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## **NOAA's Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary seeks advisory council applicants**

NOAA's Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary is seeking applicants for four primary seats on its advisory council. The council ensures public participation in sanctuary management and provides advice to the sanctuary superintendent.

"Sanctuary advisory councils have proven to be an invaluable source of advice and input by members of the community regarding the management of our national marine sanctuaries, America's ocean treasures," said George P. Schmahl, sanctuary superintendent. "We are excited about the role our advisory council has played in managing sanctuary resources and we look forward to working with new members."

The sanctuary is accepting applications for the following open seats: recreational diving, commercial fishing and diving operations (two seats).

Candidates are selected based on their expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying, community and professional affiliations, and views regarding the protection and management of marine resources. The diving operations seat has been expanded to include dive operators, dive shop owners/managers, dive travel organizers and dive club/organization representatives. Applicants who are chosen should expect to serve a three-year term.

The advisory council consists of 16 primary members representing a variety of public interest groups. It also includes six governmental seats representing the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the United States Coast Guard, NOAA Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries Law Enforcement, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Applications are due September 30. To receive an application kit, or for further information, please contact Shelley Du Puy education outreach director, via email at [Shelley.DuPuy@noaa.gov](mailto:Shelley.DuPuy@noaa.gov); by phone at 409-621-5151 ext. 106; or by mail at NOAA Flower Garden Banks NMS, 4700 Ave. U, Bldg. 216, Galveston, TX 77551. Application kits can also be downloaded from the sanctuary's website at: <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov/advisorycouncil/councilnews.html>.

Located 115 miles off the Texas/Louisiana coast, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary includes the northernmost coral reefs in the continental United States, sponge communities and other essential habitats for a variety of species.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

On the Web:

Flower Garden Bank National Marine Sanctuary: <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov>

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

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