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American Sword and Tuna Harvesters Respond to Hudson Canyon Marine Sanctuary Consideration

June 9, 2022 -- *The following was released by the American Sword and Tuna Harvesters on the Biden-Harris Administration decision to initiate the designation process to designate the Hudson Canyon as a national marine sanctuary through the National Marine Sanctuaries Act:*

The American Sword and Tuna Harvesters are concerned about the negative consequences to American citizen's access to safe and sustainable seafood by a marine sanctuary designation of the Hudson Canyon. This decision was announced yesterday without warning or consultation with participants in the many well-regulated fisheries, operating under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, that depend on this area to survive.



Simply put, a commercial fishing ban in the Hudson Canyon, has the potential to cause the collapse of the East Coast commercial fishery.

This is another disappointing action from an Administration that claims to be committed to science, working families, and communities. But it is unfortunately not out of character. Our [June 2021 attempts](#) to arrange a meeting with Interior Secretary Deb Haaland to discuss the harm to our fishers from reimposition of a commercial fishing ban in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine

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months later, and three months after the ban was reimposed.

Yesterday's announcement is, as the expression goes, déjà vu all over again: A cadre of tax-deduction funded environmental organizations working in secret with a friendly Administration orchestrates the unveiling of a far-reaching potentially negative action affecting America's commercial fishing industry under the false banner of "much-needed" ocean protections. The details are distributed in advance under embargo to a wide swath of journalists. Then, when the proposal is simultaneously unveiled by its proponents and the White House, pre-written stories appear in numerous media outlets; filled with self-congratulatory quotes, without the inconvenience of input from our hard-working fishing families and communities.

This announcement comes on the second day of Capitol Hill Oceans Week, an annual gathering of environmental and conservation groups organized by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. In past years, our efforts to reach out to Foundation officials, both directly and through mutual contacts, to include commercial fishing voices in this event have been rebuffed. As can be seen in this year's [event agenda](#), with the exception of Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), there was once again not a single speaker representing domestic commercial fisheries. It would seem that the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's commitment "to a culture of diversity, inclusion, equity, justice, and belonging" does not extend to the inclusion of commercial fishing.

Tonight, in Washington, DC -- in an action that can only be described as audacious, hypocritical, and exploitative -- the Foundation will [host a fundraiser](#) featuring a screening of the film *The Perfect Storm*, which tells the story of the tragic loss of the Gloucester, Massachusetts fishing vessel *Andrea Gail*. This creates the false illusion that the Foundation is interested in the plight of domestic commercial fishing families.

We appreciate the Biden-Harris Administration's stated commitment to equity, environmental justice, and workers' rights, but at a time when the need for self-sufficiency and supply chain security should be at the forefront of our domestic agenda, the Administration should not support actions that are likely to incentivize the increased importation of often-illegal, underreported, and unregulated (IUU) seafood to the detriment of law-abiding American commercial fishers.

About American Sword and Tuna Harvesters

American Sword and Tuna Harvesters are experienced fishers, fish buyers, vessel owners and support businesses who represent a significant harvesting segment of the U.S. pelagic longline Industry. We strive for equitable, logical

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