

Chairman James Connaughton
Council on Environmental Quality

Dear Chairman Connaughton,

I urge the Administration to use its authority to protect priceless - and uninhabited - federal islands, reefs, shoals and their surrounding undersea ecosystems in the U.S. waters of the Central and Western Pacific. Please designate these areas as fully protected, no-take marine national monuments. The areas that should be protected include the waters around the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Rose Atoll in American Samoa and the U.S. Central Pacific Islands.

Our oceans are in trouble. You will undoubtedly face immense pressure to allow a host of activities including commercial and recreational fishing, deep sea mining and other threats that are pushing our oceans to the brink of collapse. It is from exactly these same threats that these remote and now-unspoiled waters of the U.S. Pacific need to be protected. The overall health of the marine environment depends on setting aside extraordinary areas like these to conserve the resources we have and to allow our oceans to replenish themselves.

It is crucial that this Administration minimize human impacts on these significant areas and protect them for future generations. Please advise the President to designate this handful of valuable and critically important sites in U.S. waters around the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the Central Pacific as no-extraction marine national monuments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.