the current regulations.

Chairman Wise says that currently the DEC doesn't feel it has the authority to do that. Currently the law says that if you have \$500 and you want a foodfish landing license, you get one. The Department cannot add or delete anything without going through proper Legislation to amend this current law. That was why they wrote the 18-month idea – some people are going to be shut out and eventually be let in.

Councilor Chris Squeri thinks we're going to need legislation anyway perhaps we could have verbiage meanwhile that states if you have a federal fish license it would be okay to land your fish. We're not trying to stop those persons with legal federal permits; we're trying to stop the illegal fisherman.

Councilor Melissa Dearborn would have an issue if this was to be done in a two step plan. What if one part doesn't go through? They should be done together. Mr. Wise said that was the intention.

Councilor Tom Jordan thinks that the folks who should be included in the talks weren't able to do so during the busy summer months. He thinks this should be pushed to January's calendar and let the people who have the most to say get together and work this through in one or two days, not in a 2-hour meeting. Mr. Gilmore said because then it would only get promulgated in 2013. Mr. Jordan said it's probably going to take 18 months anyway. Why take 18 months to get a moratorium and another 18 months to come up with legislation? Take the appropriate time now and come up with a plan that would get everything accomplished in 18 months. Chairman Wise said that this will be taken care of in one fell swoop it would just have 2 steps.

Mr. Farnham is still not convinced a moratorium is the right way to go about this. You need to create a new license with these mentioned specific needs for these boats before you can even think of going with a moratorium.

Mr. Wise said what if the Council suggests to the Legislature that they modify the current law that establishes this license and requires that the recipient document that he/she or corporation is a legitimate commercial fishermen based on criteria the DEC would develop?

Councilor Davi thought this was a great idea because then you wouldn't need a moratorium. Mr. Gilmore said the Department would be able to do this under the current authorities. It is easier to modify an existing law than it is to create one; he believes this would be pretty straightforward. Mr. Wise said this would delay the impact until the DEC had regulations in place to separate the bona fide from the NOT bona fide commercial fisherman.

Mr. Jordan was happy with Mr. Wise's suggestion but he thought the difficulty in obtaining a corporate foodfish landing license in New York to stop the back door transferability could be addressed at the same time. When requirements are being established, we could keep the corporate licenses for non-residents but there should be a prohibition on corporations with landing licenses for New York. Ms. Debra Barnes of the DEC said that, in 2012, they had 17 corporate licenses, 10 of which were resident but the number has been growing steadily.

Chairman Wise asked the Council if they would be comfortable *accepting* the Subcommittee's initial recommendations and then, separately, make a recommendation to the Department on what it, as a Council, would like to see done? Motion by Mr. Witek to accept the Subcommittee's report. Mr. Davi seconded. **The motion carried by a vote of 11 in favor, 0 opposed; 1 abstention.**

Based on the above discussion, Chairman Wise suggested a motion along the following lines: to recommend that the Legislature authorize DEC to develop regulations that would restrict the issuance of commercial foodfish landing licenses to bonafied commercial fishermen only. These regulations should be developed within 18 months.

Mr. Hasbrouk suggested that the Council look at other states and see how this has been handled by them.

Councilor Renaldo wondered if we should end here for now and wait until the subcommittee gets together to come up with ideas with regard to the actual regulation and how it should be worded.

Ms. Dearborn thought that we were looking for a regulation that would discriminate who is a legitimate commercial fisherman in order to continue to sell the license to someone who is commercial and, therefore, avoiding a license moratorium. Secondly, to give DEC regulatory authority as well so they can go on to develop the proper plan for the future. She thinks that's why everyone agreed to it.

Mr. Wise said the essence of this motion does not have the State Legislature making the determination of what criteria should be used to issue licenses to commercial fisherman or not. It basically kicks the can down to the DEC. It doesn't propose a moratorium; it just gives the Department 18 months from the effective date of the legislation to promulgate an effective regulation.

Councilor Dean Yaxa asked whether the Council would see the proposed changes before they are enforced. Mr. Wise said they would and the Subcommittee would most likely be involved with DEC in coming up with the proposed regulation.

Wording was put on the room's screen provided by the DEC which says, "Direct the Department to modify, through a program bill, ECL 13-0335 to provide DEC regulatory authority to establish criteria that limits the issuance of Commercial Food Fish Landing License to established legitimate commercial fishermen"

Mr. Davi made a motion to accept recommendation worded directly above. Mr. Danielson seconded. **This motion was adopted by a vote of 11 in favor; 0 opposed ; 1 abstention.**

Other Items

Mr. Gilmore said that he and Mr. Heins have had numerous discussions recently with regard to the evolution of New York fisheries over the last decade. Many things have changed while others have become outdated and he believes that we really need to evaluate where marine fisheries management in New York should be heading. Another reason for re-evaluation is that the limited entry (commercial license eligibility) section in the ECL is going to expire on 15 December 2015; since action will be needed on that day, putting a plan in motion now is a good idea. The Department is actually trying to consolidate a number of things and get rid of redundancies in the current law.

It's time to step back and look at the what to do in terms of managing the fisheries, where they are heading and what makes the most sense in terms of efficiencies.

Mr. Gilmore asked the Council's license eligibility subcommittee be reconstituted and charged with making recommendations for what they would like to see happen in December. Mr. Wise agreed that we have been "running on autopilot" with the laws that govern commercial license eligibility. The committee did a lot of work 10 years ago to set things in place but they have sat there since then. The only thing that changes is the dates; he agrees with Mr. Gilmore that this should be taken up again. This will be a topic at the November meeting and he is looking for volunteers to sit on various committees or work groups, he asked for folks to consider this request and to let him know in November.

Mr. Davi said he has no problem working on a subcommittee, however, it bothers him when you sit on a subcommittee, come up with a plan only to have no action taken. Mr. Wise said that many of the recommendations from 10 years ago have actually been implemented. Mr. Davi then referred to the Apprenticeship Program, getting people into the fishery later on, etc. Even though the Apprenticeship Program has been put into regulation, it hasn't been implemented.

Mr. Jordan requested information be put together from the past 10 years as far as how many licenses have been lost, how many gained, and without naming names the demographics of the people who have obtained licenses for the subcommittee meetings. Ms. Barnes said that is possible.

Mr. Gilmore noted that Senator Charles Schumer is planning on holding hearings in November regarding a change to the Magnuson Stevens Act and allocations. Mr. Gilmore will be contacting a few members of the Council to ask what issues they would like to have included. There currently isn't an exact date; it will be after Election Day though.

Mr. Wise informed the Council and audience that Senator Owen Johnson is retiring from the State legislature. Mr. Johnson has been responsible for most of the marine resource-related Legislation that has been signed into law over the past several decades in New York, including the law that created the marine Resources Advisory Council. Mr. Wise asked for the Council's authorization to write the Senator on its behalf, commending his work on marine issues in New York over the years. The Council concurred.

Ocean Action Plan

A spokesperson from DEC described the current status of the New York Ocean Action Plan (OAP). The OAP is a coordinated and inclusive effort focused on improving the health of our ocean ecosystems and their capacity to provide sustainable benefits to New Yorkers. Together, scientists, resource managers, and a wide range of stakeholders will take stock of New York's ocean-related activities and programs. Through a five-year action plan, the goal of the OAP is to achieve better-managed and healthier ocean ecosystems that will benefit people, communities, and the natural world. Grounded in short-term actions to reach long-term goals, the OAP will guide State government funding, research, management, outreach and education choices. Ms. Karen Chytalo of DEC said this group will be working jointly with the Department of State and they are also working with other sister agencies as well. This will be New York State speaking, not just the DEC. They are not only looking at New York's waters out 3 miles but they are looking as far out as the shelf break.

This effort is being coordinated by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and State (DOS). If you would like more information please contact Matt Gove at mtgove@gw.state.ny.us or 631-444-0468 or Gregory Capobianco at Gregory.capovianco@dos.ny.gov or 518-474-8811.

2012 Council Meeting Dates

The dates of the remaining regularly-scheduled meetings of the Council in calendar year 2012 are listed below. All meetings will take place at the DEC Offices located at 205 Belle Mead Road, East Setauket, NY 11733. The meetings generally take place at 2:00 p.m.

13 November

13 November 2012 Council Meeting

Agenda items for 13 November 2012

Check the Council's web page, <http://www.somas.stonybrook.edu/MRAC> prior to the 13 November 2012 Council meeting for agenda items. For further information about the Marine Resources Advisory Council or items covered in this bulletin, to make arrangements for addressing the Council on an agenda item, or to suggest an agenda item, contact: William Wise, Chairman, Marine Resources Advisory Council; PHONE: 631/632-8656 FAX: 631/632-9441; wwise@notes.cc.sunysb.edu.