



San Luis Obispo County
★ **Democratic Party** ★

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June 12, 2015

William Douros, West Coast Regional Director
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
99 Pacific Street, Suite 100 F
Monterey, CA 93940

RE: Support for the Nomination of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary

Dear Mr. Douros:

The San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party supports the nomination of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Our communities have long supported protection of the beautiful natural resources of our coastline and ocean. Our local economies depend on protecting the habitat that provides food, clean water, jobs and a healthy environment for our families, our neighbors and our visitors.

The sanctuary can protect our business, recreation and tourism economies by prohibiting harmful ocean discharges, maintaining water quality and prohibiting offshore industrial development. The fisheries benefit through protection of the vital habitats that provide nurseries and nutrients for fish. The established and growing education and research institutions of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties will benefit from an even stronger partnership with NOAA ocean research projects that can improve adaptive management of the ocean. Existing stewardship outreach and education programs can collaborate and partner with the sanctuary to encourage conservation and protection of the land, the watersheds, the intertidal, the coast, the ocean and our planet.

Chumash heritage provides a special significance to this nomination. Protecting the vital habitat and sacred cultural sites will establish a distinctive opportunity to preserve, interpret and educate our communities and visitors about the heritage and history of the Chumash. The history and cultural stories of indigenous peoples have been underrepresented in our public dialogue. The connection between the historic seafaring Chumash, the beauty of this coast, Chumash cultural values to protect all of nature and NOAA sanctuary designation combine to make this a place of exceptional national significance.

We add our voices to the strong grassroots support for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat Harris".

Pat Harris, Chair
San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party