

Sami Powers  
2501 Marion Street  
Denver, Colorado 80205  
March 18, 2016

David Alberg  
Sanctuary Superintendent  
Monitor National Marine Sanctuary  
100 Museum Drive  
Newport News, VA 23606

Dear David Alberg:

As a trained underwater archaeologist and cultural resource specialist with nearly a decade of professional experience, I fully support the expansion of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. I support any of the proposed models, but think it's crucial for the preservation of such critically finite resources to include, among the Battle of the Atlantic sites, preservation for additionally associated resources representing centuries of maritime activity along the eastern US coast, as part of NOAA's MNMS expansion. The areas outlined along the North Carolina coast contain a heavy concentration of historic maritime resources with unmatched local importance and uniquely worthy national significance, necessitating increased protection over what exists today.

The sanctuary expansion will provide opportunities for additional protection of a class of resources that are non-renewable. Once lost to human or natural impacts, the important information these resources contain cannot be rediscovered, recreated, or re-explored. Unlike natural resources, we cannot rebuild populations of historic shipwrecks through species protection and human intervention, and the details and information contained on these sites is invaluable to a great diversity of stakeholders ranging from the descendants of those lost, to the generations of those impacted by war; and from researchers in a variety of scientific fields to the local community that will undoubtedly benefit economically from the sanctuary expansion.

Additional protection of these resources through sanctuary expansion, as NOAA has outlined, will not restrict activities of those who currently utilize these resources (recreational and/or commercial fishing, diving, etc), but rather will expand research opportunities, outreach and education, and heritage tourism along the North Carolina coast. It is in the best interest of all stakeholders to support the expansion of the sanctuary. Expansion of the MNMS will provide a mechanism not currently in place by legislation to preserve and protect a diverse inventory of non-renewable resources for the enjoyment and education of current and future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sami Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sami Powers