



Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

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Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Resolution on Seismic Airgun OCS Inventory Activities

Whereas, the Omnibus Energy Act of 2005 was adopted by the U.S. Congress and signed into law during July of 2005; and

Whereas, this Omnibus Energy Act calls for an Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) “Inventory” to explore for potential oil and gas resources in all federal waters, including within sensitive areas heretofore protected by the 24-year bipartisan congressional moratorium and within the waters of all U.S. National Marine Sanctuaries; and

Whereas, seismic airgun surveys used for oil and gas purposes have been implicated by peer-reviewed scientific studies in causing damage to fishes and federally protected marine mammals and could compromise NOAA Fisheries Service rebuilding efforts for depleted groundfish stocks.

Whereas, the “OCS Inventory” provision of the Omnibus Energy Act of 2005 undermines the original intent of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and the ecosystem protections provided by the Act.

Therefore be it resolved, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council strongly encourages a legislative amendment exempting the waters of all sites within the National Marine Sanctuary System from the “OCS Inventory” contained in the Omnibus Energy Act of 2005; and

Further, be it resolved that any seismic airgun surveys for oil and gas proposed outside of the boundaries of any U.S. National Marine Sanctuary potentially affected by such surveys should be subject to the ecosystem protection objectives and consultation requirements of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and the affected sanctuary’s Designation Document and Regulations.

Disclaimer (Required per the Advisory Council Charter): The Council is solely an advisory body. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.