

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 202030

Dear Secretary Ross:

I am writing in support of advancing the nomination process to designate the proposed areas between the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary as the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. If moved forward, this designation will help preserve sacred submerged Chumash cultural sites and protect diverse marine natural resources that are essential to California's \$1.9 trillion coastal economy.

Currently, our oceans face unprecedented challenges ranging from warming ocean waters, increased plastic ocean pollution, and threats of new offshore oil and gas exploration activities. The waters off the Central Coast of California are some of the most biologically diverse waters on the West Coast. These areas include feeding grounds for the numerous species of whales and dolphins, sea otter populations, thriving kelp forests, and are home to vital commercial and recreational fisheries.

Designating this area as a marine sanctuary would ensure we continue to be good stewards of these natural resources and maintain sustainable access to these resources for commercial and recreational fishermen. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates that between 2010 and 2012, harvest from commercial fishing in the four existing California national marine sanctuaries produced about \$69.2 million. This had a multiplier effect, which generated \$70 million in income that supported 1,840 coastal jobs.

The nomination for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary was the product of years of public engagement with local communities and has wide support from stakeholders. As you move forward with this nomination, I urge that you also continue this partnership with the community and take into account views of all stakeholders, including our local fisherman, tribal leaders, and businesses with coastal infrastructure.

Sincerely,

SALUD O. CARBAJAL
Member of Congress