



### Trustees Emeriti

Dr. Robert D. Ballard  
Jean-Michel Cousteau  
Dr. Sylvia Earle  
Terry D. Garcia  
Hon. Ernest F. Hollings  
Robert Lynn Nelson  
ADM James Watkins USN (Ret)  
Hon. Lowell Weicker

March 13, 2009

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan, Chairman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
H-309 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

### Board of Trustees

Dr. Kathryn Clark  
Gregory C. Conklin  
Tom Fry  
Bob Hollis  
Justin Kenney  
Larry Kopald  
Dr. Kumar Mahadevan  
Dawn Martin  
Jeffrey Mora  
Bob Talbot

Dear Chairman Mollohan:

Since we, the Board of Trustees of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, wrote to you a year ago, we are pleased to report that the National Marine Sanctuary Program has been elevated to office level within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—now the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS). Our gratitude goes to Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA-23) and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL-18), the Co-Chairs of the Congressional National Marine Sanctuary Caucus, for their support in seeing this effort come to fruition finally. The office elevation will enhance ONMS's operational efficiency and programmatic effectiveness in fulfilling its mission to protect, conserve, and enhance the National Marine Sanctuary System, which currently includes 13 sanctuaries and one marine national monument (co-managed).

### Advisory Committee

Stephanie Curry  
Xavier DeShayes  
Bob Holston  
Patricia Thompson

Despite the step forward with the elevation, the funding levels for ONMS, and NOAA as a whole, have become insufficient for carrying out their mandates. **Therefore, as you begin work on FY10 appropriations bills, we strongly encourage you to support increasing the allocation for ONMS to at least \$60 million ORF and \$20 million PAC—\$80 million total. In addition, we urge you to support an overall appropriation for NOAA of at least \$5.0 billion total (ORF + PAC) in FY10. To demonstrate your support and commitment, we also ask that you submit an appropriations request letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies that reflects these funding levels.**

In the past few fiscal cycles, including the current one, Congress has worked hard to try to increase the base funding to support our National Marine Sanctuary System and NOAA overall. We appreciate those efforts, but the end-game of Continuing Resolutions and omnibus bills in recent years has resulted in level funding, which are essentially cuts due to inflation, cost-of-living increases, and increased responsibilities. Therefore, we ask that you help finally put ONMS and NOAA on appropriate funding tracks by enacting much needed increases in FY10.

8601 Georgia Avenue • Suite 501 • Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(t) 301.608.3040 • (f) 301.608.3044 • [www.nmsfocean.org](http://www.nmsfocean.org)

Many of the most pressing issues of our time can be addressed by supporting healthier oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and NOAA are key components to that. An investment of **at least \$5.0 billion for NOAA**, the Nation's lead ocean agency, would help it fulfill its duties in ocean protection and management, weather forecasting, nautical charting, data collection and synthesis, fisheries management, hazard mitigation, climate research, and education and outreach efforts. Within that, funding of **at least \$80 million (\$60 ORF, \$20 PAC) for ONMS** would allow for some necessary improvements in the management, operations, and facilities of the national marine sanctuaries and monument, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in the face of increasing challenges.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries exemplifies the pillars of NOAA's mission—science, service, and stewardship. It has matured significantly since its inception with additions to the system, a larger and more experienced staff, and the creation of a regionalized component to its management regime. Most recently, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has expanded to include Davidson Seamount, one of the largest known seamounts in U.S. waters. ONMS has also been mandated to begin the process to incorporate the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument into the Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary in American Samoa. In addition, there are other expansions being considered elsewhere in the system. Therefore, an increase in ONMS funding is important to adequately protect the bounty of ecological and cultural resources within the areas it manages.

The return on the investment in these protected areas is several-fold, as they are place-based tools that are useful in addressing some fundamental problems of the Nation.

- Sanctuaries support the economy by, e.g., fostering tourism, supporting healthy fishery stocks, and providing ocean-related jobs.
- Sanctuaries help reduce the impacts of climate change on local ecosystems by acting as sentinel sites that help reduce other stressors on those areas, making them more resilient. In addition, the research and monitoring taking place in the sanctuaries provide valuable information about the changes happening in our ocean, which helps determine how to counteract and adapt to such changes.
- Sanctuaries support coastal communities by, e.g., providing educational forums, fostering local and regional partnerships, and connecting people to the ocean.
- Sanctuaries support foreign relations and national security by, e.g., hosting educational and cultural exchanges for non-American students and promoting international partnerships.
- Sanctuaries support human health and safety through the information gathered and discoveries made in them.
- Sanctuaries increase our Nation's competitiveness by producing impactful educational programs and sound science.

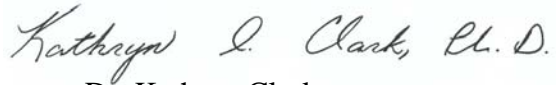
The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as a whole, are not only vital to our Nation's environment, economy, and competitiveness, but also to the health and wellbeing of each of your constituents and fellow citizens. **Therefore, we again urge you to submit a letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies requesting FY10 appropriations of \$80 million for ONMS and \$5.0 billion for NOAA.**

Thank you for your consideration and we wish you all the best as you progress in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Respectfully,



Dr. Robert Ballard



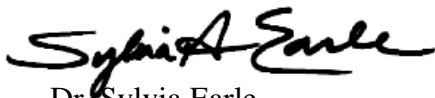
Dr. Kathryn Clark



Gregory Conklin



Jean-Michel Cousteau



Dr. Sylvia Earle



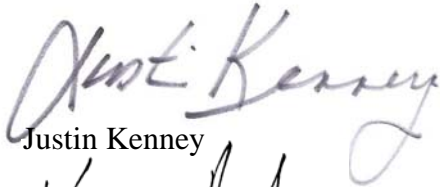
Tom Fry



Terry Garcia



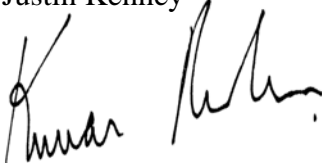
Robert Hollis



Justin Kenney



Larry Kopald



Dr. Kumar Mahadevan



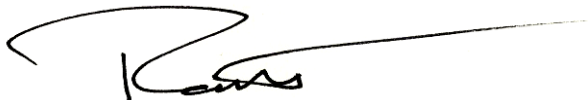
Dawn Martin



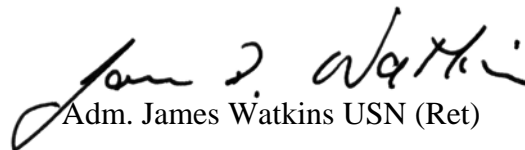
Jeffrey Mora



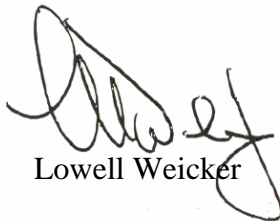
Robert Lyn Nelson



Robert Talbot



Adm. James Watkins USN (Ret)



Lowell Weicker