

established by the Administrator, not to exceed the maximum daily rate payable under section 5376 of title 5, United States Code, when actually engaged in the performance of duties for such Panel and shall be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of such duties.

Dated: June 30, 2003.

Jamison S. Hawkins,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 030530139-3139-01; I.D. 010401B]

Marine Protected Areas and an Inventory of Existing Marine Managed Areas

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Solicitation of public comments on proposed criteria for building an Inventory of Marine Managed Areas.

SUMMARY: NOAA and the Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior (DOI), jointly propose criteria, definitions, and data fields that will be used in development of an Inventory of U.S. Marine Managed Areas or MMAs. The MMA Inventory will provide information that will lead to the fulfillment of requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 13158 on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This action requests comments on the working criteria for including existing sites in the MMA Inventory, and describes data fields to provide consistent information about each site. This notice also makes clear that the development of the MMA Inventory is Phase I, to be followed by the development of the List of MPAs (Phase II) called for in E.O. 13158. The intent of this document is to solicit public participation in the development of an inventory of existing U.S. MMAs (Federal, state, commonwealth, territorial, and tribal sites) as a resource for managers, scientists, and the general public.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before September 22, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments regarding the proposed MMA Inventory criteria, definitions, and data fields should be

sent to Joseph Uravitch, National MPA Center, N/ORM, NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. Comments also will be accepted if submitted via e-mail to mpa.comments@noaa.gov. E-mail comments should state "MMA Inventory Comments" on the subject line.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Joseph Uravitch, NOAA, 301-713-3155, x195, or Piet deWitt, DOI, 202-208-6224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

This **Federal Register** document also is accessible via the Internet at the Office of the **Federal Register's** web site at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html.

Background

E.O. 13158 directs DOC and DOI, in consultation with the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, and other pertinent Federal agencies, to work with non-Federal partners to protect significant natural and cultural resources within the marine environment of the United States, including the Great Lakes, by strengthening and expanding a scientifically-based comprehensive national system of MPAs. A key purpose of E.O. 13158 is to "enhance the conservation of our Nation's natural and cultural marine heritage and the ecologically and economically sustainable use of the marine environment for future generations." A first step in developing this scientifically-based national system of MPAs is the development of an inventory of MMAs. This inventory will become the initial pool of sites from which the List of MPAs called for in section 4(d) of E.O. 13158 will be developed.

DOC and DOI were given specific roles by E.O. 13158. DOC has delegated lead responsibility to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere. DOI has delegated its lead to the Assistant Secretary, Lands and Minerals Management. NOAA and DOI have stewardship responsibilities for marine resources under various Federal laws, including the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, the

Antiquities Act, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, and the National Park Service Organic Act. These and other authorities direct DOC and DOI agencies to manage marine areas for a wide variety of objectives. Area-based management has been used for years to protect marine habitats and submerged cultural resources, rebuild and sustain fisheries, provide recreational opportunities, promote marine research, recover endangered species, and support local economies that depend on ocean resources. These areas have been managed in different ways ranging from restricting specific activities and allowing sustainable use of natural resources within an area, to the establishment of marine reserves that limit access and close the site to all uses except research.

The MMA Inventory will be used in Phase I to inform Federal, state, commonwealth, territorial, local, and tribal agencies of the locations and characteristics of existing MMAs and to form a pool from which sites may later be considered for placement on the List of MPAs (Phase II). Resource managers and others can use this information to better manage these areas and determine the effectiveness of individual sites, as well as regional and national assemblages. The core purposes of the MMA Inventory are:

Providing centralized, easily accessed information and maps on existing Federal, state, commonwealth, territorial, local, and tribal MMAs in the United States;

- Providing information and tools for environmental assessments and effectiveness monitoring (supporting independent analyses and studies of a wide variety of marine issues by governmental and non-governmental users);

- Providing important site-specific information for developing and maintaining the official nationwide List of MPAs required by section 4(d) of E.O. 13158; and

- Providing information to fulfill other requirements of E.O. 13158.

NOAA and DOI have placed a variety of protective or restrictive measures on different marine areas to achieve different management purposes. The definitions and working criteria proposed in this notice are being used to build the MMA Inventory and may, at some future date, be used in determining which sites should be placed on the List of MPAs (Phase II). However, these definitions and criteria are not final and are subject to change based on public comment and through experience gained by using the MMA