

February 12, 2010

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the millions of members of our diverse organizations, we thank you for calling for a unified national ocean, coastal, islands and Great Lakes policy and an effective marine spatial planning framework. The recommendation for establishing a coordinating national ocean policy was made by both the Pew Oceans Commission and the congressionally established U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. Hundreds of scientists have also called for an ecosystem-based approach to managing our oceans. We commend you for your strong leadership in developing a policy that makes stewardship the foundation of the nation's public trust in our marine and Great Lakes ecosystems.

Our oceans, coasts, Pacific Islands and Great Lakes are not just places of wonder and beauty -- they are economic engines that provide valuable jobs, food, energy resources, recreational and tourism opportunities. The U.S. ocean economy provides more jobs and more economic output than the entire farm sector.¹ The latest data on U.S. ocean sector industries reveals that more than 2 million jobs and over \$128 billion in GDP annually results from just ocean tourism, recreation, and living resources.² Protecting our oceans is a vital means of helping to restore our economy and jobs.

Oceans are also a central part of the global climate system, and provide healthy seafood for a hungry world population. Our ocean and coastal waters are a valuable public resource, providing habitat for an incredible array of fish and wildlife. These waters have been central to our way of life as a maritime nation for generations. Healthy oceans, coasts and communities represent our heritage and our future.

As you know, ocean resources are currently managed by more than twenty federal agencies and administered through a web of more than 140 different and often conflicting laws and regulations. This complex legal system often results in inadequate management of public and private activities, such as pollution control, fishing and shipping. A strong national policy would help to untangle the regulatory jumble by guiding and coordinating the work of all government agencies and their activities affecting ocean resource management. Such a policy would also better address the regional concerns heard by your Ocean Policy Task Force during the public hearings held just this past fall – including issues ranging from protection of subsistence resources in the Arctic to climate change-related impacts on the West Coast, offshore energy concerns on the East Coast, calls for inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the Pacific Islands, concern for wetlands restoration in the Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes' struggles with destructive invasive species.

This policy would also be one that holds conservation as a central principle. As your June 12th memo clearly stated, "We have a stewardship responsibility to maintain healthy, resilient, and sustainable oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes resources for the benefit of this and future generations." While we have many laws and policies geared toward multiple uses, the purpose of this policy is to establish a conservation standard to guide stewardship of our great waters now and into the future.

Again, we thank you for your leadership and urge you to realize the full promise of a strong national ocean, coastal and Great Lakes policy. We look forward to an Executive Order that protects, maintains and restores these valuable ecosystems for the millions of Americans who enjoy and depend upon them.

Sincerely,

¹ U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (USCOP). 2004. An Ocean Blueprint for the 21 Century: Final Report. Washington, D.C., p. 31. Available at: <http://www.oceancommission.gov>.

² National Ocean Economics Program. 2004. "Market Data: Ocean Economy Data." Accessed July, 30 2009. Available at: <http://www.oceaneconomics.org/Market/ocean/oceanEcon.asp>. Note: GDP and employment statistics include multipliers.

Alabama

1. Alabama Rivers Alliance
2. Mobile Baykeeper

Alaska

3. Alaska Marine Conservation Council
4. Alaska Wilderness League
5. Cook Inletkeeper

Arizona

6. Center for Biological Diversity
7. Environment Arizona

California

8. Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
9. Environment California
10. International Marine Mammal Project for Earth Island Institute
11. Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society
12. The Marine Mammal Center
13. Mattole Restoration Council
14. Monterey Bay Aquarium
15. Ocean Conservation Research
16. Ocean Defenders Alliance
17. Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
18. Pacific Environment
19. Project Aware Foundation
20. Salmon Protection and Watershed Network
21. San Diego Coastkeeper
22. Save Our Shores
23. Save the Whales
24. Sea Stewards
25. Seventh Generation Advisors
26. Surfrider
27. The Watershed Project
28. Turtle Island Restoration Network

Colorado

29. Sheep Mountain Alliance

Connecticut

30. Connecticut Audubon Society
31. Connecticut River Watershed Council
32. Connecticut Surfcasters
33. Environment Connecticut
34. Save the Sound

Florida

35. American Littoral Society – Southeast Chapter
36. Caribbean Conservation Corp. & Sea Turtle Survival League
37. Environment Florida
38. Florida Coastal and Ocean Coalition

39. Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratories, Inc.
40. Hernando Audubon Society
41. Indian Riverkeeper
42. Reef Relief
43. Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation Marine Laboratory
44. Tampa Baywatch
45. Wild Florida Project

Georgia

46. Environment Georgia
47. Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals

Hawaii

48. Conservation Council for Hawaii
49. Environment Hawaii
50. Hawaii Audubon Society
51. Hawaii Fishing and Boating Association
52. Hawaii's Thousand Friends
53. Livable Hawaii Kai Hui
54. Lost Fish Coalition
55. Malama Maunalua
56. Maui Coastal Land Trust
57. Pacific Whale Foundation

Illinois

58. Alliance for the Great Lakes
59. Environment Illinois

Louisiana

60. Atchafalaya Basinkeeper
61. Baton Rouge Audubon Society
62. Bayou Rebirth Wetlands Education and Restoration
63. Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
64. Gulf Coast Initiative
65. Gulf Restoration Network
66. Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper
67. Louisiana Audubon Council
68. Louisiana Environmental Action Network

Maine

69. Atlantic Salmon Federation
70. Casco Bay Estuary Project
71. Casco Baykeeper
72. Center for Cetacean Research and Conservation
73. Environment Maine
74. Island Institute
75. Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance
76. Talking Conservation

Maryland

77. Center for Chesapeake Communities
78. Chesapeake Bay Foundation

- 79. Environment Maryland
- 80. National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
- 81. Prime Seafood
- 82. Seaweb
- 83. 1Sky

Massachusetts

- 84. Alewives Anonymous, Inc.
- 85. Charles River Watershed Association
- 86. Clean Power Now
- 87. Conservation Law Foundation
- 88. Ecological Solutions, Inc.
- 89. Eight Towns and the Bay, Massachusetts Bays Program
- 90. Environment Massachusetts
- 91. Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust, Inc.
- 92. Massachusetts Audubon
- 93. Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters
- 94. Massachusetts Oyster Project
- 95. Merrimack River Watershed Council
- 96. Nantucket Soundkeeper
- 97. New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance
- 98. Ocean River Institute
- 99. Safer Waters in Massachusetts Bay
- 100. Salem Sound Coastwatch
- 101. Save the Harbor / Save the Bay
- 102. The Whale Center of New England

Michigan

- 103. Environment Michigan
- 104. Republicans for Environmental Protection
- 105. Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve

Minnesota

- 106. Environment Minnesota

Mississippi

- 107. Gulf Conservation Coalition
- 108. Gulf Islands Conservancy, Inc.
- 109. Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain
- 110. Mississippi Sierra Club Coast Group
- 111. Ship Island Excursions
- 112. South Coast Paddling Company

Montana

- 113. Federation of Fly Fishers

New Hampshire

- 114. Environment New Hampshire

New Jersey

- 115. American Littoral Society
- 116. Clean Ocean Action

- 117. Environment New Jersey
- 118. SandyHook SeaLife Foundation

New York

- 119. Citizens Campaign for the Environment
- 120. E2 New England
- 121. Environment New York
- 122. Friends of the Bay
- 123. NYCTFishing.com
- 124. NY/NJ Baykeeper
- 125. Shark Savers
- 126. Waterkeeper Alliance

North Carolina

- 127. Environment North Carolina
- 128. SouthWings, Inc.

Ohio

- 129. Environment Ohio
- 130. Ohio Environmental Council
- 131. Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper Association

Oregon

- 132. Audubon Society of Portland
- 133. Environment Oregon
- 134. Green Fire Productions
- 135. Institute for Applied Ecology
- 136. National Audubon Society, Ten Mile Creek

Pennsylvania

- 137. Penn Environment

Rhode Island

- 138. Environment Rhode Island
- 139. Sailors for the Sea
- 140. Save the Bay – Narragansett Bay
- 141. The Ocean Project

South Carolina

- 142. South Carolina Coastal Conservation League

Texas

- 143. Beach Access Coalition
- 144. Coastal Bend Bays Foundation
- 145. Crouch Environmental
- 146. Deep Search Foundation
- 147. Environment Texas
- 148. Galveston Bay Foundation
- 149. Galveston Baykeeper
- 150. Houston Audubon Society
- 151. Houston Tomorrow
- 152. Lower Laguna Madre Foundation

- 153. Sea Turtle Restoration Project
- 154. Surfrider Foundation Coastal Bend Chapter
- 155. Surfrider Foundation South Texas Chapter
- 156. Surfrider Foundation Texas Upper Coast Chapter
- 157. Texas Coastal Partners
- 158. Texas Conservation Alliance

Virginia

- 159. Restore America's Estuaries
- 160. Shenandoah Riverkeeper
- 161. Southern Environmental Law Center

Washington, DC

- 162. Blue Frontier Campaign
- 163. Defenders of Wildlife
- 164. Endangered Species Coalition
- 165. Environment America
- 166. Food & Water Watch
- 167. Friends of the Earth
- 168. Greenpeace
- 169. Marine Conservation Biology Institute
- 170. Marine Fish Conservation Network
- 171. Natural Resources Defense Council
- 172. Oceana
- 173. Ocean Champions
- 174. Ocean Conservancy
- 175. Pew Environment Group
- 176. Sierra Club
- 177. Slow Food USA
- 178. The Nature Conservancy
- 179. The Ocean Foundation
- 180. The Wilderness Society
- 181. World Wildlife Fund

Washington

- 182. Cape Georges Services
- 183. Environment Washington
- 184. Friends of the San Juans
- 185. H&D International
- 186. Kooskooskie Fish
- 187. Northwest Watershed Institute
- 188. Olympic Environmental Council
- 189. People for Puget Sound
- 190. Puyallup River Watershed Council
- 191. RE Sources for Sustainable Communities
- 192. Seattle Audubon Society
- 193. Washington Water Trust
- 194. Wild Fish Conservancy

Wisconsin

- 195. Milwaukee Riverkeeper
- 196. Wisconsin Environment