



# Our Protected Coast Coalition

FROM FARM TO HARBOR

December 16, 2016

Mr. John Armor, Director  
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
1305 East-West Highway, 11th Floor  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
[sanctuaries@noaa.gov](mailto:sanctuaries@noaa.gov)

RE: Remove the Chumash NMS proposal from the Site Evaluation List

Dear Director Armor,

We are writing on behalf of the Our Protected Coast Coalition (OPCC), which was formed to provide a unified voice of **opposition** to the nomination of the Central Coast of California as a “Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary”.

On October 21, 2016, members of OPCC provided public testimony to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary’s Advisory Council, detailing the strength of opposition to the Chumash Heritage NMS proposal. Speakers puzzled aloud how you could have claimed, as you did in your October 6, 2015 letter, that there is evidence of “broad community support” for the Chumash nomination. At minimum, you were misinformed on this point, or you chose to disregard the significant opposition. As you must know, our organization has submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for information about how the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries came to make such a flawed determination of “broad community support”.

Along with several hundred local citizens and individual small businesses, the following elected officials, agencies, and organizations, have gone on record as opposing the Chumash NMS nomination:

Tribes:

- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians—the federally-recognized Tribe
- Salinan Tribe of Monterey & San Luis Obispo Counties

Elected Officials:

- California State Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian
- Grover Beach Mayor John Shoals
- Pismo Beach Mayor Shelly Higginbotham
- Former Morro Bay Mayors Janice Peters, Bill Yates, and Rodger Anderson
- San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors Lynn Compton, Debbie Arnold, and Supervisor-Elect John Peschong



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- Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Peter Adam and Steve Lavagnino
- Former Congresswoman Andrea Seastrand

## Agencies:

- Port San Luis Harbor District, Resolution # 15-08
- City of Morro Bay, Resolution #'s 00-36; 01-15; 03-27; and 12-18
- Morro Bay Harbor Advisory Committee

## Organizations:

- San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce
- Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Coalition of Labor, Agriculture, and Business of San Luis Obispo County
- Coalition of Labor, Agriculture, and Business of Santa Barbara County
- Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations—the largest commercial fishing organization on the west coast
- Recreational Fishing Alliance—the largest recreational fishing organization in the US
- Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries—a 501-c-3 organization representing commercial and recreational fishing for six Central Coast port communities
- Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Association
- Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen's Association
- Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara
- Southern California Trawler's Association
- Morro Bay Community Quota Fund
- California Salmon Council
- Arroyo Grande Sportsman's Club
- San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association
- Forest Preservation Society
- California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference—representing all CA ports, including the very largest
- California Association of Harbormasters and Port Captains—a 68 year old professional organization of mostly public agencies
- Republican Party of San Luis Obispo County

It is likely that this list will continue to grow.

As you will surely recognize, these officials, agencies, and organizations represent many thousands of supporters and constituents. Some on this list appreciate some of the benefits that may come with a NMS designation, while also calling for certain key changes in the sanctuary program before support can be lent. Some see this issue as divisive, with a much broader level of support needed. Most, including fishing people and other resource users, question the need



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for further federal oversight when so many federal and state laws protect and manage our ocean resources. Most also are unimpressed with NMS transparency and public involvement in management decisions.

Please realize, Mr. Armor, that your decision to disregard the public opposition to creating a new federal bureaucracy—a NMS—overseeing our precious coastal waters, constitutes the Central Coast's first taste of what sanctuary management will be like for local citizens.

Please remove the Chumash—or any other Central Coast of California—NMS proposal from the Site Evaluation List.

Sincerely,

Tom Hafer  
President  
Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Assn.

Butch Powers  
President  
Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen Org.

David Kirk  
Chairman  
Port San Luis Harbor Commission

Jeremiah O'Brien  
Past President  
Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Assn.

CC: William Douros, NOAA West Coast Region, National Marine Sanctuaries  
Congressman Kevin McCarthy  
Congressman-Elect Salud Carbajal  
Clerk of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors  
Steve Lavagnino, Santa Barbara County Supervisor  
Peter Adam, Santa Barbara County Supervisor  
Janet Wolf, Santa Barbara County Supervisor  
PJ Webb, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Chair