
Issue 11: Historical Resource Protection

Comment

Resource Preservation

Protection of historic and cultural resources within the Sanctuary is a significant concern. NOAA should prohibit moving, injuring, or possessing historic resources within the Sanctuary.

Shipwrecks

Sanctuary regulations should not apply to activities permitted by the state within state waters under the Shipwreck and Historic Maritime Resources Program.

NOAA Response

Resource Preservation

NOAA agrees that it is necessary to protect and manage historical and cultural resources within the Sanctuary boundary. NOAA has included a prohibition on moving, removing, possessing, injuring, or attempting to move, remove, or injure these resources, except as resulting incidentally from kelp harvesting, aquaculture or traditional fishing operations. If NOAA determines in the future that these activities are resulting in injury to Sanctuary historic and cultural resources, changes to the regulations would be undertaken pursuant to the APA's notice-and-comment rulemaking process and the requirements of NEPA.

Shipwrecks

The Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987 gives states the title to certain abandoned shipwrecks in state waters. Under the MPRSA, the SRD has managerial responsibilities for abandoned shipwrecks within national marine sanctuaries, including those located in state waters, for the purpose of protecting them. NOAA will coordinate with state agencies to ensure that historical and cultural resources, as well as living marine resources, within the Sanctuary are protected.