

Chairman Connaughton sent the following letter to all the 55 Governors of our states and territories.

April 16, 2004

Dear Governor

The Oceans Act of 2000 established a U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy to make recommendations for a comprehensive, coordinated national ocean policy. President Bush appointed Commission members in 2001. The Administration is firmly committed to the sound management and effective conservation of ocean and coastal resources to meet our Nation's environmental, economic, and social needs and looks forward, with great interest, to receiving the Commission's recommendations to build on this commitment.

The Commission has recently completed its *Preliminary Report*, which will soon be made available to the Nation's governors for review and comment. The Commission's report is going to all Governors, out of recognition that all water systems are interconnected with marine resources. This step in the process is critical to ensuring that this discussion is responsive to local needs. The input of Governors is important to the Administration. I strongly encourage you and your staff to review this report and submit comments to the Commission. Upon completion of this preliminary review and consideration of all comments, the Commission will submit its final recommendations to the President and the Congress for their consideration.

I have been charged with coordinating the Administration's interagency policy process and will be working with Administration officials from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Energy, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the Office of Management and Budget to develop proposals to implement or respond to the Commission's final recommendations.

As you review the Commission's report, please do not hesitate to contact my office or Kameran Onley, CEQ Associate Director for Environmental Policy, with any comments or questions at 202-456-6224. Also, in the near future we will launch www.ocean.ceq.gov, a site dedicated to providing pertinent information concerning the Administration's process to responding the Commission's final recommendations and highlight ongoing ocean and coastal programs relevant to various agency activities. We appreciate your interest in this important study, and look forward to working with you as we review the Commission's recommendations.

Sincerely,

James L. Connaughton