



**Zeke's Island Reserve
Local Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, May 20, 2022 – 11:00 am**

Attendance

| <u>LAC Partner Organization Members</u> | <u>Present</u> |
|---|-----------------------|
| Division of Parks and Recreation – FFRA, Jeff Owen | No |
| Division of Archives and History, Stephen Atkinson | No |
| NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, Renee Weeks | Yes |
| Natural Heritage Program, Judith Ratcliffe | Yes |
| <u>Community Members</u> | |
| Devon Eulie | No |
| Stephen Rice | Yes |
| Angela Marshall | No |
| Jack Housenger | No |
| <u>Others Present</u> | |
| Hope Sutton, DCM/NCCR & NCNERR Stewardship Coordinator | |
| Elizabeth Colhoun, DCM/NCCR & NCNERR Southern Sites Manager | |

Welcome – Hope Sutton

The stewardship coordinator welcomed the committee to the Spring 2022 meeting, reviewed the agenda, and led introductions.

Reserve-wide Administrative Update – Hope Sutton

The Reserve-wide Update, which includes a range of Reserve activities and information was shared with committee members prior to the meeting. Members had no comments or questions about the updates. The Update in its entirety is included as Appendix A.

The stewardship coordinator provided some reminders from the Reserve-wide update:

- Brandon Puckett started a job with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science in April. A search for a new Research Coordinator will be conducted following some internal human resources work is completed.
- Elizabeth Pinnix is the Reserve's new Southern Sites Manager, providing site management for the four sites managed out of the Wilmington office, including the Bald Head Woods Reserve.
- Hope Sutton continues as the Reserve's Stewardship Coordinator, coordinating the efforts of the stewardship team and focusing on program-wide initiatives, policy, and partnerships.

Site Specific Update – Hope Sutton/Elizabeth Pinnix

General site conditions

- The site manager reported that conditions at the site during the winter and spring appear to have been consistent with or somewhat busier than previous years. Reserve staff have primarily been on site to switch out research equipment.

Spanish-language outreach project

- The reserve decided to request a NOAA Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions Scholar to continue the Spanish-language outreach project to address the need for outreach targeted to Spanish-speaking and Hispanic community visitors. An interactive map will be part of a story map that will be made available to the public via the reserve's website. The product should be ready for public release during the fall of 2022. The NOAA Scholar who will be working on the project, Yesenia Riviera-Lopez, will be arriving from Puerto Rico late in May and staying in the area through the summer. She is focusing on GIS and remote sensing for her upcoming Master's work, making this outreach project an excellent fit for her skills and interests. Reserve staff introduced the Scholar to collaborating partner agency staff when she was in Wilmington for a site visit during April.

Permit hunts

- The reserve has continued discussions and planning with Wildlife Resources Commission staff regarding the implementation of permit hunts on multiple sites, including the Zeke's Island Reserve. Committee members were provided with preliminary conditions that may be included in the permit hunt for the Zeke's Island site, which include restricting hunting on the upland portion of the barrier beach and limiting the firearms that can be used on the site. Input was collected from Local Advisory Committee members regarding the types of hunting, concerns that should be considered for the site, and any restrictions that should be included.

Mr. Rice suggested including limitations on the type of firearm due to the travel distance of the shot, pointing out that the range of a shotgun is significantly less than that of a rifle. He also suggested that an alternative to a rifle is the option of shotguns with slugs for deer hunting. He also suggested signage on site to alert visitors of hunting season. Ms. Weeks agreed that signage posted when seasons are happening would be helpful to make recreational users aware that hunting could be occurring on the site. Ms. Ratcliffe suggested limiting the number of permits to help control user conflict issues.

Roundtable

- Mr. Rice reported that he participated in the ghost crab pot clean up by submitting locations of ghost pots during the winter for an annual clean-up project.
- Ms. Weeks reported that the aquarium is back to normal with summer camps and plans to host canoe trips at the reserve in 2022.

Public comments

- None

Action Items

- Reserve staff will contact committee members during the summer to establish a date for the fall meeting.