



## Government Affairs

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February 12, 2010

Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force  
c/o Nancy Sutley, Chair  
White House Council on Environmental Quality  
722 Jackson Place  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Sutley and Task Force Members:

As the nation's largest organization of recreational boaters, with over one-half a million members nationwide, BoatU.S., the Boat Owners Association of The United States, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP). Recreational boating is a significant contributor to our nation's economy and society. It supported \$33.6 billion of economic activity in 2008 and nearly 300,000 jobs. Boating is one of the most popular outdoor family activities with 70 million participants. Therefore boaters should be considered a key stakeholder constituency in any marine spatial planning efforts.

It should be noted that last year boaters and anglers, through excise taxes on their activities, contributed some \$700 million to boating, fishing and aquatic resource conservation. Recreational boaters have a deep and abiding interest in how to plan for the use and protection of our shared marine resources. As a result, BoatU.S. believes that several key concepts should guide the development and implementation of marine spatial planning.

To the maximum extent possible, such planning should allow for as much shared use of ocean and coastal resources as can be accommodated within the bounds of science-based natural resource protection. Attempts to "enclose the commons" will have a detrimental affect on recreational boating thus potentially stifling participation and vital economic impact created by this key stakeholder group. We believe that a core tenant of CMSP efforts should be the shared use of marine resources with as few restrictions on the free movement of vessels as possible.

BoatU.S. also believes that stakeholders must be provided with every opportunity to engage in all marine spatial planning processes, and at all levels (i.e. federal, regional, state and local). Because of the large and diverse nature of the recreational boating community, such processes must provide for the full range of recreational boating interests to be included (fishing, sailing, racing, cruising, non-motorized sail and paddle sports, etc). Thus, the proposed regional planning councils should empanel stakeholder advisory groups early, aggressively recruit from all sectors, and must engage them in all

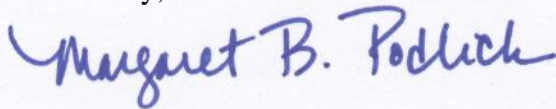
stages of the planning process. Such planning bodies should be encouraged to create seats for the full range of recreational interests, not merely one "recreation" seat among many.

A key concept underpinning all of the above must be the preservation of public access to the water as well as on the water, and the enhancement of water dependant businesses and infrastructure (marinas, launching areas, and fishing facilities) that boating and sport fishing depend upon. Open waters will mean little if recreational boaters have few places to store, launch, moor and service their vessels. CMSP efforts should incorporate the interface between the land and water to provide critical access for boaters and anglers.

In summary, recreational boating is a healthy family activity connecting children with nature and promoting youth physical fitness. Boating is a significant economic engine that encourages stewardship of marine and coastal resources. Recreational boating should be at the heart of CMSP providing the benefits of the sustainable use of marine resources now and in the future.

BoatU.S. appreciates the ongoing opportunity to participate in this process. We would be pleased to provide further information and perspectives on behalf of our more than one-half million active boating members.

Sincerely,



Margaret B. Podlich  
Vice-President, Government Affairs