



Center for Coastal Conservation

The Honorable James Connaughton
730 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

November 18, 2008

Dear Jim:

Thank you for meeting with members of the recreational fishing and boating community on the Administration's deliberations on the possible designation of special management areas in the central and western Pacific Ocean. We hope you agree that Executive Order 13474 on recreational fishing is the guide for any decisions addressing recreational fishing.

Throughout our discussions we have been concerned that the intent and express language of the President's Executive Order is not being internalized and implemented by all within this Administration. You and the President have the opportunity to set the record straight. The Executive Order establishes a presumption that **recreational fishing shall be sustained** in any future designation of an area under any federal authority, including the Antiquities Act. This same presumption will be applied to the reconsideration of any existing recreational fishing closures.

Several points bear repeating. First, after the science briefings and the few public meetings on the resources of the Pacific islands, we still have not heard a good reason for rejecting the presumption of the President's Executive Order in the areas under discussion. No evidence related to managed angling was identified. Second, remote areas that are not visited by anglers, by definition, do not experience harm from fishing—and, therefore, shouldn't be closed. Third, recreational fishing can be managed to reduce its environmental footprint (should that ever be an issue in a monument zone). As you know, we have supported (even initiated) such temporal management many times. Fourth, an Antiquities Act closure sends a message to the American angler and public that this President doesn't believe in the values of recreational fishing – and that he doesn't agree with his Executive Order signed less than 60 days ago. Why would you want the President to send that message to 60 million U.S. anglers –or their kids? Or set that precedent for the next President?

We remain concerned that the use of the Antiquities Act precludes true public input—we have not been able to comment directly on any proposal in the way that we would under existing fisheries management statutes. In any case, we ask that you make specific reference to Executive Order 13474 and expressly allow recreational fishing to further the President's legacy. We continue to be available to you throughout this process.

Sincerely,

David Anderson
Representing Center for Coastal Conservation
And on behalf of:
American Sportfishing Association
Coastal Conservation Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
National Marine Manufacturers Association

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