

Northeast Regional Planning Body Meeting Transcript

June 26, 2014

Laura Cantral: Okay. All right. Okay, folks. We're going to get started. Again, I'm — I can't tell if you can hear me in the back. Will you raise your hand, and let me know you can hear me fine? Okay, great. Great, thanks. You know, let us know how the volume is going if we need to adjust one way or the other.

Welcome to the Northeast Regional Planning Body Meeting. We're glad to see you all. Thanks for being here. Before we go any further, I would like to turn it over to Richard Getchell who is the Tribal Co-Lead for the Northeast RPB to get us started with a tribal blessing. Rick?

Tribal blessing

Richard Getchell: Good morning, everybody. What I hold here is a valuable gift, extremely important medicine to native people everywhere. Sweetgrass is the hair of our mother, Mother Earth, and it represents a northern direction on the medicine wheel. Each strand individually is resilient but fragile, but held together in a bundle it becomes very strong. When each bundle is braided together it becomes even stronger. Sweetgrass typically is braided into three bundles.

I view each bundle of this sweetgrass as a braid of tribal, federal, and state demonstrating that, brought together and made as one, allows us to become the strongest we can be, and together we can achieve great things for the environment and the occupants of our Mother Earth. Please remember this braid of sweetgrass and what it represents as we navigate through our regional planning process and the task of carrying out our duties. Thank you.

Welcome, introductions, and agenda review

Laura Cantral: Great. Thank you, Rick. I'm Laura Cantral with Meridian Institute, and I'll be the facilitator for today. We have a busy day in store, and in a moment I'm going to ask the RPB members and alternates and others around the table to introduce themselves. But before we do that, I'd like to do a quick review of our agenda for today.

As many of you here know before you were with us yesterday, the format was for the

meeting yesterday was — had a different style. It was a workshop-style meeting and you'll hear more about the outcomes and key themes and next steps about yesterday's workshop later today.

This meeting is a formal RPB meeting. Those of you who have been attending these meetings and participating in them are accustomed to this format. This enables the RPB to have the discussion that it needs to have in public and discuss topics and make decisions and we do have some decisions on the agenda for today that we'll get to. And so, we're — and we will also, as is the custom, be offering opportunities for public comment. They'll be two public comment sessions, one this morning and one in the afternoon.

So the objectives that we have lined up for today — for this meeting are as follows. We're going to review the major outcomes from the workshop yesterday as I just mentioned, as well as progress on other activities that are outlined in the framework for ocean planning for the northeast U.S.

We're also going to discuss and talk about next steps related to interagency coordination, and this topic is relevant to the goal for effective decision making which is one of the goals that is presented in the framework.

We will discuss the next steps for engagement of technical experts and stakeholders advice. This is a topic that was discussed at the last RBP meeting and the Co-Leads were charged with doing some research and developing options to present to the full RPB for consideration and discussion and a decision about how to proceed, and we will take that up later this morning.

And then finally and importantly, opportunities for public input about the topics — any of the topics being considered by the RPB. As I mentioned, we'll have two sessions. One in the morning and one in the afternoon.

So as soon as we dispense with the preliminaries of my agenda review and other announcements and some introductions we will go over a review of the ocean planning timeline and let you all know where we are on that timeline and progress and status. We'll have the review of the Natural Resources Workshop from yesterday, and then at about 10 a.m. we will transition to that discussion about technical and stakeholder advisory options for how to fulfill those important functions.

Following an initial discussion of that topic, we will pause for the first public comment session which will be held at 10:30. And those of you who would like to offer public comment at that session, we ask that you — it would be very helpful if you would sign-up by 9:45. Depending on how many people want to sign up, we'll do the math and let you know how much time you have to offer your comment.

Again, a practice that this RPB has instituted is to have some discussion, pause for public comment, inviting the public to provide your feedback or input on that particular topic if you choose. You're free to provide comment about anything that you wish to regarding the RPB's work, but if you tailor your comments to the subject that's on the table, the RPB will be listening, and then we'll resume discussion of that particular topic.

In this instance, after the 10:30 comment session, we will take a short break, come back, resume the discussion of technical and stakeholder advisory functions as informed by public comment and any other thoughts that RPB members have to share and wrap up that discussion expecting some decisions around how the RPB would like to proceed.

We'll then break for lunch and come back for an afternoon that is devoted to some updates and identifying next steps. There are a number of activities that Co-Leads and staff and members will want to share with you. In particular the discussion about interagency coordination as I mentioned as one of the objectives.

Our second public comment session will happen at 3:30 and again, if you would sign up early. We'd ask you to sign up by 2:45 or so so that we know who to expect and are prepared, and then we will wrap up with any other concluding thoughts, other business that we need to take care of, and adjourn no later than 5 p.m.

So that's the agenda. Is there anything, Co-Leads, that I need add about today's proceedings, the agenda? Things sound good?

Housekeeping matters, please have your cell phone ringers off. Restrooms are out through these doors and down the hall to the right. Lunch for RPB members will be right across the hall and those of you joining the RPB will take lunch on your own and see you back at 1:15 when we resume for the afternoon.

So I think that's all that I need to say for now regarding the agenda, the day, housekeeping, so why don't we do a round of introductions around the table?

Rick, you've already sort of introduced yourself, so unless you want to say something else, we'll go to Bruce and then go around this way and then I'll hand it off to you, Betsy.

Overview of planning timeline

Bruce Carlisle: Hi. Bruce Carlisle, Director of the Office of Coastal Zone Management in Massachusetts.

Bob Labelle: Hi. Bob LaBelle, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, representing Department

of the Interior.

Makkah Ali: Makkah Ali with Meridian Institute.

Mel Cote: Mel Cote, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Meredith Mendelson: Meredith Mendelson with the Maine Department of Marine Resources.

Meghan Massaua: Meghan Massaua representing Patrick Gilman for the Department of Energy Wind Water Power Program Office.

Sharri Venno: Sharri Venno, Environmental Planner for the Houlten Band of Maliseet Indians in northern Maine.

Tom Burack: Tom Burack, Commissioner in the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

Glenn Normandeau: Glenn Normandeau, Director of New Hampshire Fish and Game.

John Weber: John Weber, staff. That guy right there is Nick Napoli, staff.

Dan Hubbard: Good morning. Dan Hubbard, Chief of Maritime Energy and Marine Planning for the First Coast Guard District. Today I'm here in a slightly different capacity but still the same person.

Kathryn Ford: I'm Kathryn Ford. I'm representing Paul Diodati of the Division of Marine Fisheries in Massachusetts.

David Blatt: David Blatt, representing Brian Thompson from the Connecticut Coastal Management Program.

Chris Clark: Chris Clark, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Matt Nixon: Matt Nixon. I'm representing Kathleen Leyden from the Maine Coastal Zone Management Program.

Chris Tompsett: Chris Tompsett, U. S. Navy Department of Defense Representative.

Susan Whalen: Good morning. I'm Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Katie Lund: Katie Lund, the Executive Secretary for the Regional Planning Body.

Joe Atangan: Joe Atangan from the U. S. Navy representing the Joint Staff.

Grover Fugate: Grover Fugate, Director of the Coastal Program for the State of Rhode Island.

Betsy Nicholson: I'm Betsy Nicholson. I'm here with NOAA representing the Department of Commerce.

Okay. So, welcome. Good morning, back there. I'm so sorry you're so far away as the fourth side of this table.

I just wanted to welcome everyone on behalf of my co-chairs, Grover Fugate from Rhode Island and Rick Getchell from the Micmacs, and welcome you to our fourth formal and — a little too formal — and open Regional Planning Body meetings. So thank you all for being here, and for those of you who are joining us for a first time, and I know we have some alternates around the table, I just wanted to take a minute to give you a little bit of background. Promise it'll only be a minute.

So, this body was formed per the National Ocean Policy and — which was signed into executive order in 2010. The policy represents a very important evolution in this nation's efforts to ensure the protection, maintenance, and restoration of our oceans, coasts, Great Lakes, ecosystems, and resources. The policy is really written to enhance the sustainability of ocean and coastal economies, to preserve our maritime heritage, to support sustainable uses and access, to provide for adaptive management to enhance our understanding of and our capacity to manage in the face of climate change and ocean acidification, and to coordinate with our national security and foreign policy interests.

And — but the really important part of this policy and the reason why we're here is that it provides for the development for regional, coastal, and marine spatial plans to build upon and improve our existing decision making and planning processes. So these regional plans are going to help us become more — enable us to be more integrated and comprehensive, science-based and ecosystem-based, so we can make more — we can be more proactive in planning and manage sustainable uses across sectors as well as conserve our ecosystems.

The Northeast RPB was the first in the nation to be established, and we are comprised as you can see of feds, states, tribes, and the Fishery Management Council. Hopefully Doug Grout will be joining us shortly because he holds that seat. And we're charged with working together and working with you all out there to develop a regional ocean plan for waters reaching from our New England coastline out to 200 miles off-shore, taking into account very important land-sea interactions as well.

So these are exciting times for ocean planning. Two weeks ago I was part of the annual Capitol Hill Oceans Week that I know a number of us were present at. The White House

Counselor John Podesta announced a renewed commitment to the National Ocean Policy and called out specifically New England and the Mid-Atlantic regions as leading the way with an expectation of developing our regional ocean plans within this administration. So that's before the end of 2016.

So it's very exciting that this effort in New England is a tangible outcome of this administration's legacy, and that we will be able to deliver on this deadline as a result of the hard work of all of the — all of you, all the member agencies, and in particular our staff, Nick Napoli, John Weber, Katie Lund, and the Meridian Team and our partners in public who have all been actively participating in this effort. So this is a reminder that we need to keep on task and keep up the momentum moving toward this timeline, this goal.

With that, I also wanted to let folks know that there's been a bit of a change at the National Ocean Council, which is the CEQ Council that is assisting us in implementing this National Ocean Policy. We have Deerin Babb-Brott. I saw him. Hi, Deerin. Good morning. He's back in the region, no longer the NOC director.

We've got a new NOC director, Beth Kerttula, and she is a 15-year veteran of the Alaska House of Representatives where she served as the minority leader from '03 to — sorry, '06 to 2013, and she's also held positions in the State of Alaska Attorney General's office. She's a — I've spoken to her a couple times; she's a very strong advocate for coastal resource management. She understands the partnerships that are necessary to do marine planning. She was originally planning on being here and was really, really sorry that she couldn't be here. She's just getting moved in, so this would've been a great way to sort of throw her right into the fire on all of this. We'll get her at our next meeting.

But all of this said, the main reason why New England is making progress in ocean planning is not because of an Executive Order. It's because the work that we're doing here is extremely relevant to what is going on right now out there. For instance, on the offshore wind-front, just last week we had our proposal announced by DOI Secretary Jewell and Governor Patrick to auction the wind-energy area off of Maine for commercial wind-energy leasing, the largest area identified for this purpose to date.

We also continue to recover from storms, from super-storm Sandy and all the nor'easters that we see here in New England, and to understand how human and natural communities can be more resilient to change going forward. BOEM is leading discussions on sand resource discovery and management and they're really looking — we appreciate that they're to partnerships like Enrock and like this one to guide them on how they can best do that in a transparent and participatory way.

So all these offshore — all these activities in the offshore waters continue to march forward as we continue with our work at hand, and the — and both conversations are starting

to influence each other, even in this planning phase. We don't need a plan to start thinking differently and acting differently, and I think through a lot of the updates you're going to hear today, you're going to start to hear about people — the light bulbs going off and people really starting to internalize the valued proposition of this whole effort to their jurisdiction, their agency, and how this could actually assist them going forward.

I also — just the last thing I wanted to do is just pause and take stock of where we are in the process. We're midway pretty much. We convened November of 2012. We're trying to be done with this planning phase by 2016. So congratulations. You're at the halfway mark. Stick with us. This is not a half-marathon.

Our major accomplishments to date really have been establishing the first regional planning body, signing our charter, and building the relationships that commit us to working together, to developing this plan, and third, the big one, developing and approving our framework with agreed-upon principles, goals, objectives, engagement plan, and an outline for work that will be conducted to make our framework come to life. And so we're rolling up our sleeves, and we're jumping into the doing mode.

And for those of us who were there yesterday, I want to commend the staff, Emily and Nick, too, for pulling off such an incredible workshop. The sheer number of colleagues — I think there were about what, 130? Is that right, Nick? One hundred-plus folks who registered? The number of colleagues that contributed their thinking to our work is a really good illustration of a timeliness, high level of interest, and importance of expanding this discussion beyond government. Yesterday's workshop was a demonstration of transparency with many experts and interested public influencing the direction of this work. And we look forward to more opportunities like that so our products reflect our collective expertise and our diverse voices so that we have many people weighing in on how we move forward and informing our ocean decisions.

We're not the only region making progress, either. So I wanted to just say that the Mid-Atlantic just had a very successful meeting, and Joe Atangan here is on both bodies. They had a great meeting in May where they approved their framework with goals and objectives, and as we proceed we're making sure that we communicate across our regions to leverage similar work, like ocean — the ocean use mapping and natural resource work, to make sure we're consistent in our interpretation of our handbook. I'm looking at our lawyer here, Dan. And to periodically connect our leadership and staff so that we are — we're hand in hand and making progress in the North Atlantic.

So in closing, I'd just like to encourage us to wear two hats today, to represent, obviously, the important perspective of our tribe, our jurisdiction, our agency, but also another hat, to represent yourself as a steward of the oceans and a steward of this process that's intended to help us and understand and respect each other's viewpoints and collectively make

progress toward a healthy ecosystem and economy. So with that, I just wanted to thank, Laura, your team again for your organization of this meeting as we hit the halfway mark and turn it back to you.

Laura Cantral: All right. Great. Thank you, Betsy. Thanks for reminders and perspective and context and encouragement to keep up the good work and keep up the momentum including what we can get done today. So speaking of what has been done and is on the docket to get done, I'd like to ask Grover, the state RPB Co-lead, to go over the planning timeline.

Grover Fugate: Good morning, everybody. I hope you're all ready for a very productive day here.

As you can see, 2014 has the potential and promise to be a water shedder for it because we're actually starting work on the natural resources section of this and also the effect of decision-making. Those two products, a lot of people would argue, I think, are sort of the heart and meat of this whole exercise and it's when we really start to get into this.

So as you can see, we are — we had the workshop yesterday. It was a very productive workshop. There was a lot of discussion I think on a much more comfortable format for a lot of people to deal with and discuss these issues. We will continue to go on with that during this process and also the effective decision-making and then hopefully in November get back to again review and start to make some of the potential decisions that might have to be made on some of these products.

So 2014 I think is going to be a very exciting year for us. Having said that, both of these projects are extremely meaty in terms of the volume and amount of material that we will be covering. I know that some of us are struggling trying to keep up with the flow of work that's coming out of this, and so if there are any suggestions that the RPB members can make in terms of how we might be able to ease this for you and make this more digestible so that we can have some very productive discussions on this, please let us know. We're open to suggestions. Thanks.

Laura Cantral: All right. Great. So, Nick, I think it's time to turn to you for an overview of the workshop yesterday.

Review of June 25 Natural Resources Workshop: discussion about key themes and next steps

Nick Napoli: Okay. Thank you. First, real quick before I get started, if you don't mind, I've been meaning to do this for all day yesterday, but there's a demo out in the area right out there for — of the data portal and if Peter Taylor, if you don't mind just raising your hand, if you

want to grab Peter anytime between now and through lunch, he'll take you out there and give you a demo of the data portal.

Okay. So the workshop yesterday, thanks for everybody's participation. I'm going to give a quick overview. There will be a summary coming out. I know that many of the folks in the room were here, but there are some that were not so I intend to give a quick overview and then allow the RPB to discuss and reflect on what they heard.

So first, the intent, at least from my perspective here, was to provide an informal opportunity for all of you that had — from a — that come from many different perspectives and backgrounds to sort of understand and weigh in on all of the challenges and key questions that we think we have when we're talking about characterizing natural resources and also to understand the process going forward which I'll quickly go over.

We spent the most of the day on that number 1, that yellow bar, thinking about data and methods for marine life distribution and abundance and again, this focuses on marine mammals, sea turtles, sea birds, and fish, recognizing that there's a lot of other work going on characterizing other natural resources.

Early in the day, Emily Shumchenia, who did the inventory that's in RPB members' packets and was put out publicly, she gave an overview of some of the key decision points for developing distribution and abundance products that really came out of that inventory and that inventory included discussions with each of the folks there were involved in many of those ongoing projects at the federal state level and many NGO's and characterizing distribution and abundance. So there's a lot of input into understanding what the existing data sources are and what the products coming out of those data sources are and how those might be leveraged for ocean planning and then what key decisions we need to make in order to develop products for regional planning.

Then we had an overview of — so, as a reminder that that line, that first line, that's action 1-1 under the Healthy Ocean and Ecosystems Goal. We said we are developing distribution and abundance products. We have hired a team composed of Duke and NOAA and Corey Curtis (phonetic) from Duke provided an overview of that team's existing products and methods and data holdings so that we could get an understanding of what their capacity is, what they've already developed, and how we might supplement, complement, revise some of the work that they have so that it could be used for regional ocean planning in the Northeast.

We had a series of breakouts based on taxonomic groups, marine mammals and sea turtles, birds, and fish, three breakouts. We began discussing some of the key questions that have come up through the inventory and through some of our initial work with the Duke team. We had four questions for those breakouts.

I don't think we mentioned this yesterday, but going into those breakout sessions, the team and the many people we reached out to in advance of the workshop had come up with about 10 questions, so 10 sort of key questions that we really need to answer in order to frame the work over the next three to six months and get some draft products together. We recognized that we couldn't handle all of those in a one and a half hour breakout so we focused on a few, also recognizing that we wouldn't get answers on those, that we're really just trying to introduce some of those key decisions and then set a path forward for developing those products.

Those questions that the breakout groups dealt with were, "Which species do we choose?" and I think there was a range of options that we heard. I'm not going to characterize everything, but there's certainly several different filters that we heard about how we can choose species ranging from species that are protected or endangered in some way, species that may be commercially important for some reason, and even some opinions that we don't need to choose species, we need to do all of them in each of those groups. So that will be input going forward for how we decide which species to prioritize if we need to.

We also dealt with the geographic scope and resolution issue. I think in my group, I was in marine mammals, I think we agreed we were dealing with — there's certainly a question about what about Long Island Sound or Cape Cod Bay, some of the embayments and we agreed that those were in. I know that in the bird group that there was discussion about some of the in-shore embayments and coastal areas, and I believe that those folks agreed that those were in. We needed to characterize coastal areas.

We also discussed the potential applications of these data products and I think that there was maybe some difficulty there because some of the work that Grover referenced on the effective decision-making goal is really is going to be providing context or some of the context for how these products get used, and so there's a parallel track there that will really inform some of the distribution and abundance products, but certainly we heard things like thinking about the potential sensitivity or vulnerability or impact of particular uses to those different species.

Then, lastly, we discussed what other data can supplement existing data holdings that the Duke NOAA team has, and I don't know if the Duke team left out some of their handouts but there is a — there was a handout. Do you have any left? They were all on the table. They may be gone. Maybe we'll put up the email address that was included in there, but we're encouraging folks if you some data set that you think that the team may not have to email that address and let us know about it and that's going to be an ongoing discussion about how to integrate some of the local state data that many of us have with the extensive data holdings that the Duke NOAA team has.

As I mentioned, there were many other questions. We can send those out if folks are

interested in seeing those. I'm not going to go through all of them, but we really recognize that we needed some — and we've talked extensively with the Duke NOAA team about how to frame the development of products over the next three to six months — and agreed that we really need expert working groups that are based on those taxonomic groups that will meet over the next three to six months to wrestle with those questions and inform the team's development of initial draft products.

I don't think I mentioned this yesterday, but about a month or two ago I sent out a request — made many requests for experts in those areas, and I have a list of about 50 to 60 folks, most of whom I've contacted and most of whom are interested in working in some capacity in advising that work. So I just want to let folks know that there's a large group of folks that are really interested in providing input into the development of these products, and I think that we should be aware of the interest in that.

Lastly, so that was — the majority of the day was on distribution and abundance, that number 1, the yellow up on the screen. The green area, 2A, 2B, and C, we spent about two hours talking about the options that the RPB has, and this is separate from the distribution and abundance, so we know we're doing distribution and abundance products and what we say in the framework document is that the RPB is going to consider other options for how it might use the distribution and abundance products to do things like what's up under 2A, 2B, 2C on the screen, and that we need to between now and November refine some of those options and define them perhaps a little bit better so that the RPB can make a decision about what, if anything beyond distribution and abundance, it would like to do during this ocean planning timeline.

I'll go quickly through 2A, and this is summarizing some of Emily's presentation, and if you go look at the document it's really that executive summary in the document. But we certainly heard a lot in public comment about identifying areas of ecological importance, and what we realized is that there are a lot of efforts in the region that are doing that in some way, and it's really a matter of definition, and I think that we all have a, you know, a challenge in understanding what each other's saying when we say "identify areas of ecological importance." So there's lots of different definitions of that. There's lots of different applications for that, and there's certainly some challenges for implementing that, and we heard that in some of the comments yesterday.

In terms of measuring ocean health, we tried to bin that in several different ways. First, looking at single-use resource interactions. Words that come up with that are impact, vulnerability, sensitivity, compatibility. Those are the kinds of things that people talk about when they think about a single use like shipping impacting a single resource, like perhaps marine mammals.

Cumulative impacts is another way of sort of rolling up some of these single impacts

and thinking about what the cumulative effect might be and they're indicators and indices for measuring progress.

Lastly, there's a lot of discussion about trade-off models. I think when our original slide showed this as a progression, we probably still think in many ways in terms of how often these things have been used in the region or how many of them there are. There's certainly more as you go up and fewer as you go down from 1 to 2C in the region and certainly in terms of how they're being applied, and as you get further down there are fewer management applications, at least right now, and they're a little bit more experimental. That said, there was certainly some discussion about the opportunity to frontload some of those trade-off discussions and the complexity of doing that. So that's my summary.

Laura Cantral: Great. Thank you, Nick. Thank you for that great summary. It was a very rich discussion and a productive day.

Before we open it up for questions from RPB members and alternates, I wonder if anyone else around the table who was at the workshop wants to add any reflection, observation, reaction, you know, to what Nick has presented.

And also, remember our format for letting me know if you have something you want to say. No one wants to say anything right now, apparently, because I don't see any tents up. And I need to tell the people on the corners here, and Joe, I am keeping an eye on you, but sometimes I can't see you, and I can't see you, so if you want to say something, you know, wave, and throw something at me, whatever.

Questions or comments about the Natural Resources Workshop yesterday? Susan?

Susan Whalen: I would just add that I heard a lot of emphasis from participants about ensuring that our decisions reflect the values of the communities. That came through a lot.

Laura Cantral: Yeah. Yeah. It certainly did. Grover?

Grover Fugate: Yeah. I think yesterday was a very interesting discussion that went on. There's certainly, I think, a wide range of opinions on how we should be handling this particular topic, what the products might be, and how those products might be used. So this is going to be a very interesting topic when we get into it eventually.

I think one of the things that, and again the challenge, and I've said this right from the outset, I think the challenge for us is also going to be trying to manage expectations in terms of this because that — they — we obviously have to use our existing authorities to do this. We're not going to be able to create new authorities to try to deal with this so how we deal with what people are asking us to do, and what we would like to do and how we do that with the challenge of the sort of the shackles that we have in terms of this is going to be, I think, a very

lively discussion when we get into it, so —

Laura Cantral: Okay. Betsy?

Betsy Nicholson: Well, I just — I mean, I think just overall, I think yesterday was a really good opportunity to bring a lot of new people up to speed on this because it was the first big, open topical workshop we've had, and I thought it worked really well for you know, starting at the beginning.

So parts of it were painful in terms of the discussion going really broad when we got into breakout groups, and it was an opportunity to ground people in terms of the — a bit of the boundaries of this exercise. We're not just characterizing marine life because it's fun, although that's true. We're doing it, you know, ultimately to add value to, you know, what we know in terms of identifying ecologically important areas. For example, get that information to the portal, use it in our management decisions.

So it was a really good opportunity to ground a lot of the academics and natural resource based NGO's in turn that haven't been involved to date and ground them into the purpose of this whole effort which is to improve our knowledge and our participation to make better decisions about our oceans. So that was an important opportunity.

A lot of emphasis yesterday about the importance of tools and getting that right, getting to Grover's comment about you know, how — and Joe's comments he made yesterday about, you know, a lot of our product development depends on what you're using it for. What kinds of questions do you need to answer? You know, the Navy has very specific questions, NOAA has other different questions, you know, that is — needs to be very transparent and visible to all in terms of how we develop these products so that, you know, it's clear that we — as we operate within our existing authorities are paying attention to what kind of questions we need to answer for our own mandates and that these products need to help us get there. So that's a big driver.

We heard a lot of emphasis about the table. Really important to get to have these kinds of forums and have a lot — a broad group of expertise weighing in. We also heard some interesting comments about the importance of institutions being present and also committed in terms of agencies to where we're going and, you know, what is the political appetite of how far we can go, not just what's our capacity or will but what's the political appetite? Where are we going to get buy-in up the chain to do this and commit to it going forward? So all those flags were really appropriate to raise, and I think keep us on task.

Laura Cantral: Joe and then Mel.

Joe Atangan: I'm one of those guys who's not a natural resources person so it was —I was one

of those guys that needed ground truthing I guess. It was a little bit overwhelming yesterday. I was almost overwhelmed by the discussions on the data and a lot of focus has been on the data. But you know, as we progress in the discussions, you know, it was data to support protection of marine mammals, endangered species, and activities, and one of the things that kind of screamed out at me was — is, you know, we always focus at the end state of the activity. The assumption of, hey, this — if we end up putting a wind turbine out there, it's the impact of that wind turbine. And so it was — it became very clear to me at that point, it says wow, we're really shooting ahead to the end state there and not thinking a lot of times of the consequences of what gets us to that end state that are interim steps that we need to be mindful of that might impact these natural resources along the way.

So I think we need to focus on not just the end state but the things that lead to that end state which is the surveying, the impacts of the surveying work that has to happen in order to put that structure out there. The actual construction and the impact on the natural resources that result of that, you know, of the development of that structure before we can even get to, okay, we finally have a fully operational wind turbine out there, now what's the long-term impact? So sometimes it gets lost, all these interim steps gets lost in the process because we're so focused on the end state.

The other comment I want to make is I do want to stress again that the data's important, but we can also get so bogged down in the gathering of data that we never end up using that data for what we intended to use it. Okay? So, that data is useless until it becomes process and gets translated into actionable information and how that information gets processed is every bit as important as the ground truth data itself. So I think in the interest of transparency and stuff we need to ensure that the public understands the applications and the decision-making tools that we're using to convert that data into meaningful information.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Mel?

Mel Cote: Yeah. Just very briefly and how that information gets processed is every bit as important as the ground truth data itself, so I think in the interest of transparency and stuff we need to ensure that the public understands the applications and the decision-making tools that we're using to convert that data into meaningful information.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, Mel.

Unidentified: Yeah, just very briefly I just want to say I was really impressed and excited by the level of participation, the large turnout, the diversity of the prospective interests that were represented here yesterday, and obviously representing an environmental protection agency just given the fact that we're giving the kind of attention we are to this part of the equation is really gratifying and appreciated by us, and we're very happy to be part of the — part of that process, so great job by Nick and the team and Emily and everyone else, and keep up the great

work.

Laura Cantral: Matt.

Matt Nixon: Thank you. I'm certainly not a marine, mammal, fish or bird expert by any stretch of the imagination, so yesterday was a wonderful opportunity to sit around and listen to people who are much smarter than I am talk about things they've been studying their entire lives. I was in the marine mammal breakout group, and I feel that there's still a bit of uncertainty for many of the people in the room who may just be catching up to this process now, or who have actually been following this process for quite some time. And there still remains some uncertainty about, in particular prioritizing species without a certain use in mind or a co-occurrence issue in mind, and I think it would behoove us going forward to be a bit clearer about — in particular when we're prioritizing species or habitat or something like that. Just keep that in the back of your head as we move forward about why we're doing this, and it might help dialogue; just an observation.

Laura Cantral: Anyone else? Any other reflections, comments, or questions? Questions for those of you who weren't able to participate yesterday? Tom.

Tom Burack: Thank you. Regrettably, I was one of those who was not able to be here in person, but from all the reports I've heard and confirmed by what I just heard, it sounds like it was a very productive and well-run session, and I'm just curious to know whether or not, at least at the staff level, we've given thought to where we go next with this. That is, are we going to be taking some time to reflect on what we've heard and what we learned before we decide next steps or is there, for example, a vision that we would continue this process of these large, really open forums continuing down through this list of issues 2A through 2C, for example. Just trying to get a sense as to where we go from here.

Laura Cantral: Nick.

Nick Napoli: Mike — good. Okay, so on question — on number one, the process going forward is we're setting up expert working groups and those taxonomic species — those taxonomic groups and having those groups answer a list of ten questions and whatever else comes out that helps preen the development of the distribution abundance products. In the hopes that we have some initial drafts in about six months, those draft products might look a lot like what the team already has, and because we have to be — we have to realize that integrating some of the local data sets might take a little bit more time but they're — you know, those things will be staggered. Some things will be more developed than others, I think, in six months, but we'll set up those expert working groups. They'll start working immediately advising the team on how to develop products for distribution in abundance, and we're also going to look at other opportunities for getting out information to folks like webinars about what the status of that work is.

For 2A through 2C, that's the other action under the Healthy Ocean Coastal Ecosystem goal, that's action 1-2, and we really just started the discussion. It was just a summary and introduction to what the various options are that the RPB could consider about additional assessments it could do, and the intent is to take that pretty broad list and refine it down to fewer options, perhaps, define them really well. Think really clearly about the management application, the potential management application, and then put those on the table for a decision in November and recognize that yesterday, we threw a lot at folks because there's a lot that's going on in the region in those areas. They're pretty broadly defined different types of assessments in there, and that's the context for the decision that the RPB has because there's a lot of this going on already in the region, and we need to think about what's applicable and what's possible for regional planning. Recognizing that if we make a decision in November, we have about a year to do it, and that's not a lot of time so we need to realize that there's also a science plan. We plan on developing a science plan. Then perhaps some things are not possible in a year, but they become science priorities and that might be part of what the options look like.

I think you actually teed up what we wanted to ask back to you which is, what more do you need to know about 2A through 2C in order to refine these list of options so that we can get to a decision in November about what we might do, and we put up some questions at the end of the day and it was pretty broad range in conversation, but to go back to those, it is what are the potential management applications for this regional planning body for any of these things and what are the challenges, the technical or capacity challenges that there might be for developing and implementing any of these and you may have some additional questions that we need to answer and that's what we're asking you.

Richard Getchell: So Nick, could you just repeat what those two questions were?

Nick Napoli: Sure. What's the management application of any of these options, specifically related to the RPB developing them and applying them and what are the challenges associated with developing and implementing them beyond just management application but the technical capacity, resources, those things?

Laura Cantral: Okay, so that was a really helpful summary of the next steps and the lay of the land coming out of yesterday including what we do want to engage you in some discussion about right now, and also hear from you Nick, John, team about how you want to continue to get the kind of answers that you need from the RPB to those two questions that you just posed so several people have tents up and want to offer something so let's hear from Grover, Betsy, and then Bruce.

Grover Fugate: Yeah, Tom, I just wanted to say that yesterday it was — it's clear that because there was a lot of crossover (indiscernible), I would say, that this data gathering that we're gathering is not juts obviously for the sake of gathering data. It's all leading up to a decision making process and so there's — it's almost impossible to separate it at times — well, it is

impossible to separate at times from the decision-making process itself because the data products need to at times be targeted towards the decisions that we potentially might make so there's going to be a lot of crossover in terms of those discussions and it's going to be almost impossible to separate the two as we get further into this, so I think there's — we need to think about how that data gets used and how it starts to improve our decision-making capability and our efficiency so.

Laura Cantral: Betsy, before I turn to you, I need to ask all of you when you take the floor to — you know, just going to have to just speak directly into the microphone. We're having — people are having trouble hearing in the back, so if you could just really speak into the microphone.

Betsy Nicholson: All right. One small comment and one need: Sharri, you had some really good points you made yesterday about the importance of historical knowledge, and in all of this, and I want to make sure that as we think about setting up technical work groups that we're thinking that way as well, not just, you know, academics that are doing current studies, but people with historical knowledge and cultures with historical knowledge. So I wanted to mention that.

Second, I think one of our needs between now and November is, you know, if we're going to — say we go down the 2A road, which NOAA is in favor of, in terms of identifying areas of ecological importance, what do we do with that information? What are the policy and legal implications of that? We need to know that. How would that data layer be used in terms of, you know, once we get into implementation, which agencies and programs have the ability to actually do anything with that, and what are those options?

So I think just a better understanding of policy and legal implications of identifying significant areas would be helpful to me, and then finally, I just wanted to say, you know we're — a lot of the talk yesterday and, you know, the comment you just made, Nick, is, you know, the timeline is really important. Don't get me wrong, but let's not be constricted in our thinking in terms of the next six months or 2016. Let's be realistic with what we can accomplish, but really keep an eye on looking forward too because what we're really trying to do with this plan and this process is setting a trajectory for us as a region and not just what we're able to sort of tie up with a bow by 2016.

So I just wanted to mention that because I don't want that to crush any creativity or opportunity that this process provides us, but we certainly need to be realistic with what the near term products are.

Laura Cantral: Bruce?

Bruce Carlisle: So I was going to suggest sort of following up on Tom's question, sort of, you

know, where do we go from here and sort of Nick's response, and then the points that Grover added and just building off what Betsy said. In terms of, you know, we heard a lot yesterday. Each one of those, you know, big headers over there has a whole lot of stuff kind of under it and it's complicated, and if we are to come back in November and try to make some heads and tails of this and chart our way forward, I sort of feel like we need a smaller group maybe advised obviously by our technical experts who Nick's convened, but you know a smaller group of the RPB members to do what we did with you know some of these other decision points and prepare some sort of options. You know, basically, some folks were thinking through this, digesting it, integrating it with the, you know, regulatory framework, how this information and what these decision support tools, how they integrate, and a couple options for the RPB. They can be both short and long term, but especially in the short term I think we're going to need to sort of get some clarity sooner rather than later or it's going to be trouble down the line. I think it's going to end up being a little messy, so with that I guess I am volunteering myself to help out.

Laura Cantral: All right. So suggestion for a small group and Bruce is volunteering. Others might be thinking about whether they want to help him in volunteering in such a manner, so be thinking about that, and then let's go to Grover and Meghan. Betsy, are you still —

Grover Fugate: Yeah, the one cautionary note that when I look at this that I struggle with virtually every day that — in my job is that I get concerned about getting caught in static systems when we have a changing system and a system that seems to be in our area changing faster than we can sometimes keep up with.

In our state, we're losing salt marshes as a result of sea level rise because it's out pacing right of the accumulation rate on the marshes. We have essentially gone in our bay from a demersal fishery to a pelagic system. So these systems that we've set up for — in looking at and trying to value these areas need to have a dynamic component in it and almost a predictive component as we go forward because the — I don't want to get caught into a static system that tries to define areas based on today when those areas are already changing. So many decisions in our state get made on the basis of when our flounder, but we're told when our flounder is a loser in our area that it will essentially disappear and the more Mid-Atlantic species, which we're already seeing will become the dominant force in our region and if we're not recognizing that, planning for that and trying to think ahead it's going to be — it just worries me at times. So it's just a cautionary note as we get into this.

Laura Cantral: Meghan. And then we'll go —

Meghan Massaua: So during the afternoon discussion yesterday we heard a lot about identifying values of importance to try and put a little bit of balance on how we're moving forward with this, and so I might suggest that, you know, if a small group is formed that might be one of the things that they could potentially starting thinking about and bring something to

the RPB in November. I think that's going to be difficult work for this group to do to kind of try and — you know, once you start putting — valuing some things and potentially, some things are valued more at least in the short term than other things, and that's where you get into some of the meatier discussions that I think need to be had in this group, but in terms of identifying data and how to go forward with analyzing and visualizing that data, doing it with more of a focused, goal-directed type way might be helpful for the group so trying to identify what that looks like.

Hopefully, I'm being — I think I'm being a little vague but really trying to focus the group a little bit around certain things and then bring that to the RPB and have more of a discussion about, okay are we comfortable with this or not, and that will help to, you know, move forward with this.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Glenn and then Rick.

Glenn Normandeau: Yeah, I wasn't able to be here yesterday, but just a point that Grover just brought up, I want to support his view on that. You know, there's always a lot of emphasis on, for example on species that are seen as threatened or are an endangered or whatever, and in my view anyways not enough on what do we think the future's going to look like recognizing that there's a lot of uncertainty out there in our neck of the woods.

In the last two years, for the first time ever, I've seen for example black sea bass and blue crabs and, you know, which, historically, never occurred north of the Balboa Cape Cod. So we're seeing these changes occur and if you're developing strategies that are based on things that simply aren't going to be there no matter what you do you're really wasting your time so — and although it's very tough sometimes to let something go, the reality is that we have to do as Grover suggested and things need to be planned for what the reality of the future is, not preserving the impossible. One man's opinion.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Rick.

Richard Getchell: Yeah, I agree wholeheartedly. You know, one of my biggest concerns I think when I look at the whole thing is looking at whether it's traditional knowledge that we have to gather. No one's had that discussion or how long that would take or does the even change the data that exists today. But also I do understand that yesterday's exercise was a starting point to come up with, you know, three species or try to prioritize something, but also there wasn't plants in there. There wasn't a lot of other things in there that — also climate change wasn't mentioned as far as that being part of that process in the lacking data that we know doesn't exist for certain things and certain reasons.

We also — looking at other areas that we never, you know, even discussed as becoming a priority, which, makes me think the baseline approach or what would calm everybody out in

the public and ourselves would be coming up with an adaptive model and somehow communicating that anything we are missing or that we're unaware of, this process will be adapted to include all of that because some of the work I know we're looking at for tribes for an example won't be coming down. We're not going to be doing that in one year's time so I mean we need to make sure it's important that this model or whatever we wind up with in a planning process allows for that to be inclusive long term because, again, we're looking at long term planning not November or whenever the deadline is, so —

Laura Cantral: Yeah, important point. Meredith.

Meredith Mendelson: I just want to continue to echo this theme of trying to perhaps focus this effort on the need for change impact analysis. I think perhaps what we're hearing around the table and looking at all of the existing data sources that people brought together yesterday a lot of that work — I think we need to realize that a lot of that work was done for a specific purpose, understand what the purpose of its collection was, how it's already been analyzed and applied particularly in the regulatory context given that there isn't new jurisdiction of this body, and I think what we're all responding to is — what the real need that we're all struggling with is translating that into those future projections. So to me that's where there's a real opportunity for this body to fill a gap that existing regulatory structures are struggling to meet.

Laura Cantral: Okay. Thank you. Sharri.

Sharri Venno: I'd just like to add to this discussion about responding to changing conditions. From the perspective of — I also participate in the landscape conservation cooperative effort, and that's essentially what they are trying to do. That's kind of the principle behind the conservation planning that they're doing is developing a landscape system that represents a sort of, you know, full range of landscapes out there.

I worry about, you know, picking spots — little areas of ecological importance and protecting those without thinking about how they fit in the larger context. Are they representative of all the diversity, and I'm not sure how to express it in marine terms out there. Are they connected to — how does it all fit together? That's really what they're trying to do at the LCC, sort of on the — on a connected — from an upland perspective, and can we use those ideas and principle in the marine planning realm?

Laura Cantral: Kathryn and Joe, do you — is your tent up for a new comment or is that —

Joe Atangan: Yes, ma'am.

Laura Cantral: Okay. So Kathryn and then Joe.

Kathryn Ford: I'm having a little trouble putting my thoughts into words here, but I think I'm

going to echo mostly what Bruce said. We've identified — there's sort of a big picture component of all this, but we've also identified some very pragmatic issues that the agencies are going to have to deal with in the coming years. Some things are already here like wind energy development, but we're also going to have — and sand extraction is here in some places, not in my state yet. Climate change is a big thing that all these agencies — we're all around the table here going to have to start making decisions every day of our lives on this.

So you know part of this is education. I thought yesterday was fantastic. It was really well organized. I learned a lot. I come from the data side, and there was a lot of information I hadn't seen before. And so I really think that improving knowledge piece that Betsy talked about is important.

Without having heard yet this effective decision-making workshop information, I know that that's going to feed right into there, but I think when Bruce was talking about having a smaller group that perhaps starts to frame some of these issues we're going to be dealing with: climate change, sand extraction, wind energy, or marine energy use in general, other things that are in the framework include offshore aqua culture and potential future uses such as carbon sequestration and maybe exploring some of the scenario tools maybe along the lines of what Les Kaufman was talking about yesterday. I know there's the whole EBM Tools Network and sort of exploring how we can combine these improved data products with some of those decision-making tools would help me a lot to frame what we could accomplish with an ocean plan for the region.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Joe?

Joe Atangan: I'm glad she mentioned EBM because I — because as we started talking about this, there's a lot of focus on species, and I just kind of want to — and Sharri kind of mentioned some of this already as well. I want to make sure we don't lose sight of the fact that the whole purpose of establishing the whole National Ocean Policy was to get away from this species and sector-based management and get more focused into an ecosystem based management approach. So I just want to kind of ground everybody back and say, okay a lot of talk about species — data and individual species but really, what we want to take a look at is, is this whole ecosystem based management approach and — that Sharri kind of eluded to. Look at the total picture of the things, but I get a little bit concerned because a lot of the discussions on the data has been very species based, and I just want to make sure we don't lose sight of the fact that this is an ecosystem based management evolution.

Laura Cantral: Bob.

Bob Labelle: Yeah, following up on that I just keep wrestling with this mentally and are we doing an assessment or are we doing an inventory, and I think — I hope what we wind up doing is an inventory that would give us an ecological sense of what we have up here in the

northeast including the gaps and the need to fill those gaps as the conditions are changing. So that's a very valuable thing in terms of driving the assessments that are going to go on up here that are project specific because any focusing of general basic information like that saves people time and effort and it — you know, it's providing good information that may or may not be taken into account, you know. Whatever agencies are working on it only have so many staff members and everyone has different levels of expertise. We would like to hope that everyone is using all the best available information, but if the — it occurs to me if our group can come up with something that we feel is an inventory that people should use for our region then that's going to be a very helpful thing.

Laura Cantral: John.

John Weber: So just quickly I'm thinking about the last couple of threads of conversation in particular Kathryn's meatier point. A lot of obviously the work that Emily has done and that sort of summary of those existing types of things that are out there from 2A, 2B, 2C there's a lot of good information there so as far as a starting point to get after some of that I really would, you know, recommend that people go start with that.

Second comment is thinking about the conversation yesterday and thinking about also, you know, as Nick obviously — when we got into the 2A, 2B, 2C conversation yesterday, it was a lively robust conversation among the whole room. So as we're thinking about how to specifically move forward maybe saving some version of Bruce's idea I think we — it would also behoove us to think about how to continue that public conversation as well.

Laura Cantral: Okay.

John Weber: And specifically I'm thinking of Tom, back to your questions about how do we get from where we are now to November. So within that time frame.

Laura Cantral: Meghan.

Meghan Massaua: And I think in doing that, you know keeping in mind the two different time frames that we're working with is really important. What can we do by 2016 and what is going to require more effort, more thinking longer term, more resources, and needs to be in a more forward thinking type of plan document them, and they come out later.

Laura Cantral: Any other thoughts, questions, comments? Nick? No. Well let — I have question to you. Do you — are you and the team — do you feel like you have what you need — I'll summarize some key points, but do we — are there other questions that you need to get at that you need to hear from other RPB members on?

Nick Napoli: I think that was a great discussion. I captured a bunch of points that I'm sure

you're going to summarize, but I did hear Bruce offer to chair a subgroup and heard a bunch of comments around the room that I just assume are additional volunteers, but I didn't hear anyone specifically volunteer, but, you know, certainly you know if Bruce is willing to chair a subgroup I don't volunteer for things, I get volunteered for things, and I'm assuming I'm being volunteered to support that.

And there's a lot of discussion, and I just want to note that a lot of folks' discussion here focused on that 2A. I just want to note that and maybe there's some greater comfort level within this group looking at those options within the 2A bar more than B and C recognizing that we still need to have that discussion, but I'm just reflecting back that I certainly heard, you know 75 percent of your comments really were up there.

Bob Labelle: So, Nick, I appreciate you elevating my volunteer status this — really, really appreciated. With that in mind, I'd love several co-chairs. Yeah, but we are starting to take names, so —

Laura Cantral: Grover?

Grover Fugate: Nick, I volunteer. Nick, again I guess on the lines of managing expectations given the discussion that we had yesterday and realizing the amount of work that would be needed to undertake that, and we already have an existing study that's ongoing obviously trying to target these issues. Do you think that study will result in sort of the end products that will be necessary, or is there going to be additional studies that will be beyond that, that will move us more towards that line?

Nick Napoli: Do you mean the Duke team, the distribution among those products —

Grover Fugate: Yes.

Nick Napoli: — as far as —

Grover Fugate: Yes.

Nick Napoli: I think those would be inputs to any of this and I think those things are on a parallel track.

Grover Fugate: Do you think they will get us there is my question though?

Nick Napoli: I'm not certain, but I think they're very —

Grover Fugate: It's an unfair question, I realize given —

Nick Napoli: Yeah.

Grover Fugate: — the stage that it's at, but again, I just want to, again, lay out the expectations in a transparent fashion then. We may need more work beyond this obviously to get us there so

—

Nick Napoli: Right. I think those — I think the Duke stuff — the Duke NOAA team, there are some challenges to taking what they have and integrating some of the local and state data we have with them in the time that we have. So that's a big challenge, I think.

Another big challenge when we're thinking about any of these things is that, you know, there's been ongoing work trying to classify the habitat — the Benthic habitat, the water column, and that's been good work to integrate what's been going on in the region, and that's a longer term thing. That is not going to conclude in a year-and-a-half. So that's going to be another challenge is to integrate what is happening with that group with the distribution abundance products that's are coming from the Duke NOAA team and then thinking about any of these options in 2A through 2C and how — what we have in about a year could be inputs to any of these additional assessments.

Betsy Nicholson: I think one of the things we heard yesterday too from some of the members of the public and experts was a need to better educate everybody on 2A, 2B, 2C, so maybe we could think about a series of webinars that wouldn't be too onerous, that could just give like a little bit more of a one-on-one, and I thought one of the most powerful parts of yesterday was actually hearing from practitioners on how effective some of these things were. What were their experiences with them in terms of benefits challenges?

So I think if we could keep that conversation open to, you know, government, non-government, everybody, to keep that — the learning continuing to happen I think that would help us all beef up and get closer to a practical decision.

Laura Cantral: Okay. So anything else? Are you — are we ready to wrap this up for now?

So just — I'll just add a couple of things to what Nick said in what he had heard from this discussion, which was really very helpful. You know, I — a couple of points that I will underscore that are relevant to the workshop and the nature of the work coming out of the workshop that also transcends more broadly to the process I believe, and you heard from Grover as he went over the timeline, the nature of the event yesterday and the workshop design is something that will continue as RPB work continues and will be, you know, feathered into the process, and you saw on the timeline that Grover presented that there's some, you know, already planned and in the works and more will come as the opportunities are clearer about what those workshops need to be designed around.

There's also, I think, a strong recognition that, you know balance is a key theme here. There's lots to balance with this process, and we can talk about that in lots of different contexts. In this context, it's another point that Grover made about needing to think carefully about balancing, you know, workload and the products and have all RPB members digest those products and make meaningful use of them in how they are going to relate to decision making and that gets to another point that several of you made is the — right now — this work, the natural resources work, and everything that's on that slide and effective decision making work and inner agency coordination are on parallel tracks, but those things soon will intersect and reinforce each other, so I think that's also helpful to keep in mind, and it's part of what people have referred to as a bit of a chicken and the egg conundrum that was referenced several times yesterday so I just wanted to point that out.

So in terms of what's next, and Nick help me out if I get this wrong here, but what I'm hearing and in summary is that for number one on the slide that work is in motion. That is something the RPB has committed to doing. There are expert work groups that are getting organized and assisting and status of that work will be presented in webinars and other opportunities to engage and that work is moving forward toward November which will be the next meeting and beyond.

For the other things the 2A, B, C, there's still a lot of consider — a lot of considering that needs to be done and feedback from the RPB about some questions that need to be answered and how far along that spectrum you want to go, and that perhaps to assist the RPB in being able to answer some of those questions and make decisions in November a suggestion to create a small work group that could present some options was offered by Bruce, and Bruce, I'm happy to report that others have volunteered to assist you, including Grover and Betsy and Rick, and I'm sure they would welcome others of you who are interested in helping out.

And then a couple of other themes that feel like important themes that came up and important to keep in mind is the nature of the time frames and there's a time frame to November but — and there's a time frame to 2016, but there's a longer term time frame in process and so not being too constrained in thinking about those deadlines while recognizing that those are important deadlines i important to keep in mind, and then finally, another aspect or dimension of this work is the need to think about the dynamic nature of the resource and the points that were made about change impact analysis and an opportunity that this body has to contribute to the work, to the thinking, to what individual agencies are doing and have the capacity to do could be an important contribution. So, Nick, how'd I do? Do you want to add to that?

Nick Napoli: That sounds great and, Bruce, I didn't mean to elevate you to a chair. I thought you were volunteering, but it sounds like I have Bruce, Grover, Betsy, and Rick to work with immediately following this meeting. Thanks.

Technical and stakeholder advisory options: discussion

Laura Cantral: All right. So as we close this out and move to the next topic on our agenda, we've had a couple of other people join the table, so I'd like to invite Lorraine and Doug. Welcome, and would you introduce yourselves? Lorraine?

Lorraine Wakemen: Yes, I'm Lorraine Wakemen. I'm with the Office of Policy and Plans for the U.S. Maritime Administration. We're part of the Department of Transportation.

Doug Grout: And my name is Doug Grout. I'm representing the New England Fisheries Management Council here, and in my other life, I work for the New Hampshire Fish and Game Marine Department as the Marine Division Chief.

Laura Cantral: Yeah. All right, so thanks and welcome, and I think — I hope everyone's had a chance to introduce themselves. I think that's correct.

All right, well, let's transition to the next discussion. We would now like to take up the topic of the technical and stakeholder advisory function and how best to fulfill this important need for the ocean planning process. As a reminder, we will start some discussion among the RPB members and alternates. I'm going to ask Betsy and others to do some framing and kind of tee up the discussion. We'll open it up for some discussion, and then we'll pause and hear public comment, take a break, and come back and resume the discussion.

I'd also like to remind the RPB that in addition to hearing public comment that will be offered during the upcoming session, you also received a number of written comments that are in your materials in your binder and hope that you've had a chance to look at that and may want to refer to that during this discussion.

So, Betsy, I'm going to turn it to you and you offer some context and some perspective. Recall that the Co-Leads took this up as an assignment to present some options, which they have done, and you've seen that. They're in the materials and they've, of course been available online and — for reactions from members of the public. So Betsy, I'm going to turn it over to you.

Betsy Nicholson: Okay. So now we're — we've really been looking forward to this. We really want to have a positive discussion toward making a decision about how we're currently and could be in the future continuing to engage nongovernment colleagues and what options we have going forward. So just as a reminder throughout this regional planning body process today, we've been I think very thoughtful and careful to engage both technical and stakeholder experts and the public in our process, and along the way we've been checking in with a lot of

folks to see how it's going.

We all know this is not a new topic. We actually have an engagement strategy that's been approved by this body and by the National Ocean Council in January as part of our framework, and that's really a strategy that outlines a lot of ways that we're currently engaging folks in this planning process right now. We're revisiting this topic for three reasons. First, as Laura said, this came up again at our January meeting that we needed more discussion. So the Co-Leads took the action, and we've been talking many times since January and produced this options paper for you to consider.

Secondly, we've heard a lot of ideas over the past year from both the RPB members and the public, and we're committed to be adaptive and nimble as we proceed and account for new engagement needs as they arise. So that's another reason why we're revisiting this.

And third, as more regions, particularly the mid-Atlantic and others are standing up their RPBs and moving forward and engaging nongovernment folks, we've also sought some clarity on legal guidance around involving nongovernment colleagues and so we wanted to make — you know, we wanted to share that legal clarity with you all today, and that's what's also sort of caused us to reframe these options.

So we put them forward to you in the briefing book. I hope everyone's taken a look at them. We really appreciate the half dozen or so public comments that came in by Monday. Thank you to those of you who submitted those. It's really helpful to know where people stand going into this discussion.

Okay, so what I'd like to do just in closing in terms of framing this is to give you some filters that I'd like people to use in today's discussion first. There are about five of them. First of all, we need to be considering practical ramifications, positive or negative, of any decision we make in terms of how it impacts our timeline, our capacity, and our funding. Okay.

Secondly, we want to make sure that what we have in place is properly staffed and functioning. I'm thinking of the state advisory groups, for example. You know, we want to make sure that what we're — what we've already committed to is working and take steps to make that happens.

Number three, a reminder, the options that we've put in this options paper are those that are under the purview of the regional planning body and don't include very important nongovernment self-organization that has already — that's happened throughout this process and that we very much appreciate. So that's not — that is — we're making an assumption that that will continue and is very important. That's not an option because it's outside of this body.

Number four, we've got to make a decision today so we can incorporate the approach

we want to take into our timeline going forward and what — we don't want to be back here in November opening up this conversation again. We really want to know as best we can how we're going to be moving forward here.

And, finally, I want everybody to really think about this is as more of a formula. We need to find balance between what's effective and efficient and what's transparent. This is an equation we've got to strike a balance on. You know, whatever we come up with today may not be everyone's first choice, but we need to figure out what's meaningful and what's doable and what's needed right now as we proceed in terms of what we know and embrace it as we walk out of here. So that's what I wanted to say.

Yeah, so what I'd like to do first — next is to turn it over to our friend, Dan Hubbard, over there, who's our Coast Guard RPB member and also just very conveniently happens to be sort of a FACA lawyer. All right, someone who's had a lot of experience with this, and at first, I'd also like to thank Dan because as we've sought clarity and I've pulled in the Department of Interior, Mid-Atlantic, the NOC, CEQ lawyers, Department of Commerce lawyers to make sure we get this right. Dan has been there to interpret them. Thank you. So, turn it over to you.

Dan Hubbard: Before I get started, I wanted to first say thank you to the RPB, the staff and also the Co-Leads for their patience in preparing for this meeting because I'm kind of burning the candle at both ends right now and appreciate the flexibility there. I also wanted to say thank you to my colleague and shipmate, Michelle, who's been standing the watch while I've been fulfilling my military obligation. That's really been helpful. I also wanted lastly wanted to say thank you to my command at the district legal office for releasing me for this morning to come over here and have this conversation.

If you've never been to a military legal office, it's kind of a mixture between a monastery and a like a Las Vegas casino. It's — no, it's like a monastery in that it's very serious and nobody talks to each other, but it's also like a casino because there's no clocks on the walls and there's almost no windows. So you lose track of your time very easily. So very happy to be here and —

So when we first began this process, our stated purpose included making the process transparent and accessible to the ocean users beyond the table — the RPB table. This goal was initially complicated by the new amalgamation of entities that sat at the table, the respective regulations and processes, and in particular the Federal Advisory Committee Act, since the federal co-lead provides much of the support and leadership funding.

FACA actually called us to question initially our own constitution as a group, but also how to engage stakeholders and bring that input into our process. FACA itself is designed to promote transparency by limiting advisory committees to federal agencies and to ensure that decision points made by the government are made within eyesight and earshot of the public that

they affect. Just as Louis Brandeis once said that sunlight is the best disinfectant and we agree with that, and that is our strategy as we go forward.

Having no line item support establishment of a FACA committee to bring input from the public, and NGOs partners we're being practical as the cost of running a FACA can run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The CMSP handbook directs the regional planning bodies to determine on their own whether or not to establish FACAs. It further directs that the general council for the federal co-lead should serve as a legal servicing officer for legal questions regarding their RPB.

I'm happy to report that the test that we endured for trying to bring stakeholder input did not end with the impediment. The RPBs themselves fall into an exception for the Federal Advisory Committee Act. It's called the unfunded mandated format, or UMRA for purposes of this discussion. UMRA excludes groups from FACA who are comprised entirely of federal, state, local, and tribal representatives who by virtue of their shared mission meet to confer and discuss the administration of federal programs.

The RPB fits squarely into the UMRA exception, both due to its composition and our shared vision of working on the National Ocean Policy. Decisions that are made under the — a group that falls under UMRA have to be made by the RPB members by themselves and also have to be focused on the federal program, which is the National Ocean Policy, but there's more. The RPB, not being subject to FACA, any subcommittee that reports to the RPB is also not subject to FACA because the RPB itself does not sit in the place of a federal agency. It only happens to contain them.

So our strategy and the options, which are available to us going forward, hinge on preservation of the UMRA exception. We can establish committees who report back to the full RPB so long as the decision making process of the regional planning body is vested solely within the membership. So we're going to open up to a discussion about the options, but the analysis that we endured has created the path, and I think today we've got the framework to just — to decide what vehicle we're going to use to go forward. So thank you.

Laura Cantral: And we are — we're glad that you could join us. I would like to note that there are also no windows and no clocks in this room, so apparently, you can't avoid that, but we're really glad that you're here and contributing to this discussion and thanks for your work on this.

So, Betsy, why don't you — yeah, why don't you take the mic again, go through the options and then we'll open it up for discussion before we transition to public comment.

Betsy Nicholson: Okay. All right, so I think the plan is that I'm just going to — everyone pull out your options paper. I'm going to help you walk through it. So we're all —

Laura Cantral: Tab three.

Betsy Nicholson: Tab three. And this was on the web with all the materials for those on the other side of the table, here. I think what we're going to do is walk through both the technical and the stakeholder advisory functions first, and then consider them one at a time. Okay, so, because they marry each other. Make sense and the brilliant legal clarity that Dan just provided us applies to both.

All right, so, in terms of technical advisory function, you can see the intent here is to access experts from government and nongovernment colleagues on a variety of topics, and we have some assumptions here, in terms of the general purpose here being — wanting us to provide appropriate, effective, and efficient means of obtaining technical expertise — and so, and the legal requirements cover just basically mirrored. That's meant to refer back to what Dan just shared with us in terms of complying with UMRA and FACA.

So if you look at page two here, the two options we have for the technical functions are one, is to convene an expert panel, and really what this is — this is reflecting a nimble approach where what we're doing is much like we did yesterday. We're seeking a lot of different individual opinions as topics arise. It's not a standing body option, but rather, one that is strategic in pulling together relevant technical expertise to participate in topical workshops and all kinds of other types of meetings where they would be — these experts — well, all the events would be open to the public and the experts would be contributing to issues deliberated directly by the full RPB. Getting back to what Dan said, it's very important here that nothing is rubber-stamped for the RPB, that there is open and public deliberation and decision around this table.

So really this nimble approach allows for flexibility to involve individuals on particular subjects for expertise as needed to inform our decisions and bring these disciplines together. So, and you can see here yesterday was a perfect example of this where we had a topical workshop with a lot of different folks there, and, you know, at this stage in the game that was really helpful, because we need a very broad discussion.

Pros of this are its nimbleness and ability to plug in expertise into relevant discussions as we evolve this whole conversation and the cons are really that, you know, we've heard — and in some of the public comment we've received — we heard some support for standing up a formal technical advisory body, and this is not that. This is a different model. So that's the con. Okay, so that's option one — our expert panel, our roster of experts that we pull from.

Option two is standing up a technical advisory committee. So this would be a standing body, a subcommittee of this group that would have perhaps a variety of different subject experts that would meet regularly and provide advice on process and products to the RPB for their deliberation. We, the RPB, would be in charge of selecting these committee members,

which would include both government and nongovernment colleagues. It's important, legally actually, to have a government liaison as part of that standing committee that would report — that would help report to this body.

Other — two other points on this option that important to mention is that, again, that the — this kind of technical advisory committee would be presenting preliminary products to the RPB — nothing rubber-stamped, and that that would be deliberated in public and decided upon by this body, and that they wouldn't be — any standing body wouldn't be privy to any documents that aren't already made public. So these are really important legal points that our lawyers have made that would — that are also mirrored in the formal stakeholder option, which is why I took time to go through them.

So the pros of this technical advisory committee are that it creates a standing, you know, formal advisory body to provide us guidance. It institutionalizes the support of our technical direction, and it satisfies some folks that want this. The cons are timing considerations in terms of the time it would take to choose and set up this kind of body. The difficulty in choosing that membership and the lack of flexibility that would allow us in terms of relying on a set group of folks with a certain array of expertise to answer questions as we evolve down this road that would be perhaps constrictive.

So those are the two options for the technical side of things. Let me just keep going and just finish by giving you the two for the stakeholder options. So the stakeholder advisory options — it's a similar approach here, in terms of the one-two punch. The option one being, you know, let's, basically let's continue what we're doing now and adapt it to be even better. Number two is to set up a formal stakeholder advisory council.

But, again, just backing up to some assumptions, here. Like I said in the framing, it's really important that to recognize that there are a lot of ongoing efforts by existing stakeholder groups, here that, you know, Nion (phonetic) is an example, that are outside of this body that help communicate information and gather input and feed that right into all kinds of forums — more formal, like this one and also, workshops and public meetings, etcetera. So those efforts continue, we hope, because they're really important.

What else is different here? And you can see here at the bottom of page three a list of the existing mechanisms of stakeholder input that we have just to remind folks of what we agreed upon in our engagement strategy. So we have the state-specific advisory groups that report via their state members to this body. We've got a lot of project related output — meetings and stakeholder input. We've got rounds of public meetings where we go to far reaches of the region and sit down with citizens and all kinds of folks to talk about where we are. We meet with a lot of individuals, etcetera. So a lot is going on and this really — this option one is reflecting — is staying the course — is taking another look at that engagement strategy and, you know, certainly continuing to be nimble and adaptive, and figuring out, okay,

what needs to be strengthened. What have we invested in that just could operate a little bit more effectively? How can we tweak some of the things we're already doing?

And then option two is really to establish the stakeholder advisory body that would be a subcommittee — a formal subcommittee in a standing body of this regional planning body — and again, similar to the tech — the technical side, we would select the committee members. All of that would be done transparently. It would include government and nongovernment colleagues, a liaison. They wouldn't be privy to anything that wasn't public. They wouldn't be able to rubber-stamp anything but rather share their insights with us that we could deliberate and decide upon.

So pros are that it forms that — the formal advisory body that some folks have expressed a real desire for and that it really does meet a need for some cross state regional discussion. Cons are similar: time and considerations of what it would take to set up that body and restricting ourselves in terms of a set membership that might make it difficult to choose to have people feel that they're actually represented by one person of that in descript. So I'll just stop there. I feel like I've gone on way too long, but I just really wanted these options to be clear to folks so there's — and for the legal guidance to be clear, so we can move forward, and have this discussion and then hear from the public and discuss again and decide how we want to move forward.

Laura Cantral: All right. Great. So we've got a few minutes before we're going to pause for that public comment, and we definitely want to hear your reactions to these options and your opinions. The Co-Leads have given this a lot of thought and consulted the lawyers, have considered the range of options, have factored in public input about this topic that RPB has received and now wants to hear what you all think about it, and if you have ideas for alternatives or hybrid options, we'd ask that you be clear and specific about how you think that would work.

And keep in mind, as Betsy said, that what's important here is, I'm going to use that word, balance again. It's striking the right balance with what's meaningful and also doable and is what's needed for right now, and can be adaptive as the process moves forward. So I think those are all very important things to keep in mind.

So I see several folks have put tents up, so let's just take those comments, and then we'll pause for public comment, and then I think when we come back, let's break it down and talk about the technical advisory function and see if we can settle on that, and then take up the stakeholder one and settle on that.

But now — for now, we'll just sort of have a free-for-all with what's on people's minds. So Grover, let's go to you first.

Grover Fugate: Okay, I'll just start out with saying that our experience from our own ocean planning effort was that in terms of – we had a standing scientific advisory committee and then we had technical advisory groups, and we found the technical advisory groups much more effective in getting input and dealing with the situation. They were flexible. We could pull people in and out as we needed to, and it was a much more productive process for us in terms of getting input.

But having said that, I think – and we also had a standing stakeholder group which was very inclusive. There were over probably 90 groups that were participating in that, and that can get unwieldy at times and that's also a very – concern because my wish for both of these groups or whatever input we receive is that it's effective in helping us make the decision and I think that's sort of the key aspect to this to me.

Having said that, I think the states are sort of in a unique position, and I think the federal government is somewhat a little bit – this is an easier decision for you. And the reason I say that is as a state, I'm faced with a decision of if we have a group, who do I choose and how does that choice get made. And that's a – there are going to be winners and losers in that decision, and I don't want to create that from our process right now because our stakeholder process is, as I said, very inclusive.

The other thing that's present in my mind, and you will continue to hear me say this all the time, is that one major user group, that is their day in and day out on this ocean, is our fishermen. And I would suggest to that there's not a hell of a lot of fishermen in this audience today, and it's very difficult to engage those groups and putting them on a stakeholder group without any financial support or any other capability of having them interface is not going to be a very conducive process to getting their input into this.

The third issue is bandwidth and that is we're already – because of our stakeholder process being very intensive during those planning years, we're already suffering burn out from our stakeholders. They don't want to see necessarily another body or another entity that they're going to have to deal with and contribute to as part of that. So from a state, it becomes a very difficult situation for me to think about standing up another body because of those particular issues. My preference would be is if we could use our existing groups that we already have established and continue to use those. That would be my preference from Rhode Island's point of view, but I think there's some very real issues outside the ones that may have been brought into the paper that, as a state, we tend to face.

Laura Cantral: So I want to acknowledge that we've got lots of people who want to make comments and five minutes before we transition to the public comments. So I've got a queue. We've just heard from Grover. Lorraine, Doug, Glenn, Tom, Meredith, Joe, Katherine, Betsy – did I miss anyone who has a thought for now? So we're not going to get – obviously, we're not going to get you all in in the next five minutes so why don't we just go down this row and take

Joe and Doug, and then we're going to break for public comment. Okay?

Joe Atangan: Grover, first of all, I appreciate the context that you provided there now because I think you bring out some really important points that you highlight feds aren't used to dealing with. Now having said that, though, in looking at the options that are presented before us and the timelines that we have to work with and also mindful of the – of our mandate to be inclusive and considerate of as many of the sectors as we could be, my inclination is to support the option that provides us the most flexibility in engaging the public and getting the technical expertise that we need to arrive at these decisions. While I see the advantages of having a standing technical committee, I believe it's absolutely critical at this point for us and this body to be maximum flexibility, and that maximum flexibility I think enables us to take advantage of some of these standing groups that you mentioned that are existing in the states already.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Doug?

Douglas Grant: Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Doug, you got to talk right into the microphone. We're having trouble with the volume.

Douglas Grant: How's this?

Laura Cantral: That's great. That great in the back? No? That's not great.

Douglas Grant: That's not great. How about this? All right, I'll try and keep my voice up. I am one that feels that it's going to be – it's very important for this group to have a standing technical committee that they can rely on to synthesize the broad amount of information from a technical aspect that is going to be – this body is going to be looking at and trying to develop. We are all policy people here. Some of us may have had, at one point in our past, some technical background, but we need a group that we can rely on that we believe in, that we have selected because of their expertise. It doesn't mean that we – that group may not be relying on some other expertise that are outside of their group to try and bring that information in.

I also am not on the same page as this is going to make things quicker. I think initially, yes, it's going to take things longer to develop this technical advisory group, but in the long run, you will be – have a group that has bought into this, that understands the process, and knows the type of information and a way to help communicate it to this group of policy people here. I think in the long run if we go on what I refer to as option one is ad hoc expertise, every time that you bring in a new group of people, you're going to have to bring them up to speed because they will potentially each time be a different group of people, people that need to be made aware of what this process is and the type of information that we're looking for.

I think I'll just leave it at that at this point. I may want to follow up after some of the public comment. And just I guess my final statement, as far as the stakeholder groups, I could see where we – because of the vast diversity of stakeholder groups in each state where it – although I prefer to have a standing group, it may be difficult to pull that group together as well compared to a technical advisory group which I think we could pull something together that would have a broad range of expertise.

Laura Cantral: All right, thank you. Already have ideas on the table and I've noted those of you who have your own thoughts you want to share, and I suspect others will as well. But let's transition now to public comment, and after we hear from all of our commenters, we'll take a 15-minute break. So those of you who are planning to provide public comment, you will – we'll ask you to keep your remarks to three minutes, and I'm just going to go through the queue of who's signed up in order and then we'll just get you going, coming up to the table, introduce yourself, and share your comments. So folks that we have to hear from this morning are Brent Greenfield, Valerie Nelson, Paul Williamson, Wendy Lull, Beth Casoni, Melinda Gates – Melissa Gates, I'm sorry – Melinda, oh, I hope you brought your checkbook – Priscilla Brooks, Richard Nelson, and Nick Battista. So Brent first.

Public comment

Brent Greenfield: Thank you. Good morning. I'm Brent Greenfield, and the following comments are on behalf of the National Ocean Policy Coalition. I'd first like to address the legal guidance in the options document. While the options document suggests that a formal FACA stakeholder committee is not legally possible, it is important to note that under Section 8 of the National Ocean Policy Executive Order, regional planning bodies are not only not prohibited from establishing a formal stakeholder advisory committee under FACA, but they are specifically authorized to do so.

With the exemption – with the exclusion from participation on the Regional Planning Body itself, the Coalition continues to believe that commercial and recreational user groups should be given a formal role for interacting with and providing guidance to the RPB, including but not limited to the development of a formal advisory committee under FACA. RPB activities should be held to stakeholder processes and standards at least as rigorous as those accorded to statutorily-authorized ocean use planning processes.

As to particular scenarios under consideration, the RPB presents stakeholder advisory separate options to continue with existing stakeholder activities and also to establish a stakeholder advisory board and technical advisory options to convene an expert panel and establish a standing technical advisory committee. Given these options, the RPB should implement all four approaches and such implementation should precede further RPB activity.

As to the board and committee, user groups, the public, and the scientific and other relevant technical committees should be kept fully informed and engaged regarding their establishment, including through open and transparent opportunities to participate in the development and review of their proposed establishment structure and selection processes. Members of both the board and committee should be selected through an open and transparent nomination process. In addition, membership should be balanced and representative of the region's potentially impacted commercial and recreational interests, and the standing technical committee should contain the expertise and diversity of knowledge that is necessary to provide technical guidance and advice on the variety of issues that the RPB decides to address. Broad representation will help address concerns about difficulties in determining membership given the wide potential array of topics that the RPB may seek guidance on. If need be, the RPB could create subcommittees to address specific subjects.

As to impacts on the 2016 activity timeline, as precursors to regulatory activity through the requirement that federal entities implement RPB products to the maximum it can, RPB actions could result in impacts to some of the region's most significant potential economic contributors – existing and potential economic contributors. According to the most recent federal data, the Northeast RPB states generated over \$900 billion in economic output in 2013. It is, thus, vital that RPB decisions not be guided solely by desire to meet certain deadlines.

Finally, board and committee membership, understanding that a liaison may be needed, should be limited to non-government representatives as government officials are already represented on the RPB. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Valerie?

Valerie Nelson: Thank you very much again. I'm Valerie Nelson with the Waterlines and also from Gloucester, and this is actually the third meeting when I've been here to talk so I appreciate the opportunity again and also have gotten to see your process and read your documents.

Laura Cantral: Valerie, you need to speak into the microphone.

Valerie Nelson: Sorry. And in – very broadly I would say I think there's tremendous need and also opportunity to bring more technical and advisors in and stakeholders probably through a more flexible, fluid system. But I did write something down to try to capture what I, as – from a community and another resource, feel – would say that to me has been breathtaking. And that is that this effort is the most significant natural resource effort with such a potential for radical transformation in management of that effort, guided by so few people, resting on such a simplistic intellectual and policy foundation. And I think the first time I was here, I said that as well.

But it's actually kind of easy to trace a couple of ideas here that have come in from a

couple of groups. [Inaudible] we need wind. We need marine protected areas. And those drive – regardless of all the mapping exercises, there are those couple of ideas, well, we need that. And by the way, other uses are coming at us so let's get going on mapping and effective decision making, whatever. But the other thing is I'm so struck – I don't know whether it's 30 or 40, but this is like an interlocking directorate. Whether it's Laurel who's on the Joint Ocean Commission who's down at the Coastal Week or Darren who's down in D.C. and then back on Sea Plan, if you wrote a list of how few people have been running this project for the last few years, it's not many.

So you take that combination of simple ideas with simple politics with a few people running this radical movement that you're about, I think yesterday was informative. I think you got a taste of how much to benefit there is to opening up to more people, more experts, and seeing where those ideas that they bring to the table will take you. I would say whatever group you set up, do not include a single person who has been involved to date. You've heard from them. They've participated. They will stay in Sea Plan. They will stay in NEOAN. Every person you appoint to this effort must be new, must be out of a different field, a different public, a different community.

What I observed is you're starting to get some big ideas. Go for people who know about landscapes, who know about adaptive management, who know about climate change, what I brought yesterday about tradeoff analysis, who know about economics. Bring in young people. Bring in community people. Government is getting so isolated, it's one of the least-trusted institutions in society. Bring in small businesses. Bring in the churches. Bring in only new experts and new people. They don't have to know about oceans. Like we heard about landscape work, that is where you will find the responses to the challenges that Grover, all – what's coming at us and how are we going to manage this ecosystem for nature and preservation and for the humans, the fisherman, the communities, and the public more generally, sustainably. You do not have the intellectual foundation to grapple with that. You do not have the people at this table yet.

So going forward, only newcomers. Reach out as broadly to the greatest of intellects and work that you can find and probably don't form a group that then itself forms group think. You have a system like 2(c) (phonetic) tradeoff. If you get your own group on that, reach out to people who know something about tradeoff analysis. Bring them in. If you're looking at ecological places and landscapes, bring those people in. So a simple rule: don't include any expert or stakeholder that has been included to date.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Paul?

Paul Williamson: Pass at this time.

Laura Cantral: Okay. Wendy?

Wendy Lull: Good morning. My name is Wendy Lull. I'm the president of the Seacoast Science Center and very proud to say that the Science Center is the first New Hampshire member of NEOAN, the New England Ocean Action Network. And at the Science Center, some of you know, it's nice to be back here, that we are a non-profit marine science education system, and ocean education is what we do so everyone understands the importance of a healthy ocean which is one of the reasons that we are participating in NEOAN and I enjoy coming to these meetings a great deal.

Because we are members of NEOAN and NEOAN has recommended a structure, I would say that for the larger part of that, I would be here to say that I support that, but I'd like to sort of go off that for just a moment to address some of the things that I experienced today because every time I come to these meetings, I learn something new and am impressed with the works that you all do. Certainly, I support the fact that you guys are already using words like dynamic plan and recognize the need to be responsive because, as we have new information from the research, it has to be included in the plan. And I also understand that the – am impressed with the amount of transparency that has gone on with this process so far.

But there's another word that I'd like to suggest, and that is accessibility. In New Hampshire, a small coastline, I know, but we have a very intense and passionate group of people who care about our oceans, and we've had a number of meetings. And at the Seacoast Science Center, we've screened the Ocean Frontier's one and two films and have had quite a large group of people who have come to see those films that are about this planning process. And what struck me every time is that people were really interested, and we all know that there are very few people who get up in the morning and say, oh, boy, I want to go do some ocean planning. They're very important. I know, it's a shocking kind of thing. I go to my staff, "Where are you going?" "I'm going to go sit in a room for three hours and talk about spatial planning." It's not very exciting. And yet, it's important work and people are really interested.

So I don't — I'm not a structural expert. I know there are a lot of plans here and we've talked about all the things like making sure you have experts, new voices. I think it's important whatever structure you have, you have a little window of accessibility for people who just want to learn and know. I have said many times when I come here that the Science Center is also a member of NEOSEC which is a group of 40 institutions ranging in size from the New England Aquarium to some very small ocean education institutions, and we all have access to the public. So ways that can be a little more accessible and exciting and interesting than a webinar would go a long way for us to be able to sort of solve a shared problem which is how do you get all of this information out to the public and how do you, as a receptive planning body, get feedback from such a large and diverse audience. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Okay. Beth?

Beth Casoni: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Beth

Casoni, and I'm the associate director for the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association and we're a not-for-profit organization that represents the commercial lobstermen. But that being said, we also have small boats, 24-foot to a hundred-foot vessels, inshore and offshore, and we have members from Maine to Cape May, New Jersey. So we have a diverse demographic of fisheries. We represent gilnetters (phonetic), long liners, charter boats. So it's not predominantly – it's predominantly lobster in Massachusetts.

But that being said I commend your efforts to streamline the data that's out there. It's daunting. I've been with the organization for eight years, and I've never attended so many meetings. And I agree with Grover, there's no fishermen here today. There's one fishermen. They're all working. So all the decisions that are being made today will affect not just the fishermen but the shoreside businesses that they support. And I don't want people to lose sight of these are small business owners, and they support communities. So everything that's going to impact them on the waters will impact the businesses that they go shop at, their marinas, their communities. So that's that.

And the data, the data information, there are gaps in the data between different states because each state has different reporting measures in place. So that's something to be considered. It was alluded to yesterday that the data going to be used for, I'm going to say lobster just because that's predominantly what we represent, is going to be used from trial surveys. And I had the privilege of going out on the Gloria Michelle last year – two years ago, and the timing that these trial surveys are done are times when the lobsters aren't there. And other species from what I've been told from other fishermen, summer flounder, winter flounder. So when looking at the data that's being used, a broader array of data should be sought. There's the ventless trap surveys. There's NGOs that have data sets, the Lobster Institute at the University of Maine, the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation, the Massachusetts Lobster Foundation, Gulf of Maine Research. So there's other entities that should be considered in the data collection.

And also use the industry, the fishermen, surveys. I mean, is that scientific data? Probably not but include them. That's where – they feel that there's another layer, there's another arm that's going to come down and regulate somehow indirectly what they do for a living on the waters. And for what betterment? For green energy. For sand restoration to beaches. And they seem to feel like they're at the bottom of the food chain.

And then there was a comment yesterday or something was brought up about the anticipated – this is to set a benchmark on species for the ocean's health. So I look at that and I say a benchmark on species, is this going to create another need for another assessment on species that are being harvested from the ocean? And if that's so, who's going to govern that or is it just going to be something that is going to be a benchmark where you set a maximum threshold that you can extract from the oceans. So that was just a concern that I saw from yesterday.

And then on option two, the stakeholders and advisory committee, I support that option because why not bring in the industry people who know what's going on out there and utilize the NGOs that are currently involved in that process. That's it. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Melissa?

Melissa Gates: Hello. I'm Melissa. I'm sorry I don't have the bank account that Melinda has, but I'll try to offer some contributions of value. I'm the Northeast regional coordinator with Surfrider Foundation which is an environmental non-profit dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves, and beaches through a powerful activist network. Surfrider's northeast network is robust. We have one chapter in each coastal state. Surfriders are a user group comprised of people who enjoy low-impact, non-consumptive coastal and ocean recreation activities of any sort such as swimming, surfing, diving, and sailing. And Surfriders act to protect what we love: the ocean, waves, and beaches.

I want to take a moment today to express gratitude for the immense amount of time and energy that everyone in this room invests to form our regional ocean plan. Surfrider is appreciative to share in this visionary community with all of you.

With regard to state advisory boards, Surfrider acknowledges the opportunity for state-based stakeholder dialogue in such advisory boards, and they can and do provide great opportunities for stakeholder dialogue. And we appreciate that some of the RPB members are seeking advice from ocean users to help inform their participation in regional ocean planning. However, we would urge all RPB members to follow the inclusiveness and accessibility guidelines set forth by the National Ocean Council which call for the inclusion of the full range of interests in ocean planning. Many state advisory groups formed to date are heavily lacking in non-consumptive ocean and coastal recreation interests. We urge all state RPB members to find a way to formally include a wide swath of interests from across the spectrum of ocean stakeholders, including formal representation for non-consumptive ocean recreation users.

Maine's RPB members have set a great example to follow in communicating regularly with their state advisory body, setting clear expectations, goals, and objectives for meetings, and then incorporating stakeholder feedback into their participation in the RPB. The Maine RPB members have also opened participation in their advisory board beyond their original invite list to be more inclusive of all ocean users in the state. Surfrider applauds the Maine RPB members in this effort to be inclusive and to make decisions informed by ocean users in their state. We hope to see all RPB members incorporating these principles into any ongoing local advisory boards or [inaudible] regional ocean planning, and we'd like to see the state advisory boards continue conditionally if they are feasible to orchestrate alongside formal regional advisory boards and if they formally recognize recreational interests.

With regard to technical and stakeholder advisory options and recognizing the vital importance of comprehensive, regionally crosscutting, ongoing stakeholder involvement in the successful development of an ocean plan, Surfrider recommends a hybrid approach to the proposed advisory options which we feel would provide the widest level of participation to help inform ocean planning without limiting expertise to scientists or to a select few individuals or organizations in our region. We'd like two formal advisory boards to be formed, a technical advisory committee and a stakeholder advisory board, with ad hoc components such as the panels and the public workshops like we saw yesterday and got to work through.

The establishment of formal technical and stakeholder bodies would provide ongoing guidance to the RPB while also establishing a formal mechanism for regional stakeholder dialogue. This is a vital function that would build trust and understanding and could help us avoid serious conflicts down the road. Given that multiple topics need to be addressed in a limited timeframe, Surfrider recommends that the advisory bodies could convene expert panels on specific topics as needed in order to create an information base that the RPB could use at its discretion.

Thanks for considering our feedback on these advisory options and for your commitment to remaining nimble and adaptive. And I'd also like to end with just saying — wondering why we're not convening a workshop to discuss this because I feel like maybe the best option would be having stakeholders and RPB members engaging in open dialogue about this rather than having you all discuss and then having us provide comment and then you all discussing again. Thanks.

Laura Cantral: Priscilla?

Priscilla Brooks: Good morning, everyone. My name's Priscilla Brooks, and I'm the director of ocean conservation at Conservation Law Foundation. Thank you for this opportunity to comment. I want to call your attention to the New England Ocean Action Network letter dated June 18 and also NEOAN submitted a letter in June 2013 with comprehensive recommendations on stakeholder and technical advisory committees. And these letters were signed by a long list of individuals and organizations throughout New England.

So I'm going to touch on – CLF shares those recommendations and so I'm just going to touch on those this morning. First off, comprehensive, ongoing, formal, and meaningful stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of the regional planning process. With respect to a technical advisory function, we don't think it's an either/or option. We recommend a hybrid option and we recommend the hybrid option with respect to the stakeholder advisory body as well. CLF recommends that the RPB immediately establish a standing technical advisory committee as a subcommittee consisting of scientists from academia, government, and other entities across New England, and that would include individuals or representatives of other organizations that have particular expertise.

And again, I think that Doug Grout sort of underscored how important it is to have continuity in the technical expertise, a group that can respond to the various different products all along the way of the process. This would not supplant the need to create working groups on specific issues, to convene – to be nimble and convene ad hoc groups to advise on specific issues, but having a formal, consistent, ongoing body that can provide advice to the RPB on an ongoing basis is critical.

Secondly, with respect to a stakeholder advisory body, again, we recommend a hybrid approach, and again, we think the RPB should immediately establish a stakeholder advisory body as a subcommittee. The – and the representation on that body would range from traditional current and nation ocean user groups as well as other interests. The stakeholder advisory body would inform the ocean planning process all along the way and provide for an ongoing cross sector and regional dialogue which is critical.

Now, the stakeholder advisory body would not supplant the state advisory bodies. The state advisory bodies are important, but they would – it would be in addition to the state advisory bodies and any other kind of gathering of stakeholders to address different issues along the way. So to that end, we think that it's important that the RPB continue projects, specific outreach, and stakeholder input, periodic public meetings and workshops, project-specific public meetings, and meetings with individuals. Again, we're calling for a hybrid approach. We think you need to do all of the above basically. And importantly, the stakeholder body would provide, again, continuity in stakeholder input all along the way, and I think this is critical. And it would also provide a formality to stakeholder input that we really don't have now.

Finally, Grover mentioned the Rhode Island experience. I want to call your attention to the Massachusetts experience which did all of the above. Massachusetts had a formal technical committee as well as a formal stakeholder advisory body in addition to every kind of stakeholder outreach that you could possibly imagine all along the way, and I think the results were very successful. So thank you.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Richard?

Richard Nelson: Hi, I'm Richard Nelson, and I'm a lobster fisherman from Friendship, Maine. I'm also a long-standing member of NEOAN and a great supporter of their activities and also support the comments we sent in and my fellow members of NEOAN that have already spoken here.

As far as being a lobster fisherman, it's interesting Wendy Lull just mentioned something about the fact that nobody takes this as something very interesting, the ocean planning. I kind of have a different opinion of that. I'm very intrigued by it, and it follows very closely if I look back and say what do I do as a fisherman. There are mornings that I get up

early, four o'clock, whatever, pour a cup of coffee, sit in front of my computer, bring up a chart, especially this time of year. I may already have 60 traps on my boat ready to set, and we're going to start out the season. This is a shedder season. But I need a direction. I have to have a plan. And you start taking in input, what happened the last few years, the history of my fishing, what's going on, what input has come from this winter's climate conditions, and the temperatures, and things, what's going on, what reports have I heard from other people. All these things get factored in and you're looking at these charts and you're making a plan. It's just – that's exactly what you're doing. And I think there's something highly intriguing about it, and I think we all share a little bit – at least, well, some of us, share a little bit of that.

There are people, though, still in New England that are very clueless about what's going on here, and certainly Betsy made a very concise little summary of what's going on at the beginning of our meeting today and it gave a little history and all that. But there are still people in little communities in Maine that rely heavily on the ocean that are still clueless of what's going on, and if you do mention the fact, as she did, perhaps some of the newer aspects of it of opening up wind areas to leasing to engaging in sand exploration, they would be immediately fearful of what these things mean to them.

So I'd like to – I know the discussion here is about stakeholder and advisory things, but we have to know where we're coming from and what's going on in our background here. And our background is that some of these major elements of these things are still – because of the timing of this process are still looked at, if not in reality, but they're looked at being top-down inspired things. These things came from BOEM. These things came from various directions. They did not come from little communities in Downeast Maine or Midcoast Maine. They did not come from that population.

So, therefore, that is the outlook of where we start. So we have to – unless we engage those people, those people who are reliant, so heavily reliant – we talked yesterday, let's say, of things of economic assessments and tradeoffs and things like that. Let's look back for a minute. We have an island of basically fishermen, fishermen's families, and their teachers and their people who service them and things like that. What happens to these people if they make a tradeoff against a certain aspect of that fishing economy? Now that's going to wipe out that entire community, that entire island, and I know that I probably sound like a broken record. At every one of these meetings, I come and say that same thing, but it seems to be necessary because what's gone on before hasn't changed. We haven't changed our goals and we haven't changed the process of how we're doing things.

We've had the White House recently announce – made announcements of these timelines, that we here in New England and the Mid-Atlantic are going to produce these products, and it's almost as if they were already produced and already signed, sealed, and delivered, by 2016. But I still question what is the most important thing is putting out these products that we seem hell bent on putting out or else establishing a true process of which I

look back at the national ocean policy and think that this is what was called for and was the process of true stakeholder engagement, of true bottom-up assistance in creating these goals and these plans right from the start, and we've left some of that behind. We're on our fourth meeting here. We've already set up all these goals, and we still have yet to set up the stakeholder process. So I just think we need to do that.

And I appreciate all the efforts of this — that John Weber and people have made in the sort of informal aspects of the engagement process now, but I think we have to — since this is such a formal group, we have to formalize that process also somehow because if it's based on individuals, let's say the individual and his talents or the individual and his time, what happens if that individual leaves or something? It's just not good business sense. We've got to base it on something — written process somehow.

And the only other thing is I think Paul Williamson brought up the fact that we could use a stakeholder group for a user-group-to-user-group interchange or — in other words, he almost had the idea of put the user groups up on this table and move you guys to the audience and let them discuss what's going on out there and where the tradeoffs could be made or where the exchanges could be made and — in other words, you guys do the listening for a while and listen to the — to turn some of that discussion and decision making over to the user groups themselves. I guess that's enough for now. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Nick and then, Sally McGee, I didn't call your name out, but I think you wanted to comment as well so you'll be after Nick.

Nick Battista: Good morning, thank you. Nick Battista with the Island Institute in Rockland, Maine. We're a community development organization that works to sustain Maine's island and coastal communities. I wish I could have heard a little bit more discussion about Grover's comments and the who's in/who's out and how does it work with the state advisory groups, how would a stakeholder advisory board work with them. I think that was going down a really interesting direction and would just have loved to have heard other people weigh in on that before commenting.

I think I support a hybrid stakeholder advisory board. I think it'll be an easier way for those of us in the audience to follow and track this process. You guys are doing a lot of really good work, really interesting things, but there's a lot going on and it's only going to get more so as we go forward. A process — a group that is meeting more regularly or more substantive. There will be agendas, there would be notes, there would be information coming out of that process that would help me track it. It would help me figure out how to weigh in and give you a piece of information that maybe I have. Maybe I know something about the — how to — or thoughts on how to characterize the lobster fishery. Right now, I can talk to John about that because I know he's thinking about it, I know you guys are thinking about it, but maybe there's something in the recreational fishing work that Sea Plan's doing that I have a piece of

knowledge about. Knowing that you are doing that and going down those various paths with all the different information pieces of information that you're dealing with would be really helpful to have one collected place to be looking at that. The infrequent meetings and email updates are just – the timing's too short to get into the substance of some of these issues.

One of the questions I have is whether you would look at a stakeholder advisory body as a place to get advice about the substance of some of the issues that you're trying to grapple with. Is it a place to provide updates about the process and what you're doing and where the state of each project is or is it a place to get advice on various tools or strategies for engaging specific industries? Is it a place where you can ask a group of people to think through how do we engage fishermen, how do we get more fishermen involved in this process? I think answering those questions is important because that's a different group of people in each situation.

So in closing, I just think it's important to be clear about what you would be asking an advisory board to do, what decisions you are going to be making based on that advice, how they fit in with the state groups, and how it can those of us sitting in the audience who want to contribute and participate in the process contribute substantive information.

Laura Cantral: Sally?

Sally McGee: Good morning. Thanks for adding me to the list. My name's Sally McGee. I'm –

Laura Cantral: You need to speak in the mic, Sally. Just get it right in front of you.

Ms. McGee: Thank you. How's that?

Laura Cantral: (Inaudible).

Ms. McGee: Okay. My name's Sally McGee. I'm the northeast marine program director for the Nature Conservancy. Two things. First, I wanted to mention two projects that are ongoing that the Nature Conservancy is engaged in. One is with the University of Massachusetts School of Marine Science and Technology. It's essentially a data mining project looking at the scallop video survey that took place over the course of more than ten years and looking at a number of species and habitat types that were observed in that video survey. So that is ongoing and we'll also be incorporating oceanographic variables as well in the analysis. And so I wanted to make sure that the RPB is aware of that and that it's ongoing, and we're most interested in making sure that the end results, maps and other outputs from that project, are useful to you.

The other is with the Science Center, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, with Mike Fogarty that he mentioned yesterday. Likewise, we're very interested in making sure that we get feedback from you to ensure that the final products are of use.

Which gets to the point about both your technical advisory committee and stakeholder advisory committee and your consideration of how to put those together. The Northeast Ocean Action Network letter made some good points, had some great ideas and guidance about how to incorporate technical and stakeholder input. The technical advisory committee, I think absolutely you need a standing committee, and to have expert panels on an ad hoc basis will be a useful way to supplement and probably expedite the work of the technical advisory committee because you don't need everybody for everything for every specific project, but you do want to make sure you have the kind of technical advice that you need. So having more focused expert panels would be a good way to do that.

As far as a stakeholder advisory committee, I'd agree with a number of the previous speakers that, yes, that's a very important means for formal input for stakeholders. Also, I'd say that project-specific outreach on the part of the RPB to get input from a variety of stakeholders is something that is going to be important ongoing, especially in your efforts to ensure that a broad geography of stakeholders is included and provided with opportunities for input. And ways that you can do that would be to hold meetings in conjunction with events and activities that draw the stakeholders that are important to this process, especially those that may not be in this room and may not have been participating previously and that we all wish were here and participating. Go to them rather than having them necessarily need to come to you. Thank you.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Thanks to everyone for your comments. We will have another public comment session at 3:30 this afternoon, and just as a reminder, if you would sign up by about 2:45, that would be really helpful, and we look forward to hearing from folks during that session. Another request that we have is if you – we're about to take a break and during that break, if you didn't register for this day, for this meeting, if you wouldn't mind just signing up out at the front desk. We want to know who was here today, and you may have signed up for yesterday and thought that you'd done everything you needed to do for both days, but we actually have a different list for each day. So if you would help us out by making sure that your name is on the list for today and that we know that you were here and can document that. So we will take a break now and come back and resume the discussion about this important topic. So let's come back at 11:30. Thank you.

BREAK

Technical and stakeholder advisory options: identify next steps

Laura Cantral: All right, so let's pick up where this group left off, informed by the public comment. Before we go into the discussion, I'd like to welcome Jonathan Perry who has joined us at the table. Jonathan, would you like to say hello. Okay, speak into the microphone, Jonathan.

Jonathan Perry: [Comments in a foreign language.]

Laura Cantral: Great. Welcome. So I had kept the queue – the list of people who had comments that they wanted to make before we took the break from – for public comment. So shall I just go – Grover is on the list now. He had made a comment. No, he made a comment before we broke, yeah, and now he's got another one. But let's go with – let's start – let's pick up with Lorraine.

Lorraine Wakeman: The Department of Transportation has such a wide variety of stakeholders. I mean, even within my own administration, maritime administration, we have a wide variety, and therefore, we would prefer the more flexible approach. Even within our stakeholder groups, we have differences of opinions. They don't always agree with each other so having one representative for all of maritime commerce or all labor groups would be difficult for us.

Laura Cantral: So Glenn, you were on my list from last time. Do you have a comment?

Glenn Normandeau: I guess my comments, to some extent – I think that the idea that we can have a body that has a representative from every interest, I just – I don't see the resources there to backup that type of situation. I do think there's skepticism still publicly about this process, that there's a feeling out there that we're actually doing ocean zoning and that if every single individual has a stake in it, isn't directly involved, that they won't be represented as opposed to what I see this as, as tool development so that when individual projects and what not come up on the scope, we have some things to work with to look at what's going on in that area.

I understand the skepticism. I'm in state government now, but I have worked on and own commercial fishing boats. I've spent five years working on oil tankers. I've been a water rat my whole life. My house is 50 feet from the ocean front in New Hampshire. So I get it. At the same time, we have a limited operation here, for lack of a better word, and I'm just not sure it can accommodate an enormous expansion, and at least in the state of New Hampshire where we are very accessible to the public, the state agencies are, and I really think that our folks there can be heard and listened to in the settings that we have available to us, and I think they are heard. And that's my comment for now.

Laura Cantral: All right, thank you. Tom?

Thomas Burack: Thank you, and I wonder if I could start my comments really with a question or set of questions to Betsy. And Betsy, I'm sorry, I'm going to put you on the spot here a little bit, but in your five points up front, you spoke about practicalities. And one of those that you mentioned was funding or budget as well as just staff resources. And I think there's just a – you say a very practical issue that we've got to address here, and rather than our dealing in generalities, it'd be helpful to have some specifics. That is, what do we actually have available for resources under current budget assuming we don't get any additional funding to actually be able to support outreach kinds and engagement kinds of functions, again, both from a dollar

standpoint and a staff timing standpoint? Because I think we just need to understand what's in the checkbook. Okay, so if you could start from there, then I may have some comments to build on that

Betsy Nicholson: All right. Rather than me speculate, even though I do manage some of those NOAA grants that contribute to our engagement funds, John, can you help just break it down? I think you're closer to it.

John Weber: So the biggest existing pot that we have I think, particularly in terms of money and time, is staff for this. To – and –

Glenn Normandeau: Can you get a little closer to the mic?

John Weber: Yeah, I'm sorry. So biggest particular – the biggest specific pot that we have available to us that is right now not allocated towards some other aspect of engagement – and as a reminder, engagement occurs throughout a lot of projects so I don't want to make light of that. But I think what your question is really getting at is to do something new, what do we have, what's the check account look like. And the check account looks like Katie, Nick, and myself. For Nick and I, we're working on making that picture on that checking account look prettier.

In terms of additional availability of resources that are unallocated, we certainly could look at that. We would run – in order to pull off formal meetings such as this or even a workshop such as yesterday, that's not an insignificant cost relatively speaking. And so I don't know exactly what that number is, but usually for something like yesterday we figure on something like – without staff time, just the facility and all that good stuff, 10 to 15K, 10 to 15 thousand?

Unidentified: It's more like 35K, I think, for RPB meetings.

John Weber: But if you include staff time and the logistics and the time to prepare for all of that – all I'm talking about is just the facility costs and you have to budget into that. And so as staff, we would have to take that – certainly as we're listening to this, we're taking that into account because ultimately it falls on responsibility to manage a lot of that very specific work. Does that – Tom, does that answer your question in enough detail or can I provide more?

Thomas Burack: Well, it may be helpful for us to provide more. Again, I'm just trying to understand do we have the capacity, with all the other work that we have planned to do, to run any additional meetings of this scale, for example, within a given year. That's really what I'm trying to understand because I'm going to guess that whether we're – as some kind of a formal stakeholder group or a science advisory type group, that we're probably talking something on roughly this scale. Maybe I'm mistaken about that. Maybe things can be done in a smaller,

simpler way, but I'm trying to understand what's – given the other things we're already committed to doing and the resources we have, how much more of this could we take on?

John Weber: So through the rest of this year, we have, as you've heard – seen Grover talk about timelines and things like that, that's all budgeted for. We wouldn't put that. There's also another aspect of this which is beyond 2014 which we would want to think about, and that is much more of a question which, right now, I don't know what those resources would be after this calendar year. We would have to find additional resources beyond what we have now.

Thomas Burack: All right, I think I understand what I've heard which – tell me if I've got this right. What I think I've heard is that for 2014, for us to take on additional meetings of this scale, we'd have to essentially take other work off the plate that's currently planned in order to be able to take on additional things. And likewise, for next year as well there may be work that we had currently had planned to do but we wouldn't be able to do if we were to take on meetings similar to this but either for stakeholders or at the scientific or technical level. Is that a fair summary?

John Weber: It is, and I would also add that beyond this calendar year, we would be seeking additional money, funding beyond just staff time. So the first part of what you said is absolutely true. Staff would have to look at reallocating and re-thinking about where we put our efforts. And then beyond that, we also have the additional issue of finding additional funding to hold meetings such as this.

Thomas Burack: Thank you, that's helpful. I'm not quite sure where that leaves us other than to know that the ask that we have or that we're considering clearly would put huge strains on us. I've always been all about inclusiveness and engagement and trying to build consensus among diverse interests, and so my gut always is to seek ways to try to engage as many folks as possible in a process. But what I've just heard certainly gives me real concern that in this particular instance we don't have, at least at this moment, a whole lot of flexibility in that way. And I really think form has to follow function here.

I'm also struck by the fact, and discussed this with Sherry and others, that we have huge communication challenges just among all of us. We use different acronyms even just – there was the TLA earlier, and TLA is a three-letter acronym, earlier of an EBM. And Sherry turned to me and said sort of what's that, and I said, well, that's evidence based management of course only to find out that isn't what was meant, it was ecosystem based management. So just we have a lot of challenges just understanding each other, but that communications challenge I think is one that's going to be there regardless of what we do.

I also hear and agree with Glenn that there may be a lot of fear on the part of groups that they're going to be left out of something. I don't think that's at all the case here. I think that we have really been working very hard, as I think was amply illustrated by the listening session we

just held, to hear people's thoughts and ideas. So I'm all for as much engagement as we can afford, but I'm not a firm believer in process for process sake, and I think what we're hearing is that without really doing a significant restructuring of our budget, we don't have the ability to bring in additional fora for stakeholder engagement.

So I guess what I would ask is whether there are some things that we could do to modify how we work now that wouldn't necessarily cost us any or much significant resources but still a way for us really to engage our stakeholders. And maybe we should look at the format of these meetings and doing, as I think it may have been Richard suggested, flipping things around from time to time and we all sit in the audience as a group and we listen to a group of stakeholders talk about some particular issues and how they might approach it. I know there's also been talk about whether or not we could encourage the existing stakeholder groups from various states to get together periodically and share thoughts and ideas that they might then bring back to us. And if there's a way to do that at little or no cost to us, that certainly would be viable. Be a challenge for a state like New Hampshire that doesn't actually have a formal group, but we could certainly encourage volunteers to go and participate in that kind of conversation.

But I think there are ways for us to accomplish what we want to accomplish without having to figure out a way to completely re-do our overall work strategy and budget year in order to be able to secure the kinds of input we want. May be a little bit different on the technical side. Doug's comments I think are important to really consider and understand further. That is, truly what do we think we need to do. That is, do we really need to have the ability to be able to synthesize technical data in order to be able to formulate the work products that we're developing or is that not a necessity that we're going to have. And I think in my mind that would drive whether we need some kind of formal science advisory group. So let me stop there and hear others' thoughts.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Meredith?

Meredith Mendelson: Thank you. Gosh, I've got a lot of thoughts. I'll try to be quick. John, can I just clarify? Were you saying that the proposed options to develop standing groups you think are challenging to be feasible from a financial and staffing perspective?

John Weber: They would require us to reallocate time expenses.

Meredith Mendelson: Okay. So just a couple things. First, I guess I think I've had some hesitation as well about the value of a regional stakeholder body all along from the standpoint of the ability to really get a representative sample from across the region. But I think to some degree, we have to be cognizant of the fact that we've heard over and over consistently from our audience members, many of whom have been here over and over again saying this to us, that they really want a regional approach and that the state-by-state has not been satisfactory to them.

So I think to some degree we have to figure out a way to be responsive to that and, to Grover's point, to try to seek out some of those members of our audience and constituency who are not present in this room. I think we need to – if we really want to sort of pass the straight face test here, we have to go out in search of those people and bring them into the room. To me, the reason for doing that is that the risk of not doing that is that we lose buy in from the people who are here, and I don't know that I think we can afford to do that in this process if we really want to be effective in our broader goals. So to me, we can deny that, but at the end of the day, I'm not sure that it actually advances anything further. So to that end, I hope that we can come up with some ways, maybe over lunch we can talk a little bit more about how to do more with less. That's what everyone is doing these days, and I'm sure we all have lots of practice at it that we can bring to that discussion.

One last thing that I wanted to put out before the break, the Maine advisors group had a call a couple of weeks ago to talk about these proposals, and the feedback that we got from that group was that they also very much wanted a standing group of advisors but they really wanted a hybrid that I hadn't heard talked about yet which is a hybrid of both stakeholder and technical expertise in the same group. And I think part of the reasoning there is that distinguishing between them might be somewhat arbitrary. I mean, we maybe traditionally see the technical expertise as being scientists, but if we have questions about the nature of something happening in the fisheries, they're not, perhaps, the best experts or the only experts at the table. So there may be crossover there. And then using that unified group to draw ad hoc expertise as a subgroups, again, across the scientific and less traditional expertise. So just putting that out there as a suggestion from the Maine advisors.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. Kathryn?

Kathryn Ford: Yeah, echoing a couple of things that Meredith said. I was thinking of passing actually. I liked her point especially of the buy in. We don't know what's going to happen to this whole process. It sounds like, John, even starting in January of 2015 we're not sure what the funding situation is, let alone when we're supposed to be done with our timeline at the end of 2016. And I think it's really important that we prove that this process is meaningful by that 2016 date, and I don't think we can do that without that buy in.

However, having participated in a lot of these ocean planning discussions over the last few years, I'm very aware of Grover's concern about fatigue and how do we actually structure this with existing resources, can we create a mechanism where the stakeholder group is a formal advisory body but completely self-organized or something like that.

Laura Cantral: Mel?

Mel Cote: Thank you. Some really good thoughts I think being expressed by the last few speakers, and I think there probably are some hybrid options that we may want to look at

pursuing. And just recognizing, though, that the resources are a major constraint, this is a very well – relatively, in all the things I'm involved with, extremely well-resourced effort. Most of the meetings I go to are in free meeting space, staffed by my own people or interns. And for our part as an agency, we're willing to contribute to trying to do these things as inexpensively as possible by providing meeting space, by providing some staff or intern support to help carry these activities through. So I liked a lot of what Meredith and Kathryn and Tom just said, and I would echo their concerns as well as their thoughts about how we may be able to find some hybrid approach to meeting all of our needs.

Laura Cantral: Grover?

Grover Fugate: I guess with old age, the filters come down and I'm going to be blunt and honest about this one. We have an existing user group with about 80 groups on it. We have the tribe. We have the [inaudible] organization with a lot of industry groups on it. We have cities and towns from all the coastal communities, and each one of those is very different and what they bring to the table is very different. We have fishermen groups, and we'll have anywhere from 10 to 20, maybe even 30 different industry sectors there. We will have recreational users that include the diving community, the recreational fishing community, bird watchers, whale watchers, you name it. We have scientific and policy people sitting at that group. We have NGOs so we have Audubon, TNC, CLF, Save the Day, Surfrider and others. We have state and federal agencies there. And their meetings are open to the public, and given the fact that we will often have a hundred or more people there, there's obviously public components to that that come in just out of their own interest and they're treated equally as any other stakeholder.

Given that, I would challenge anybody here to tell me which one isn't more important than the other. Each of these have brought something to the table in these discussions. Given that, the practicality of the situation is if I've got a local stakeholder group that is telling me one thing and I've got a standing stakeholder group that's telling me another, I'm going with the local stakeholder group every time. The same with the technical groups. If I have an aquaculture group that's telling me one thing and I've got a standing scientific committee that's telling me the other, I'm listening to the experts that work in that field day in and day out.

So it begs the question what is the value, and I would challenge each of the state people because they're probably in the same situation that I am. We have to be responsive to our local audience, and they are important to us and they represent a much wider range of constituencies that is likely to be at a standing group. So I question the time and energy that we're going to spend in this, what the ultimate value of that is going to be in this process, particularly – and I'm just being – with no disrespect to any of the people out there and what they have to offer. I do value their opinions. It's obvious that this is a very difficult and important decision because we've spent four meetings on this topic. It is not an easy one, but I'm just being honest about this situation, that when it comes down between the two, I'm going with my local people every time.

Laura Cantral: Katie?

Katie Lund: Just a few observations to offer based on public comment we've gotten and also RPB member input related to the technical aspect of this. I think – and Kathleen I think is an RPB member who is not here today, and she has raised this as a topic or an interest and that, with the work groups and the technical experts that we are engaging and informing, one of the actions that we can take to improve transparency is, on the website at the very least, to identify who those people are so that it is a transparent process. Nick mentioned that's a very important next step coming out of these – the workshop yesterday. And so I think that's a take home that we can do to follow up on your idea, Meredith, what can we do coming out of these discussions as action items, and I think that we've heard that from the public and from RPB members on this topic.

The other is just a point of clarification that when we put the options paper together both with your input and [inaudible] discussions, we did broaden it from being a science advisory to technical advisory, and so that's just a point of clarify that, by broadening it, we are thinking more inclusively beyond scientists as part of this process. And they could be process experts, they could be regulatory experts that can be broader, that, in the fall, we're going to be having a regulatory workshop similar to yesterday's natural resource workshop. So that technical advisory function was broader than just a science advisory function, and I just wanted to make that point in drafting this options paper.

So a reminder in the fall, back to Grover's overview of the timeline, from the stakeholder perspective, we have the public meetings that we've talked about doing throughout each of the states, we have another workshop that we're talking about doing before the November meeting, and quite possibly and most probably, state advisory meetings that might be happening too. So from a stakeholder perspective, I think just as a RPB members, to keep that in mind, and going back to that timeline this morning, these are things that are going to be immediately happening between now and the November meeting.

Laura Cantral: Betsy?

Betsy Nicholson: All right, so how about this? Well, first of all, I really appreciate the candor – that comes with old age, I guess – and all the comments we've gotten. I think – and to echo Kathryn and Meredith, I too, and I think we all do, want to be really responsive to what we've heard. It's really, really important. And as I said in the very beginning of this conversation, this is a balance. We have to find a balance here between what's feasible and what's meaningful.

So how about this? In terms of the – I'm just going to start throwing out like concrete ideas because I think we need to start to gel some of these ideas. So on the stakeholder side, in an effort to have cross-regional dialogue, continuity of engagement, and building on what we're

already investing in, how about – and again, I don't know where this stands with capacity, but how about having a forum this year, maybe two next year, as were reviewing a lot of where we're going and what we've done that pull from those state advisory groups. So it's not necessarily a standing body, per se, with a limited membership, but it's acknowledging the depth that a lot of these state advisory groups have in terms of reaching into their constituencies and their local people. And it's asking the states to ask about interest from those advisory groups to assemble and have a facilitated, cross-regional dialogue on issues that we need feedback on from that group.

So again, it's not a standing committee. It's a way to bring folks that have already been engaged so for continuity but also to perhaps even include that as maybe a part of our RPB meeting. So in the effort to bring in the idea of flipping around the meeting structure, perhaps we have a large part of a meeting be that subset of folks just having very well-facilitated discussions about things we need input and we're sitting out there. So we sort of have this hybrid, combined approach where we're pulling from our state advisory groups, we're looking for gaps. If there are gaps, we fill them. It's – the participation can be beyond that. But we get away from standing up something totally new that's going to need funds we don't have and we take advantage of a lot of efforts that the states have already done to dig deep into their constituencies. So there's an idea to throw out there to try to move the conversation forward.

Laura Cantral: And specifically, just a clarification, this is about the stakeholder ...

Betsy Nicholson: Stakeholder ...

Laura Cantral: So this is with regard to the stakeholder advisory function. Any reactions, thoughts on that suggestion?

Grover Fugate: Just a point of clarification. Are you talking about that there would be a – two meetings potentially which the – a subset of the stakeholders from each of the state groups would go to or are we talking about reaching out to each of the stakeholder entities that the states may have and then bringing those questions to the stakeholders? Because it's sort of a very different mechanism. We hold our stakeholder meetings at night so that people can attend. These meetings during the day, there's not very many that you will get coming to these unless they are specifically paid to do this. So that's the only – I'm just trying to seek a little clarification, that's all.

Betsy Nicholson: Yeah, so if we – so just running with this idea, if we pull those people in, maybe we could have an evening session within the bounds of these meetings to have that discussion. So you – and I don't know whether we could fund their participation. That's a whole separate issue, but maybe we could try to make it as convenient as possible, do it during one of these meetings so that we're here listening, we're already planned on being convened, and that those folks are – right, a combination of the people that we're pulling from the states

and filling other gaps as we see them.

Laura Cantral: All right, let's hear from Doug.

Doug Harris: Thank you. That – yeah, Grover's question clarified some things for me. I think that's potentially a good idea of having these forums that would be in conjunction with these meetings. I've always been of the other mind with these advisory committee meetings is that we should be going out to them or at least some subset. But one way to deal with that and getting different state advisors together would be bring them in for an evening meeting in conjunction with this, with the RPB meetings.

One of the questions I had and is for the group or the leaders, how would we decide which would be a subset of those groups? Who would be chosen? Would it be the leaders of the RPB in consultation with the states where those regional advisors take place or would it come to the full committee here? Who is going to have the ultimate decision on who's going to be the subset here?

Laura Cantral: All right, Tom?

Thomas Burack: Doug, I'll just offer an opinion and sort of just some reflections here. I think it's an important question, but it makes an assumption, that is, that we actually have to limit, we have to pick a subset. One of the challenges I have with this whole notion of a stakeholder group is that somehow we're going to have to select who plays. My experience with stakeholder group in any kind of issue of this kind is that the folks who really want to be at the table and want to be involved are going to be there and they're going to involve themselves if there's any way to do it, frankly whether they're invited or not. And I think that's a really healthy thing.

So what my vision would be for this, what I was envisioning based upon what Betsy described, is that essentially this would be open to any members of any of the existing state committees as well as any of the other groups, some of whom, like [inaudible] we've heard from today, who may not currently be involved in any existing state groups. I think they would be equally welcome at the table and anyone else who has an interest, or if we can think of any other interests that we just don't see coming at all, I think it would be within our prerogative to say, gee, it'd be really valuable to have somebody who's a community planning perspective or a community development perspective, for example, because we don't see anybody showing up who has that outlook, just as an example.

But I would err on the side of inclusiveness, and it could mean we have a hundred people in the room but that's not a bad thing either. It makes it more challenging to manage, but I think that would be really valuable. That's how I would answer the question. Others might answer it differently, but I don't want to be in the position of picking 15 people who come

and talk to us and everybody else has to sit on the other side of the wall.

Laura Cantral: Meghan?

Meghan Massaua: So I think I like where this discussion is going and I'm sort of thinking we've sort of – right now we're trying to wrestle with the how. I think we all understand the why and the value of input from diverse bodies and trying to get some bottom-up influence into this forum. We were just discussing the who and maybe self-identification of interested groups from each of the state groups, but what I'm sort of wrestling with is the what and what we're asking folks. Are we asking them to react to certain products that we're putting on the table? Are we asking them to just identify issues of importance to them? Are we asking advice on decisions and direction of the RPB? I think in this discussion, we really got to – and this was raised in the public comment as well, especially if we're talking about bringing together a large group of people, we need to be very clear on what ask is. And that's maybe not something that we're going to solve today, in the next half hour or whatever, but something that we're going to need to work on if we're talking about bringing together a large group of folks.

Laura Cantral: Any other thoughts, reactions to the idea that – I'm seeing some heads nod around the table in describing it, but I'd like to hear other thoughts. Meredith?

Meredith Mendelson: I think maybe I heard Betsy sort of mumbling this before we got started, or not mumbling but commenting that just we've had, I think, a pretty – a lot of really good feedback. And Grover, your comments were very compelling to me. You're right. You're absolutely right, the local piece is very valuable, particularly from the states' perspective, and that, to me, is not something that we can necessarily let go of if we do pursue a regional approach.

But I think some of the questions that you raised are important to have some feedback from the audience on, and just the structure of this conversation isn't going to allow that in a formal structure. So I'm hopeful that we can continue this conversation after lunch when we've had the opportunity to at least informally hear from people in the audience about what their reaction is to some of the points that have been raised.

Laura Cantral: So maybe in the spirit of that, I have two suggestions. One is we are about ready to take a lunch break so we could do that and do, as Meredith said, have some opportunity for some informal discussion. I'll try to summarize at least my own understanding of what's on the table and being considered with regard to the stakeholder advisory function, and then we could come back right after lunch and see how people are feeling and if you've got comfort with moving forward with something in that regard. And then let's be – and let's be really clear about what that is, and then let's also be really clear about the technical advisory function and how you want to handle that and what are the options that have been considered, both in the paper and otherwise, you – how you're feeling about that and then see if we can

wrap this up. Because I believe, and others have said it, the sort of topics that you've been talking about since the very beginning of this RPB process – and there is deep desire among everyone in this room, the members, the stakeholders, the facilitators to reach some clarity and move on.

So in the spirit of looking for a strategy to engage stakeholders that is responsive to what you're hearing, that strikes the balance, that Betsy and others have talked about, that cuts across the region, that provides continuity, that builds on current investment and staffing work and leverages in smart ways opportunities that you can identify, whether it's in the context of these kinds of meetings or other things, the suggestion that Betsy's put on the table and has been refined a little bit by others is to consider organizing a forum, not a standing group but a forum, plan to do one this year, maybe a couple next year, and that that forum would be organized by pulling from the state advisory groups, pull in others as needed, make it very open to anyone who wants to participate, and look for gaps and encourage participation from people who have those perspectives so that you have as robust a forum and participation as possible. And perhaps schedule as part of these meetings, these formal RPB meetings, have evening events, literally turn the table, do listening, hear from those people, be clear about what it is we're asking for and need – feel a need to get from those people in terms of input and feedback. And that's something that we'll need to think about more and work on more, but I think that's the model. And Betsy, correct me, or others, if I got something wrong about that, but I think that was what you were proposing.

Betsy Nicholson: Yeah, so with – yeah, [inaudible].

Laura Cantral: Yeah. So that's my summary. Let's take a break for lunch. Let's come back and revisit this, see where folks are, make a decision, take up the technical advisory function and make a decision, and then move on with the rest of the agenda. So we will come back from lunch at 1:30. And if you want a map of options for lots of lunch locations, we have that information outside. And we'll see you back at 1:30. Thank you.

LUNCH BREAK

Laura Cantral: So speaking of moving forward, we're going to move forward with the afternoon of this RPB meeting. And I failed to recognize Michele Desantess who is playing the role of Dan Hubbard for the afternoon. Welcome, Michele.

So let's come back to the topic that we were discussing when we broke for lunch, and agreement was to re-visit the idea on the table about how to handle the stakeholder advisory function, see if we can reach closure, conclusion, and a consensus decision around how to proceed with that, at least for now. And then let's take up the technical advisory function and have some discussion and hopefully similarly come up with an idea that you all can feel good about and reach a decision. And then we'll move on to the rest of our agenda which includes

some updates on other activities that are underway and other business that the RPB needs to do. Sound good?

All right, so just to refresh your memory, very quickly I'm going to do one more summary. I'm going to make this quick because I don't want you to be having to listen to me talk. But the proposal is to organize a forum in conjunction with the November RPB meeting and that this forum would be not a standing membership forum but would draw from the existing state advisory groups to encourage their participation, to look for other perspectives that need to be included and encourage that participation, but also to make it very open and inclusive to anyone who wants to be participating, build in a forum as part of this kind of meeting where the RPB is listening and engaging in some discussion, and, as part of that forum and with the people who are participating, think very carefully about the what, what would the RPB be asking for input on. And I think that that answer would be easily identified as the decision points that are going to be part of the agenda for November, things related to the natural resources work and the points that Nick made this morning, also the effective decision making work that is underway and that we're going to talk about this afternoon. Discussion about how to engage stakeholders in a continuing fashion would be appropriate and possibly another topic and satisfy the what question. But that would all need some more thought.

And then also remember that this idea would be in addition to the other mechanisms that are already underway and planned and will be ongoing, and they're spelled out in the options paper. They're in the framework. I think it's important to remember that there are multiple engagement mechanisms that the RPB is committed to, the state-specific advisory groups, the project-specific outreach and stakeholder input, these meetings, meetings with individuals, the website and digital outreach, etc.

And then the other thing that I'd like to point out is that we'd like to hear from the RPB about how you feel about this idea and its potential to strike that right balance. Again, let's try it for now and see how it goes. It would be a cross-regional forum so it satisfies that need and desire that many have expressed. It would be open and inclusive. The RPB – no one would be making choices about who's part of the group and who's not. It is manageable and would leverage other opportunities when you would be gathered already, and so it helps from a capacity standpoint and a budgetary standpoint. So with that, what are people's thoughts? Rick?

Richard Getchell: I definitely think that from a tribal perspective, a lot of things come to mind. We do a lot – pretty much everything we do is one on one but it's also regional. We stand together on common causes amongst tribes. And when I view stakeholder engagement and public input, I think we all stand together on the same common causes, the same – again, I always say ecosystem health and I think I'll even get a t-shirt that says that. But I think that's got to be the fundamental purpose we're all here.

And the more we can hear from stakeholders, the less likely we're going to wind up allowing any certain thing, whether it's tribal or if it's an interest group out there, to not be – we want to make sure they're heard and we want to make sure we don't lose certain aspects of this planning process as we move forward. So by always revisiting and forcing ourselves to hear that, I think that's going to be the guiding principle for all of us as we move forward. So I support – I understand that it can get crazy at times, but what you proposed as far as handling that way, being able to minimize the impact of having too many people at the table or the resources is a good way to – I feel good about that and I do feel good about the regional aspect of things.

Laura Cantral: Great, thank you. All right, let's go to Michele and then Matt.

Michele Desantess: Okay. I want to, I guess ...

Laura Cantral: Michele, you got to speak right in the microphone.

Michele Desantess How's that – is that – oh, there we go. I want to tie some things together that were brought up earlier by New Hampshire and Rhode Island. So yes, there is a constraint on financial resources, but as federal agencies, we all have our own stakeholders and we all do outreach in different ways to different audiences. So as Rhode Island looks to their local audiences, I think that the federal agencies look to their stakeholders in providing information about this ocean planning process. As an example, Coast Guard, and we have one in the audience, works with the harbor safety committee meetings. So we go on a regular basis and we talk to them about what ocean planning is so they can make informed decisions on whether they want to be here or not. And I'm wondering if we could add to that list, in addition to state groups, that we have federal agencies with existing mechanisms that we can leverage. And I fully support this idea of a workshop, regional workshop. I think that the one that happened at Roger Williams was very successful and could be just as successful going forward for the next one. And if we look at who's been invited and who's accepted to come and maybe see who are the missing groups, then we can make sure we do targeted outreach to those groups that don't represent state or federal audiences. So I think it's a good idea because we have to get the biggest bang for our buck.

Laura Cantral: Matt?

Matthew Nixon: I am in favor of Betsy's revamped idea here. The one thing that I would stress is – and this is getting nitpicky but just formalizing the relationship of the RPB to this forum either within our charter, whether it's an amendment, and what exactly relationship that is so when they may be consulted, how many times, on what, just so that here is a just a – what's the word I'm looking for here – there's a set procedure and people know what to expect from this group. And I would think that given the discussion today, there is somewhat of a sense of urgency regarding this, and I'd hate to add more work and effort to the group that put together

this wonderful options paper, but I would think it might be something they could probably pick up on as well in terms of describing some of what Meghan and Nick earlier had described as what does this group advise on, what are the decision points that they advise on, and when does the RPB go to them to help make a decision.

Laura Cantral: So Matt, just to be clear, you're asking for the RPB to write down what this proposal looks like so that we all have some clarity about ...

Matthew Nixon: I think it would be helpful ...

Laura Cantral: ... terms of engagement here.

Matthew Nixon: We have a concept now which is really this forum that Betsy's described that some folks have added their thoughts to, but I think it would be helpful for everyone, including my boss who's not here, to at least understand what was discussed and to know what to expect going forward about what the function of this forum would be and how they would interact with the RPB. And I think we could probably discuss – the smaller group could develop something around that and then present it to the RPB and interested parties as well.

Laura Cantral: Grover, did you want to ask a clarifying question?

Grover Fugate: Yeah, Matt, I think we've already said that we're not quite sure what we're going to be asking and when we're going to be asking. So to get into that level of detail, I don't know – I agree that I think writing it into the charter that we're forming this group and that we will consult with them on issues is a good idea. I just don't know that we need to get into the specifics of when, how many times, and what type of questions.

Matthew Nixon: I can appreciate the – again, it is getting into the weeds as I said before. But I just think from my perspective it would help set expectations for people participating. But at the same time, I can understand. I mean, the decisions that this group makes are all over the board so how to plan for those types of decisions. So I mean, that might be something that the smaller group could discuss as well.

Laura Cantral: All right, thank you. Let's see, Joe?

Joe Atangan: I'm for anything that moves the process forward so I fully support the establishment of this forum. But I do echo what Matt said, and I recognize that we've got a few months to come up with the topics and the things that we want to address. What I'm concerned about is if you toss out the idea there's going to be a forum, that you're going to have a free for all. Well, shoot, everybody wants to go to the forum. So it's got to be somewhat – I think they made a play about that. But anyway, you got to have some sort of targeted topics to focus the effort. Otherwise, it will become a free for all and so – and a free for all, I think, would slow the

process. But having said that, I think it's a viable solution, a viable proposal that advances the football ever so slightly. So I'm 100 percent in favor of moving forward.

Laura Cantral: Christine?

Christine Clarke: I would echo what Joe shared, that moving it forward is a wonderful thing, and I would suggest that maybe to help with that forum, maybe those that have already expressed their interest in having that open dialogue could help share their thoughts on what that forum might look like and their input. And I think it's a happy medium, realizing the boundaries upon which the board is trying to work in terms of finances and time and constraints and really being very interested in wanting to hear the open feedback from those who have expressed interest. So I think it's a fair and probably an appropriate way to go.

Laura Cantral: Doug?

Doug Grout: Yeah, I concur. I think it was a very good idea that was brought up here as a starting point for getting stakeholder input. I would concur with Tom's suggestion that we be as inclusive as possible with this. So thank you for putting that forward.

Betsy Nicholson: Joe, do you have an old idea or a new idea?

Joe Atangan: No new ideas.

Betsy Nicholson: And just while Laura's walking over here, one example of something we might want to cover with a forum like this is something we'll talk about this afternoon which is one of our objectives in the effective decision making goal to how to improve public input in some of these processes that are setting offshore uses. That's a perfect example of something that we really need a stakeholder forum to focus on. So I think we are not lacking content. It's just a matter of proposing some ideas and having a dialogue with folks about what – adding to that. All right, Laura, you're back.

Laura Cantral: I'm back. So any other thoughts, comments, advice, reactions to this idea? All right, so I'm ready to ask a question and hoping that you're ready to answer it, that you are comfortable with this approach, that with the addition of some of the comments here, including adding the federal stakeholder outreach to the list of ongoing stakeholder engagement opportunities, thinking about how to formalize the relationship, whether that's in the charter or some other way to document what that looks like, a forum would have structure around topics and the content would be – there would be clear expectations about that and we would work to do that in designing this forum. So those are a few things I picked up on in some of the comments in addition to several people expressing their endorsement of the idea. So how are people feeling? Remember, this is a consensus decision making body and if you love it or can live with it, then that constitutes consensus and let's make a decision. Joe?

Joe Atangan: Just a clarification point. You mentioned something about adding it to the charter. I guess I'm a little bit concerned about that since the charter has already been circulated and ratified, approved, or whatever else. But I certainly would agree to some sort of terms of reference of some guiding document that could be provided outside of the charter I think might be another approach.

Laura Cantral: Yeah. So maybe it could be made part of the engagement strategy document. I think the point is some documentation would be appropriate. Point taken on that technicality. Sharri?

Sharri Venno: So Laura, it sounds like you're heading towards having us make a decision right now? Would it be possible to hear the folks in the back of the room about their response to – it's a whole new idea that wasn't raised before. I wonder if it's just possible to hear their reaction before we make a decision.

Laura Cantral: So if that is something that you all would like to do, then my suggestion would be to move on with the agenda and we have a public comment session coming up later this afternoon that would provide that opportunity to hear from folks and then I'm going to ask the question again. So [inaudible] with you?

All right, so then let's shift gears to the other part of engagement that we need to talk about which is regarding technical advisory functions. And as Betsy summarized from the options paper, there are a couple of options. One would involve pulling from a roster of experts, a panel of experts, as needed and would offer flexibility to get the expertise around the topics and the subject matter that the RPB needs at the moment. The other option would involve a standing committee, and there are pros and cons around both of those. But before going forward with opening it up for RPB discussion, I think two questions that came up in the morning and have been part of some hallway discussion that would be helpful to bring to your attention and then I think, Nick, we maybe would ask you for some – offer the RPB some clarity about what is currently planned, designed for, underway.

But what the two questions that I think we want to wrestle with are, number one, how to fulfill the need to have the information, the technical information, that's going to result from working with experts delivered to the RPB in a digestible way, whether that's some kind of synthesis work or summary or making it available in a way that manages and respects workloads and is useful to the RPB, many of whom people at the table are experts in lots of things but not technical experts in everything that's going to be before you. So that's one question.

And then I think the other question is does the RPB have what it needs for now and what about longer term. So just thinking about the timing of when – engaging the experts

around the topics that are going to be evolving as you all make decisions I think is something that needs to be put in clear perspective. So with that, Nick, could I just ask you to provide some clarity about that?

Nicholas Napoli: Sure. So I'm not answering those questions. You want clarity on what we have and what is planned, correct?

Laura Cantral: I think you're asking – yeah, you're providing clarity about what we have.

Nicholas Napoli: Okay. So we have a natural resources work group. That's an internal work group composed of many of the folks around the table, but it's composed – it's internal. It's federal agencies, states, and tribes. There's about 30, 40 people on that work group. And what they've done to date is help guide the work leading up to the workshop essentially. So that's develop the RFP, review the RFP, review proposals, review and provide input into Emily's work, review the workshop agenda. So there's been a lot of work among that group, and it's composed both of RPB members and technical staff from those agencies. So it's sort of a mix of policy and technical folks that have been dealing with the natural resources subject generally to date.

Now that we have the Duke team, Duke/NOAA team, on board, what we have suggested starting yesterday and was even suggested in their proposal and we've had a lot of discussions about it is that their work is focused on developing distribution and abundance products from marine mammals and sea turtles, fish, and birds. So from that, we've developed a list of about 50 to 60 folks who would be the potential roster of working group members for each of those three taxonomic groups. So we'd end up with something like a potential for 20 folks on each of those taxonomic groups, although my expectation is that all of those folks aren't going to be able to attend all of those meetings because it's going to be a lot of working group meetings probably over the next three to six months to answer a lot of the questions that we were asking yesterday plus others.

That's what's set up now or is to be set up. In terms of consistency, that's what's needed right now. Perhaps what comes out of the subgroup that's composed out of Bruce, Grover, and Betsy on that 2(a) through 2(c) question about what other assessments could be done, perhaps there's a need for additional expertise based on that decision, but we don't know what that decision is yet.

Laura Cantral: Okay. All right, thank you, Nick, that's helpful clarification. So I invite anyone at the table to offer any reflections on how to meet this need, ideas, suggestions, questions. Go ahead, Tom.

Thomas Burack: I'll just put something out here just to get started. I think the basic notion that's laid out in the original options paper of really a flexible approach here is the one that makes sense. I think when we get farther down the road in this, we see maybe there are very

specific issues or questions we need to get sort of a broader perspective on or we need to get effectively a peer review on. Then maybe we want to establish some specific panel that has a very clear charge. I would be leery of trying at this particular moment to identify a broad cross section of scientists and technical people to come together to provide us with some form of guidance when we're not even sure at this point what the questions are that we're asking. And I don't think that that's necessarily going to be a good recruitment strategy, number one, but number one, I don't think that's a fair use of folks' time. I think we get farther in this process, we may have – I think we will have a better sense of really what questions we have, what needs we have. So I would suggest for the moment we continue where we are now, we really be flexible, adaptable, and look to whether we need something more formal at a later time.

I will, just as an aside, also point out for those who are interested, Council of State Governments has just put out a new document called A State Official's Guide to Science-Based Decision Making and I'll provide a link, but folks may find it interesting, sort of a general background and primer in terms of how you might go about using science in the kind of work that we all do day to day.

Laura Cantral: All right, great. Betsy?

Betsy Nicholson: We're always looking to learn from the states. All right, I think just to add to this I totally concur. I think it's premature right now to set up a TAC. I think it would slow us down. We need to give our staff and ourselves the flexibility we need to get a little farther down the road, and then it may be very relevant next year or whenever to have some kind of a synthesis panel with a very specific charge. We're trying to create a science priorities plan. We're going to want some feedback on that, for instance. So I agree.

I also think we can do a lot more in terms of transparency as we move forward and set up these work groups. I think going back to the options paper and thinking about our expert roster, we can be putting those names up on the web. Who are we engaged in? What groups are they part of? Where are they in the process? We can do that through the web. We can do that through webinars. We just need to be – and this is for our own sake too, RPB members, to keep up with the process, really doing – double down our efforts to communicate and be transparent about who's involved and how we're moving forward. So I think that's an action.

Laura Cantral: Any other thoughts on this? Doug?

Doug Grout: Well, thank you. As you all have heard, I am a big supporter of a technical assessment group. I think it's very important that we have identified people who will have expertise in being able to understand the various technical and scientific information that's being brought forward to us by the working groups. And the way I saw this, this was a decision document here that was provided to us as to which way we'd be going over the long term. I think if we made that decision today, it doesn't mean that we're going to have a technical working group in place in the next couple months. I think it means if we made a

decision to go with a technical working group, that this regional planning body would then start to work on what are the guidelines of this working group, what is the policy of this working group, what are their terms going to be, how are we going to select who's going to be on it and for how long, what kind of skills do we need on it.

That's going to take time to develop, and I think if we put that decision off, if we wait till next year to start thinking about this, it's going to be another year before we have them effectively in place and sitting here and providing us with the technical guidance that we need to make some of the decisions here.

So I think it's important that we make that decision today as to whether we're going to go forward with a technical working group because it will take time to set up these policies. I know at the councils, we have a policy on who's going to be on the SEC and what their responsibilities are. We don't have that here yet, and I think it's something that we need to start working on.

Laura Cantral: Joe?

Joe Atangan: I guess I don't see the option that's on the table right now as being exclusive of getting that technical advice. The only real question here is whether to have a standing committee of permanent members for however – whatever period of time or do we, at the beginning of the process, allow ourselves some flexibility by having a nimble group that we can draw upon for technical advice. So I don't see it as being totally exclusive. I think we're still – whether we go with the technical advisory committee process and wait or whether we go with the nimble pool of technical advisors to draw upon, it doesn't take away from the fact that we need some technical advice right now.

So like I said, I'm very much in favor of let's get moving on this thing here. We've been working on this thing for two years. Let's get moving forward as quickly as we can. It doesn't preclude us from establishing a standing committee downstream, but I think it gives us a chance to get things in motion and figure out what we really need in the long term.

Laura Cantral: Lorraine?

Lorraine Wakeman: Yeah, in the past two days we've just been given such a wealth of information, and I think that from a Department of Transportation perspective, we'd need time to digest this if we were going to go into a formalized standing committee. If we have to make a decision today, it would be for the more flexible because, myself, I wouldn't have enough information to make a decision about a standing committee, a formalized one, but I'd feel much more comfortable saying we can be fluid, we can move – for this question we can go to these folks, we'd be much more fluid. I just think it's so early in the process to nail down a standing technical committee because there's so much info that we're still gathering, and I don't think

that any of us know all the questions that we're going to want answered.

Laura Cantral: All right, is there anyone else that I've missed? I'm going to suggest that we wrap this up for now since we're going to provide a public comment and we'll invite any input on the discussion we're having right now. I think we need to move on to the other part of our agenda and probably expedite some of that just given the timing of that. But I think if I'm – I'm going to try to characterize what I've heard out of this part of the decision. I think that the suggestion has been made by a few folks around the table that a flexible approach for now is appropriate and do-able and, in fact, already being done and that in many instances, you don't know yet what the questions are that you would be asking a standing group of technical experts to help you with, and until you have a little more clarity, perhaps it makes sense to hold off on the creation of a standing group.

And I think the point that I was hearing from Doug is, yes, that may be the case, but just keep in mind that it does take time to set up a committee. So in the meantime while the flexible approach is being pursued, it might be worth thinking about what would be the mechanics for standing up a group if and when you are ready to do so. So I think that those – no, Doug's shaking his head. Maybe I got it wrong. No?

Doug Grout: Personally I think before this committee makes any decisions, we need to have that filter. We just can't take information from every group who wants to put together a scientific paper and have that used by a policy group. It needs to be someone that does it – that has the expertise and knowledge to say this is good science, this isn't as good for our needs. If we go ahead and start making decisions, this group starts making decisions without that, I think it's weakening the decisions that we're going to be making here.

I think that the working groups that were established, have been established, with the resource workshop certainly can start moving forward. Doesn't mean they have to stop, but before that information is – that they're going to bring forward in the long run, maybe within next fall or maybe next year, we need to have a group that's going to say this is good information that we can base our decisions on. At least that's the way I feel about it, and it sounds like I'm in a minority but ...

Laura Cantral: All right, thank you for clarifying, and I'm sorry for mischaracterizing your point. Bruce, do you have a point?

Bruce Carlisle: I sort of think that we do need to clarify – I think that we do have a responsibility to clarify, and this has been said before, but make it more clear about what the different work plan – first of all, I'd remind everybody that we do have a work plan. We've got a framework. We've got specific products that we're towards here. And to date, there's been a lot of engagement with specific entities, and there's always more to do. But let's please not lose sight of that.

I do think that we do have a responsibility to remind people of what those elements in the short of near term and medium term are. And I'm kind of looking at John and Nick here because I know they know, but making sure the RPB knows, and we said this before, who those folks are, the experts were, the scientists and technical matter experts who are helping us with the abundance and distribution work and the stuff that's following up. But there's other elements of work plan components that I think will help us articulate and provide – we get that out there, it becomes clear what we're working on and people can volunteer, say, hey, I see you're working on something that – hypothetically, rec fishing or something like that – I want to join in on that.

And then I do think as we get towards November and we start to sort of see some stuff coalesce and we've had an opportunity to sort of consider options – and I certainly don't want to do that in a vacuum. I want to be reaching out to folks on that and talking to folks – we can consider, I think, a little bit more about, based upon what's coming in and where we're headed with our decision making component of our work plan, where we might need, to Doug's point, some additional technical expertise or guidance around data integration or synthesis. But a lot of these are going to come up based upon specific issues, whether you're – can you integrate different data sets around marine mammal observations, can you integrate the observations with models that are out there. A lot of this stuff is going on with the fisheries characterization work, how are we building upon multiple data sets, and we might not be able to integrate them into one data set but how can we utilize them together.

These are stuff that we're starting to work on, and I think there's been a lot of guidance we've already gotten, a lot of interaction, and certainly we have an opportunity to do more. So I guess my only point is just to collectively remind ourselves of that and maybe to sort of build that out on the website and other opportunities for people to see that and it provides a good forum and a place for people to grab a toehold if they need to.

Laura Cantral: All right. Lorraine, did you have another point?

Lorraine Wakeman: I did.

Laura Cantral: Okay. And then we're going to wrap this up.

Lorraine Wakeman: I understand what Doug is saying and I can appreciate that very much, but representing an agency with so many facets as the Department of Transportation, I mean, I would want to reach back to experts within the Federal Aviation Administration and with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. I mean, people don't think of airports as affecting the ocean, but many airports are located on the coast. So I wouldn't really be comfortable agreeing to standing up a technical committee at this point until I reached back to the DOT experts, the federal highway people, of course my own administration, Maritime, to get more input about that.

Unidentified: All right, so I'm going to – how about this? Respecting Doug's comments and, Bruce, I think you added a lot of value too, how about going with what – we heard a lot of support for option one in terms of building out the roster of experts, being really transparent about who they are, how we're engaging folks, trying to keep us as informed as we can and continuing to learn and have a lot of conversations going forward. So how about deciding on going with option one, reserving the right for option two as we get a little farther down the road, understanding that it takes time to do that but having a much better sense of what we're going to need by November? Can we live with that?

Updates and progress since last RPB meeting

Laura Cantral: All right, so I'm going to ask you to think about that and we're going to revisit the can you live with that for both of these topics that we've just been discussing after we hear public comment. For now, we're going to move on to the part of our agenda that was our originally scheduled 1:15 slot, updates and progress since the last meeting. And at this point, I think, John, this is when I turn it over to you to take it away, and we're going to hear from a few folks, John and Katie, and there's a little bit of a tag team going on. But John, you take it first.

John Weber: Thanks, Laura. So there is a bunch of tag teaming, and in the interest of time – so Bill Hubbard, Katie, myself, Rick Getchell – I'm going to speed up and be quick.

Laura Cantral: John, we're having trouble hearing you.

John Weber: Sorry. That was all right. I was just mostly talking to the other presenters. Can I get the next slide, please? So just as a reminder, here's the framework. It had goals. It had objectives. It had outcomes. This is important because all that we're about to provide an update on for you refers right back to this framework. So just as a reminder, that framework organizes everything that's about to come.

Next slide, please. So a lot of work that I'm going to touch on really is captured under the goal about healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems. That had three objectives as you remember: characterizing the ecosystem, supporting the existing restoration and conservation programs, developing a regional ocean science plan. I'm going to really – myself and Katie are really going to focus on progress under the first objective. Bill Hubbard from the Corps of Engineers is going to talk about progress under the second objective. Next slide, please. And Katie, I'll let you take this one.

Katie Lund: Thanks, John. Yeah, so earlier this month we contracted an award for the baseline assessment work to WHOI's Marine Policy Center. The PI for that is Hauke Kite-Powell and the co-PIs at the Policy Center are Di Jin and Porter Hoagland. They were here yesterday. They

were part of the workshop and listening to all the conversations there which is obviously important. Also in partnership is Charlie Colgan from University of Southern Maine and Brooke Wikgren from the New England Aquarium.

So the assessment overall, it's a project that's going to pull together the information from many of the other projects that you'll hear updates on throughout this presentation. It's going to integrate this information, and the tasks include, first, an analysis of the regional marine economy and resources by looking at economic indicators, things such as employment, recreational boating trips, fish landings, and non-market valuation studies. It's going to compile information on the status and trends of human activities, infrastructure, the natural resources project that we heard so much about yesterday, and future considerations and scenario building based on that information.

The team is going to pull the information together into a final report and a product as one of the decision making tools of this regional ocean planning effort. So these tasks are going to necessitate gathering information from many of the projects you'll hear about, a lot of other information throughout the region, the state planning processes and efforts in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. So this team is just getting off the ground. The project timeline is running through September of 2015, and we are going to ask that they come to the November RPB meeting and provide updates on the framing of this as an overall effort to get your feedback and also a more detailed timeline for that overall effort through September of 2015.

So we look forward to presenting more information on this. They're just getting started, and we'll just leave it at that. I think that's the end of that slide.

John Weber: Thanks, Katie. Can I get the next slide, please? So I'm going to touch on a few other projects that we have ongoing or about to get underway. Folks will remember that over the last year and a half or so, we've done some initial work characterizing and in some cases mapping commercial fisheries. We always recognize that there's an enormous amount to do here and so that phase one effort which wrapped up six months ago is now leading into a second phase which has multiple components to it. One is doing some work to characterize, choosing that word carefully, the lobster fishery, recognizing that for that fishery, and as we had a robust discussion yesterday about, existing data varies widely according to jurisdiction. So we're not going to be able to, just because of existing data, maybe do some of the work that we've been able to do with other fisheries.

That said, if you're in New England and you're saying you're going to characterize the ecosystem, you darn well better pay attention a lot to lobster. So we intend to do that. As part of that conversation, I think we're going to have some opportunities to think about ways to potentially pilot new data collection. So yes, a focus on existing – looking at compiling existing information, but while we're doing that, let's think about ways to maybe think about new data collection as well.

Couple of other projects I'll mention briefly that generally fall under this, sort of broadly speaking, fish and fisheries effort, second bullet here is Gulf of Maine Research Institute is starting to do some work for us on compiling information, basically pulling together an annotated bibliography type of thing on existing science that is out there that relates to climate change and, say, potentially effects on fisheries and fishing. Obviously, there's an enormous amount of work that's already going on about this. The New England Fishery Management Council, Atlantic States, Mid-Atlantic Council, New England Fisheries Science Center, etc., etc., and some state efforts, some state meetings over the last couple of years, there's a lot going on with this. So not at all going to be doing anything as far as a first step other than compiling existing information, but within that, also looking at ways of using existing fisheries dependent and potentially independent data to see if we can think about using that existing data to actually start visualizing changes and seeing if we can relate to changing environmental conditions. Very much a pilot effort. Lot of other related efforts ongoing that have to be coordinated with this, fully understood. But when we've been out doing fisheries mapping, it's been such a constant comment from fisheries folks that we've talked to, that we felt compelled to respond to that and start looking at this question. It also relates to a lot of the question, at least in the fisheries group, that we were starting to get into yesterday about this is not a static environment and we understand that.

Next couple of bullets I will go over a little bit more quickly. You can see them up on the screen. I mentioned phase one work that we did looking at certain commercial fisheries that are managed at a federal level. There's existing data that comes out of that federal management, fisheries management, process. We want to do some additional analysis with that to look at and see if we can better differentiate areas of fishing versus other fishing vessel types of activities. Using that data, it's been a big question. We'll see what we can do with that. And also updating the work that we've done to date with more recent data. Thanks to the coordination with folks at NOAA, we have received a big slug of new particularly vessel monitoring system data that we intend to do some work on to see about updating that and looking at some questions about annual trends and changes during management over the time period, etc.

There has been a – as part of this overall first phase of fisheries mapping effort, when we were out engaging with folks, the for-hire charter boat, head boat, that part of the fishery was identified as a gap, a hole. We don't have great data for that. So we've been having conversations with many of the state fishery managers in partnership with Sea Plan to see about piloting some sort of effort to fill that data gap. We also, though, are just recently learning about a whole lot of other related work that is ongoing potentially in the fisheries management side of things more that I think is going to lead us down the road of really trying to coordinate and partner with those efforts. So that is very much still in the scoping effort but is also underway. You can see the general timeline up there of sort of all of these efforts roughly speaking through 2015, again building in engagement with the fishing industry managers and scientists on all parts of these projects as we move forward specifically related to this project.

Can I get the next slide, please? I'll be very quick over some of these. Folks will remember a year or two back we did a project that was characterizing recreational boating in partnership with Sea Plan and the states. As part of that, we had identified that there are other types of recreational activities that occur so we're right now in the middle of scoping out a project to characterize those activities and fill that data gap. You can see some examples of the types of activities I'm talking about.

The final thing I'll dwell on on this slide is continued characterization of maritime commerce. So folks know that we've looked at, from working with the Coast Guard and NOAA folks, use of existing data that gives you the picture of where commercial vessels of a certain size go. We've engaged the ports and shipping communities as part of that work. One of the questions that has come up is that when we've done that, they have said, hey, we're a very dynamic industry, there's a lot coming down the road for us that may change this picture. So we want to go back and further engage with shipping companies, probably the business development side of things, if we can some of the ports folks, to actually start seeing how we can do a better job of understanding how changes that may be coming down the road may translate into activity out in the real world. There are some very specific components of this that have been mentioned. Things like continued interest in the Americas Marine Highway Program, [Inaudible] Shipping, the expansion of the Panama Canal and what that might do, and some people have even brought up opening of the Arctic and other just very large topics. We feel a need to focus in on some of that to make sure that we are at least engaging those folks who are thinking about those things, and there are a lot of them, to engage them in this process.

Final point I'll say on this is this actually relates also, if folks will remember, to the third goal. And the third goal talks about compatibility among past, present, and future uses. So the information that we want to poke at with this is also very much related to some of the objectives we talked about under that third goal as an example. Could I get the next slide, please? And I'm going to turn it over to Bill at this point.

Bill Hubbard: Hey, folks. So Bill Hubbard, Army Corps of Engineers.

Ivy Mlsna: Hi, I'm Ivy Mlsna, [inaudible] fellow in the Ocean and Coastal Unit, EPA Region 1.

Mr. Hubbard: Bottom line up front, this group has developed three documents. We're going to ask you folks, the RPB by the end of July to review and do a reality check on what we've developed.

So the first thing you did is, thank you very much, you gave us the experts in habitat restoration. Massachusetts has a division of ecological restoration. [Inaudible]'s heading that up. But what we want to do is make sure that you're cross checking among your agencies, make sure Division of Marine Fisheries in Mass. is talking, federal agencies, the Department of Interior. We have Fish & Wildlife. There are more agencies in the Department of Interior than I

can name. So we want to make sure everybody's comfortable that this group is the right group of people. If you want to add people by July, add them. Not everybody has to be on this. Not everybody is doing ecosystem restoration, but we don't want to lose anything. So we're going to send you the list of participants. You folks have nominated these people. You want to add somebody, do it now.

The second document, and Ivy put this together, is a compendium of funding programs. In government speak, programs is money. So what funds are out there to do restoration and conservation. I think we have a comprehensive one. There was a farm bill so that just changed. The court just had a water resource development act so there's little changes. But by July, please tell us if we're missing a big funding program.

And then near and dear to all of us, there are some priority projects on the third list. Those projects came from the people you nominated. So let's make sure each agency has the right projects. And they range from the St. John's River with the Maliseets to the Mohegan watershed, Mill River in Stamford, Connecticut, finishing up the Penobscot. Herring River, Herring River is a \$40 million project. Most of the people in the Northeast think it's one of the most important restorations that need to be done for ocean health.

So we need to make sure the list is comprehensive, and then we will move out as a subcommittee – is that what we are or an advisory, some type of group. That's going to happen in September, and then we're going to ask you as the RPB to endorse these projects. And you can do a softball endorsement of, yes, these are good projects, they will improve the ocean health, individually or collectively, or if you really want to give people a bonus when they go to apply for funding, say these are RPB priorities. Because when we fund – and I'll talk from the Corps of Engineers. If there's a regional planning group – and very often it's The Nature Conservancy, Northeast Marine Ecosystem eco-regional priority. So if there is a regional priority, that project will get up in the funded level a little more than not having regional priority. So it's something you can do as a group or just at the very least, support it.

So with that, three documents by July would be good and just add people, add projects, and add programs that we might have missed for funding. [Inaudible]? She did all the work. Questions? Turn it back to John.

John Weber: Thanks, Bill. Could I get the next slide, please? I'm actually – I'm going to turn it over to Nick. We just walked through a lot of the goal-specific type of work. As a reminder to folks, obviously we have on the agenda the effective decision making goal as the subject of our next agenda item. So I'm skipping over that for now, but there are a couple of efforts underway, the data portal and some of the tribal work group stuff, that are kind of – sprawl across a couple different goals. Nick's going to start us off with that on the data portal. Next slide, please.

Nicholas Napoli: So I'll be real quick. The data portal team is supporting all of the engagement activities related to the different uses. John mentioned commercial fishing, maritime commerce, recreation. So the data portal team will be supporting each of those efforts. That's a lot of data analysis that then goes out to those stakeholders for their review and input. Same with aquaculture and energy and infrastructure. With energy and infrastructure, probably the most dynamic one that we have up there because we're regularly updating that based on ongoing offshore planning processes. So if you want to get a sense of what those areas are, you can go to the energy theme on the website.

Natural resources, we talked a lot about that. I mentioned it yesterday that, in addition to marine mammals, fish, and birds, the data portal team's working on a lot of other natural resource aspects. We just added the water quality viewer thanks to some input in using essentially all of the data coming from the EPA. We're working on understanding what coastal protected lands – having a layer for coastal protected lands. There's a lot of effort going on in trying to integrate all the bathymetry, different bathymetry in the region. And then that team will be supporting the Duke/NOAA team as those products come out to integrate them into the portal.

Next slide? Also, this team is supporting needs emerging from the regulatory discussions. John's going to talk about that in a little bit. This is the effective decision making goal, and these data needs up at the top are just a sampling of some of the data needs that we heard through talking to some of the regulatory agencies. So eelgrass, we have an eelgrass layer but we're updating it. Coastal wetlands. Critical habitat and range maps for those protected species so in addition to the distribution and abundance data that we're developing, there are already habitat and range maps from Fish & Wildlife and the fisheries service that we can integrate into the portal to understand what the potential range is. And those are the types of data that a lot of the regulators are looking at.

And we're also discussing functionality needs with the regulatory agencies, what's the best way to package up the data. Right now we have it packaged by theme characterizing each of these uses or resources, but some suggestions, as we get down the road, we might be looking at how to package up that data differently if we were looking at particular projects, for example, or particular regulatory responsibilities.

And then lastly, we'll be supporting the tribes as they ramp up their work. And in the area of looking at other cultural historical data, we've started looking at national and state parks, national historic sites, other historic sites, and landmarks, things like that that we would incorporate into the portal.

John Weber: Thanks, Nick. Next slide? And Rick?

Richard Getchell: I'll be quick as I can. Of course, we have our tribal work plan, and from that,

we've created our trial work group. We're looking – we're actually working on consultation best practices. It's a guidance document for all agencies, and we're using responses to tribal comments. This work has already been done, it's been very extensive, with some other agencies and we're adopting those to create our own.

We're also working with Nick on outlining the mapping needs, and we're going to be soliciting for data sets that exist and also trying to identify what doesn't exist. We're working with the Narragansett tribe on upcoming Palio (phonetic) cultural research throughout this year. And basically I've met with various groups, a lot in this audience: the Conservation Law Foundation and British Columbia First Nations on Ocean Planning, United Southern Eastern Tribes, and their annual meeting and Surfrider Foundation and the Atlantic College of Oceanography and Coastal Zone Canada and the Gulf of Maine.

John Weber: Great. Just one last slide. So again, what we've just walked through for everybody, just to sum up, is progress under those three goals, the objectives, etc. So everything that we've talked about, you can tie right back deliberately to the framework. I want to leave with just this general sense of timeline. We've talked a lot about this, but I'm going to point out a couple of things. So note that some timeline elements are the effective decision making goal, workshops on that, I will touch more on that in a minute. In October, the framework talks about a series of public meetings in each state much as we did last spring when we were developing goals with the idea of reviewing progress on some of these very important topics in advance of the November decision. The forums or the stakeholder forum that we're talking about after the public comment presumably would then be added to this list. All, again, leading to this RPB meeting where the point of that – and we keep talking about this, the point of that is really to decide on next steps under each goal. A lot of what we talked about yesterday is certainly going to be a main topic there, and certainly some of the effective decision making stuff that I will go over briefly next will also be a main topic, we think, for that meeting. So I will end there and happy to answer any questions.

Laura Cantral: All right, so I'll kidding aside, let's take a few questions, and I'm going to do a time check and an agenda adjustment because we do want to try to stay on track and accommodate everything that we need to do. And a couple of people, at least a couple of people that I'm aware of, have a hard stop right at 5:00 or a few minutes before. So Betsy, did you have a question or a comment? Yes, go ahead.

Betsy Nicholson: All right, so I just wanted to pause and thank Bill and Ivy, EPA and Army Corps, for really being early champions on this restoration and conservation objective. It's not something we've spent a lot of time talking about yet. So I just want to underscore the work that they've done, the importance of us all to make sure that everyone's weighing in on these preliminary documents.

And then we're really going to need to have a very clear understanding of – dig deeper,

a clear understanding of what criteria we're using to be flagging regionally-significant restoration projects, for example, and then figure out a way to make this really transparent. And maybe we have some public comment on some of those documents, but I just wanted to acknowledge your work and thank you and encourage us all to weigh in on this, and we might even want to add this to the November agenda as something that we want to be updated on at that point. But again, the public meetings in the fall are going to be another important way to get feedback on this because this is a really important issue to a lot of people that we've heard in the last round of public meetings. So I want to make sure that we have ample opportunity for folks to weigh in on that.

Laura Cantral: Lorraine?

Lorraine Wakeman: I just have a question for Nick. Is your data portal compatible with the oceandata.gov? Are they linked?

Nicholas Napoli: We use – we derive a lot of products that come out of the data sets on oceandata.gov so that's more of a clearing house for federal data, at least right now, and we use a lot of those data sets and produce products and put them up on the Northeast portal.

Lorraine Wakeman: thank you.

Laura Cantral: Other questions or comments? Overview of an enormous amount of work that's going on, great overview. Folks feel clear and comfortable for now? You feel updated? All right, stay tuned and continue to be involved thank you to all of those who are involved in this work.

So John, maybe – let me do an agenda check here. So I think that we could – let's at least give it a try. I don't want to do injustice to the topic so let's take the time we need, but if we can go over the interagency coordination work and status update and get some questions and reactions to that work in the next 30 minutes, we would be in track to do our public comment session at 3:30. And then come back with the two decisions that we've tabled until after public comment and any other wrap up that we need to do. Folks comfortable with that? All right, John, back to you.

Interagency coordination update: discussion about key themes and next steps

John Weber: Can do. So next slide, please. So as a reminder under the effective decision making goal, there were several objectives. We're actually really going to touch base – at least I'm going to start touching base on the first objective and the third objective that you can see up there, recognizing that in Rick's update he focused also on the fourth objective. And then we're

also going to provide a quick update on the third and fifth. So for the sake of organization, there we go.

Next slide, please? All right, so under this effective decision making goal, as folks know, we put out an RFP a while ago and are working with folks at Sea Plan, ESS, and some other folks on this. There are, within that objective and the work and what we've been doing to date, is, as many of you around the table know because we've come and met with you, we have been talking to the agencies about identifying – starting to get very specific on what exactly are we talking about, what are those opportunities under the first objective which talks about enhancing interagency coordination. And then very importantly, while we're doing that, talking about the third objective which talks about incorporating products into existing decision making.

And for folks who were with us yesterday, this is a question that came up time and time again as we're thinking about the marine life data and products that we're developing. One of the things that we kept saying is we need that technical work to continue. There's a road for that work, and we had a conversation about that yesterday. At the same time, we are having the conversations with those folks who we want to maximize the utility of those products as informed by best available technical and scientific input so that they are also useful for those folks who are on, say, the regulatory side of things. So those decision makers, the person who sits at a desk and, when a development product comes across their desk, they care, because they're required to, about certain types of marine life species or habitats, etc. We want to maximize the utility of the products that we're developing in that sense for those types of decisions. So those are conversations that we've been having.

And we are – before I go into – just to provide you a flavor of sort of the types of focus areas that we're starting to hone in on, just a couple of things. We have identified the usual cast of characters at a federal level so various federal agencies who have existing regulatory decision making authorities. And so these include folks such as BOEM who have responsibility for doing things like issuing releases, and also the wildlife service agencies, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service who may play more of a consultative role given their existing mandates. So we are about halfway, a little bit more than halfway, of engaging those federal folks. So very much everything that I am about to say is going to be more informed by those conversations yet to come.

We are similarly talking to the states. So the states very much have a role in this topic, and we want to understand better what opportunities there are as seen by the states around the table. So – and including folks in New York. So we are, again, not all the way through conversations with all of those states so some of what I'm going to say is going to be more informed by that.

The other point that I will say is that, in addition to folks around the table around up

here, we have just started to reach out to folks who are not at the table who are either part of an industry that has experience in marine waters or may want to, the environmental NGO community, other user groups because we want to get all of those perspectives as much as we can as we move forward and more further specify potential areas to focus in on.

I guess the final sort of clarifying point that I'll say right now is all of this is in an overall timeline of further developing options and discussing them, leading into a November RPB meeting to decide on next steps and specific paths forward.

So what I wanted to do is then dive into some of the types of topics that we're talking about, particularly under objectives one and three, as again, they have surfaced to date. So obviously there are existing interagency coordination practices that have been put in place. What we have talked about is building on what has worked with those, not trying to reinvent something just to add another layer certainly, but that recognizing that there are, in some cases, existing processes, particularly at early stages so almost at a pre-application or very early steps in a project development review life span. So in particularly with the Corps of Engineers, that has been a subject of conversation. Under their Section 404 and Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10 responsibilities and as it works out in the real world, sometimes they do some pre-application work. Maybe there's an opportunity there to expand on that a little bit, particularly if we're also bringing in some of the data and products that we're talking about as could be issued through the portal. So that could be – that's an area that we're starting to focus in on.

Another area, another topic that has come up often has to do with NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act. Recognizing that across the various types of development and other federal activities that happen out there, NEPA cuts across all of them. It's always a requirement. Different agencies have to be the lead agency depending on their permitting role for NEPA, but it is a constant. And there are some potential opportunities, we think, early in the NEPA process to enhance interagency coordination that have to do with identifying lead and cooperating agencies as those are terms of art in NEPA world, that sort of thing. Lot more to explore with that. A placeholder thought that a lot of that also directly relates again to the use of data and information at an early scoping phase of NEPA.

Finally, obviously and very much I want to say thank you to Bob Labelle for really helping us with very important conversations with BOEM. So obviously BOEM has a primary leasing authority for lots of – for several important activities out in federal waters. So it's obviously very important that we coordinate with them, and meeting with the folks in the energy branch and the resources branch of BOEM is something that will be happening in the weeks to come. But a couple of things have emerged out of that that, again, are kind of similar but also recognizing that the decisions are being made to move ahead with particular lease areas off New England waters so we have to pay attention to that. Within all that there could be some opportunities.

One of them, just as an example, goes something along the lines of this. So BOEM, for certain types of projects, and frankly, other agencies as well, have from time to time issued study guidelines that are intended to help direct project proponents to develop the kind of information that is required in order for a decision to be made ultimately on, say, a lease or a permit. Well, sometimes those study guidelines in some cases are, by necessity, very broad, national in scope. They may not always fully capture all the topics that, say, we would wish that they would capture for us here in New England. Grover has provided us previously in conversations about this some examples with, say, doing some work on characterizing fishing, and that may be what we – maybe there's an opportunity to have a further in-depth conversation with BOEM about how to address some of those issues that this region would like to continue further in terms of more particular guidelines on how to carry out such studies, etc. A lot more conversation on that type of thing to come, but really wanted to point that out because it's a subject that has already come up to date.

So that's kind of a flavor under that. Related to that and a very important last piece, and then I'm going to turn it over to Betsy for an update on a couple of the other objectives, again directly relates to the data portal and the use of data, and it was a thread of the conversation yesterday. So again, while we are out talking with the federal agencies, those agencies' staff who have responsibilities under existing federal statutes for marine mammals or essential fish habitat consultations or looking at Endangered Species Act issues, etc., we're asking questions about the data side of things: what would be helpful for you, regulator person, to see us produce as far as a data product. So getting that input will directly, as has been said before, also inform the work that is done to produce some of those data products to the extent that we can, recognizing, again, as we've said before, that we're working at a regional scale. We're not – there's always going to be a need for site-specific studies. Yes, we understand that.

But again, if you're thinking about this through a NEPA lens or an early pre-application or very early in the review of a project stage, is there benefit to looking at existing information that is produced in a suitable format to help inform further conversations about a specific project. The answer seems to be yes, there is interest in pursuing that, particularly among some of the federal agencies but that also there's a lot more detail to come in that. Some of that gets into the very detailed reading of words that exist on paper about how agencies are required by regulation to carry out their responsibilities, as an example.

Some of it will also get into – there's – for a lot of these topics, it's not always black and white. There are variations on levels of concern and certainly lots of natural variability and species utilization of particular spots in the ocean, etc., etc., etc. So we need to also get into a better – a more fully-developed conversation about interpreting those data products, how do agencies, when they look at information that they need to look at, not only what do they need to look at, but how is some of that interpreted. Some of that is going to be a very in-depth, detailed conversation which I think we've only scratched the surface of yet, but it's very important to see if we can pull out some of that information to try to connect with, again, some

of the products that we're talking about making.

The final point that I'll say under all of this, and a lot of what I've just said has been primarily a focus of conversation with many of the federal agencies, again, we're not all the way through all those conversations, we have also been talking about the states. Some of that conversation has been directly related to everything that I just said but incorporation a state perspective. So lots of conversation about the importance of data, the potential application of data. Also, though, thinking about some potential application of federal consistency provisions under the Coastal Zone Management Act, and lots of people here are familiar with that. That is basically, under existing federal authority, a role for states to have a say in federal decision making. It's a very powerful tool for states. And thinking about, through the plan, what are the opportunities and appetite to look at the application of federal consistency, again, maybe using some of this data, maybe looking at some administrative type of efficiencies. I will say that, again, we are not all the way through all those conversations, and we've, again, only scratched the surface of some of that. The reaction, to date, among the states has – as you can maybe well imagine, at times it has to reflect the political realities of that state and/or very important policy differences among the states. And obviously, that's going to be reflected. All of that said, I think the point is looking for those common threads that then we pursue further. I think that's one of the important conversations yet to come. So I'm going to stop there and, maybe just in the interest of moving forward with the update, pass it over to Betsy. But then certainly I think afterward we'll have time for questions and clarification.

Betsy Nicholson: Yeah, so this'll be quick, and then we'll get to the discussion around what you just said. So just getting to objective two, if you could back up the slide, I want to call this out because this is up here cause of public comment, all the public meetings and all the engagement that we've done to date. There is a lot of interest around figuring out specific measures to enhance public participation and really making more tangible the impact we want to have with this ocean plan in terms of transparency and participation in ocean management decisions. And so I just wanted to – not much work has been done on this yet, but we have Coast Guard, Maine, NOAA, and BOEM committed. Right, guys, committed? To really putting our heads together and starting to scope out this work. And this is a really important place where we're going to need a lot of stakeholder input in terms of what – idea generation and figuring – setting some expectations about what we could actually do to improve.

So ideas up here are – and this – again, this has all come from public meeting. This is from the framework really. Developing a guide to public input on offshore wind, sand and gravel mining, and offshore aquaculture. The public has very specifically expressed a need to just, you know, show me the flow diagram, how does this work, where is my point of input. And so having not just an online guide but something that we can put in the hands of fishermen, of other people as well just as a public education tool. And frankly, an education tool for a lot of us up here too to really understand these processes.

And second was really to, from that point, get a lot of feedback on identifying challenges and best practices and recommendations for improvement and really figuring out what's possible within our existing authorities to tweak, to make better, what are some good ideas. And we're really looking forward to a lot of conversation between now and November. The public meetings, the stakeholder forum that we just talked about is a really good way to generate a lot of thought around this so we're looking forward to adding a lot of meat but didn't want to leave this out because this is very important and we're just getting started.

John Weber: And just all I want to do is the next slide, I think it's the next slide, yeah, so just to sort of conclude and give people a sense of the timing, again, we're working with Sea Plan folks right now on these additional individual agency and very importantly stakeholder meetings through the summer. And yet to be scoped out, but obviously, the importance of this – because some of this is really about how do we hardwire some of what we're doing into implementation of the plan. So very important topic. So we recognize that in addition to these individual meetings, some sort of form of public workshop to look further at specific options, examples, etc. in an early fall type of timeframe. Certainly as you've heard, there's going to be public meetings again also throughout the region so a second bite at the apple forum idea in whatever form that takes, all leading again to this this November RPB meeting to review all that input, all the work done to date, decide on specific options, etc.

Public comment

Laura Cantral: Okay. Great. So we have a few minutes now to open it up for discussion, questions, clarifications. We'll offer that a recurring theme of this meeting is that there is a lot of work underway, and a lot of what you've discussed during this meeting is with the intention of finding out what you need to know to be able to make decisions around a number of things in November. And you saw that teed up in a number of these slides and things that we just went over, as well as other discussions we've had over the course of the day. So Bob, [inaudible]?

Bob Labelle: Yeah, speaking for BOEM, I just want to say we appreciate the efforts, and it's very, very timely with regard to offshore wind. There's a long way to go in evaluating when and if there'll be projects out there, even though the lease sales are starting to proceed. The area is certainly not totally defined yet and there's a lot of input for monetary mitigation and studies and lots of other good input. So we do appreciate this effort. It's bringing a regional sense to what we're doing, and also on the sand and gravel beach nourishment question, that's a big question for this region, and this is a really good way that we can sort of ask that in a large sense. So thank you.

Laura Cantral: Meghan?

Meghan Massaua: Sure. I just want to offer that even though DOE is not a regulatory agency and our focus is on research and development, we do have a mission to reduce barriers to deployment and with particular notice for offshore wind and so that potentially we could offer some perspectives on this as well. And maybe, John, we can talk offline about moving that forward.

Oh, and sorry, also want to mention that DOE has recently launched one of our education and outreach efforts around wind, and not just offshore but wind in general, regional resource centers, one of which is in the Northeast and one of which is an island in grids which would include islands off of Maine and includes the Island Institute. So that might be just another thing to keep in mind as something going on in the region particularly around developing guides for public input. DOE may be able to help in that way.

Laura Cantral: Any other thoughts, questions, comments?

Betsy Nicholson: Yes, something quick positive to say. I mean, it's all good, but I just want to say how central this work is to this whole effort in making a really big impact. I know, speaking for NOAA, just investing in the data portal and just getting the right working real working staff in front of that portal and just throwing darts at it, talking about functionalities that would be helpful, it's like kids in a candy store. They're really excited about this. Real working staff have told us what a big impact this larger context of information can have for them in terms of effective decisions, efficiency in terms of back and forth that goes on not knowing data, etc., etc.

Lots of caveats, of course but just want to express my support on behalf of NOAA for all the work that's been going on in this. And Daniel Martin's out there in the audience. A big thank you to Daniel too who's data manager and data architecture guy and, I don't know, guru. But just a lot of hard work has been going into this and it's really – this is very organic starting with the conversations with the working staff and very appreciated. So go team; I think we can go a long way with this.

Laura Cantral: Great. Any other thoughts on this great set of updates? It's going to be a busy summer and fall. All right, well, if that's the case, then I suggest we transition to the public comment section. And like I did before, I'll read the queue in the order that people have signed up so that you'll know where you are on the list, and then we'll just get started. So we have a few people who've signed up: Valerie Nelson, James Monroe, Melissa Gates, Rob Moyer, Nick Battista, Sally McGee, and Priscilla Brooks. So Valerie, we'll start with you.

Valerie Nelson: Well, I found this last session so interesting and informative in terms of all the prior discussion because I kept thinking about our technical experts involved and is the public and stakeholders involved in what you're all talking about. And starting when I came a little over a year ago and then again in January and then this meeting, I have to say that the process

is still fundamentally broken because I try to be responsible, I go to the sites, and I come to the meetings, but the experience from back there is that I only find out what it is you're doing until after you've done it. Even in the public meetings like in Gloucester last year, you talk about mapping, we ask you are you going to look into regulations around sand and gravel, no. But then we find out at the next meeting that that, in fact, is what you've been doing. So then I come in January, well, your focus is on these regulations and these agencies. I ask for information about what you're doing. I never get anything. And then that's not really talked about here, but what I find out is a whole new work agenda you've been spending months on.

Now so this is important because if you're serious about technical and public input, you need to have that input at the point when you're deciding what it is you're doing, not after you've already done it asking for a few comments at the end because that process you've structured – and this is really important for the substance of your work – is that most of what I hear is so what I would say is conventional, whether it's the economic analysis that you're funding, this is so static, job data or – there's so much work happening in the economics profession around – for God's sakes, we all recognize that those kinds of models have got us to not only extreme inequality and not great on environmental protection, but you can't even have a growing economy if you don't get this stuff straight.

You're going to such a narrow band of experts and deciding what to do and then coming and announcing it and not giving communities or other really thoughtful, creative talents in this country the opportunity to participate in what it is that you're doing. And the amazing thing is that you can say you're static zoning as if nothing much is changing, but your own conversation is how much climate is changing, how much – it's as if the world is coming at you. The way you're structuring your work is not adequate to address the challenges that are going to be facing you increasingly and increasingly. So you need to involve, as I said this morning, technical experts, and I thought yesterday was a great step forward because you could see when you actually have a greater mix of minds in the room, you get clarity on ecosystem-based management, sustainability values. Some big issues start to come up when you get the right people.

Now I want to say in particular that I object greatly to hearing over and over that, as you do this work that we only hear about after the fact, you do go to the Sea Plan groups and the NGOs you've talked with for years. Now why do you do that and not come ahead of time to all of us? We're the ones with the community background. I have many things that Gloucester could tell you about federal consistency reviews. I have many things I could tell you about water quality on Cape Cod. There's a wealth of innovative thinking and energy out there. The only people you're talking to are CLF and Sea Plan.

If you expect to have a genuine public process and a system that is adequate to be responsive of the challenges at federal agencies and state agencies in the near future, if not now, you must get this process right and not just talk about in the fall a forum with a few

stakeholders. Reflect on what just happened today. Where did you include experts and the public and stakeholders in the framing of the projects, in the letting of the contracts, when will you let us know exactly and transparently so that when we go to your website what is ENROC doing, what is Sea Plan doing, how is what you're doing related? Put your things out there for public comment consistently, and purposefully invite the best that this country has to offer in terms of technical thinking and expertise and find a way to engage the public. As I – we said in Gloucester, they will be engaged if you frame those issues in terms of the experiences of the economy and of the storms coming and what they value in their culture and engage in a conversation with the public that is meaningful to them and should be meaningful to you. So don't even separate these public discussions from what you just went through this afternoon. You're not following basic principles in terms of technical or public stakeholders.

Laura Cantral: James?

James Monroe: My name is James Monroe. The company that I own is Blue Water Dynamos out of Gray, Maine. I also represent a British company with 40 years' experience in sub-sea engineering very involved in cable installation, and most recently we delivered a monster machine for sub-sea mining into the Southeast Asia sea.

My opening comment – well, I have to say initially, every time somebody speaks I got to re-do my notes because they happen to cover something I was going to bring up and they get to it ahead of me. As usual, Betsy stole my thunder, and it would have been helpful, quite frankly, if that excellent presentation by John Weber had been earlier in the program so that numbheads like me would have a little better understanding that the goals are up there and where we were with that. That would have been very helpful.

Considering this is about ocean planning, I would be curious to know how many of the panel have ever been 20 miles offshore in a small boat or even out of sight of land. I'd just be curious to know that. And I will say, and Betsy mentioned earlier in the program, this idea of having us so far away is very inconvenient. It may be my poor hearing and my poor eyesight. Half the time I couldn't hear what was really being said and, most of all, I couldn't see who was saying it, and that is really quite annoying and a little bit disrespectful.

A matter of perspective is my note. It says whereas the goal here today seems to be focused on how to achieve the already-established goal and considering comments already expressed, perhaps you might consider for members of your group to be more – act more as a disinvolved facilitators. In other words, we talk about bringing in all this expertise and the public, we got to keep those two comments together, but contacts made with academic agencies and academics and marine-related industries and marine-focused organizations should provide a strong resource pool for the various goal sectors. And quite frankly, I hate the word expert. I have never met an expert and I'd like to do that someday.

And your construction of your committees and your subcommittees or whatever you want to call them, working groups, I think you ought to try to shoot for a goal of 50 percent of what you might call highly-qualified people and 50 percent of other interested parties from the general public. There's a lot of smart people out there in the marine industry, these fishermen and all. There just is a whole lot of smart people, and you really want to do your best to extract their knowledge and incorporate it in what you're trying to accomplish here. I can tell you I spent 12 years on an FAA committee and it was 50 percent airports, that's what we were doing, and 50 percent people from the industry. And I can tell you some of those meetings were very vigorous, tables flying, people arguing, and all this and that. It was very constructive, if you will. Or destructive, depends on your perspective.

And as far as this list goes, I notice that nice lady from I believe it was the Mass. Lobster Association, she had quite a list. There's also a lot of other resources like the Marine Technology Society. They have a huge database of very smart people. And there's a whole bunch of those. In fact, maybe that's – one of the goals ought to be is to assemble where is the resource pool and who are these people who might be able to help us assemble a very high-qualified group of people. That may be the first thing you want to do.

Our interest, quite frankly – oh, I missed one here. You might consider – in all this public outreach business, you might consider a little more use – or I don't know, maybe you do it, I just missed it – of webinars. That technology's moved ahead so quickly, you can almost have a one-on-one conversation. Once a month or whatever, every six to eight weeks, whenever you've done something, a little notice. Then it's really nice because we can record it and watch it later at our convenience. Just driving down here, I spent two hours in the morning just getting here. It's only 30 miles down the road. Cost a lot of money.

My next item is, and it's a question, does the panel have a full grasp on all it needs to accomplish by the 2016 deadline, everything that they need to do to meet that deadline? I don't know the answer to that. Just threw it out there.

My next item is our interests, our company and a lot of associated companies, really is that our interest is advancing ocean energy projects. So therefore, completing the work of this committee is critical, particularly how it connects to BOEM and FERC and the permitting process. So I really wish – I would say it's decision time now is what I'm trying to say to advance the goals. The first step be to identify and segregate the subject areas working off your goal list. And be very specific. Identify what you want people to work on and really narrow it down, the scope of it, so they know what their responsibility is and the limits of their responsibility. And quite frankly, I don't think people realize, and it's going to be a little bit of time before they do, but cape wind is really going to be a paradigm shift in ocean use. I don't think most of us, including me, have a real grasp on how mammoth that whole thing's going to be, and if you really dimension it out and it starts to become part of the life here and the uses and what not, change out here and foggy days and so forth when it's really too hazardous even

to transit the area.

So anyway, that's all I have to say. Keep up the good work, and thank you very much.

Laura Cantral: Melissa?

Melissa Gates: Hello, I'm Melissa Gates. If anyone joined after I commented this morning, I'm the Northeast regional coordinator with Surfrider Foundation which is an environmental non-profit dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves, and beaches.

You asked us to reflect on your discussion about advisory functions. We've been discussing that. The NEOAN group had a lunch and talked a little bit about it. It's a really complex issue. From Surfrider's perspective, I feel like we really need the technical advisory committee to be formed sooner rather than later because I feel like that group of experts, however you define experts, whether that be those with traditional knowledge or scientists or other folks working with data, they can really assist you in developing what the questions are that need to be answered. So rather than the RPB discussing amongst itself what do we need to know, where are the data gaps, you can pull together these experts from our region and say, hey, what are the questions we need to be answering and work with that group to really come at the questions from that angle. And that way, you also have buy in from stakeholders, and the technical advisors in our region can also then pull from their networks and bring in individual experts that they know for any panels that need to be assembled or any specific questions that need to be drilled into further. So I would, again, just echo my sentiment from earlier in saying that Surfrider firmly believes that forming the standing technical advisory committee is really vital to the ocean planning process.

Stakeholder advisory boards, another really complex issue. I feel like there's room to really come at this ad hoc approach. I think having a formal mechanism by which regional stakeholders can assemble with everyone on the same page with a clear protocol for what is being asked, what is needed, but mostly just for people from every different sector to come together at the table and speak together so you're not just segregating it by states, by tribes, by individual user groups, commercial fishermen over here, recreational users over here. Everyone at the same table having the same discussion so that we can avoid serious conflicts down the road. I think that's really a wise way to go about this, and again, using that stakeholder advisory board to help the RPB come at the process of developing the questions that need to be answered and how to address them would be a good approach that I would enjoy.

So now I'll get to the comments I had actually prepared for you today about the progress toward the healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems goal. Real briefly, we appreciate from Surfrider that the RPB has formally recognized the significant data gap in recreational use by issuing the request for proposals this spring for a study to characterize our region's ocean and

coastal recreation. We were, of course, disappointed to learn that the decision on the proposal was postponed till late summer 2014 which we feel cuts into the prime data collection time for individual Northeast recreation users, but we appreciate that filling this gap remains a priority. Coastal and ocean tourism and recreation constitutes the largest single stakeholder group contributing to the Northeast's ocean economy. In New Hampshire, we're 43 percent of the state's ocean economy employment which makes up the single largest sector for the state's ocean economy. In all the other New England states, the [inaudible] states, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, and Mass., we're the single largest sector contributing to coastal jobs and the ocean GDP.

So it's clear that ocean and coastal recreation and tourism is an important stakeholder group for Northeast Regional Ocean Planning, and we really appreciate that the RPB recognizes this and is committed to filling the data gap for characterizing ocean and coastal recreation. And Surfrider looks forward to your decision on the study, and thank you again for listening to comments and again for Sherry in particular for receiving that the decision on advisory functions should really be bounced back to stakeholders again for additional feedback. So thank you.

Laura Cantral: Rob?

Rob Moir: Ahoy! I'm Rob Moir from the Ocean River Institute, and I want to thank you for all coming together. This is the most esteemed body of planners, and I am a passionate member of the Northeast Ocean Action Network, NEOAN, because I believe in the importance of networking. And I'm in the minority of passionately not thinking there should be another body. The last thing this body needs to do is reproduce more bodies in terms of technical advisory groups or stakeholder advisory groups. The reason I say that is because I've served on at least two advisory councils and been there, done that. And they work great for a single agency like Cape Cod National Seashore or Stelack (phonetic) National Marine Sanctuary so that kind of scale. They don't work for committees like this, and we found that out with the National Estuary Program started in the '80s, and they wanted to get everybody involved in saving estuaries. They eventually got 18 estuary programs going I think, and way back then was to have three committees: a science – a technical committee, a stakeholder kind of enviro committee, and businesses committee. And it was like going fishing with three different kinds of nets because the chair of each committee was to each into the cot end after all that work and get together and create Franco fish with one holding a shrimp and one holding a sardine and the third with a wolf fish or something. And we saw this happening so that doesn't work and it just wasn't fair for them.

And since then we've had the Mass. Ocean Bill and the Mass. Ocean Act, and I am eternally grateful for Deerin Babb-Brott for having the courage of saying bring them all together and we won't segregate you into different interest groups but just let it all come at me. And he said it was like drinking from a fire hose, but he was able to push the waters back so John

Weber could do all the intelligent things behind him and stuff.

But we saw this happening yesterday, the importance of not segregating the group out. Yesterday we segregated into fish people, marine mammals, and bird people, and turtles were with the mammal people I guess. And so I was with the fish people and we were asked what's your best fish and immediately said, gee, I wonder what the marine mammal people think their best – the whale thinks the best fish is and stuff. So we already missed that other input. And then in the afternoon, I was hearing from this Gloucester stakeholder how that in the end it's all about what area they're going to take away from the fishermen. Then the BU professor said we really should address the end point, just take it on and look right at the end point. And to me it sounded a lot like the Gloucester person was saying. However, she took it as an affront, and rightfully so from where she was coming from, her stakeholder position, as did the lobster people. And the reason was because the scientist was speaking a different language than those two were. And that's why you mustn't have the scientists separate from the stakeholders because they'll spin off in different directions, and instead, the scientist was able to reframe it to get the other people on board. So your inclusivity is just marvelous.

The last thing I want to talk about is stakeholders. When I – the Stelack National Marine Sanctuary needed to do a general management plan, and so the Ocean River Institute put out the word across the nation who's got a stake in this, who cares about Stelack – every single state and Guam and San Juan, Puerto Rico, wrote back, people from every state. A woman in North Carolina, she cares because her grandfather was a sea captain. A woman in Iowa – or a man in Iowa cared because they summer in Orleans. There was a bunch of school teachers – I think they're school teachers, a bunch of educators in California who care about Massachusetts waters because of The Voyage of the Mimi and seeing a 12-year-old Ben Affleck out there on the oceans got them involved. So when you're looking at the stakeholders of these waters, you're talking about every resident of the United States of America plus every American outside the area. Who hasn't read Moby Dick or seen the movie Moby Dick, Perfect Storm, Jaws, Captain's Courageous? So the nation looks to you guys to maintain clean waters, and if they find it's not clean, they're not going to say, oh, you weren't informed by some stakeholder. You guys are it and you're doing a great job, but – yeah, thank you.

Laura Cantral: Nick?

Nick Battista: Thank you. Nick Battista with the Island Institute in Rockland, Maine. A quick question. Are the work groups that have been talked about a couple of different times today reflected in the capacity notes in the framework or are they otherwise publicly posted? Yes, they are?

Laura Cantral: [Inaudible] behind you.

Nick Battista: Sorry to make you run, John.

John Weber: They will be.

Nick Battista: Awesome. Very cool. The other question, I was wondering about objective five under the compatibility – not compatibility [inaudible]. Anyway, objective five under the effective decision making goal, that's improving coordination with local communities in the decision making processes. I suspect based on the update that John provided that not a lot of thought has gone into that and you guys have been doing an awful lot of other work. It seems like this is a really good place to ask for substantive input from the audience, from those people who have been coming up and asking to have a venue or otherwise provide input, either hosting a workshop or even asking the folks in the audience to tackle developing the work plan or fleshing out the work plan for this goal or starting to think about it. Might be a really good connection to some of the conversations we've been having earlier today. And also figuring out how to incorporate communities into the effective decision making goal might help with some of the political issues that seem to be arising in these conversations or probably will arise pretty quickly.

Laura Cantral: Sally?

Sally McGee: I'll pass, thanks.

Laura Cantral: Okay. Then Priscilla.

Priscilla Brooks: Priscilla Brooks, Conservation Law Foundation, and thank you very much for a second opportunity to comment on your deliberations on advisory bodies.

So first, on the technical advisory committee, I don't know why you wouldn't want to have a standing technical advisory committee who can advise on the overall approach that the RPB is taking to the technical pieces of the ocean plan. I appreciate the need to be flexible and to tap the kind of expertise that you need for very specific issues, but for example, John today put up a list of all the various projects that are going on around the ocean and coastal health objective and it's a tremendous amount of research. But my question is who is advising on that overall approach that you're taking and how is going – what technical advisors are going to advise on the synthesis of all these individual pieces of information? I think that's what a standing technical committee would do.

And again, not to use the expert word, but that could be very broad. It can be scientists. It can be individuals who just have some expertise about data. But I want to underscore again the need to have a consistent group of technical experts that can advise on the overall direction of the scientific aspects of the plan, and that's what a standing technical committee would do. And in doing so, it would increase the credibility of the planning process and provide essential support to the decisions that the RPB is going to make. So I want to again encourage you to do

that, to establish a standing technical committee, not to replace the vital working groups that you want to create and that are going to be made public and any other working group you want to create along the way. And also, the thought of creating a standing advisory committee down the road at the end of the planning process, come on. That doesn't make sense. I think you're going to do it, you really need to do it now. So that's on the standing technical committee.

On the stakeholder committee, I wondered if you could clarify, Betsy or Laura, what that forum looks like. Is it a group of stakeholders that are made up from the state advisory bodies plus additional folks? Is it just completely open to anybody that wants to come to a stakeholder meeting? What – could you just describe again what that is?

Betsy Nicholson: I think yes and yes. I think the idea was, it evolved, to pull from those state groups, to recognize gaps of important interests that we need to be present to make that a whole, make that a really comprehensive perspective, and then to make it open to others who want to join.

Priscilla Brooks: Okay. I think that, again, having a consistent set of stakeholders around such a table is really important. Not to say that it couldn't be open and additional folks could be there, whoever wanted to, but it's important to have a consistent thread throughout the process. That way you have a group, a large group, of stakeholders who knows what's going on, who's not constantly having to get up to speed, who can really provide some cogent advice. So on the idea of a forum, again, I would far prefer that you establish a standing stakeholder body, and I've made those comments and NEOAN members have made it very clear over and over again.

If there's going to be a standing-esque body called a forum, I want to recommend that it be highly structured, that the goals and objectives of the particular meeting are very clear, and that that meeting be structured in a way that enables stakeholders to deliberate questions and formulate advice back to the RPB. I think what we don't want is just simply a larger stakeholder meeting where information is presented and people make comments. That's not the same thing as deliberating together as a group of stakeholders from around the region and from different sectors deliberating and providing advice back to the RPB to consider.

Yesterday's meeting, it was informative. The conversation and discussion was great, but it was free ranging, and I think you'd be hard pressed to pull out a lot of really clear advice that came from the stakeholders because it was just – it was far reaching. So again, I think I want to underscore the need to provide a forum that enables stakeholders to deliberate a question and provide clear advice back to the RPB, recommendations back to the RPB. Okay, thanks.

Laura Cantral: All right, thank you. Thanks to all who offered your thoughts. That concludes this public comment session. And it's a few minutes before four o'clock. We're going to take a break, just a very short break till four o'clock so fast break, a little stretch break. We're going to come back at 4:00, and then we're going to revisit this topic of the two advisory functions, make

some decisions about that, wrap up, and make sure we understand what next steps coming out of this meeting are and heading into a busy summer and fall and a November meeting. So be right back at 4:00 and we'll finish this up.

BREAK

Laura Cantral: All right, we've got two decision points here that we would like to entertain. The first one is regarding how to meet the stakeholder advisory function, and then we'll talk about technical. With the stakeholder advisory role, what we have talked about is the creation of a forum, and to be clear, that would be drawing from the people who participate in the state-based advisory groups, seeking and encouraging participation from other perspectives that should be represented in a forum like that to ensure the broadest set of perspectives possible, and that it would be open for anyone who was interested to participate. It would be in conjunction with the November meeting. To start, we would be clear and write down what the role of it is, what its relationship to the RPB is, and that forum would be structured with a very clear agenda and set of objectives, topics, and manner of engaging in an interactive way that enables deliberation and input from the people who would be participating in the forum with the RPB.

So that's a summary, and before I say anything else, Matt has put his – did you put it up? No, that's all? Okay. So then I'd like to ask the RPB if there are any further thoughts or clarifications of what I just said, my summary of the idea. Then are you comfortable with and supportive of the proposal to create the stakeholder forum the way that I've just described it?

Unidentified: You said highly structured, right?

Laura Cantral: I did say highly structured. Okay. All right, so the RPB has reached consensus that this is how it will proceed. You can expect to hear more details about all that I just said about the nature and the relationship and the structure of the forum, and we will start planning for that to be incorporated as part of the November meeting. And while I'm speaking about the November meeting, let me just say that that will happen – we are targeting the 13th or 14th of November for that meeting, and we're finalizing the details about the location and the venue. It's likely that it will be in New Hampshire, but details will be available and posted and circulated just as soon as we can make them available.

All right. So let's now turn to the other topic for some further deliberation and hopefully a decision related to the technical advisory function. And the way the idea was framed before we took a break and did other business and then heard public comment was to move forward for now with the first option presented in the option paper which provides for a flexible approach, pulling from a roster of identified technical and subject matter experts, and giving further thought and reserving the right to create a formal standing technical advisory committee when the RPB knows a little bit more about what it is that it would need such a

standing committee to do, recognizing that there are lots of tensions here having to do with timing and the needs that the RPB has for a standing group to help it with synthesis of information and other functions that groups like that play. However, on balance, the sense of the table before we took that break was that that was an appropriate way to proceed. So with that framing, I'd like to open it up for some further discussion. Joe?

Reflect on public input and wrap-up remaining RPB business

Joe Atangan: I guess in some ways I'm seeking some level of clarification on what the technical advisory committee would be reviewing and providing to the RPB. And from my – from what I think I understand is that there are working groups that are going to provide – that are going to do a scientific examination or a technical examination of a specific issue and that this technical advisory committee would then review that work product and provide advice to the RPB on the quality or the value of the work product and that's what a kind of technical advisory committee would be doing.

I think one of the concerns that I heard is, well, you need some consistency and which is why folks are advocating for a standing technical advisory committee. My concern is that standing up a technical advisory committee for a group that has to address a broad set of issues across the entire region opens ourselves up for the possibility and a very real possibility that we end up with a standing committee with a two- or a three- year term that may, in the end, not be qualified to advise on some of the issues that might be popping up because some of the issues that pop up may, in fact, be very topical.

So again, I want to reiterate my support for a nimble technical advisory committee, can be very focused on the subject so we get the real – folks who have knowledge of the subject at hand to inform the RPB so they can make the type of decisions that we need to be making. I think one of the concerns was making sure that those who serve on that advisory committee are well known through the public. So I guess part of that stipulation on that flexible group would be to ensure that when we do select those panels, is that they are well publicized to the group – to the stakeholders and that they're well aware of who the folks are that are participating in that group, that there's transparency in the process of identifying who those panel members are.

And I think from the folks who submitted input, I think that's where the value of that roster is. Give us the names of the folks that you consider the pre-eminent folks for the subject at hand, whether it be marine mammals, whether it be birds, whether it be sector based, but I think that having this flexibility is absolutely critical to ensure that we are moving forward in this RPB process with the resources and the time constraints that are under us – that we're being subjected to.

Laura Cantral: Matt?

Matthew Nixon: I meant to have it up this time. I'm really on the fence about this. I can certainly appreciate Doug and several of the members of the public's points of view, and I can also appreciate the original proposal that was put on the table. I would suggest if the route that this group takes is to consent to the flexible framework that most of us around this table – I certainly can't vouch for everyone, but we are planners. We can at least begin in a certain timeframe to begin thinking about what is coming down the road. There's been a lot of mention of we don't know what we're going to have to talk about, but we do have a work plan as has been pointed out. We do have several of the projects that we know are coming. So I think we can at least begin to plan to sort of get at Doug's concern about we won't have to start from ground zero when a new project comes up. So we could begin to talk about the types of experts that we need to bring on board now at least to get a jump start on this, if that is indeed – if the loose framework is what we decide to adopt. Just a suggestion from a planner.

Laura Cantral: Kathryn?

Kathryn Ford: I'm not a planner, and I'm not an expert at all in all of these different topics. John did a great job describing all the different studies that are going to be done over the next year or so. And so I was just thinking, maybe we could use an existing regional science body of some sort to provide some peer review feedback on all of the studies that get done through these different initiatives. So, and maybe we could start to craft what that peer review would give us, like recommendations on how to use it for something.

So I, and I don't know if any of that's possible, but I'm looking at this list. We've got the economic assessment, we've got the lobster fishery study, the climate change indicator work, VMS work, charter boat work, recreational fishing work, maritime commerce work. I know a lot of the people that are working on this are experts in all of those fields, representing agencies and science, academics. But maybe it would be helpful to have an independent body that maybe already exists that could serve in that role, to just kind of give that peer review feedback to identify any real deficiencies, or gaps, or you know, clear ways in which the work should not be extended.

Laura Cantral: Any other thoughts on this?

Betsy Nicholson: Yeah. So you know, we were just chatting during the break. I do feel like there are kind of two tiers of technical work that are, we're embarking on, and we've been doing in terms of some of the work leading up to this point, that, you know, specific work groups that Nick has been talking about are absolutely essential in terms of getting into the weeds on specific topics. We need to do that now.

I think there is another tier of technical support that we need. You know, I'm a little on

the fence on this, too, in terms of when. But I think we need to do it at some point. I had mentioned earlier, you know, we're going to need to be building a science priorities plan. We're going to need someone to review that. That's a technical committee, or a peer review, an independent group. We're going to need that, whether it's, you know, but it might be next year. So for me, it's more a question of timing than it is whether or not we need some real feedback from that second tier of technical experts.

Richard Getchell: So you want to go ahead, Grover?

[Laughter.]

Grover Fugate: I was just going to say that maybe we can, as part of trying to move this ball forward down the field, it's been put before, if we have all of these technical work groups out, and we put the individuals that are on those work groups, because as I've said before, you know, when we've, working on, for instance, marine mammals, I think we've got about every marine mammal expert in the region working on that work group. But having said that, if we put those out, and if there are suggestions from others that are out there, that want to have others part of that work group, maybe we can open that work group up to other individuals. Maybe that's one way of trying to deal with this issue, so that it's not being viewed as we're getting a skewed opinion or an exclusive opinion, but we're getting an opinion from who these people think might be important for us to listen to.

Laura Cantral: Okay, Doug.

Doug Grout: So I hope the policy board, group here doesn't take my desire to have a standing work group, and feeling that that is an important technical advisory group to have, as something that would preclude the working groups from continuing to work forward. I think that work needs to be worked on right now. I agree with that. But I also think that this group needs to commit, from a policy standpoint, to developing this technical working group at this particular point in time. Because I know, from my own perspective, working and representing the counsel on this board, when we come time to make decisions, policy decisions, without that synthesizing of the information, which is going to, there is going to be lots and lots of information that's going to be brought forward, that's going to be brought forward to this board, I'm going to need to have some technical and scientific people that we have appointed that I feel confident in to give us advice on this water fountain-full of information that's technical information that's going to be brought to us. And without that, I'm going to feel very uncomfortable making decisions on this.

Please, don't stop the working groups there. They need to move forward with that. But I'm hoping there'll be enough people that, you know, we can see that we do, at some point in the future, we are going to need this technical working group, this broad overarching group that's going to provide technical information to us.

Laura Cantral: Glenn.

Glenn Normandeau: So I just have a question, actually, related to what is, what, let's say that whether it's now or a year from now, we develop, we have a technical attack. I'm trying to understand, you know, you're not going to have anyone on that, or enough people on that to look at all of the disciplines involved. And so in several things that I'm part of, you know, we have a bunch of committees for each topic. It could, one's wildlife, water fowl, whatever.

So are we talking about, when you talk about attack, are we talking about going out and finding a group of individuals willing to serve on that group, outside of this board, or are we talking about a subset of the RPB members, whose job it will be, when a particular discipline needs to be dealt with, to go find the experts that are going to report back, and then that, or are going to study it, and then that subcommittee reports back to the full RPB? I'm not exactly sure even what structure we're talking about here in terms of, because, you know, we're talking about everything from marine transportation, to marine mammals, to fisheries. So this is not, you're not going to put an attack together that has even remotely the breadth of expertise that covers these issues.

So are we talking about, as I said, a subset of this group that identifies individuals for specific topics when their time has come, or are we, I don't know what else the options would be. Are we looking to identify other people who will, because they have time on their hands, want to take this task on? And that's my question to whoever wants to answer it. I'm not sure, Doug, how things are set up over at, with, you know, the fisheries commissions and all. But —

Laura Cantral: You want to respond to that, Doug?

Doug Grout: Sure. At the counsel, they have a scientific and statistical committee, and that scientific and statistical committee, even though we manage well over two dozen species, they don't have expertise in those individual species, but they have expertise in social aspects, economic aspects, population dynamics, ecology. They have a wide variety of expertise that are in that committee. And so that's the type of thing that I would see.

Now, another potential way of looking at this is you could have standing technical committees for each aspect of this, standing technical committee for aquaculture, standing technical committee for fisheries issues, for technical aspects in habitat. That would be much, much larger than the, what I was envisioning there.

Glenn Normandeau: So I'm just trying to get who are these people going to be if we do this, inside or outside of this group, and if outside, who's going to go find them, and hire them, or pay them, or whatever. You know, I mean, you know, and something like AFOI or NEAFOI, which are groups of associations or state agencies, these people come from our own state

agency staffs. They're on state payroll, and we cover the costs of them to operate. I'm just, again, I'm trying to, like, what are going to do. I'm not being critical of the idea, by any means. I just want to understand in my head what would get created.

Doug Grout: Do you want me to answer it, or? My —

Laura Cantral: Go ahead [inaudible].

Doug Grout: My suggestion is we generally solicit people, and those people can come from academia, can come from non-governmental organizations, from the federal government. They can come from state governments. But they are all, every one of them that are on that group would be scientists or technical people.

Laura Cantral: Susan, why don't we go to you [inaudible].

Katie Lund: I just want to respond a little bit to Glenn's question. It seems to me that you don't know who you need until you know what you're asking them to do. And it, just following up on what Betsy and Doug are saying also, I think, I definitely see this as two tiers. It seems to me that, as I understand it from the working groups, we have a lot of incredibly talented and knowledgeable people working at the working group level.

To me, where I think we need some help is in integrating all of those different disciplines into the larger plan. I don't know that anybody could or should second guess all of the marine mammal experts that are working on the marine mammal work. But when the marine mammal work, you know, comes up against the transportation plan, well, you know, how do you fit all those pieces together.

And I don't know who we need at this point. I don't have disciplines in mind. But it seems to me we need help at kind of a higher level, integrating all of the scientific analysis and recommendations that are going to be coming our way. So that's my two cents.

Betsy Nicholson: All right. How about this?

(Laughter)

Betsy Nicholson: So how about, I think we have really broad consensus and support for moving forward with Option 1, and moving forward with these work groups that are topical, and that are in the weeds where we need experts. We've committed to being transparent about who is involved, getting that up on the web, and proceeding here.

And as much as it pains me to say this, how about we create a small group to explore about how to create a technical group that could help us with the integration piece of this, that

is not a reflection of every single species and ocean use that we're looking at, but rather systems-thinking people, data integrators. You know, these, I mean, I don't know exactly who they are, but it's a different kind of person that is thinking more holistically. Why don't we think a little bit more about what would be, what we think would be useful as we move forward? Because we have to be adaptive here. We don't have the answers right now.

I think we can commit to doing what we know we need now, and we can commit to seriously thinking about how to move forward with this other piece. So we're not necessarily waiting until November. We're really chewing on this more, because it's, you know, it's 4:40. I think we've heard a lot of really good comment. We're struggling up here because we really respect the comment we heard from you all and each other. And I think we need to think more about the structure and the who and the what of that higher level technical group that we've been speaking to. How about that?

Laura Cantral: Joe.

Joe Atangan: I just want to make sure I understand, because I'm a little — I'm a little slow right now. So —

(Laughter)

Laura Cantral: You got coffee.

Joe Atangan: Well, I guess what I'm struggling with is this, you want this, what's being proposed is to investigate this technical, a technical advisory committee that would help synthesize the various concerns and advice the RPB. Is that what I'm hearing here?

Betsy Nicholson: Right. So as we move down the road with a lot of big products that we've just contracted very smart people to do, that we are prepared to have assistance in looking at those products when we get to that, particularly to the integration part —

Joe Atangan: Okay. Because the other concern that I have is, you know, we heard a clamoring from the folks in the audience about a technical, a hybrid solution type of deal, and I don't want to peel that scab off again here. But —

(Laughter)

Joe Atangan: — but I think it's important to solicit, to go back to them as well, to solicit, okay, based on this new vision for what this standing advisory committee would do, is okay, who would you put on there? Who are the types of folks that you would want included? It doesn't have to be by name, but the type of expertise that they would expect or maybe call, that they would envision to be participants in this technical advisory committee.

I think, you know, as I sit back here and listen to them, I think there is a disconnect in what the RPB views as a technical advisory committee. I think, you know, what Doug articulated here, you know, you've got economists, you've got scientific guys. And in my mind, it's got to be broader than that. So I really need to, I'm, because there was an overwhelming, I guess, desire for a standing technical group from the folks in the audience, I'd kind of like to get their input, maybe provided through email to the staff here, on what they envision, you know, what are the qualifications, what are the qualities that they would like in somebody that would be a member of that group, so that we can have a, so that we, as an RPB, have a better understanding of what their expectations are, and is it consistent with what we, as an RPB, think that member should be as well.

Laura Cantral: Bruce.

Bruce Carlisle: So I'm, with all due respect, Chris, I'm going to channel your boss, Commissioner Burack. And he said this morning that form follows function. And I go back to the what, what specifically are we asking this technical, or expert, or other group to do. The data integration thing's a little fuzzy to me, and I'm not sure exactly how much data integration we're going to be doing. Well, hold that thought.

There's data integration, which is what, if you are developing a distribution of abundance, you know, maps and information about whatever [inaudible] species you're doing, we've got experts who are doing that. We've got the best experts in the area. If we don't have them, by all means, let's bring them into that mix.

If we're going to start to overlay that information, and start to think collectively as government about what that means for our decision-making, we need to come up with a little bit more specific questions, of which we would be asking, or we feel that we lack expertise on. If it's more general, just sort of touch point guidance, let's be specific about that.

But I'm sort of struggling with the what and the who. I mean, we can get a bunch of people to sort of gather around, and you can bounce stuff off them. I'm not sure how much utility that would be, but if that's what we're looking for, let's be specific about that.

Laura Cantral: John.

John Weber: So I wanted to make a point about timing. So when Kathryn, when you were running down the list of projects that we went, in an overview — what?

Laura Cantral: Could you speak up, please?

John Weber: Sorry. I wanted to make a point about timing. When Kathryn, you were reflecting on the list of projects that we gave an overview on, recognize that all of those projects, it's not as

if those projects are going to be spitting out products come September. Heck, no. They're going to, and most of them are at least a year away. So in terms of, you know, just that aspect of it, when would we have stuff that would be ripe enough for people who we would ask you to think about from an integration standpoint, or whatever else the question is standpoint. You know, some of those products are not even at an early draft form. It is going to take time to develop those. So I would just commend, you know, point that out to folks as we're thinking about this.

Laura Cantral: Doug.

Doug Grout: So, I appreciate Betsy's suggestion there, and clearly, because I've been the person that's been so passionate about this issue, I'd be willing to chair a committee for it, if you'd like, or participate in the committee. But I'd like to find out before we move down this as a potential option, because I'm hearing a lot of people on this board that are uncomfortable with going with a technical advisory committee, is there anybody else that would be willing to join me on this committee?

Grover Fugate: Joe would.

(Laughter)

Joe Atangan: Grover's always got my back.

(Laughter)

Doug Grout: Don't feel pressure. Don't feel pressure. You know, I just don't want to, if this isn't something that other people on this board believe in as passionately as I do, then, you know, there is no, it isn't worth moving down this. But if the committee thinks this is, or the board, the planning body, excuse me, feels that this is something that's worth looking at, then, you know, I'm here to help move this forward, see if we have something that's viable to move forward. But I'll listen to the rest of the people here.

Laura Cantral: So do you want to go, Joe, and then we'll go to Matt?

Joe Atangan: Yeah. I don't think there's a disagreement about whether or not to have a technical advisory committee. I think we're in agreement that we need one. The real question is, is do you want a standing permanent, no, semi-permanent one with a specific term, where you're tied into the representation that's on that technical advisory committee, or whether you have a flexible organization that can tap into a pool of expert advisors, that can provide you with the right advice. You know, I don't want a cardiologist giving me advice on my brain functions. You know, I want the right expert giving me the advice.

And so that's why it comes down to, do we have a standing group, okay, that may or may not have the expertise giving us advice, or do we set up a pool of experts, with inputs from the folks who have submitted, you know, who have expressed an interest in having these technical advisory committee that we can pull from to give the advice appropriate for the subject at hand. And we don't know what that subject is just yet.

Like John said, some of these work products aren't due out for another year. Bruce specifically commented on the what. What is it that we're getting advice on? I'm just a little bit leery about setting up an advisory committee before we know the what.

So I don't think there's a disagreement here on a technical advisory committee. Giddy-up. Let's go. The question is, is do we set up one with a specific term and identify experts before we know what it is that we need expertise on?

Laura Cantral: Matt?

Matthew Nixon: Betsy, your proposal is to consider this, and I think that's what Doug was responding to. Being a lowly alternate, I would be more than happy to volunteer Kathleen [Laden's] time on this.

[Laughter]

Matthew Nixon: I am almost certain that she would then delegate to other people. But Doug, to answer your question, I think this is something that, I mean, you wouldn't be alone in this charge, I don't think.

Betsy Nicholson: And I think what we're trying to do is commit to investigating the who and the what to help us make this decision. We're not committing to forming a standing body.

Laura Cantral: And the form, and the function, and the structure, and the role —

Betsy Nicholson: We're just not there yet.

Laura Cantral: — [inaudible].

Betsy Nicholson: We're not there yet. So —

Laura Cantral: Kathryn, did you have something else?

Kathryn Ford: Oh, I just wanted to follow up on something Joe said. Another idea, too, is to have the standing body, the technical advisory committee, that is actually responsible for pulling the experts together, and answering the questions that we have. And that might give

some of the people in the region more incentive to participate, because they could actually say, "I'm on the technical advisory committee for the New England Regional Planning Body."

I agree, we're still at this chicken and egg thing. It's hard to know. But I would like to keep it on the agenda, because I think that this, certainly in the counsel process, it seems to have been an incredibly valuable role. I think there are more than, I mean, definitely more than one technical advisory committee in the counsel process. So I'd like us to continue to explore this role.

And Matt beat me to it. I was going to volunteer Paul Diodati.

(Laughter)

Kathryn Ford: But I don't think you'd be alone.

Laura Cantral: Okay. So anyone else? I'm going to summarize here, and see where we are. So I think I am going to summarize it this way. I'd like to know whether you all are supportive of an approach as described by Betsy, that involves moving forward with Option 1, that's a flexible approach, drawing upon an identified list of experts as needed, being very transparent about who those experts are, and encouraging suggestions about other people who should be involved in the process as it evolves. So that's the first part of the equation.

And then the second part is to have a small group, and we've got some people who volunteered, to explore the prospect of creating a technical advisory committee, the standing nature of that or not, you know, explore all of the options and the pros and cons around those, including, as Bruce pointed out, you know, figuring out the form and the function, the who, the what, the structure, the role, the relationship to the RPB, all of those sorts of things that, as Betsy said, you're just not quite there yet, and it needs further thought. And so a small group that includes Doug, and Kathleen and Paul, as support by Matt and Kathryn, and —

Mel Cote: You can sign us up.

Laura Cantral: — and Mel will put some thought into this, and bring back some ideas. So are you supportive of that as a way to proceed from this meeting?

Many: Yes.

Laura Cantral: Yes. Okay. All right. So have a consensus decision about how to proceed with technical advisory function for the RPB. And in the last remaining minutes, I am ready to summarize outcomes and next steps, unless there is something else, co-leads, that we need to do before we adjourn.

Okay. [Inaudible] all right. So thanks everyone for hanging in, a long day. We, I would

suggest, met all of the objectives laid out before us for today. And let me summarize a few things. I'm going to go through them organized by the goals, as laid out in the framework.

So with regard to the Healthy Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems Goal, we talked about outcomes from the natural resources workshop yesterday, and there will be topic-specific technical committees that are getting to work on the specifics, as outlined in that workshop. And Bruce has left, but I know that he remembers that he volunteered to work with a group, and I don't have my notes, of others who volunteered to assist him to look, it was the co-leads, that's right, to draft some, develop some options for decisions related to the 2A, B, and C in the list of natural resource decisions that Nick presented this morning. The RPB will also be exploring the use of webinars and other kinds of outreach to keep the conversation and the education effort going forward, before going on and the roll-up to the November RPB meeting.

With regard to effective decision-making, the conversations with agencies are continuing. Draft ideas to implement measures to enhance public participation, the best practices within existing authorities, and getting public input, that's also in motion. And then finally, a decision to develop a stakeholder forum, as part of the November meeting, and I won't repeat all of the dimensions of how that will work, except to say that it will be structures and topic-specific.

And then with regard to technical advisory role, we will, the RPB will move forward with the flexible approach, the Option 1 presented in the paper, and a small group with Doug Grout and others assisting will explore options to come back to you with regarding a technical advisory committee.

And then finally, finally, we had lots of very good stakeholder input, as always, and thank you to all of you who made those contributions, and who stuck it out with us to the bitter end. Much appreciated. I think that that's all that I have to summarize or contribute to this meeting for now, so I will just say my thanks, and turn it over to the co-leads for any final words.

Richard Getchell: I'd just like to thank everybody for coming and their attendance, and also like to thank John and, you know, Nick, and everybody in the way this was set up, and having that natural resource work group. I thought that was very beneficial.

Betsy Nicholson: Thanks to Laura and the Meridian team as well. And for your patience on all sides of this table. This is hard. This is really messy. And we're moving forward, and it's, you know. Hang in there, and thank you.

Laura Cantral: All right. It's a wrap. Thank you.

[End of Recording]