August 22, 2012

Rebecca M. Blank
Acting Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Daniel J. Basta
Director
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
1305 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3278

RE: Reactivation of the National Marine Sanctuaries Site Evaluation List

Dear Acting Secretary Blank, Dr. Lubchenco, and Director Basta:

We are writing to support the reactivation of the sanctuary Site Evaluation List (SEL), which is a vital part of the process to create national marine sanctuaries. The SEL is an important process by which local community groups can start a conversation within their communities about whether they can support a new national marine sanctuary off their coast. The SEL will open up a process for communities across the country, not just those near Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, to engage in this process and make their voices known.

We believe that each community must decide for itself whether a national marine sanctuary is right for their area, but without the reactivation of the SEL, local communities' ability to engage in this process is limited.

Sincerely,

Ken Nedimyer
Chair
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council

The council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration."