



**SPORT FISHING & BOATING
PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

MAY 31 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Pritzker:

The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (Council) was established in 1993 to advise the Secretary of the Interior, through the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Director), on aquatic conservation endeavors that benefit recreational fishery resources and recreational boating, while encouraging partnerships among industry, the public, and government. With this charge in mind, we are writing to offer our collective guidance on any potential marine national monument designations proposed in the final months of the current Administration. It is our hope that any designation will continue our previous spirit of cooperation between public and private angling and boating stakeholders and embrace the tremendous social and economic benefits of angling and recreational boating equally with the conservation benefits of a marine monument.

Anglers and boaters recognize and support efforts to protect and enhance our aquatic resources. Through federal excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel, fishing license fees and direct donations, anglers contribute nearly \$1.5 billion annually to fund fisheries conservation and habitat restoration. While anglers only harvest around two percent of all finfish landed in the United States, their economic impact is substantial. According to a 2011 National Marine Fisheries Service Survey, the nation's 11 million saltwater anglers generated more than \$70 billion in economic output, supporting more than 450,000 jobs. Clearly, saltwater angling and boating are important components of the nation's economy and their access to any new or expanded marine monument should be included in any monument management goals.

In addition to the increased conservation measures that marine monuments may provide, they also should secure opportunities for angling and recreational boating where these activities have been traditional uses of the nominated waters. Aquatic resource conservation and low-impact public use of the resource are mutually beneficial, and the inclusion of both will enhance the value of a monument for the American public.

CHAIRMAN

Scott Kovarovics
Executive Director
Isaak Walton League of America

VICE CHAIRMAN

Betty Huskins
Southeast Tourism Policy Council

MEMBERS

James Adams
Executive Board Member
Past President
States Organization for Boating
Access

John Aley
President
American Boat and Yacht Council

John Arway
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat
Commission

Douglass Boyd
National Board Member
Coastal Conservation Association

Jeffrey Crane
President
Congressional Sportsmen's
Foundation

Thomas J. Demtrich
President
National Marine Manufacturers
Association

Chris Edmonston
President
BoatUS Foundation

Fred Harris
National Board Representative
American Fisheries Society

Mac McKeever
Senior Public Relations Representative
L.L.Bean, Inc.

Jerry McKinnis
Co-Owner
BASS LLC

Michael Nussman
President
American Sportfishing Association

John Sprague
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
Marine Industries Association of
Florida

Alvin Taylor
Director
South Carolina Department of Natural
Resources

James Zam
Executive Administrator
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife
Commission

Larry Voyles, ex officio
Director
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Dan Ashe, ex officio
Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5275 Leesburg Pike, Mailstop FAC
Falls Church, Virginia 22041
P 703 358-2435 F 703 358-2210

Whether through a Presidential Proclamation under the Antiquities Act or legislative designation by Congress, we believe it is important to pursue the establishment of marine national monuments in a manner that allows the management of the monument to include the priorities and values of anglers and recreational boaters. The planning process should be transparent, locally driven, and guided by science-based conservation principles that not only protect fisheries habitat and increase fish population abundance, but also elevate consideration of sustainable fishing and boating uses.

We are grateful that your respective agencies and the Administration have recognized angling and recreational boating as a sustainable use of marine monuments in recent monument expansions in the western Pacific. We urge you to continue that precedent and offer the following suggestions to consider in the creation of any marine monument:

- The proposal should be developed through a public process that results in support from local anglers and boaters, as well as the appropriate state and local governments. In addition, input from anglers and boaters should also be considered in the marine monument management plans that are developed subsequent to designation.
- Reasonable public access should be retained to enable angling and boating opportunities.
- The monument proclamation should include a direction for the Secretaries to consult with state and territorial fisheries and boating authorities on recreational management objectives, including the establishment of seasons and bag limits and regulating the method-of-take.
- Recreational opportunities should be upheld and the historical and cultural significance of angling and boating explicitly acknowledged in the monument proclamation.
- Honor obligations and trust responsibilities toward affected Native American tribes.

We look forward to working with you in protecting, advancing and fulfilling the needs of our nation's most pristine and important fisheries and aquatic resources, which fuel our angling and boating economy, and maintain the heritage of our anglers and boaters for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Kovarovics", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Kovarovics
Chairman