

SUMMER 2014

SANCTUARY WATCH



NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
NOMINATION PROCESS
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YOUR CHALLENGE,



YOUR CHANCE

“For the first time in years, the doors open to establish new national marine sanctuaries. I challenge everyone who cares about our nation’s ocean and coasts to make your voice heard. This isn’t just about the environment. It’s about taking a stand for the special places you hold dear. This is your chance to let America know — to let the world know — that this place matters to me. We have an opportunity to make a difference, and it’s up to all of us to take responsibility — for ourselves and for future generations.”

— Edward James Obnos



RISING TO THE CHALLENGE



Photo: Jaime Windon

By Daniel J. Basta

Our nation was founded on the principles of community voice, citizen action and the sense that, as individuals, we can make a difference.

Now, for the first time in nearly 20 years, the American people can nominate marine and Great Lakes places for consideration as national marine sanctuaries. We have not entered into this process lightly; rather, we have heard from communities and stakeholders, political leaders, and others across the country who want to secure lasting federal protection for and a voice in the management of their special ocean places.

This process will require a great deal from our staff, but we expect an equal amount from those communities interested in nominating a site for consideration. Nomination is only one part of what may be further years of work, evaluation, and public participation toward designation as a national marine sanctuary.

You’ve heard the phrase “it takes a village.” In this case, it certainly does. It takes businesses, next-door neighbors, recreators, artists and students — people of every walk of life, background and political viewpoint to ultimately put forth a nomination. And that’s the way it should be. This is the American public’s process, and that journey is a central part of what makes our nation — and our national marine sanctuaries — strong.

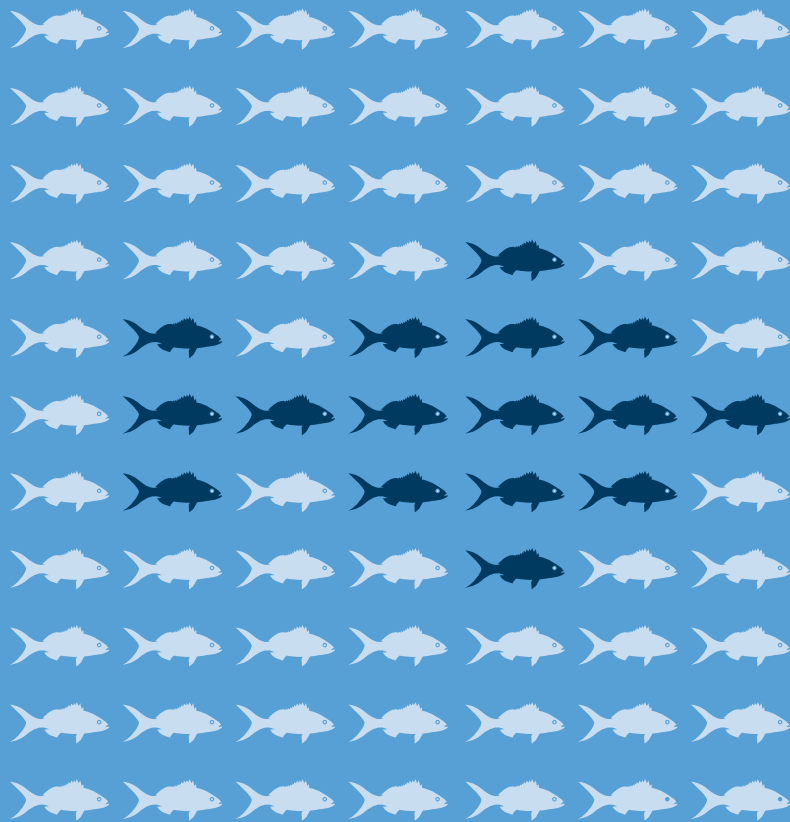
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BEFORE & AFTER

Sanctuaries Make a Difference

Yellowtail Snapper **POPULATION**

in the Tortugas Ecological Reserve



The yellowtail snapper is the most economically important reef fish to the fishermen of the Florida Keys. It is also an excellent indicator species for the effectiveness of fisheries management. The population of yellowtail snapper has dramatically increased as a direct result of the establishment of the Tortugas Ecological Reserve in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Source: <http://floridakeys.noaa.gov/scisummaries/reeffish.pdf>

21,000

Protected Humpback Whales



Each icon represents 1,400 whales

Dark blue fish icon = BEFORE
White fish icon = AFTER

Their population decimated by commercial whaling, humpback whales in the North Pacific Ocean numbered only about 1,400 in the mid-1960s. Through an international ban on commercial whaling and protections under the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the North Pacific humpback whale population now numbers more than 21,000. About half of this population spends winter in and around the Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, created by Congress in 1992 to protect humpback whales and their habitat.

Source: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/condition/pdfs/hihw_condition_report

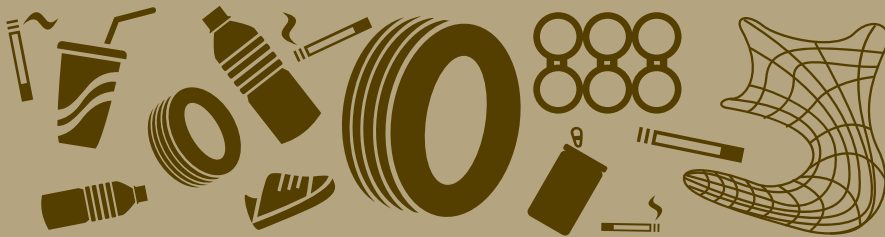
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Renovated from the defunct Fletcher Paper Mill, a victim of difficult economic times, the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center is now a popular destination for visitors of all ages. In 2013, the center welcomed over 82,000 visitors. Featuring a life-size replica of a portion of an 1800's Great Lakes Schooner, a re-creation of a shipwreck site and an artifact lab, the center allows the public to experience and appreciate more than 200 shipwrecks in and around Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.



Source: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/condition/pdfs/tbnms_lowres.pdf

MARINE DEBRIS REMOVAL



- 22 tons of trash removed yearly by 800 volunteers in Olympic Coast NMS
- 600 tons of debris removed from Papahānaumokuākea MNM over 10 years
- 185 ton dock from Japan's tsunami removed from Olympic Coast NMS
- 7,000 feet of gear disentangled from 17 whales in Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS since 2002

Source: <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/>

\$0.00

A recent economic impact study found no short-term financial loss for commercial and recreational fisheries due to the implementation of the Tortugas Ecological Reserve in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary over a ten-year period. This finding sharply contrasts theoretical literature which projected short-term losses for those displaced from marine reserves. In fact, commercial catches in the region increased and continue to do so.

Source: http://ccma.nos.noaa.gov/ecosystems/coralreef/TortugasAssessmentReport_final.pdf

HABITAT RESTORATION

- 500+ sites assessed for damages, totaling 1.3M square feet of seagrass, coral and hardbottom habitats since 2000
- \$2M+ in fines assessed were used to restore damaged habitats in sanctuaries
- 70+ seagrass and coral habitats successfully restored to date

Source: ONMS staff, unpublished personal communication



Infographic/illustrations: Matt McIntosh

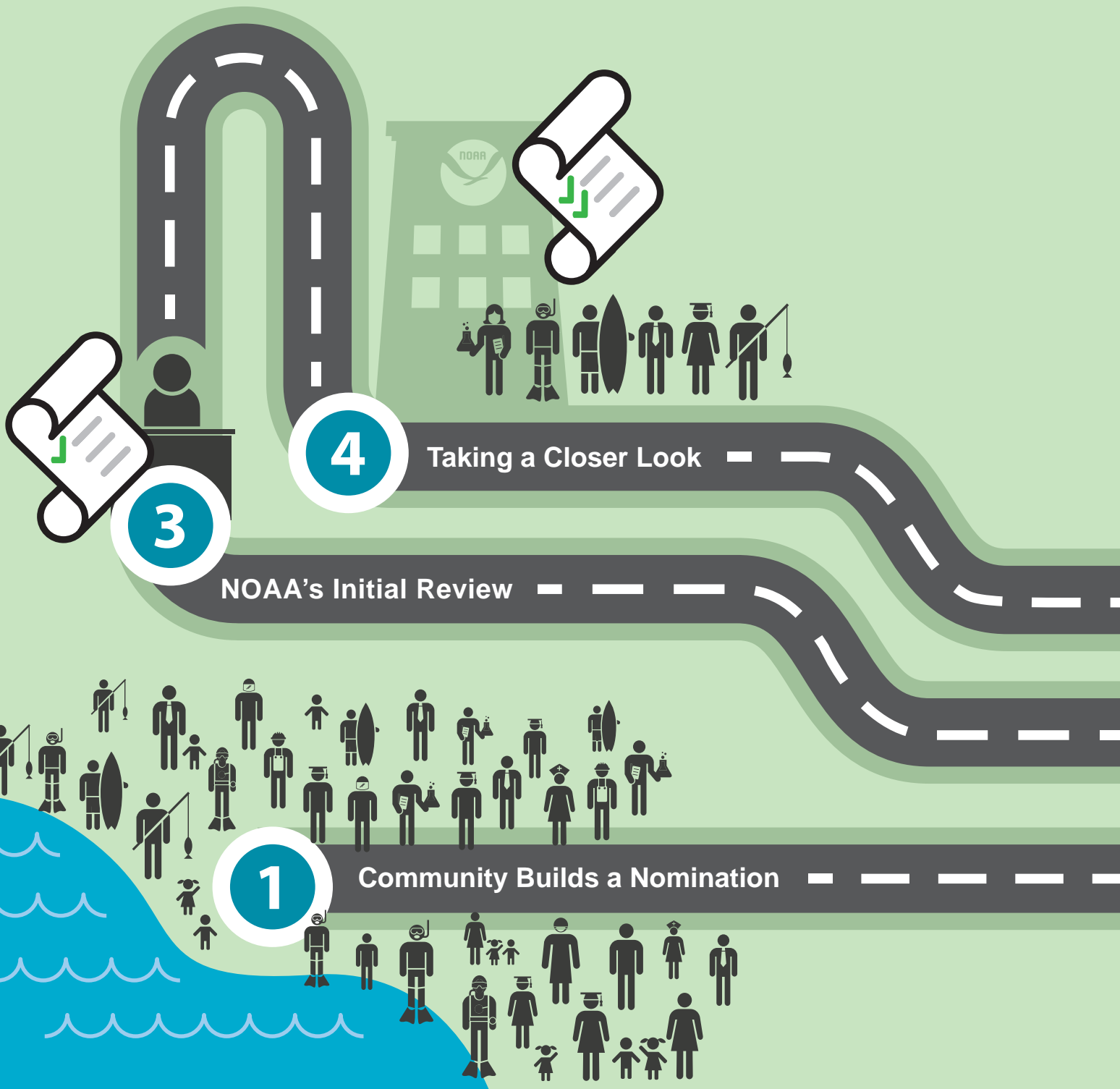
The Road to Nomination

For the first time in two decades, NOAA invites communities across the nation to nominate their most treasured places in our marine and Great Lakes waters for consideration as national marine sanctuaries.

In response to ongoing widespread interest from the public, NOAA has launched a new, locally driven sanctuary

nomination process developed with input from more than 18,000 public comments. Throughout the nomination process, NOAA will be available to answer questions and provide guidance to nominating communities and other interested parties. NOAA will also update nominators on the progress of the agency's review of their nomination.

PLEASE NOTE: Nomination is not the same thing as sanctuary designation. Designation occurs as a separate process that, by law, is highly public and participatory and often takes several years to complete.





SANCTUARY NOMINATION PROCESS

1 COMMUNITY BUILDS A NOMINATION

A community gathers information and support for the special place it wishes to nominate, following the guidelines at www.nominate.noaa.gov.

2 COMMUNITY SUBMITS NOMINATION TO NOAA

Once ready, the community submits its nomination to NOAA.

3 NOAA'S INITIAL REVIEW

NOAA looks at whether or not the nomination meets the basic requirements.

4 TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

NOAA takes a closer look at everything that makes the nomination a potential candidate for sanctuary designation, while continually working with the community throughout this process.

5 NOMINATION IS ACCEPTED

NOAA will notify the community once all the requirements have been met and the nomination has been accepted.

6 NOMINATED AREA ADDED TO INVENTORY

NOAA will place successful nominations in an inventory of areas it could consider for potential designation as a national marine sanctuary.

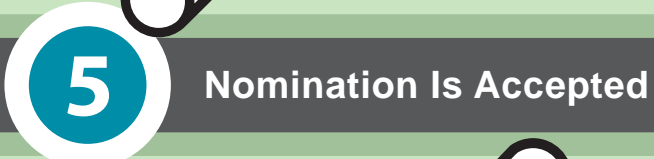
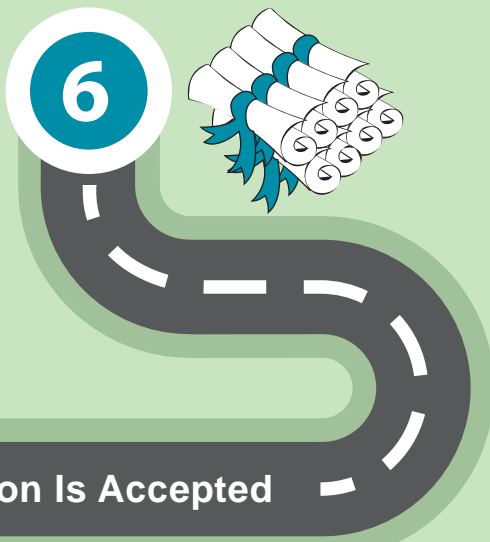
PLEASE NOTE:

Addition to the inventory does not guarantee sanctuary designation, which is a separate public process described in the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.



Nominated Area Added to Inventory

PLEASE NOTE: Addition to the inventory does not guarantee that a nominated area will become a sanctuary.



Community Submits Nomination to NOAA



Infographic/Illustrations: Matt McIntosh



By Shiva
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Progress

SANCTUARIES: A Vital Component of the U.S. Ocean Management Mosaic

To insure that our coastal ocean waters are utilized to meet our total needs from the sea.”*
That’s how Rep. Charles Mosher of Ohio, speaking before his colleagues in Congress in 1971, described the idea behind the legislation that would eventually become the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Those needs, he said, include “recreation, resource exploitation, the advancement of knowledge of the earth, and the preservation of unique areas... [and] all are important.”

Mosher saw this new legislation as a formal expression of the balance between those needs. Most importantly, he said, it addressed “our national concern over indiscriminate and thoughtless utilization of the oceans.”

Earlier Efforts

This was not the first attempt by governmental leaders to make society’s interaction with

the ocean more sustainable. Efforts to curb indiscriminate exploitation of marine resources date as far back as the early 1850s, when California passed state laws to manage oyster harvest and protect salmon runs. Likewise, a 1911 treaty between the U.S., Great Britain, Japan and Russia attempted to control rampant fur seal hunting — and became the world’s first international agreement on wildlife.

Unfortunately, these early, valiant efforts failed to counterbalance the world’s skyrocketing demand for marine resources. By the early 1970s, ocean health was in rapid decline. Garbage dumping, devastating offshore oil spills, and rapacious industrial whaling, among other issues, focused the American consciousness on the seas and motivated broad, bipartisan consensus for a new paradigm of ocean management.

Though environmental challenges old and new continue to plague the world’s oceans today, the spirit and the substance of the efforts by Rep. Mosher and his colleagues helped

usher in this paradigm, including the creation of a unique system for protecting America’s extraordinary offshore resources — cultural and ecological, Great Lakes and marine.

Elevated Protection

Today, an array of policy tools exists to help protect special offshore places and conserve marine resources, ranging from place-based designations like marine reserves to effective federal laws like the Magnusson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act.

Yet within this legal and regulatory mosaic, the National Marine Sanctuary System has come to serve a unique and important role in ocean and Great Lakes management. Like other relevant laws and designations, sanctuaries confer an elevated level of protection for the resources they encompass, bringing the unparalleled scientific and enforcement capabilities of the federal government to bear on their protection.

*Representative Mosher (OH). “Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1971.” 117 Congressional Record at 30855.





Photo: Flickr/Michael Matti

SANCTUARY SUCCESS STORIES

Nationwide, America's most extraordinary marine natural and cultural resources and the coastal communities dependent on them have reaped tremendous benefits from this unique combination of federal protection and empowered local influence. A few examples include:

STOCKS RESTORED

Key West fishermen saw the value of their total annual catch rise by 40 percent over 10 years — from \$40 million in 2001 to \$56 million in 2011 — after Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary worked with local scientists, conservationists and fishermen to implement a no-fishing zone to restore depleted populations of grouper and snapper species.

THE SANCTUARY CITY

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the sole site within the Great Lakes and home to dozens of historical shipwrecks, has become an engine for economic diversification and stability for the city of Alpena, Mich., which now hosts more than 82,000 sanctuary visitors yearly.

FEWER WHALE STRIKES

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, which protects the biodiversity critical to a whale-watching industry worth about \$26 million per year to the New England economy, led a successful multi-year effort in collaboration with the shipping industry to reroute shipping lanes away from key whale habitat, thereby reducing ship collisions with humpback, fin, and critically endangered North Atlantic right whales.

Stakeholder Empowerment

However, unlike these other programs, national marine sanctuary designation today represents empowerment of local stakeholders in the management of the offshore environments they cherish and depend on. Sanctuary advisory councils provide a channel for citizens, public interest organizations, businesses and local governments to directly influence sanctuary management and elevate priorities for consideration within NOAA. This influence manifests as site-specific management plans and regulations, tailored to the unique needs, vulnerabilities and activities of each site.

Furthermore, by regularly and formally convening local stakeholders, sanctuaries provide a crucial vehicle for coordinating the multitude of uses of the space and resources in and around these special places. The very features that attract fishermen, scientists, environmentalists and the public to sanctuaries can often produce competition and even conflict among these interests.

Success via Collaboration

By providing a legally sanctioned forum, sanctuaries facilitate open discussion, foster understanding and even collaboration among stakeholder groups. For instance, after years of contention between fishermen and environmentalists related to state fishing policy, representatives for these two groups in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council found significant common ground on the emerging threat of ocean acidification. This common ground led to collaborative research, and then in 2008 to the completion of a report and management recommendations for the

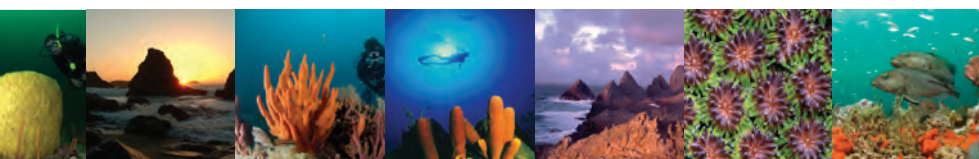
sanctuary superintendent that was unanimously adopted by the full council.

Similar collaboration-driven success has occurred at sites throughout the sanctuary system, leading to benefits for the offshore environment, coastal communities and coastal industries. These victories came to pass because of national marine sanctuaries. Sanctuaries themselves have succeeded because of federal collaboration with the local stakeholders, who care for and depend on our country's oceans and Great Lakes, day in and day out.

Building on the Foundation

Forty-three years ago, Rep. Mosher and his colleagues established a system intended to improve balance among coastal and ocean uses, toward a national approach for offshore resources that is sustainable rather than "indiscriminate." Today, the combination of federal management capacity and local stakeholder engagement that defines and energizes national marine sanctuaries is helping fulfill the promise of their foundational efforts.

The National Marine Sanctuary System continues to evolve, and will require significant growth through designation of new sites where elevated resource protection is warranted and sought after by local communities, in order to realize the system's full potential. But sanctuaries today are indispensable — no other marine natural resource policy tool has the breadth and adaptability to balance the complex, overlapping interests invested in our nation's extraordinary offshore heritage.



OF THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

From school teachers to senators, people across the nation have been asking for the chance to nominate new national marine sanctuaries. We've been listening.

For the first time in more than two decades, NOAA has reopened the door to protect new areas of America's marine and Great Lakes waters as national marine sanctuaries. In this issue of Sanctuary Watch, we explored the who, what, why and how of the new sanctuary nomination process, including a step-by-step nomination guide and a personal challenge from actor Edward James Olmos. Here are excerpts from the thousands of comments submitted by people from all walks of life in support of new national marine sanctuaries!



VOICES OF CONCERN

The call for action has come, in part, because of the negative impacts communities are seeing in their waters. These are just a few examples of why people want better protection in the areas they hold dear.

HABITAT DESTRUCTION

Jody McCaffree – North Bend, OR



When I was younger, my family spent most of our summer vacations camping on the south coast of Oregon, while my dad fished for salmon. It wasn't until I was older that I realized how fortunate we were to always have fresh native fish on hand. Unfortunately, due to many years of industrial development in the Coos Bay area, the health of our estuarine ecosystems has been compromised, and several species of salmon are now on the endangered list. We have a duty to do what we can to preserve and protect these waters for future generations.



“We are pleased that NOAA has sought public input on its sanctuary nomination and designation criteria, and that the revamped process will strengthen the ability of communities and other interested parties to actively participate.”

— Congressional letter of support signed by 26 Members of Congress, including Sen. Barbara Boxer and Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California

“Sanctuaries are a key component of our nation’s commitment to conserve our ocean and Great Lakes for future generations, and we very much support efforts to reinvigorate the National Marine Sanctuary System.”

— Joint letter of support signed by 120+ non-governmental organizations, businesses and academic institutions

“This process is an important first step toward filling a gap in protection for many of our coastal waters. I value clean beaches, clean water, and healthy fish and wildlife. We need to take steps now to protect our ocean for future generations.”

— Excerpt from comments submitted by 16,000+ Sierra Club Members

POPULATION DECLINE

Jeanette Davis – Baltimore, MD



I’m pursuing my Ph.D. in marine molecular biology, with a research focus on the Hawaiian sea slug *Elysia rufescens*, a species of photosynthetic sea slug that could be useful in developing anticancer drugs. This species, which gathers in Hawaii’s Black Point Bay in large numbers once a year to mate, was once nearly overharvested because of its medical potential. It is so important to protect creatures like this, and the marine

habitats they depend on, both for the health of the ocean and the benefits they could have in saving human lives.

POLLUTION

Samuel Janis—Governors Is., New York, NY



When it rains, I watch from my office on Governors Island as a stream of floating garbage pours into a small cove. This is the reality of living along New York Harbor, the nation’s most urbanized estuary. When it rains more than a quarter-inch in 24 hours, our city’s wastewater mixes with street runoff and overflows into the harbor, disrupting the ecological balance and hampering natural restoration and recovery. We, the people of

New York City, urgently need to address this issue if we want to live in a city with swimmable, fishable, healthy waters.

WHAT

CHANGE THE FUTURE OF THE OCEAN
CHOOSE SANCTUARIES

WILL

WWW.NOMINATE.NOAA.GOV

YOU

DO?

