



March 14, 2016

Mr. David Alberg
Superintendent
Monitor National Marine Sanctuary
100 Museum Drive
Newport News, VA 23606-3759

Dear Mr. Alberg:

The Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group (BAREG) is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to research, education, and preservation of the maritime heritage of the Twentieth Century's two World Wars. As such, we are writing to support the expansion of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS).

BAREG's membership is composed of sport and technical divers and many of our members are avocational marine archaeologists with formal training and certification from the Nautical Archaeology Society. Our group is committed to the increase and diffusion of knowledge of the Battles of the Atlantic to include documenting the wrecks of the two world wars of the Twentieth Century. Many of our members have worked with staff from MNMS on surveying wrecks off North Carolina in areas proposed for the sanctuary's expansion.

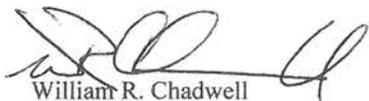
We believe that the expansion of MNMS will have a very positive effect on the research of the important wartime wrecks found off North Carolina and will help organizations such as BAREG to promote awareness of these historic maritime resources. Additionally, expansion of the sanctuary will show that the global wars of the last century were not just fought in distant fields and waters, but that those war's battlegrounds are also here in off our coasts and in our nation's territorial seas. We believe that the timing of the expansion is significant as the centennial of World War One is underway. Important wrecks from that conflict are found off North Carolina and the U-boat campaign in the summer of 1918 was a prelude to the carnage of Operation Drumbeat in 1942 that left so many wrecks on the seabed off our Atlantic Coast.

We do not advocate for any of the currently proposed boundary models, but instead believe future sanctuary boundaries should both encompass all currently-known wrecks from the World War I and II Battles of the Atlantic off the coast of the North Carolina Outer Banks, as well as be sufficiently large enough to provide adequate protection to any similarly historic wrecks that may be discovered in the future.

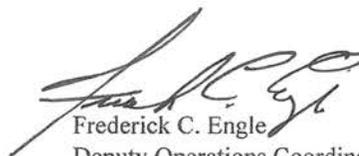
We have one specific recommendation regarding mooring systems at the more popular wreck sites that would be in the expanded sanctuary. Each time a dive boat ties into a wreck, particularly with anchor chain, it hastens the deterioration of the sunken vessel. The mooring system used at the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary has worked well to protect the wrecks in Lake Huron from damage caused by tying into the wreck. We recognize that mooring systems would have significant cost to install and maintain, particularly in the dynamic environment off North Carolina and so these would only be used at the most popular dive sites, such as the U-352.

As divers with a deep interest in maritime history we look forward to the expansion of MNMS. Please feel free to contact Fred Engle, BAREG Deputy Operations Coordinator (geographerfc@gmail.com), should there be any way our organization can further assist with the expansion of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary.

Sincerely,



William R. Chadwell
Operations Coordinator
Battle of the Atlantic Research
and Expedition Group



Frederick C. Engle
Deputy Operations Coordinator
Battle of the Atlantic Research
and Expedition Group