

December 10, 2008

Ian A. Bowles, Secretary  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Bowles,

On behalf of the Massachusetts Ocean Coalition, and the thousands of individual environmental and energy conscious citizens we represent, we applaud the Commonwealth for its open, transparent and democratic method of developing the first-in-the-nation integrated ocean management plan. As you know, this is an opportunity for Massachusetts to be a national leader in developing a comprehensive, area-based ocean management plan that balances commercial and recreational activities with conservation needs in order to ensure a healthy ocean legacy for the Bay State. The policy that we craft here in Massachusetts will be a model for other coastal states and nations as they look to develop their own ocean plans.

Below are the critical elements that we believe an effective ocean management plan must include:

**1.] Protection of underwater habitats essential to sensitive and unique marine life.**

Marine species require particular habitats and the resources that those habitats provide to survive and thrive. Habitats that are especially sensitive or unique must be identified and adequately protected.

**2.] Allow uses only where they can coexist with healthy marine ecosystems.**

The ocean plan must balance the protection of marine wildlife and habitat with that of other uses, such as offshore renewable energy. Any uses in a particular area must be compatible with the habitats and species of that area.

**3.] Design new uses in ways that maintain the ocean's living resources.**

Emerging uses, such as offshore renewable energy, must be designed at a scale appropriate to the habitat and resources defining the project area.

To accomplish these goals the Ocean Plan must incorporate:

**1.] Input from a wide range of ocean users.**

Ocean users must continue to be invited to provide input to the planning process and must be able to track the progress of the plan through publicly accessible documents and resources.

**2.] Use the best available scientific data.**

Sound ecosystem-based decisions require the best available scientific understanding of ocean wildlife and underwater habitats.


**3.] Incorporate new information and data on an ongoing basis.**

A process for incorporating new information and collecting data that does not already exist is necessary due to the changing nature of the marine environment, the knowledge of its ecosystems, and the human uses of them.

These six elements are essential to developing an ocean plan that provides ample ocean stewardship for the valuable marine resources of Massachusetts' ocean waters while enabling the

Commonwealth to harness all that the ocean has to offer in terms of clean renewable energy, food, recreation, and transportation. The members of the Massachusetts Ocean Coalition look forward to continuing to work with the state to formulate a successful Ocean Plan.

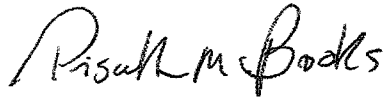
Sincerely,



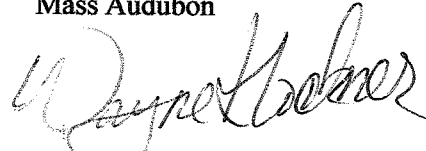
Warner Chabot  
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Mass Audubon



Priscilla Brooks  
Conservation Law Foundation



Wayne Klockner  
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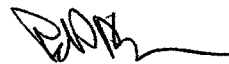
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The Sierra Club



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Clean Power Now



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Eight Towns and the Bay



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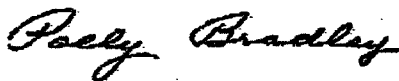
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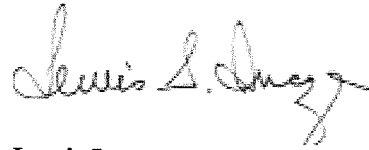
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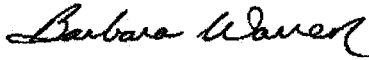
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Salem Sound Coastwatch



Piote Parasiewicz  
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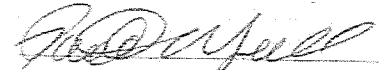
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