

Making Conservation Happen:

Using Your Existing Resources to Have Your Voice Heard



Pretty Picture Intended to Reiterate That You Have This & Others Don't



Agenda

- Engagement Strategies and Tactics
- The Mystic Aquarium Story: Campaign for the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument
- View From the Receiving End: Zoos and Aquariums Making a Difference
- Strategies to Help Zoos and Aquariums Activate their Audiences on Public Policy Issues
 - Messaging Findings from The Ocean Project/IMPACTS Research and Innovative Solutions Grants+ Program
 - Engagement Models
 - Audience Engagement Tips
 - Zoo and Aquarium Examples
 - *Annual AZA Congressional Reception and Lobby Day*

Engagement Strategies & Tactics

Tom Adams

Policy Advisor

The Ocean Project



Progressions in Engagement

ADVOCACY FUNNEL

Think of your advocacy strategy as a funnel. With a clear strategy, you can move both your high-value and low-value action takers to take more meaningful action.



Foundational Elements to Zoo & Aquarium Advocacy & Engagement

Resources

- Guests who view you as a trusted source of information
- Staff, volunteers, Trustees, donors and vendors
- Programs – shows, demonstrations, keeper chats, lectures and fundraising events
- Public relations – social, free and earned media
- Other facilities – entrance/exit, theaters, food services, grounds
- “Evaluation culture” allows you to measure the effectiveness of your message and response rate to a specific ask

The Mystic Aquarium Story:

Campaign for the Northeast Canyons & Seamounts National Marine Monument

Katie Cubina

Senior Vice President

Mission Programs



Getting there... Public Policy



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Forum: A monumental opportunity for the Atlantic Ocean



Stephen M. Coan

By Stephen M. Coan

POSTED: 2019/16, 6:47 PM EDT | UPDATED: 1 WEEK, 3 DAYS AGO | 0 COMMENTS

In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt said, "There can be nothing in the world more beautiful than the Yosemite, the groves of giant sequoias and redwoods, the Canyon of the Colorado, the Canyon of the Yellowstone, the Three Tetons and our people should see to it that they are preserved for their children and their children's children." It is easy to believe that if he were alive today, Roosevelt would look just beyond the horizon of Long Island, New York, where he lived on Sagamore Hill, and call for the same conservation of our Atlantic Ocean.

Numerous scientists, leading conservation organizations and educational groups are calling for the protection of the Coral Canyons and Seamounts area of the Atlantic, off the coast of Cape Cod. It includes five undersea canyons along the southern side of Georges Bank and four nearby seamounts – the only ones in the U.S. Atlantic Ocean – that support a remarkable array of ocean life. The seamounts (Bear, Mytilus, Physalia and Retriever) and the submarine canyons (Oceanographer, Lydonia, Gilbert, Nygren and Heezen) are home to diverse and fragile deep sea corals as well as a menagerie of associated species, including deep sea fish and sharks.

The dynamic ocean environment of the canyons and seamounts attracts other ocean wildlife, including whales, sea turtles, sharks, tunas, and sea birds. A number of these species are iconic to the region. Long valued by local Native American tribes, today these species are among those that support New England's vibrant whale watching, recreational fishing, and seabird viewing industries.

Getting there...

Public Education & Outreach





THANK YOU, PRESIDENT OBAMA

FOR PROTECTING MORE OCEAN THAN ANY PRESIDENT IN U.S. HISTORY

Your bold actions to create the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and expand the existing Papahānaumokuākea and Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monuments will help assure resiliency to climate change and the health of ocean ecosystems globally. Your ocean legacy will protect valuable marine wildlife as well as native cultures in over 850,000 square miles of our ocean. Future generations will benefit from your vision and historic action to protect the planet.



THANK YOU, PRESIDENT OBAMA, FOR CREATING THE FIRST MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT IN THE ATLANTIC

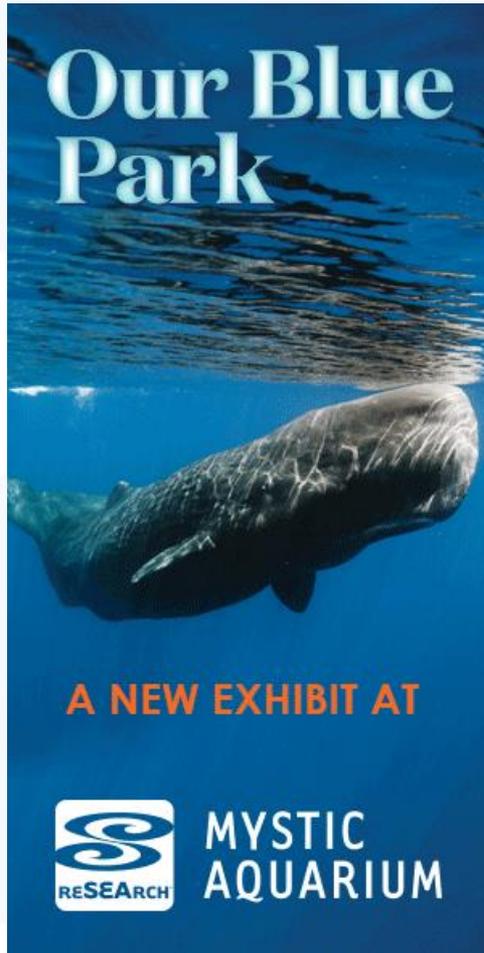
Your bold action will increase the ocean's resilience to climate change, inspire other world leaders to take action, and protect deep-sea canyons and underwater mountains teeming with the life that helps support New England's ocean and coastal economies.



Mystic Aquarium's Role Post Designation

- Scientific Expertise -- inform Management Plan
- Research and Exploration: Scientific Expeditions to the Monument
- Exhibit development at Mystic Aquarium
- Education and Outreach to formal and informal educational audiences
- Convener on public policy issues related to ocean protection and New England fisheries

Our Blue Park Exhibit



View From the
Receiving End:

*Zoos and
Aquariums Making
a Difference*

Mark Antoniewicz
Director of Communications
Hip Hop Caucus

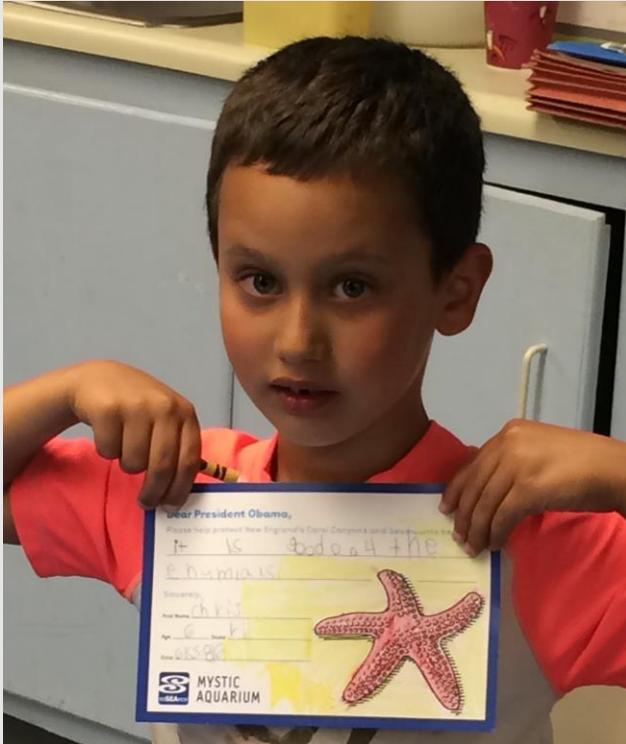
Formerly Served on
President Obama's
Public Engagement Team
for Environmental Issues



Zoos & Aquariums: New and Dynamic Voice

- National groups had not adequately developed grassroots support for Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument
- While number of opponents were not large, they were organized and vocal
- Mystic's ability and willingness to explain the science and significance of the resource provided an "independent" intellectual counterbalance to opposition
- It also gave decision-makers and the public a neutral and trusted source of information they could use to justify support
- Nailed down the Connecticut delegation and help neutralize Rhode Island delegation

Impact of 2016 Engagement Campaign



- Told us there was broad public support – Mystic, “vote” for MPAs campaign at 8 SEA LIFE Centers, other zoos, aquariums, museums
- Along with other groups, resulted in a wave of positive local media coverage that showed more support for marine monument
- Brian Deese (President Obama’s Climate Czar) visited Mystic. Saw the engagement effort and told us all about it
- We couldn’t have done it “without those meddling kids!” – Sea Youth Rise Up delegation

Breaking the Silence: Engagement to Increase Participation

- Diversifying the call for action with a unique and trusted voice for
- Moving hearts and minds with stories and familiarity
- “Either you shape the policy or let the policy shape you”

Strategies to Help Zoos & Aquariums Activate their Audiences on Public Policy Issues

Tom Adams

Policy Advisor

The Ocean Project



Innovative Solutions Grants+ Program

2014

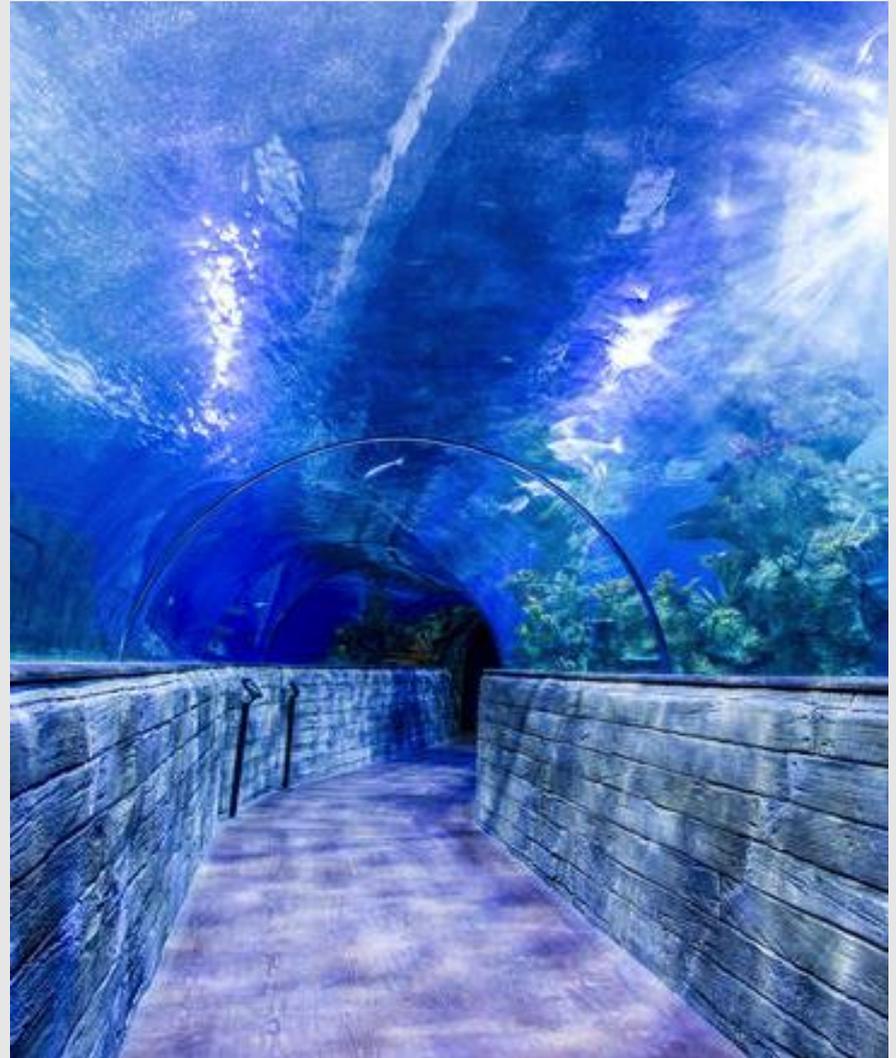
- New England Aquarium
- North Carolina Aquariums
- Oregon Coast Aquarium

2015

- Florida Aquarium
- Philadelphia Zoo
- Riverbanks Zoo and Garden
- Woodland Park Zoo

2016

- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
- National Aquarium
- St. Louis Zoo
- Woodland Park Zoo (Extension)



Core Findings from The Ocean Project/IMPACTS Research

- Aquarium and zoo visits, as well as newsworthy events, can activate an underlying concern for the ocean and its animals
- **When visiting, people expect, trust and appreciate information about ocean conservation**
- People are much more interested in how to be part of the solutions, much less in the problems
- People are much more inspired by emotional stories about animals and places, much less by facts and figures about "the ocean"
- Youth (13-25) tend to be most interested and most willing, with potential to influence others
- "Walking the talk" resonates with audiences, especially when positioned as "together we can"
- There is an opportunity to integrate Internet and social media into visitor experiences



“Basic Cable” Advocacy and Engagement Model

- In person presentation in high visitor locations that include quality visual information (movie, poster, etc.)
- Tabling in designated area to capture guests and “make an ask” immediately after they leave a presentation
- To reinforce the information and tell the story again, conduct a short survey (5 questions max) asking guests if they saw the presentation, did they respond to the ask, etc.

Webinar Tease! In June webinar we will release the findings of three pilot projects that used a similar approach on fisheries management

A La Carte Expansion of Basic Advocacy Engagement Model

In addition to "Basic Cable" model:

- Use your animals to deliver message on your social media channels – every “silent movie” posted is a missed opportunity
- Education and community outreach staff incorporates message points into their presentations as much as practical
- Use your newsletter, magazine, and other in-house communications
- Media events using exhibit as backdrop to highlight an issue impacting that species
- Use membership appeals as a message delivery tool as another reason to “join your team”
- If applicable, highlight operational and infrastructure improvements you’ve made that help address the issue on which you are engaging. (e.g., rain barrels & water conservation)

(continued)

A La Carte Expansion of Basic Advocacy Engagement Model *(continued)*

- Turn staff and volunteers into advocates
- Use lecture series and award ceremonies to focus on a specific issue
- Invite/cultivate elected officials and staff for tours/visits:
 - *Tours for them and/or staff and try to get them there during your high season so they "see their voters"*
 - *To distinguish you from other voices engaging on the issue, provide them with the economic impact stats and information about the challenge of your unique business*
 - *Turn it into a media event by giving them an award...even if it's a "single use" honor*
- Be present while absent by providing "wall art" (branded photo of elected official's animal encounter, poster, etc.)
- Build relationships with politicians in their formative years
- Utilize staff, Trustees and other supporters' relationships with public officials

The Target is Likely Smaller than you Think

- **Zoos and aquariums have a head start** – people come to you, they trust you, and 75% of your guests want you to tell them what they can do to make a difference
- **Common mistake is that too many people are targeted** – be disciplined in planning scope of engagement effort
- **Engage visitors in high traffic areas** – use focused educational messages with “an ask”

Sometimes a Small Crowd Makes a Big Difference

- Congressional offices draft specific language to answer constituents after 15-25 contacts within a week or about a dozen phone calls a day for several days
- Heart-felt individual letters force tailored responses and sometimes a review by senior staff – they are gold
- A small number of the right people (Trustee, major donors, other friends, staff, volunteers, etc.) with the right message can get the attention of officials who ask themselves, “What if this catches on?”
- Small, creative actions can get attention



Small Acts Can Have Big Impacts



Thank you
Mr. President
*for protecting our ocean
for future generations.*



Always Say Thank You

Thanks **President Obama...** *for Protecting our Atlantic Ocean!*

Designating the **NORTHEAST CANYONS AND SEAMOUNTS** as our nation's first **MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT** in the **ATLANTIC OCEAN** protects vital biodiversity - including endangered marine mammals and fragile deep sea corals, builds climate resiliency, and ensures that future generations may forever cherish America's ocean treasures.

ARIQ Biological Park
Aquarium of the Bay
Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
Audubon Aquarium of the Americas
Audubon Nature Institute
Beverly Zoo
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Aquarium
California Academy of Sciences
Center for Aquatic Sciences at
Adventure Aquarium
Chicago Ecological Society/Resnikfield Zoo
The Florida Aquarium
Franklin Park Zoo
Georgia Aquarium
Hawaii Park Zoo
Living Planet Aquarium
Myrtle Aquarium
National Aquarium
New England Aquarium
Newport Aquarium
Oregon Coast Aquarium
Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium
Point Defence Zoo & Aquarium

Roger Williams Park Zoo
San Antonio Zoo and Aquarium
Santa Barbara Zoo
Sea Life Center - Arizona
Sea Life Center - Curitiba
Sea Life Center - Charlotte & Concord
Sea Life Center - Danvers
Sea Life Center - Kansas City
Sea Life Center - Michigan
Sea Life Center - Minnesota
Sea Life Center - Orlando
Sea Life Trust
Seattle Aquarium
SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment
Smithsonian
South Carolina Aquarium
Stone Zoo
Tennessee Aquarium
Texas State Aquarium
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center
Wahkiakum Park Zoo
Woodland Park Zoo
Zoo Miami

People More Likely to Act When They're in a Comfortable Place

- You are a “safe space” where people let their guard down
- Safety in numbers... engaging in the right location creates “rubber neck interest”
- Happy kids = relaxed and receptive parents



Pro tip: Be sensitive and aware so you don't intrude or impose on your guests

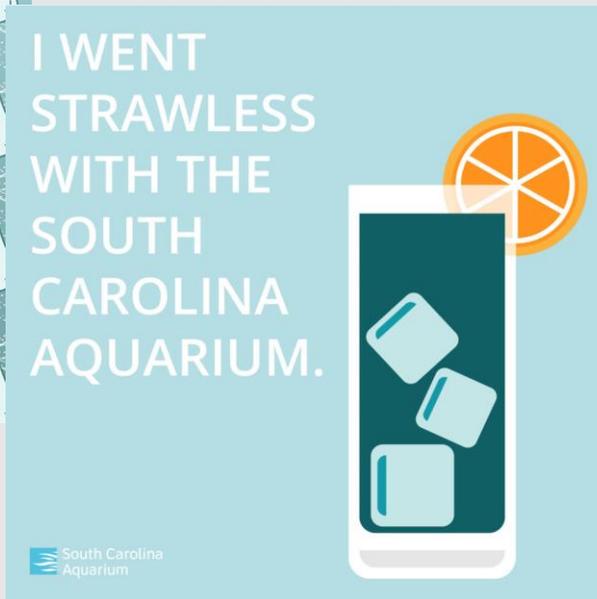
South Carolina Aquarium: Education + Action = Results

A poster with a teal background featuring a repeating pattern of white icons for plastic bottles, water bottles, and plastic bags. A central teal square contains white text and icons.

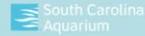
What if the ocean had more plastic than fish?



TAKE THE PLEDGE TO END PLASTIC POLLUTION TODAY!

A poster with a light blue background. On the right is a white smartphone icon containing a dark teal drink with three light blue ice cubes and an orange slice. The text is in white.

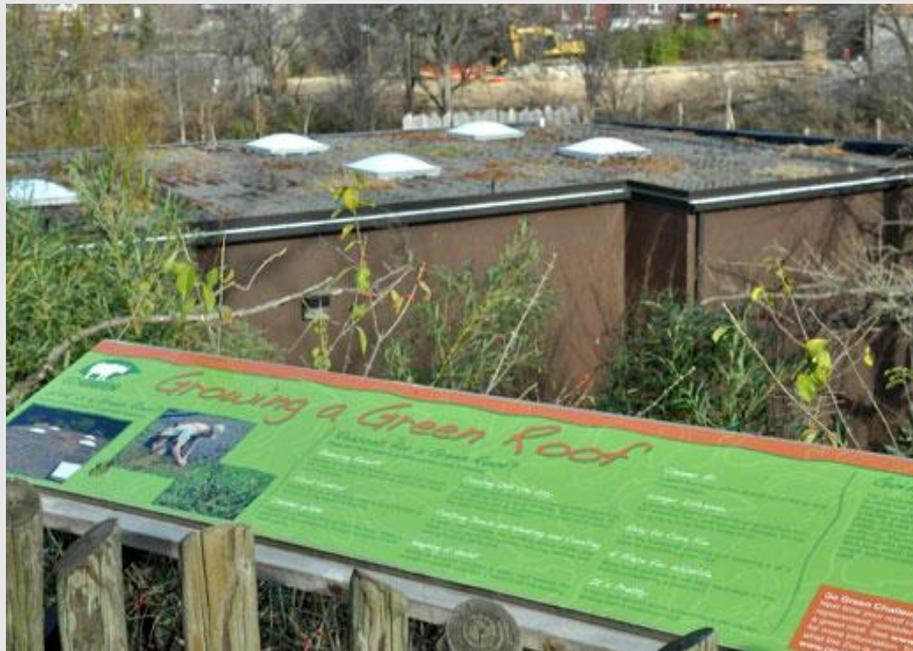
I WENT STRAWLESS WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM.

A poster with a light blue background. A dark teal silhouette of a sea turtle is centered, surrounded by radiating white lines. The text is in white.

I am bringing a bag for sea turtles.



Cincinnati Zoo: Leading by Example



CINCINNATI ZOO takes steps to **REDUCE WATER USE**

#GreenestZooInAmerica

Water usage reduction efforts began in 2006, which have added up to BIG savings.

HOW did we do it?



Replaced Pavement with **GREEN SPACE**

Installed **GREEN ROOFS**

Planted **RAIN GARDENS**



Changed Everyday **BEHAVIORS**



Fixed **LEAKS**



Added **PERVIOUS PAVERS**

Installed **RAIN BARRELS**

Installed **LOW-FLOW TOILETS**



and most important...

Buried **3 STORM WATER SYSTEMS**

Beneath the Zoo

All of these efforts have added up to

1 BILLION
Gallons of Water Saved!



Cincinnati Zoo: Renewable *Energy as an Exhibit*

- Reverse “broken window messaging”
- Large scale solar capacity onsite in highly visible location
- Communicate significant savings on energy
- Cool cars on hot summer days





AZA Lobby Day Handout: On Point and on Message

- Identifies the problem
- Says we are here to play a constructive role
- Highlights ESA's success
- Promotes the prominent role AZA members have played
- States that AZA is in this for the long haul
- Clearly states position



The Association of Zoos and Aquariums Supports the Endangered Species Act

- Scientists estimate that the total number of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish has declined by more than 50% since 1970, and many believe that we are living amidst the planet's sixth mass extinction.
- Without critical intervention today, we are facing the very real possibility of losing some of our planet's most magnificent creatures such as cheetahs, elephants, gorillas, sea turtles, and sharks.
- AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums have a unique responsibility to help others understand this crisis.
- The Endangered Species Act, which is recognized globally as a model for species preservation, has prevented the extinction of 99% of the species it protects since its inception in 1973.
- AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums working with partners through the Endangered Species Act have played a significant role in bringing more than twenty-five species - including the black-footed ferret, Florida manatee, and California condor - back from the brink of extinction.
- AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums all share a deep commitment to the animals in our care and to conserving wildlife throughout the world.
- Species protection and conservation requires long-term commitment, and AZA-accredited facilities have been working to save species for decades.
- It is through the ongoing work related to species recovery plans and protections afforded by the Endangered Species Act that we will conserve endangered and threatened species for future generations.

The AZA and its members fully support the Endangered Species Act and will work with Congress to assure that the agencies responsible for carrying out the mandates of the Act receive the necessary funding, human resource capacity, and regulatory flexibility to succeed.

Annual AZA Congressional Reception and Lobby Day

- Takes place every year in May (***May 15 and 16, 2018***)
- Reception one of the most heavily attended – using program animals to tell stories to Members of Congress and staff
- Opportunity to ***cultivate and maintain relationships and champions***
- Travelling to DC sends signal of ***institutional commitment***
- Allows zoo and aquarium priorities to be widely disseminated by ***real people...not lobbyist***
- Staff notices who is walking the hallways
- Great networking and professional development opportunity

Summary of AZA Fly-In Agenda

- **Multi-Species Conservation Fund; Reauthorization**

Renew program that funds important conservation programs specifically for elephants, tigers, rhinoceros, great apes, and marine turtles

- **Institute for Museum and Library Science (IMLS); Appropriation**

Requesting ***\$38.6 million for FY 2019*** (10/1/2018 – 9/30/2019) for grant program that has previously funded zoo and aquarium programs

- **NOAA Environmental Education; Appropriation**

Support FY 2019 funding levels of ***\$8 million for Environmental Literacy Grants and \$12 million for Bay-Watershed Education Training Program (B-WET)***. Zoos and aquariums are eligible for grants

- **Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Program (NOAA/NMFS); Appropriation**

Support \$4 million in funding for grants and cooperative agreements marine stranding network members – including many AZA members

- **Endangered Species Act (ESA); Reauthorization**

No pending legislation at this time but efforts to repeal and rollback the ESA are expected – AZA is expressing support for ESA and opposition to proposals that would weaken its provisions

Parting Thought: Think Before You Speak

- The Office of National Drug Control Policy (Drug Czar) once launched a campaign with the message:

"Teenagers who smoke marijuana are more likely to be sexually active"

Additional Resources

■ [The Ocean Project](#)

- Stay up-to-date on our programs, future webinars, pilot projects, and World Oceans Day

■ [Mystic Aquarium](#)

- Learn more about the research, advocacy and exhibits that led to the creation of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument

■ [Hip Hop Caucus](#)

- More information on the engagement efforts of the Hip Hop Caucus, especially their climate change campaign

■ [Cincinnati Zoo Go-Green Initiative](#)

- *Link to the Go-Green page, but we encourage you to take a few minutes to explore the rest of the Conservation section because of the quality of how they communicate the issues.*

■ [Spitfire Strategies](#)

- A women-owned communications and advocacy firm that specializes in the needs of non-profit clients has a number of free advocacy/communications planning guides. Here are two we recommend:
- [Discover Your Activation Point](#) – to help you decide where to start and how best to achieve your desired results
- [Smart Plan](#) – Before you decide to engage your resources on an issue, especially one with local implications, use this planning guide to help assess how best to position yourself for success and anticipate and plan for the potential backlash that could result from you taking a stand

Thank you!

If you have any follow up questions or need information or advice on possible engagement activities, please contact **Tom Adams** at tadams@theoceanproject.org

Please look for follow-up materials that will include a more detailed deck of PowerPoint slides containing additional information and answers to all questions asked – including those we are not able to answer today due to time constraints

Contact us if you are interested in an on-site advocacy and engagement training sessions for your organization

