



**FOR CALENDAR LISTING**

CONTACT: Becky Shortland  
912/598-2381

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**GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY  
HOLDS SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

**SAVANNAH** –The Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS) will hold a public meeting of the Sanctuary Advisory Council on Friday, April 13, 2007 in Jesup, Georgia. The meeting will be held at the Jesup-Wayne County Airport conference room (535 Airport Road, Jesup) from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The Council meeting agenda includes a law enforcement report and a presentation on Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Dr. Brian Keller, regional sanctuaries science coordinator, will talk about the background, history and research of the Florida Keys sanctuary.

All meetings are open to the public. Public comment is tentatively scheduled for 3:00 p.m. To receive more information, or to request a complete meeting agenda, please contact GRNMS Advisory Council Coordinator Becky Shortland at (912) 598-2381.

The sanctuary advisory council was established in August 1999 to provide advice and recommendations on management and protection of the sanctuary. The advisory council, through its members, also serves as liaison to the community regarding sanctuary issues and represents community interests, concerns, and management needs to the sanctuary and NOAA.

Designated in 1981, the sanctuary is one of the largest near shore live-bottom reefs off the southeastern United States, encompassing approximately 23 square miles. The Gray's Reef sanctuary consists of a series of sandstone outcroppings and ledges up to ten feet in height, in a predominantly sandy, flat-bottomed sea floor. The live bottom and ledge habitat support an abundant reef fish and invertebrate community. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, also use Gray's Reef year-round for foraging and resting, and the reef is near the known winter calving ground for the highly endangered Northern Right Whale.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program, which manages the Gray's Reef sanctuary, seeks to increase the public awareness of America's marine resources and

maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, the sanctuary program manages 13 national marine sanctuaries and one marine national monument that together encompass more than 150,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

In 2007, NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and more than 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

- 30 -

On the Internet:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA's National Ocean Service: <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov>

National Marine Sanctuary Program: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary: <http://www.graysreef.noaa.gov>