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## **Atlantic Sea Scallop group opposes an Atlantic Marine Monument; says it contradicts the President's own order**

*The following was released by the Fisheries Survival Fund:*

WASHINGTON – May 4, 2016 – The organization representing the Atlantic sea scallop industry, one of the most economically valuable fisheries in the nation, has written to the White House opposing the creation of an Atlantic Marine Monument, noting that such an action subverts public processes, and contradicts the President's own executive order on public participation in the regulatory process.

The Fisheries Survival Fund (FSF), an organization that comprises the majority of the Limited Access Atlantic sea scallop fleet, is one of the many stakeholders that frequently participates in the public fisheries management process. FSF opposes any attempts to circumvent this process, as noted in the letter.

“We strongly urge the President to not designate any marine monuments in New England, but rather to allow the public process to continue moving forward,” states the letter, which was sent to the White House Council on Environmental Quality. “Let the President’s legacy be that he allowed the public to have a voice in how we manage our shared resources.”

The White House has been considering designating an offshore monument in the Northeast Atlantic at the behest of several environmental groups, an authority granted by the Antiquities Act. President Bush previously used this authority to create two expansive monuments in the Pacific Ocean around Hawaii and the Northern Mariana Islands.

As argued in the letter, “Public areas and public resources should be managed in an open and transparent manner, not an imperial stroke of the pen.” In fact, several regulations have already been developed through the Council process that ensure fisheries are properly conserving and managing marine resources.

FSF’s position mirrors that of Executive Order 13563, authored by President Obama himself, which states in part that regulations must be based on the best available science, involve public participation, and include greater coordination across agencies. The current management system is more consistent with these standards than a monument designation, which could be abused by a few select insiders. Through regional councils, the government is already protecting Cashes Ledge and deep-water corals.

If the Administration insists on the designation of a monument, the President should accept recommendations made by members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Rhode Island Delegation, in consultation with other regional fisheries organizations, and approved unanimously by the ASMFC. Their proposal would ensure the protection of deep-water corals and ocean canyon substrates while allowing for fishing that would not affect the protected areas.

[Read the full FSF letter to the White House here](#)

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