



March 1, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Nation's eight Regional Fishery Management Councils (Councils) are charged under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) with managing, conserving, and utilizing fishery resources throughout the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the United States. In implementing this charge, the Councils are required to take into account the effects of management actions on United States fishermen and fishing communities.

The Council Coordination Committee—which consists of the senior leaders of these Councils—wrote to President Obama in 2016 to raise concerns with the designation of marine monuments under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the effects of those designations on the Nation's fisheries and on domestic fisheries management.

Under the requirements of the MSA, the Councils protect essential fish habitat, minimize bycatch, and comply with protections for species listed under the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act and other mandates within the U.S. EEZ. Through implementation of the MSA, the United States is the global leader in the successful conservation and management of fishery resources and associated ecosystems in a proactive sustainable manner. Spatial management, such as the use of marine protected areas, is one of the tools utilized by the Councils. Through the Council process, more than 1,000 individual spatial habitat and fisheries conservation measures have been implemented protecting more than 72 percent of the Nation's ocean waters. The Councils use a public process, in a transparent and inclusive manner, and rely on the best scientific information available as required by the MSA.


As a result, we not only meet conservation objectives but also ensure sustainable seafood for U.S. consumers, promote the economies of coastal communities, and maintain the social-cultural fabric of our Nation's recreational, commercial, and subsistence fishing communities.

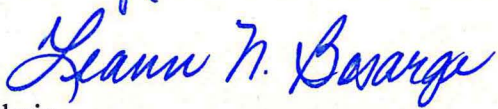
Designations of marine national monuments that prohibit fishing have disrupted the ability of the Councils to manage fisheries throughout their range as required by MSA and in an ecosystem-based manner. Our experience with marine monument designations to date is that they are counterproductive to domestic fishery goals, as they have displaced and concentrated U.S. fishing effort into less productive fishing grounds and increased dependency on foreign fisheries that are not as sustainably managed as United States fisheries. The removal of American fishing vessels from U.S. waters eliminates their ability to act as watchdogs over U.S. fishing grounds threatened by foreign fishing and other incursions. For all of these reasons and more, we believe fisheries management decisions should be made through the robust process established by the MSA and successfully used for over forty years to ensure the opportunity for sustainable American fisheries to exist.


Attached to this letter is a resolution approved by the Council Coordination Committee in 2016 regarding the successes of the MSA. The resolution notes that decisions to close areas of the EEZ through Executive action under authorities such as the Antiquities Act of 1906 may not take into account the MSA statutory requirements to achieve Optimum Yield (OY) from the Nation's fishery resources and may negatively affect domestic fishing jobs and recreational fishing opportunities and undermine the Regional Fishery Management Councils' efforts to develop and implement ecosystem-based management.

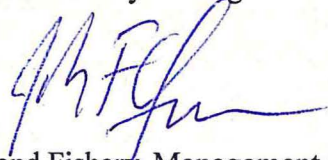
America has made significant progress in curbing illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing and minimizing our nation's dependence upon seafood imports. We hope you will continue to support our nation's sustainable fisheries and fishing jobs by safeguarding fishery resources in the U.S. EEZ and their management through the MSA.

Respectfully,



Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council



Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

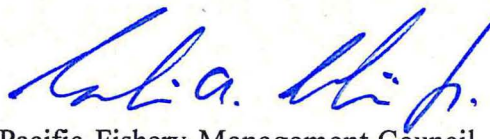

Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council


Chair
New England Fishery Management Council

Chair 
North Pacific Fishery Management Council


Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council


Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Chair 
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council

Attachments: CCC 2016 Resolution on Marine National Monuments
Maps of Western Pacific and New England monuments



Outcomes Statement and Recommendations

Council Coordination Committee

MARRIOTT BEACH RESORT

ST. THOMAS, U.S.V.I.

MAY 24-26, 2016

Marine National Monuments

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) notes the successes of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in managing fishery resources of the United States as well as the marine ecosystems of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the CCC recognizes that there have been a number of proposals regarding the designation of new, or the expansion of existing, Marine National Monuments within the U.S. EEZ.

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) was originally passed by Congress in 1976 for the specific purpose of sustainably managing the nation's fishery resources to provide a food source, recreational opportunities and livelihoods for the people of the United States;

Whereas Congress, in passing the Magnuson-Stevens Act, found that "Commercial and recreational fishing constitutes a major source of employment and contributes significantly to the economy of the Nation."

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Act created eight Regional Fishery Management Councils that are charged with managing, conserving, and utilizing fishery resources as well as protecting essential fisheries habitat, minimizing bycatch, and protecting listed species within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone;

Whereas, through the implementation of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and through the actions of the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the United States has become a global leader in the successful management of its fishery resources and associated ecosystems in a proactive sustainable manner;

Whereas, the Regional Fishery Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service have made great strides in managing fisheries in an ecosystem-based manner;

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that fisheries management actions be developed through a public process, in a transparent manner, and based on the best scientific information available;

Whereas, the Regional Fisheries Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service manage fisheries stocks throughout their range and concerns have been raised that designations such as marine monuments may disrupt the ability of the Councils to continue to manage fisheries throughout their range and in an ecosystem-based manner;

Whereas, the designation process of marine national monuments under the Antiquities Act of 1906 does not explicitly require a robust public process or that decisions be based on a

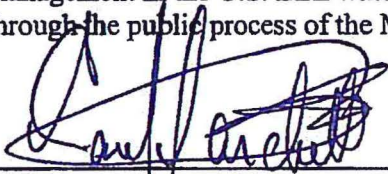
science-based environmental analyses, and does not require fishery management or conservation as an objective;

Whereas, the Regional Fishery Management Councils have a strong history of implementing spatial habitat and fisheries conservation measures (over 1000 individual spatial management measures) in a public, transparent, science-based manner through the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

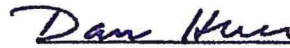
Whereas, concern has been raised that decisions to close areas of the U.S. EEZ, through statutory authorities such as through the Antiquities Act of 1906, may not take into account requirements to achieve optimum yield (OY) from the Nation's fishery resources, may negatively affect domestic fishing jobs, recreational opportunities and undermine efforts by the Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop and implement ecosystem-based management;

Therefore be it resolved, the CCC reiterates its support for the public, transparent, science-based process and management required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Therefore be it further resolved, the CCC recommends that if any designations are made in the marine environment under authorities such as the Antiquities Act of 1906 that fisheries management in the U.S. EEZ waters continue to be developed, analyzed and implemented through the public process of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.



Carlos Farchette, Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council



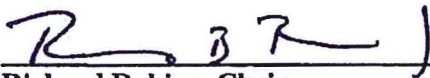
Dan Hull, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council



Kevin Anson, Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council




Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council



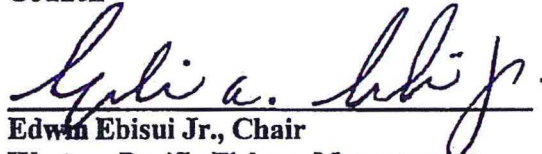
Richard Robins, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council



Michelle Duval, Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

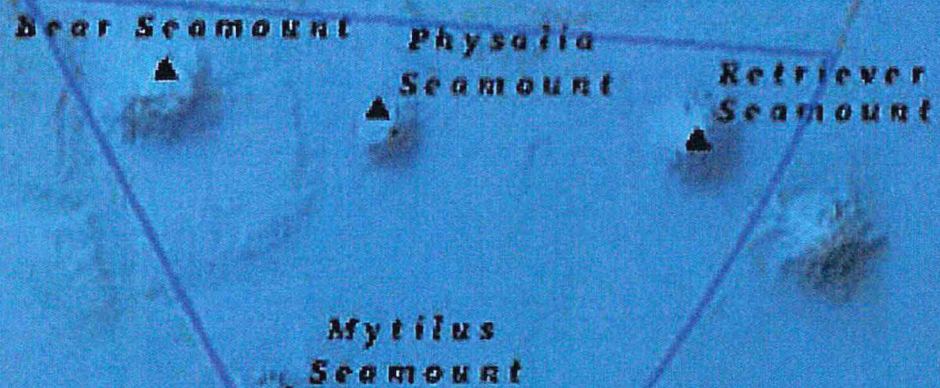
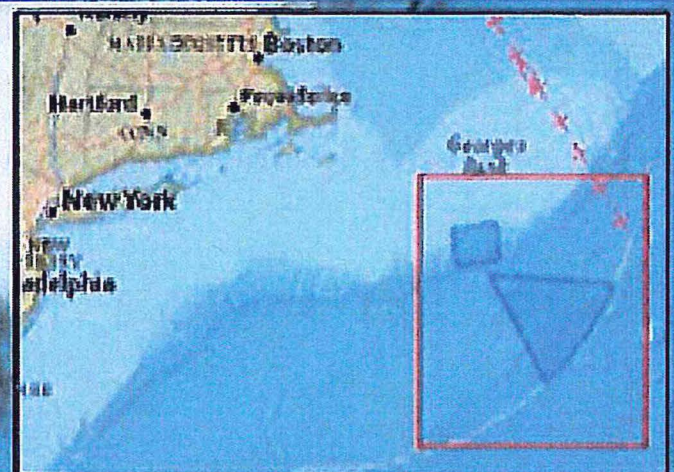
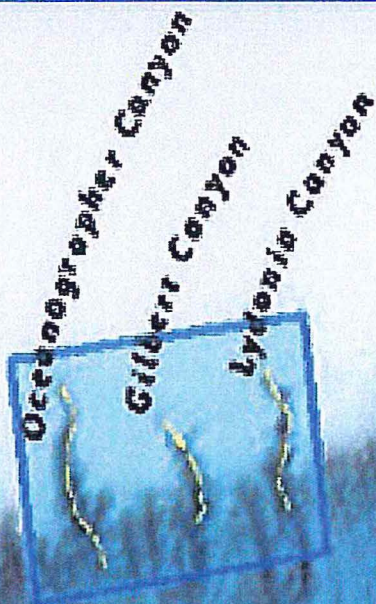


E.F. "Terry" Stockwell III, Chair
New England Fishery Management Council



Edwin Ebisui Jr., Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council

Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument



Legend

- Seamounts
- Canyons
- Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument
- Exclusive Economic Zone
- International Maritime Boundary



Canyon Unit	
Latitude	Longitude
40.122	-68.212
40.577	-68.768
40.690	-67.678
40.207	-67.578








Seamount Unit	
Latitude	Longitude
39.865*	-66.031
39.939	65.943
40.044	-67.722

*The U.S. 122 nautical mile western boundary



Credit: NOAA

US EEZ Regulated Fishing Areas, Western Pacific Region

Magnuson-Stevens Act

-  Longline fishing prohibited (1991 - 92, 2011)
-  Large Vessel Prohibited Area (2002)
-  False Killer Whale Southern Exclusion Zone (2012)
-  Guam No Anchor Zone (2004)
-  Bottomfish/Groundfish fishing prohibited (1986)
-  Bottomfish Vessels ≥ 50 ft prohibited (2006)
-  US EEZ: trawling, drift gillnets, poisons and explosives prohibited (1986 - 2004)

Antiquities Act

-  Marine National Monument (2006 - 2016)
-  Closed to all commercial fishing

