

Mr. Ignacio Cabrera
Friends of the Mariana Trench
PO Box 7048 SVRB
Saipan, CNMI 96950



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
1305 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Mr. Angelo Villagomez
The Pew Charitable Trusts
901 E. St., NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Cabrera and Mr. Villagomez,

Thank you for submitting the nomination for the proposed Mariana Trench National Marine Sanctuary. We appreciate your interest in protecting this special area as a national marine sanctuary.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) has reviewed your nomination in accordance with the sufficiency review provisions described in NOAA's final rule Re-establishing the Sanctuary Nomination Process (79 FR 33851). Your nomination met the standards for sufficiency and we have initiated the more detailed national significance and management considerations review.

The detailed review included the nomination along with the additional report submitted on December 5, 2016, and the addendum submitted on January 17, 2017. In reviewing this material we have the following requests for additional information before we complete our detailed review. Our requests for additional information are listed below:

- 1) In reviewing the nomination materials we would like clarification on what areas you are seeking to include in your nomination. The review team was unclear on this point after reading the text in connection with Figure 1 and Figure 2.
- 2) Management Consideration 2 asks for information on how "the area provides or enhances opportunities for education, including the understanding and appreciation of the marine and Great Lakes environments." Our review team determined that while the nomination included information on the expectations for NOAA contributions, we would like additional information on what the nominating community would contribute to education opportunities if a national marine sanctuary was designated.
- 3) Management Consideration 4 asks for information on how "a national marine sanctuary would provide unique conservation and management value for this area or adjacent areas." Our review team determined that more information was needed to understand your view on the unique value of a national marine sanctuary. Specifically, the review



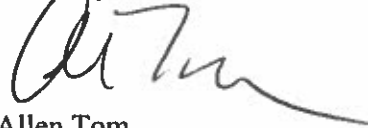
team was interested to know what value would the proposed national marine sanctuary bring beyond possible sources of federal funding.

- 4) Management Consideration 5 asks for information on “the existing regulatory and management authorities for the area could be supplemented or complemented to meet the conservation and management goals for the area.” Our review team understood that the nominating community did not feel current management met the community’s expectations and needs. However, we would like more information about how the nominating community sees a national marine sanctuary fitting in with current management of the area. Specifically, the review team was interested to know how a national marine sanctuary could support the current management framework beyond possible contributions of federal funding.
- 5) Management Consideration 6 asks for information on how “there are commitments or possible commitments for partnerships opportunities such as cost sharing, office space, exhibit space, vessel time, or other collaborations to aid conservation or management programs for the area.” While our review team understands that there is support for the nomination, we would like more concrete examples of how that support would translate into partnership opportunities.

As you consider additional information to address the requests above, staff from my office stand by to address any questions you have. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-879-2818 ext. 225 or via email at allen.tom@noaa.gov. We hope to hear back from you on these questions within 30 days so we can proceed with our detailed review. Also, please note that the additional information you provide will be added to our webpage and therefore public.

Thank you again for your interest in NOAA’s national marine sanctuaries. We look forward to continuing work with you on this important nomination.

Sincerely,



Allen Tom
Pacific Islands Regional Director

Cc: John Armor, Director, ONMS