



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Joseph P. Gill, Secretary
Frank W. Dawson III, Deputy Secretary

The Honorable Kathy Sullivan,
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
and NOAA Administrator
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Sullivan:

The Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission of Maryland are writing in support of designating Mallows Bay in Charles County, Maryland as the Nation's newest National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) with the caveat that it will not impact current commercial or recreational fishing activities. Mallows Bay would be the first Sanctuary on our Nation's river – the Potomac, and the first in the Nation's largest estuary – the Chesapeake Bay.

These two advisory commissions, appointed by Governor Martin O'Malley, advise the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on all recreational and commercial fishing matters. We believe that Mallows Bay would be an outstanding addition to the National Marine Sanctuary System. It is home to the largest and most diverse collection of historic shipwrecks in the United States, from the Revolutionary War to the present, totaling nearly 200 known vessels. It includes the remains of the largest assemblage of World War I wooden steamships, the largest pre-World War II shipbreaking operation in the United States and numerous Native American, Potomac River fishing industry, and Civil War archeological sites. It is also a unique marine and terrestrial ecosystem that offers tremendous opportunities to educate the public about our nation's maritime history and to promote conservation, research, recreational fishing and boating, and tourism.

Mallows Bay is, in short, a nationally significant and ecologically important resource. We can think of nothing more timely to commemorate the anniversary of World War I and our maritime history and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations of Americans than to designate Mallows Bay as a National Marine Sanctuary. We urge you to do so while not impacting our vital current recreational and commercial activities.

Sincerely,

William Goldsborough
Chairman
Maryland Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission

William Rice
Chairman
Maryland Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission