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May 3, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NMFS Employees

FROM: Rolland A. Schmitten
Nancy Foster

SUBJECT: April Transition Board Meeting

The Transition Board (Board) addressed a very ambitious agenda at the April 18-21 meeting. The Board members have continued to demonstrate the commitment and focus needed to develop consensus on contentious issues that will guide agency operations in the future. We are pleased to say that the operation of this Board is meeting all of our expectations as a tough, productive, decision-making forum that will have a major influence on the management of the agency.

The following sections are highlights from the meeting. The specific details will be documented as formal operating agreements or agency policies and distributed to all Directors at a later date.

APPOINTMENTS

The SES appointments will be made effective as soon as the new headquarters (HQ) structure is in place and DOC approval is obtained, as appropriate. Although we have set a target date of October 1, 1995, we will work closely with the NOAA Human Resources Management (HRM) Office to establish the offices as soon as possible. The Transition Board will remain in place until the new structure is implemented.

The SES appointments we are recommending under the new structure are:

Science and Technology

Michael Sissenwine

**Operations, Management
and Information**

**Recruit - In the interim
Charles Karnella will have the
lead for designing the office**

**Sustainable Fisheries
(previously F/CM)**

Gary Matlock

Protected Resources

William Fox

Habitat Conservation

**Recruit - In the interim
Tom Bigford will have the
lead for designing the office**

Field Operations

**No Changes; NER selection
in process**

Dick Schaefer, currently the Director of the Office of Conservation and Management, has been asked to serve as the NMFS liaison with recreational fishing interest groups. He and his team will enhance state-federal cooperative efforts and further improve our working relationship with these interests.

The other current Office Directors (ODs) not named to an OD position in the new structure will be reassigned at a future date.

OTHER MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

The NMFS Industry Liaison will be Linda Chaves who is currently Chief of the Trade Services Division in the Office of International Affairs. The Enforcement position will be recruited. Gary Gailbreath will be acting in the interim.

HEADQUARTERS RESTRUCTURING

Board recommendations have been approved for all the program/function transfers from the HQ offices being restructured. In general, employees will be transferred with their functions. However, in cases where Division and functions are split among two or more offices, the individual reassignment will be determined after the new staffing plans are reviewed and approved. As mentioned earlier, the target date for establishing the new HQ office structure is October 1. The following are the approved program/function realignments to the new office structure:

Operations, Management and Information-

In addition to general administrative and budget functions, this office will include:

- IT-95 operations and long-range planning [RE2]
- Local and area wide networks [RE2]
- Core Strategic Planning Staff
- Transition Board Staff
- Fisheries Inspection Service [IS4]

Science and Technology-

- Fisheries Statistics [RE1]
- Research Oversight [RE3]
- Ship Requirements (Days at Sea) [RE3]
- Scientific Publication Office (SPO) [RE2]
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) [IA1]
- Scientific bilateral agreements [IA2]

Protected Resources-

- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) [IA1]
- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Resources (CCAMLR) [IA1]
- Int'l Whaling Commission (IWC) [IA1]
- Trade and environment [IA3]
- International sea turtle negotiations [IA1]

Sustainable Fisheries-

- Financial assistance programs [IS1]
- S-K grants program [IS3]
- Trade promotion [IA3]
- Fisheries management bilateral agreements [IA1]
- United Nations (UN) actions [IA1]
- Int'l Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) [IA1]
- Donut Hole negotiations [IA1]
- Salmon treaty [IA1]

The name of the current Office of Conservation and Management will be changed to the Office of Sustainable Fisheries. The Board believes this name to be a more accurate description of the program and oversight responsibilities of the office, and to identify more clearly the priority for sustainable fisheries in the NOAA/NMFS Strategic Plan.

OPERATING AGREEMENTS FOR THE REGIONAL, COASTAL AND NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARDS

These Boards will be institutionalized within the agency. The Board meetings will be regularly scheduled and principals are expected to attend. The active support and participation in these Boards will be a factor in the performance evaluation of the senior managers involved. The following are brief summaries of the Board memberships and purposes:

Regional Boards

Members - Chair-Regional Administrator (RA), Science Director (SD), plus a balanced representation of regional and center managers, including enforcement.

Purpose - Address key day-to-day regional issues; set regional priorities; develop regional operating plan; conduct program reviews; and develop budget strategies.

Coastal Boards

Members - RAs, SDs, HQ ODs, Special Agents in Charge (SACs), and

GC representatives. The chair will be a RA and the co-chair will be a SD from a different region. The chair and co-chair will serve on the Executive Board and will rotate on an annual basis. The first chair and co-chair will be appointed by the Assistant Administrator.

Purpose - Ensure coast-wide integration of management, science and enforcement; address transboundary issues; develop coastal budget initiatives and coast-wide program plans; and ensure consistency across regions for agency management (HRM, etc.) and programs (public education, regulations, law enforcement, etc.).

National Science Board

Members - Science and Technology Director (chair) and all SDs.

Purpose - Develop national science policy; address national science issues and recommend corrective actions to Board as appropriate; and ensure the integrity and quality of NMFS science are maintained.

OPERATING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ODs AND THE FIELD

The purpose of this agreement is to clarify the "tasking" authority within the agency and the process to resolve tasking-related problems. In summary, ODs will deal directly with RAs and SDs for day-to-day operational issues. All major issues especially those requiring significant staff work will be tasked through the AA and DAA. If a conflict cannot be resolved between the OD and the field Director, the issue must be "jointly" elevated to the AA/DAA.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT RETREAT

A retreat for all SES and selected senior managers will be held in the Washington, D.C. area in July. This meeting will follow the scheduled Board meeting during the same week. The purpose of the retreat is to discuss the details of the management and structure changes, and to kick off the formal implementation of the Regional, Coastal and National Science Boards.

CHARTER TEAM BRIEFINGS: The Strategic Planning and Budget Process Charter Team briefings were excellent. It is clear that empowering our employees to improve the way we do business is working. We look forward to the briefing from the other Charter Teams.

STRATEGIC PLANNING CHARTER TEAM (SPCT) - The SPCT presented a conceptual overview of the Foundations of a NMFS Strategic Planning System. The presentation focused on the framework for the planning system, building the infrastructure, obtaining stakeholder input, setting direction, developing strategies, allocating resources, and managing the process. The Board agreed to the institutionalizing of a strategic planning process in NMFS. This would entail establishing a core strategic planning group separate from the Budget Division within the OMI, designating "planning cells" in each region and HQ office, developing a profile for a Regional Planner position, and developing a training proposal for the strategic planning process. The Board

approved the funding requested to provide the required training for the strategic training process. The SPCT will work jointly with the Budget Charter Team to develop specific details for a FY 1996 operating plan and a FY 1998 budget formulation process.

BUDGET PROCESS CHARTER TEAM (BPCT) - The BPCT presented a status report to the Board which included detailed overviews of a proposed Management Information System (MIS) and an agency-wide Financial Report System (FRS), and a conceptual model for the budget operations process.- The Board agreed that funding should be provided to conduct a MIS workshop to further develop the MIS used in the NOAA Science Review. As an electronic data base management tool, the MIS will have a variety of uses, one of which being an automated Current Year Operating Plan which is a major end-product for the BPCT. The Board also agreed that the requested funding should be provided to implement an agency-wide FRS by October 1, 1995. The FRS in the Northeast Science Center will be the adopted system with the necessary modifications to insure that proper funds control and mandatory reporting requirements to NOAA are maintained.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held on May 23-26, 1995, at the Sheraton Reston Hotel, Reston, Virginia.

[2] From: + Account Manager 6/2/95 2:27PM (10360 bytes: 1 ln)
To mailing list: #All NMFS-HQ Users
Subject: Transition Board Meeting

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MEMORANDUM FOR: All NMFS Employees

FROM: Rolland A. Schmitt
Nancy Foster

SUBJECT: Transition Board Meeting

This memorandum summarizes the results of the Transition Board meeting held on May 23-26 in Reston, Virginia.

House and Senate Budget Resolutions

As you are aware, both the House and Senate Budget Resolutions propose the elimination of the Department of Commerce (DOC) and significant reductions to NOAA that could impact NMFS programs. The "Chrysler Bill" which is expected to be introduced in the House on June 6 specifically proposes the downsizing and restructuring of NMFS by terminating some programs and transferring others to the Departments of Interior (science programs) and Agriculture (seafood inspection) and the Coast Guard (enforcement). Doug Hall, Deputy Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, met with the Board on Wednesday, May 24 to discuss the potential impact of these Congressional actions, and NOAA's strategy to deal with this serious situation. Mr. Hall indicated that the NOAA leadership would fight to keep NOAA as a unit if the Department is eliminated. In a Washington Post article printed on May 26, Mr. Hall made it clear that NOAA has no "optional" programs, and that severe budget cuts will result in the loss of basic services to the American public including hurricane, tornado and flood warnings, highly accurate weather data for airlines and agriculture, and protection of imperiled fish and marine mammal populations. He specifically pointed out the worrisome prospects that making the wrong decision could have on the Nation's \$3.5 billion per year fishing industry. The Board greatly appreciated Mr. Hall's visit and his support for NMFS.

In the past, NMFS has survived major reduction proposals by the Administration. This time, however, the proposals are coming from both Houses of Congress. Given the Congressional actions to date, it appears that the DOC, NOAA and NMFS could undergo major changes over the next few years beginning in FY 1996. We are doing all we can to ensure that members of Congress understand the importance of our mission and the impacts that discontinuing or fragmenting our programs will have on the Nation's fishing industry and the economy. We firmly believe, however, that there will always be a Fisheries Service in the Federal Government. We will keep you abreast of new developments as Congress progresses with its deliberations.

Charter Team Briefings - The Board greatly appreciates the work being accomplished by the Charter Teams. The briefings to date have been impressive, and the dedication and hard work is clearly evident by the well researched issues and the sound recommendations being presented. All employees should maintain a keen interest on the Charter Team activities as they will definitely affect the way we do business from the Headquarters Offices to the labs and divisions in the field. The following is a summary of the Charter Team briefings and Board decisions and responses:

NOAA Support Services (NSS) - The NSS Team's recommendations to establish an Administrative Effectiveness Board and initiate NMFS/OA Collaborative Sessions were adopted by the Board. Although the Board is supportive of the Team's recommendations to establish an HQ Grants Office and a Grants Council, further discussions were requested. The Team also prepared a list of nine delegations of authority issues which the Board deferred discussions to a later date. The NSS team also volunteered to analyze the administrative staffing requirements for all FMCs, but the Board decided to assign this task to the FTE Streamlining Task Group already created from Board members. A guidance memorandum to all Regional, Science and Office Directors will be coming out soon to coordinate this effort.

Agency Image (AI) - The Board accepted, with caveats, the AI Team's recommendations regarding agency statement, Customer Service Agreement, informal name change, motto, logo, support for Public Affairs and Congressional Affairs staffs in Fisheries, and support for a FISH-type (24 hour, 7 day a week information access mechanism for the customers) system by Region. The caveats relate to the Congressional actions which could affect the agency to varying degrees. The questions to be answered are how and when would implementation be most effective, and what mechanisms should we employ? The Board wants further discussions on the proposals on the staffing requirements, the logo, and the motto.

Information Management (IM) - The IM Team discussed some important issues relative to splitting vs. consolidating information management functions within the new Headquarters structure. The Board has taken the team's recommendations under review, but has requested more information and analysis. The Board recommended that the team include Mark Holliday in the analysis process.

Budget Process (BP)/Strategic Planning (SP) - The BP/SP Charter Teams, responding to a task assigned by the Board at the April meeting, gave a joint briefing on interim processes for the allocation of FY 1996 budget appropriations and the formulation of the FY 1998 budget estimate. The Board accepted the joint-BP/SP Teams' recommendations with only a minor change to the briefing schedule for the Regional Administrator and Office Directors base program/budget presentation. John Oliver was tasked with developing the specific criteria and guidance. A memorandum will be sent to all Directors by Friday, June 2.

Headquarters Restructuring Plans

The proposed functional statements and organization diagrams for the new HQ Offices -- Operations, Management and Information; Science and Technology; Sustainable Fisheries; Protected Resources; and, Habitat Conservation -- were reviewed by the Board. Comments and suggested changes were provided to the appropriate HQ Directors to consider in revising their plans which are due on Friday, June 9. Final HQ restructuring decisions will be made by Friday, June 16.

Regional Structures - With the approval of the three program (SF, PR, and HC) HQ office structure, the Board addressed the question of whether the field structure should relate programmatically to the HQ structure. The Board developed a set of criteria and asked each Regional Director in conjunction with the Science Director to develop

a proposed field structure consistent with this criteria. These options will be discussed by the senior managers at the July Leadership Forum. A guidance memorandum will be coming out soon.

High Priority Operational Issues - The Board reviewed a long list of issues and problems affecting the agency and decided on the top five to be addressed at future meetings:

- o Requirements and impacts of Congressional actions on DOC/NOAA/NMFS -- This will be an ongoing agenda item until the fate of the agency is certain. As stated earlier, we will keep you abreast of new developments.
- o General Counsel Relationships -- This topic will be discussed by the Regulatory Effectiveness Charter Team at the June Board meeting.
- o FMP Priorities -- This topic will also be discussed by the Regulatory Effectiveness and External Interfaces Charter Teams at the June Board meeting.
- o Laboratory Reviews -- When the NOAA Science Review is released, a team consisting of the NMFS Senior Scientist and Science Directors will present the NMFS position relative to the report findings and recommendations.
- o By-Catch Policy -- Mike Sissenwine will pull together all agency materials on by-catch, and consider workshop options for the Board at the July meeting.

June 20-23 Transition Board Agenda - to be held at the Sheraton Premiere in Tyson's Corner, Virginia. The final agenda will be distributed to all Directors a week in advance of the meeting. The following are tentative agenda items:

- o Charter Team Briefings -- seven teams are expected to give presentations
- o Development of Charter Team Implementation Plan (Decision Matrix)
- o Leadership Forum Readiness (Senior Managers' Retreat)
- o Enforcement Strategic Plan Review
- o Progress Report on Development of Field Structure Options