



May 16, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C. Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross Jr.
Secretary of Commerce
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Zinke and Secretary Ross:

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. The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) - which consists of the senior leaders of these Councils – held its annual meeting on May 16-18, 2017 in Gloucester, Massachusetts to discuss and consider actions on national, international and regional fishery resource management and policy issues.

The CCC discussed as part of its agenda the Presidential Executive Order 13792 of April 26, 2017 requiring the U.S. Department of the Interior to conduct a review of certain National monuments designated or expanded since 1996 under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Also considered was Executive Order 13795 of April 28, 2017 calling for certain Marine National Monuments to be reviewed “Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy.” On May 11, 2017, the Secretary of Interior published the Federal Register notice (22061) soliciting public comments on the review of certain monuments established since 1996.

The CCC notes that Section 2(b) of Executive Order 13792 specifically requires the Secretary of Interior to “*consult and coordinate with, ... the heads of any other executive departments or agencies concerned with the areas designated under the Act.*” The Councils are among the federal entities statutorily charged with the stewardship of the Nation's living marine resources and the development of conservation and management measures. We request the opportunity to consult and coordinate with the Departments of Interior and Commerce in the development of recommendations that will be prepared for Presidential action to carry out the policies set forth in Executive Orders 13792 and 13795.

Designations of marine national monuments that prohibit fishing activities - especially those that did not receive adequate economic and social impact review and did not allow for a robust public review process - have disrupted the ability of the Councils to manage fisheries throughout their range as required by MSA and in an ecosystem-based manner. Marine monument designations



have the potential to be counterproductive to achieving domestic fishery management goals. The Councils will bring more than 40 years of experience and successful US fishery management under the MSA to these reviews.

Respectfully,

Carlos Farchette, Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council

Leann Bosarge, Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Mike Luis, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Dr. John Quinn, Chair
New England Fishery Management Council

Bill Tweit, Vice-Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Herb Pollard, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council

Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Edwin Ebisui, Jr., Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council