Making Conservation Happen:
Maximizing Our Potential in the Policy Arena
Goals for Today’s Webinar

▪ Understand how to safely and effectively engage on public policy issues

▪ Provide a basic review of the legislative process

▪ Explore examples of what is and is not lobbying

▪ Case Study: Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
Agenda

- Introduction: Advocacy & Engagement Begins With Your Guests
- The Potential of Zoos & Aquariums
- Understanding Lobbying Laws
- Case Study: Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Key Existing Resources & Talking Points
Introduction:
Advocacy & Engagement Begins With Your Guests

Tom Adams
Policy Advisor
The Ocean Project
Introduction:
Advocacy & Engagement Begins
With Your Guests
Introduction: Zoo and Aquarium Visitors Vote!

- 70% of people in the United States who visited a cultural entity in the last year report they voted in 2016.

- Additional data suggests a person who visited a cultural organization in the last year is 62.5% more likely to vote in the 2018 midterms.
Introduction:
Knowing Where Your Guests & Members Live Gives You “Standing” with Public Officials

Brookfield Zoo welcomed student groups from over 40 counties, almost all of which were located in Illinois.
Introduction:
Knowing Where Your Guests & Members Live Gives You “Standing” with Public Officials
The Advocacy Potential of Zoos and Aquariums

Andrea Densham
Senior Director of Policy and Advocacy
Shedd Aquarium
The Advocacy Potential of Zoos and Aquariums: Public Trust

![Bar Chart](image-url)

- Aquarium: 75.8
- Art Museum: 75.9
- History Museum: 76.0
- Science Center/Museum: 75.8
- Natural History Museum: 76.2
- Zoo: 74.5
- NGO: 64.9
- State Agency: 61.6
- Federal Agency: 53.5
- Daily Newspaper: 66.9
The Advocacy Potential of Zoos and Aquariums: **Not Seen as Having a Political Agenda**
The Advocacy Potential of Zoos and Aquariums: Visitors want you to recommend action
Understanding Lobbying Laws

Tom Adams
Policy Advisor
The Ocean Project
Abbreviated Discussion of Lobbying Laws

Before you engage on an issue you need to do two things:

- Know the law
- Have plenty of coffee
IRS Lobbying Definitions

15% of your annual budget may be used for activities that legally constitute lobbying

**Grassroots Lobbying**
Asking people to contact a public official to take a specific action on a legislative or regulatory matter

**Direct Lobbying**
Asking a public official to take a specific action on a legislative or regulatory matter

“Please cosponsor and vote for the Motherhood and Apple Pie Act”
Don’t Confuse Lobbying With Education

- Talking about the importance of an issue:
  - “Climate change is affecting oceans”

- Saying a place/animal needs protection:
  - “By restoring the Everglades we can help save the Florida Panther and many other threatened and endangered species”

- Explaining possible conservation solutions:
  - “By removing the outdated Elwha Dam we can restore salmon their historic runs”
Lobbying or Education, What do you Think?
Congressional Authorization and Appropriations Processes
Difference Between Congressional Appropriations & Authorizations

- My father was cheap but permissive. So we asked him for permission -- he “authorized our behavior.”

- My mother was less permissive but more generous – we asked her for money – she “appropriated funding for our activities.”
For example: Current Legislation to Reauthorize Magnuson-Stevens Act

- **H.R. 1520/200 introduced**
  - Referred to House Resources Committee
  - Referred to Water, Power and Oceans Subcommittee

- **S. 1520 introduced**
  - Referred to Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee
  - Referred to Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard
Case Study:
Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

Matt Mullin
Marine Fish Conservation Network
Magnuson-Stevens Act: A 40-Year Bipartisan Success Story

- In 2006 Congress began requiring scientifically derived catch limits and creation of measures so that catch limits are no exceeded.

- Enacted in 1976 to promote American commercial fishing and keep foreign vessels from fishing in U.S. waters.

- Congress amended the law in 1996 and in 2006 and prioritized recreational fisheries management, science, and conservation.

Recreational fishing in Oregon
Credit: Bob Rees
8 Regional Fishery Management Councils...

...overseen by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), a division of NOAA.
An International Model: Magnuson-Stevens is Working

A National Marine Fishery Service index shows steady progress in restoring the health of America’s fisheries:

- 41 fish stocks rebuilt since 2000.
- 2/3’s of overfished stocks that were put in rebuilding plans either were rebuilt or made significant progress by 2013.
- According to NOAA’s latest economic report, U.S. commercial fishing generated an estimated $51 billion and recreational fishing generated $63 billion in sales impacts.
Communicating on Public Policy

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

[Logos of various organizations]
Communicating on Public Policy
Mystic Aquarium’s Campaign for the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument
Communicating on Public Policy
Your Youth Engagement and Education Participants Grow Up to be Voters
Communicating on Public Policy
Your Education Materials Can Create an Educated Base that Can Be Engaged and Mobilized

OCEAN ACIDIFICATION 101

1. Ocean acidification (OA) is caused by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas, which release carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere.

2. Excess CO₂ lowers the pH of the ocean, making it more acidic. The increased acidity can have a significant impact on marine species and their ecosystems.

3. OA has been documented at various locations, affecting the productivity of ocean ecosystems.

WARM WATER VS. COLD WATER

Warm-water corals:
- Build reefs
- Most species need clear water so light can reach the photosynthetic algae that provide nourishment
- Live closer to the surface
- Require water temperatures of more than 64 degrees F

Cold-water corals:
- Generally do not build reefs
- Do not need sunlight to survive; they feed on plankton and organic particles
- Are found at depths ranging from 10 feet to over 6,000 feet
- Live in temperatures as low as 39 degrees

You can see both warm—and cold-water corals at the Seattle Aquarium!
Communicating on Public Policy: Three pilot projects

Primary goal: Engage visitors to (1) raise their awareness of, and (2) document their support for science-based fisheries management

Secondary goal: Engage visitors in a way that maintains, if not improves (1) the quality of their experience and (2) their perceptions of aquariums as conservation leaders

Tell a common story that begins with a local species that is recovering, connects that local species with national policy, includes the carryover benefits to the surrounding environment and local community, relays urgency, and asks for a show of support

Test the efficacy of three different tactics: Video presentation, dive show talk, and serving seafood samples
Existing Resources & Talking Points
Key Existing Resources

1. Members, guests, community partners
2. Venue and events
3. Staff, board, donors, volunteers and vendors – and sometimes unions
4. Website and social media operations
5. Public relations and marketing operations
6. Media and corporate partners
7. Brand
8. “Friends and family” at other aquariums, zoos and museums
Key Talking Points

1. Your economic impact is as significant as it is different
2. Your jobs can’t be exported to another community, state or country
3. Your leaders *are* community leaders
4. Your programs help kids learn science & other cool stuff
5. Partners with local schools
6. Your institution has served generations of customers
7. Your views are guided by science – not politics
8. Your field conservation programs = “Walk the Walk”
**Additional Resources**

- **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 you assess how best to position yourself for success and anticipate and plan for the potential backlash that could result from you taking a stand

- **Conserve Fish**
  - For more information on fisheries issues and Magnuson-Stevens Act we recommend Marine Fish Conservation Network, comprised of fishermen, conservationists, scientists and citizens united around the shared mission of conserving and revitalizing the ocean and fisheries

- **Know Your Own Bone**
  - Coleen Dilenschneider’s blog provides a wealth of information and data relevant to cultural institutions and the source for the information and slides regarding voter participation and public attitudes and trust of zoos, aquariums and museums

- **The Ocean Project**
  - Stay up to date on our programs, future webinars, pilot projects, and World Oceans Day
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.