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Contact: Ben Sherman, NOAA
301-713-3066

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Mar. 21, 2008

Commerce Department Appoints Members to Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee

The Department of Commerce, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, has appointed 13 new members to the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee. The agency has also reappointed one member to a new two-year term.

The committee is supported by the National Marine Protected Areas Center, established within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior. The center is charged with working with states, tribes, and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive and effective national system of marine protected areas (MPA) to conserve the nation's natural and cultural heritage.

"I am pleased to present this group of highly qualified stakeholders with broad and diverse ocean interests," said Joseph Uravitch, director of the National MPA Center. "These individuals play an important role in the conservation and sustainable use of America's marine resources for present and future generations."

Required as part of Presidential Executive Order 13158 which called for the creation of a national system of marine protected areas, the 30-person committee represents a wide range of stakeholder interests, including representatives of natural and social scientists, commercial and recreational fishermen, energy and tourism industries, state and tribal resource managers, and environmentalists. In addition, nine representatives of federal agencies serve in a non-voting capacity.

The advisory committee's duties include providing advice and recommendations to the secretaries of commerce and the interior on implementation of aspects of MPA Executive Order 13158 of May 26, 2000.

The following members have been newly appointed to the MPA Federal Advisory Committee:

- Lori Arguelles, president and CEO, National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, Silver Spring, Md. (representing conservation)
- Victor Mastone, director and chief archeologist, Board of Underwater Archeological Resources, Boston, Mass. (representing cultural resources)
- Melissa Miller-Henson, program manager, California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, Sacramento, Calif. (representing coastal states)
- Russell Moll, Ph.D., director, California Sea Grant College Program, La Jolla, Calif. (representing natural science)
- Elliott Norse, Ph.D., president, Marine Conservation Biology Institute, Bellevue, Wash. (representing conservation)
- Alvin Osterback, port director, City of Unalaska/Port of Dutch Harbor; Dutch Harbor, Alaska, (representing rural and native Alaskans)
- Robert Pomeroy, Ph.D., associate professor and Sea Grant fisheries specialist, Connecticut Sea Grant, Groton, Conn. (representing social science)
- Eugenio Pinerio Soler, chairman, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, Rincon, Puerto Rico (representing commercial fisheries)

- Capt. Philip Renaud, USN (Ret.), executive director, Living Oceans Foundation, Landover, Md. (representing conservation)
- Jesus Ruiz, scuba instructor; San Jose, Calif. (representing scuba divers)
- Bruce A. Tackett, manager, legislative and regulatory issues, ExxonMobil Biomedical Sciences, Inc, Fairfax, Va. (representing ocean industry)
- David Wallace, owner, Wallace and Associates, Cambridge, Md. (representing commercial fisheries)
- Robert Wargo, marine liaison, AT&T, Bedminster, N.J. (representing ocean industry)

The following member has been reappointed to a two-year term:

- Ellen Goethel, ocean educator/commercial fishing, Hampton, N.H. (representing commercial fisheries)

The federal advisory committee meets twice yearly, and invites experts and diverse MPA stakeholder groups to address the committee on issues of concern. Committee meetings are held in various regions across the country to provide an opportunity for public comments. Transcripts, presentations, the committee's recommendations, and other documents from past meetings are available on the National Marine Protected Areas Center Web site, <http://www.mpa.gov>.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

National Marine Protected Areas Center: <http://www.mpa.gov>