January 23, 2013

The Honorable Rebecca Blank  
Acting Secretary of Commerce  
14012 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dr. Jane Lubchenco  
Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
and NOAA Administrator  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dan Basta, Director  
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
1325 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

RE: Reactivation of the National Marine Sanctuaries Site Evaluation List

Dear Acting Secretary Blank, Dr. Lubchenco, and Director Basta,

The Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council recognizes the critical role played by the Site Evaluation List (SEL) not only for the establishment of national marine sanctuaries but for the vital involvement of local communities. The SEL provides an important mechanism for local communities to initiate and engage in discussion regarding the desirability of a marine sanctuary; its perceived benefits or detriments, and to voice questions or concerns.
Beyond the benefits of marine sanctuaries for the preservation and management of cultural and natural resources, their contributions to a region must be demonstrated holistically from the physical landscape through history and heritage to address present uses and economic advantages. The SEL will engender these conversations. In recognition of the significance of the SEL and its role in generating the crucial participation of local communities, the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council supports and encourages the reactivation of the SEL.

Sincerely,

Susan B.M. Langley, Ph.D.
Chair, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council