

California Central Coast Caucus

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June 4, 2024

The Honorable Richard W. Spinrad, Ph.D., Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere/Administrator for National Oceans and Atmospheric Administration

1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128
Washington, D.C. 20230

Subject: Support for Phased Implementation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary

Dear Dr. Spinrad:

The California Legislative Central Coast Caucus (CLCCC) writes to you in support of the phased approach to the Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary Designation.

The CLCCC is a bi-cameral body composed of ten California state legislators who represent the counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura - nearly half of California's coastline and state waters.

We strongly support the desires of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council (NCTC); the over 50 environmental organizations including the San Luis Obispo Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club (San Luis Obispo County), SLO Climate Coalition, Azul, and Brightline Defense Project; and the Morro Bay Wind Energy Leaseholders (Equinor Wind US LLC, Golden State Wind LLC, and Invenergy California Offshore LLC) who desire a phased approach to the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.

The Northern Chumash and Leaseholders have issued a joint request as follows:

NOAA [should] adopt a phased approach to the Sanctuary designation, in conjunction with regulatory clarifications, to foster this compatibility with environmentally sound offshore wind development and operation. Upon initial designation, the northern boundary of the CHNMS would be located south of

Diablo Canyon, but north of Port San Luis and Avila Beach. Following the initial designation, and at an appropriate time, we jointly support expansion of the full boundary of the CHNMS to connect to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. We request that future expansion be reflected in the Sanctuary's Management Plan through inclusion of a Sanctuary Expansion Action Plan.

(Joint NCTC/Leaseholder letter released April 23, 2024)

The joint position is a pragmatic compromise that supports ocean and on-land community health.

It is indisputable that our changing climate is wreaking havoc on biodiversity and carbon-based energy is creating more pollution than our ecosystems can withstand. We need conservation and clean energy that co-exist. This is why our caucus is joining the large coalition of tribal leaders, environmental organizations, and clean energy providers who are asking the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to move the Chumash Sanctuary forward quickly.

We ask NOAA to formally designate the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. We also urge NOAA to include a specific timeline and other benchmarks for the future expansion of the Chumash sanctuary in the final designation document. This timeline should provide a reasonable amount of time (ie: between five and ten years) for the installation of cables, while ensuring the eventual full designation of the sanctuary and the protection of ocean waters stretching uninterruptedly from the Monterey Bay to the Channel Islands national marine sanctuaries. As members representing the full region, our shared goal is to see the entire Central Coast ocean area within the boundaries of national sanctuaries. 117-81-7

We couldn't agree more with what was stated in a similar support letter, submitted by over fifty conservation, environmental justice, tribal, climate, and other entities: "The scale and severity of the climate and biodiversity crises demand that U.S. leaders simultaneously advance habitat conservation and responsible offshore wind development." Time is of the essence – we urge NOAA's formal designation now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Adams".A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Monica Linn".

DAWN ADDIS
Chair, Central Coast Legislative Caucus
Assemblymember, 30th District

MONIQUE LIMÓN
Vice-Chair, Central Coast Legislative Caucus
Senator, 19th District

The Central Coast Legislative Caucus

SENATORS

Anna Caballero, Monique Limón (Vice-Chair), John Laird, Henry Stern

ASSEMBLYMEMBERS

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