Making Conservation Happen Webinar
No Time to Engage Like the Present
Agenda

- 116th Congress Open for Business
  Tom Adams; Policy Advisor, The Ocean Project

- Snapshot of Ocean Health and Fisheries Issues
  Amy Kenney; Executive Director, National Ocean Protection Coalition

- Benefits Gained and Lessons Learned
  Rich Block; President and Chief Executive Officer, Santa Barbara Zoo

- Know Your Story & Advice and Tips
  Tom Adams
The 116th Congress is Officially Open for Business

Tom Adams
Policy Advisor
The Ocean Project
Political Steering Winds of the 2020 Election

Electoral vote assignment based on House vote

Democrat 324

Republican 214

Election.princeton.edu
Lowdown on the Shut Down

■ Is it Almost Over?
■ What’s It Really About?
✓ Completion of FY 2019 Appropriations Bills that should have been completed before September 30, 2018
■ “Tells” That It Might End Soon
✓ Start Talking to Each Other...Stop Talking Past Each Other
✓ House Vote Totals on Individual Appropriations Bills
✓ Trickle of GOP Members of Congress Supporting Reopening Gov’t Continues
✓ Mitch McConnell reengages

This is a very condensed summary of the shutdown situation. Tom Adams is available to provide more information and answer any questions at the conclusion of the webinar. If interested, please indicate in the Q&A section.
Important Days and Events

- **Jan. 29** – President’s State of the Union Address
- **Early to Mid February** – Submission of President’s FY 2020 Budget Request
  - Timing Being Affected by Shutdown Stalemate
  - Budget Submission Starts the Congressional Budget Process
- **Feb. 25-26** – AAM/AZA Advocacy Day
- **May 7-8** – AZA Lobby Day and Congressional Reception
- **June 4-6** – Capitol Hill Oceans Week (CHOW)
- **June 8** – World Oceans Day
- **The Ocean Project’s Monthly First Friday Webinar Series**
Congressional Jobs

**DC Office**
- Chief of Staff – Top political advisor responsible for everything
- **Scheduler – Gatekeeper and world-class juggler**
- Legislative Director (LD) – Manages legislative agenda and staff
- Legislative Aide (LA) – Responsible for managing portfolio of issues
- Legislative Correspondent – Primary responsibility to respond to policy letters, emails, etc. from constituents
- Press Secretary – Manages press relationships and message delivery
- Office Manager – What it sounds like
- **Staff Assistant – Front office and administrative responsibilities**

**State/District Offices**
- State/District Director – Manages staff and state/district operations
- Constituent Representative – Attends events and meets with constituents on a variety of matters
- Caseworker – Resolves problems constituents are having with federal agencies
One Good Reason to Cultivate Relationships... **MONEY**

- **Appropriations**
  - Earmarks May Be Returning
  - Favorable “Report Language” Can Give You an Advantage Pursuing Grants

- **Infrastructure**
  - Transportation
  - Water Projects
  - Facilities
  - New Green Deal -- but be careful with this one

- **Federal Grants**
  - Help Identifying Grant Opportunities
  - Possibility of Letters of Support
2018 Election Impact on Ocean Policy

- Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) replaces former Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) as Ranking Member of Senate Commerce Committee
- Democrats Take Control of House
- Base of Party Continues to be New England & Pacific Coast
- Majority won largely in Suburban Districts, most notably in AZ, CA, CO, MI, NM, OK, TX, UT, & VA.
- Dems picked up seats in FL, GA, SC, & VA
- No more GOP held seats in New England
- Agenda more favorable to science and conservation, but still has challenges.
Top Ocean Issues in 2019

Amy Kenney
Executive Director
National Ocean Protection Coalition
The National Ocean Protection Coalition

- **Mission:** Protect America’s Most Special Ocean Places
- **Members:** 50+ Ocean Minded Organizations
- **Services:**
  - *Bring Together and Unify the Community*
  - *Provide Updates from DC and the Regions (List Serve, Calls)*
  - *Make it Easy to Show Support and Engage (Toolkits, Social Media, and messaging guidance)*
  - *Partnerships with The Ocean Project, Aquariums, Local and National Groups*
NOPC Loves Partnering with Aquariums and Zoos!

- Mystic Aquarium
  - Education and Outreach Efforts (PSA Video, Post Card Drive, Exhibit)

- New England Aquarium
  - Support for Science and Outreach

- Always interested in project partnerships that can make a difference
Ocean Protection, Health and Fisheries
Issues for the New Congress

- **Marine Protected Areas**
  - National Monuments
  - National Marine Sanctuaries

- **Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling**

- **Fiscal Year 2019 Appropriations**
  - NOAA
  - Interior Department (Misc. Accounts)

- **Aquaculture**
  - Primarily Addressing Large-Scale Offshore Operations

- **Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act**
  ("Magnuson-Stevens")

- **Climate Change**

- **Plastic Pollution**
Voters Visit Zoos & Aquariums
It Might Take a Little While...But Investing Time in Building Relationships Pays Dividends

Rich Block
President & Chief Executive Director
Santa Barbara Zoo
Why I Go to DC & Sacramento

- Establish a relationship with elected officials and their staff
- Provide current information on AZA, CAZA, SB Zoo
- Demonstrate relevance, credibility, and authority
- Present position on current issues
- Respond to questions/criticisms
- Request support/leadership after establishing relationship
My 18-Year Relationship with Two Senators and One Representative

Cultivation Tactics

- Meetings in DC
- Meet with local staff at Zoo
- Provide current information on relevance & impact of the Zoo and California’s 23 accredited zoos and aquariums
- Invite to annual AZA reception in DC
- Suggest joining the Zoo & Aquarium Caucus (House)
- Invite for Zoo tours & experiences
- Add to newsletter mailing list

Results

- Always get a personal meeting with the Representative
- Always get a meeting with senior aide (Senate)
- Always ask how they can help and consistently offer support
- Joined Zoo & Aquarium Caucus
- Willing to arrange visits to institution for Representatives and their staff (Pelosi in 2018!)
Starting Over in 2017: One New Senator & One New Representative

Tips for Starting Over

- No Matter How Much you Think You Know About Them, Take 30 Minutes and Research Their Backgrounds – the Internet Makes it Easy
- Assume They Know Little or Nothing About You
- Assume They Have No Idea of What it Takes to Operate a Zoo/Aquarium
- Try to Get in as Early as Possible but don’t be Deterred if it’s Difficult – It’s Chaos on Their End
- Invite Member and Staff to the annual AZA reception
- As Soon as Possible, Get Them or Their Staff to Tour your Zoo/Aquarium – Target District Work Periods
- Your Guests are Their Constituents – Invite Them to Public Events
- Make Sure They Know You are a Resource for Them
Things That Worked Really Well... and Things That Were Less Effective

**Effective**

- Creating a statewide manual of California’s 23 accredited zoos and aquariums (perfect for Senate)
- Sharing specific legislative requests
- Creating on-site experiences for Representatives and staff
- Follow-up with pictures of experience (always find their way to social media)
- Providing follow-up information in response to questions or topics from meetings
- Sending “thank you” notes following all meetings

**Not-So-Effective**

- Criticizing other organizations
- Presenting information with little or no support
- Asking for assistance with no details
- Spending time with Senate staff focused on a localized issue
- Arranging a meeting with little structure or focus
Know Your Story & Advice and Tips

Tom Adams
Policy Advisor
The Ocean Project
Conservation Story

- **Conservation Programs**
  - Priority Policy Issues
  - Consumer Campaigns
  - Captive Breeding
  - Local, Regional, National, International Field Programs

- **Number of Animals Cared for**
  - Threatened and Endangered
  - Most Popular Exhibits

- **Partnerships**
  - Local Government
  - School Boards
  - Civic Organizations
Economic Impact Story

- If Feasible, do an Economic Impact Study

*If EIS is not feasible:*

- Annual Budget

- Number of Employees
  - FTE’s, Part-time and Seasonal, & Volunteers
  - Jobs Vary from High-Skilled, Entry Level Professional, and “First Job” Part-time and Seasonal Positions

- Source of Jobs from Entry Level

- Contracted Services
  - Budget for Capital Projects, Contracted Services, Food, and Goods and Services

- Tax Revenues Generated
Community Impact Story

- Total Membership
- Annual Attendance
- Annual Number of “Yellow Bus” Field Trip Visitors
- Annual Attendance on Free-Days or Free Tickets
- Web and Social Media
  - Annual Online Visits
  - Social Media Followers
- Community Partnership Programs:
  - Schools, Churches, Community Organizations, etc...
Advice and Tips

**Take Aways**

- No Better Time Than Now to Engage
- Be There Before You Have an Emergency
- If You Want to Know or Do More...Help is a Click or Call Away
- Make the Legislative Staff’s Job Easier by Providing Them Objective Opinions on Conservation
- Research Members Before Making Contact

**Tricks**

- Be Nice to Scheduler and Staff Assistants – They Are the Gatekeepers
- Advertise Yourself and Stay in Front of Them – Decorate Their Office With a Poster
- Don’t Forget the District Staff
- Your Board and Supporters are Community Leaders – Know Who They Know
- Politicians are Ambitious – Get to Know Them Before They Get to Congress
Thank you!

This Webinar is funded by the **Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation**

This webinar has been recorded. If you want to rewatch it, share it with a friend or colleague, it is posted at [www.theoceanproject.org](http://www.theoceanproject.org). A PDF version of the slides also will be available on our website.

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