

#80,

Additional Correspondence  
Received Related to Proposed  
Stellwagen Dedicated Habitat  
Research

**Individual Correspondence**





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 23, BOSTON 02133-1054

JAMES M. CANTWELL
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
4TH PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
MARSHFIELD • SCITUATE
TEL. (617) 722-2140
FAX. (617) 722-0835
James.Cantwell@MAhouse.gov

COMMITTEES:
REVENUE
BONDING, CAPITAL EXPENDITURES
AND STATE ASSETS
PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION
STATE LEGISLATIVE CO-CHAIR
COASTAL CAUCUS



December 10, 2013

Mr. Tom Nies
New England Fisheries Management Council
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing to express my grave concerns about the proposal to close recreational bottom fishing in the SERA II "Reference Area." I urge the Council to adopt Alternative 1, No action, and to protect the South Shore from this proposal's significant economic costs.

The SERA II "Reference Area" represents 55 nautical square miles of essential cod/haddock fishing grounds which are critical for sustaining numerous South Shore charter fishing businesses and enjoyed by local and visiting recreational anglers. The proposed bottom fishing closure will exact heavy and irreparable costs on the regions charter fleet by significantly increasing their fuel costs, safety risks for crew members and passengers, and travel times to fishing grounds. Very similar costs would be imposed onto the many recreational fishermen that dock their vessels in harbors throughout the South Shore of Massachusetts.

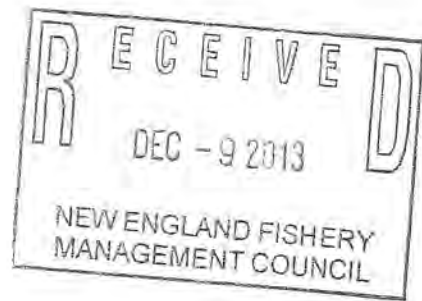
Recreational fishing is an important component of our fishing and tourism economies which we cannot afford to lose. The regions' recreational cod/haddock fishery has historically been at the very core of our charter fishing industry and an essential fishery in attracting recreational anglers to our region. We cannot afford the economic adversity that will be imposed on the charter fleet, recreational fishermen, marinas, bait & tackle shops, hotels, restaurants or other industry related businesses by prohibiting bottom fishing on some of our most productive fishing grounds.

After a careful review, I believe the research benefits from closing the proposed SERA II "Reference Area" will be outweighed by the substantial economic loss to our region and therefore, I oppose this closure, and respectfully urge the Council to do the same. Please vote to adopt Alternative 1, No action.

Sincerely,
James M. Cantwell
State Representative



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Kevin Twombly from Gloucester MA. I operate two charter boats in Gloucester. I am writing to say that I **strongly support *Alternative No.1, No Action*** to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

The devastating blow to our industry with the very limited amount of fish now available this past year has caused my business to be down 50%. The idea of taking more areas to access these fish is unthinkable.

The sanctuary made a promise in 1991 to all fisherman they would never attempt to regulate fishing. They have lied to us from the beginning and will continue to do so if they get any jurisdiction over any piece of our ocean, ***our ocean, not theirs!***

The "SERA II reference area", if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Gloucester to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote *Alternative No. 1, No Action.***

Thank You

Sincerely,

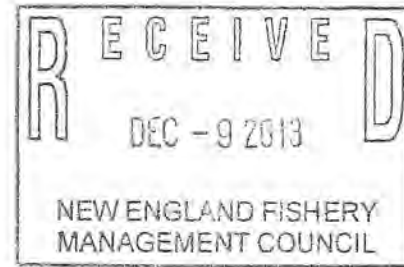
Captain Kevin Twombly

Kayman Charters

PO 252

Gloucester MA 01931

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950  
Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II



December 8, 2013

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Steven Getto and I operate a commercial boat from Green Harbor, Ma. I fish Stellwagen for both tuna and dogfish.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

The proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is specifically where I fish. This closure would impact both the dogfish long lining I do and the tuna fishing which requires me to catch bait on the bottom such as whiting, herring and mackerel. In addition to my commercial fishing I do some recreational ground fishing with friends and family and this closure would have a devastating impact on local residents who enjoy the food and recreational value of this resource.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire "reference area" to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other "sanctuaries" all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don't stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators "promised" all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing.

The "SERA II reference area", if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

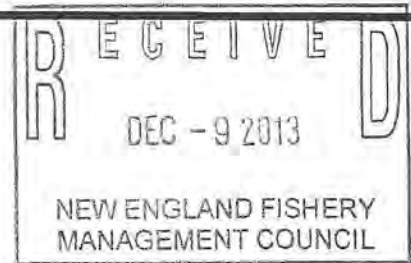
Thank You

Steven Getto  
F/V Hannah G  
Norwell, Ma  
781-264-3288  
sbgetto@comcast.net

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Debra Richardson <richardson32704@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 3:33 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** URGENT



Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

Please pass this to ALL voting members of the NEFMC. My name is Capt. Debra Richardson and I operate several charter boats from Gloucester to Plymouth Massachusetts. I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) closed area and support Alternative No.1, NO ACTION to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

I have been a licensed charter captain for 15 years and most of my charters have been for Cod, Pollack, Haddock and other groundfish. I have fished these waters all of my life! My family has a long history of fishing on Stellwagen Bank and this proposal will virtually KILL the charter fishing business for us and prevent others in my family from fishing recreationally.

I know Craig McDonald of SBNMS and know he wants to stop ALL fishing on Stellwagen Bank. He will eventually try to stop ALL fishing both commercial and recreational. Please DON'T let him succeed. Please vote Alternative 1., NO ACTION TO THE HABITAT PROTECTION MEASURES. Thank You.

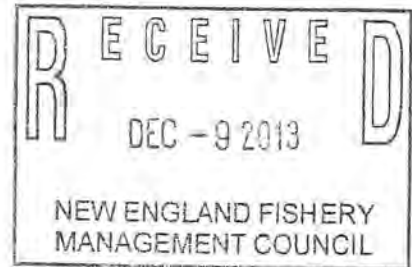
Capt. Debra Richardson  
7 Carolina Trail  
Marshfield Ma, 02050  
781-727-3667



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Chris Graham <chrisgraham60@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 6:48 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Fishing



Good Morning skipper,

The idea of closing this area is ridiculous please try and be realistic with your goals regarding fish stocks and the ocean. I am a member SBCA and strongly disagreed with this idea!

What you should do regarding protecting the ocean would be stop all long lining and dragging in the United States! Yes this is a big challenge for you but with the help of your allies meaning our origination and all of our associate clubs. Using this mind set the reduction of harvesting from the ocean. Implementing this proposal would greatly reduced a fishing pressures in the first year the ocean would have re-populated to levels similar to the 1900's Thank you for your time and consideration of the above proposal

Regards

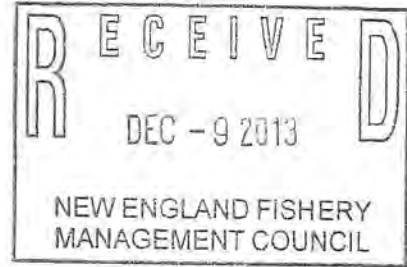
Christopher M Graham



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** captdave@cathyanncharters.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 4:06 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** closures



dear.Mr Nies,

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of  
Maine closed areas. I strongly support ALTERNATIVE 1. NO ACTION.  
Capt David Patry.

**Karen Roy**

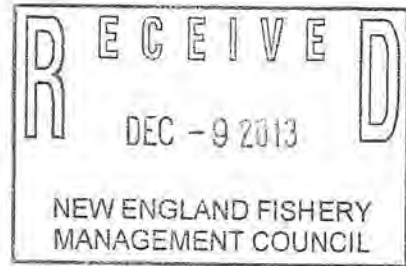
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**From:** Tony Modestino <tonymod@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 4:18 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area

Dear Mr. Nies:

Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Tony Modestino  
141 Wagon Trail  
Hanson, MA 02341  
Phone: 781-826-4242  
Fax: 781-826-4206  
Cell: 617-842-8729  
email: [tonymod@comcast.net](mailto:tonymod@comcast.net)



**Karen Roy**

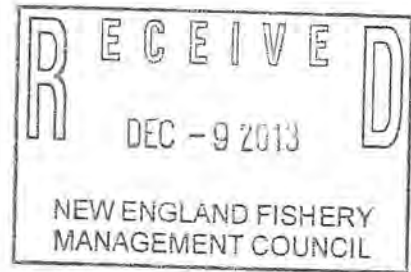
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**From:** Tony Modestino <tonymod@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 4:15 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area

Dear Mr. Nies:

Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Sherwood Modestino



**Karen Roy**

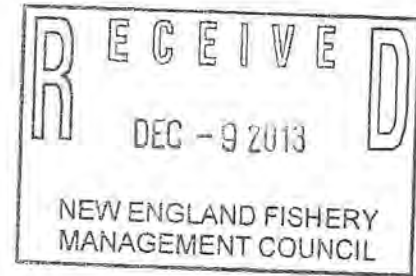
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**From:** Doug <sashamysportfishing@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 10:40 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Closure of western GOM closed area

I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION

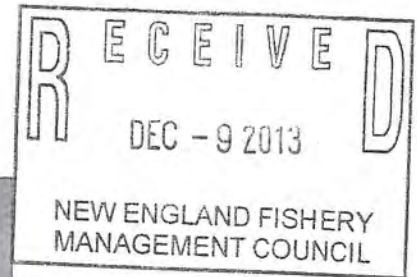
Thanks  
Captain Doug Amorello  
Plymouth ma

Sent from my iPhone



**Karen Roy**

**From:** Debra Richardson <richardson32704@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 4:03 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** A kid who loves to fish



My name is Paul Richardson. I am the one in the middle. I am 8 years old. I love to fish. I go fishing with my friends, cousins, Uncle and Grandfather. My family has been fishing on Stellwagen Bank for a very long time. Please vote Alternative 1. No action to the habitat protection measures. I want to grow up fishing these waters.

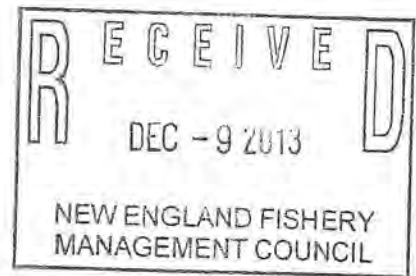
Thank you  
Paul Richardson  
7 Carolina Trail  
Marshfield, Ma 02050  
781-727-3667

Mr. Tom Niles

New England Fishery Management Council

50 West St.

Newburyport Ma. 01950



Re: Proposed SERA II, Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area

Dear Mr. Niles,

My Name is Mike Connolly. I operate/manage Green Harbor Marina in Marshfield Ma. I sit on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Marine Trades Association, (MMTA) the Marine and Environmental Education Alliance (MEEA) and the Motoring Technical Training Institute Advisement Committee. (MTTI)

I am writing to you to express my thoughts in regards to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC. No one loves the wild and the appreciates the beauty of our planet more than I. The ocean and the species who call it home are extremely important on so many accounts. It is with our community's best interest in mind, that I *strongly oppose closing the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" from charter/party, recreational fisherman, and lobsterman.* On the heels of "The Great Recession" it would be **economically irresponsible** for anyone to consider risking the livelihood of so many fishermen who make their living in and around this exact location. The repercussions of a closing/restriction of this type would surely extend deep into every coastal business in the Commonwealth. **Jobs will be lost** in all facets of coastal businesses. The business model I have now has changed as we try to dig out of the recession here on the coast. Fishermen, are the most important customers for coastal businesses. The boating industry was one of the hardest hit industries during the "Great Recession". Thirty five percent of boat dealers and manufactures have gone out of business. The recreational boater coming into boating, who does not fish, has all but disappeared as the "Baby Boomer" generation reaches the later stages of life. Our industry needs all the help we can get, so please, I urge you, not another blow to our industry as we try to get back on our feet.

**Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action**

Thank you for your understanding,

Sincerely,

Mike Connolly

Green Harbor Marina

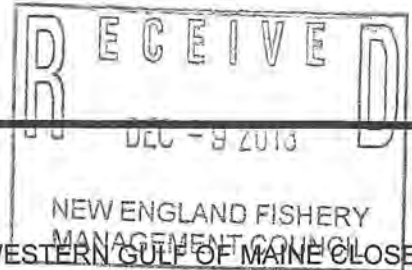
mike@greenharbormarina.com

781-837-1181

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** kgricketts@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 12:29 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION



Dear Tom,

I am a recreational angler and spend a great deal of time bottom fishing. I am also a licensed USCG OUPV six pack captain and a member of the Green Harbor Tuna Club.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION

Thank you,

Kevin G. Ricketts  
10 Marvill Way  
East Bridgewater, MA 02333

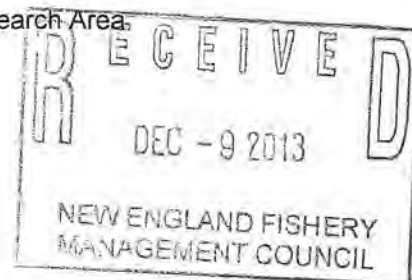
mobile: 617 774 9855  
[kgricketts@comcast.net](mailto:kgricketts@comcast.net)



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Howard Newman <howard.newman1@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 12:14 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

**RE: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area**

Dear Mr. Nies:

Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support **Alternative 1, No Action**.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community. I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area."

Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote.

**I strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action*, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.**

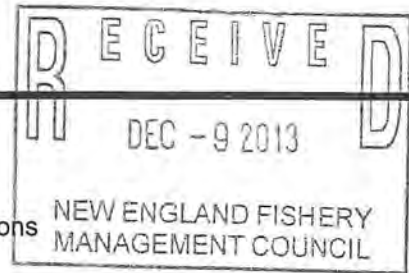
Respectfully signed,

Howard Newman  
6 Liberty Rd  
Marshfield, MA 02050

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** henry Isherwood <kranknhank@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 11:46 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Changing for worse western gulf of maine regulations



*I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION". Henry Isherwood*

## Karen Roy

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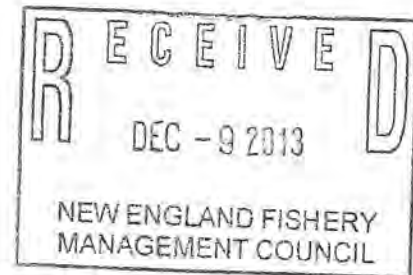
**From:** baker1936@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 11:02 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies; chedsey.foster@aol.com; wagnersworld60@aol.com; wtjenks@yahoo.com; wkobrock@snet.net; mcameron48@yahoo.com; ladydi2007@sbcglobal.net; kellie.shaffer6@yahoo.com; dautorio427@comcast.net; jgrosso55@sbcglobal.net; igorpekar@yahoo.com; dweigold@sbcglobal.net; bww01@att.net; ilona50@yahoo.com; jimmorelli@cox.net; kevin.capt@gmail.com  
**Subject:** OPPOSE CLOSING OF GOM AEREA.

Dear members.

I strongly oppose any changes to the western GULF OF MAINE closed area and support alternative 1 NO ACTION. I do some fishing there about four to five times per year.

You have no good reason to close an area that large to recreational fishing. I sincerely hope you would consider the wishes of the reel and line fishing men and women.

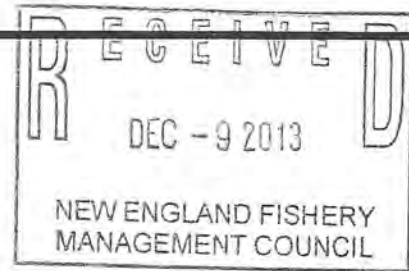
Respectfully, Peter Schoppenhauer.



**Karen Roy**

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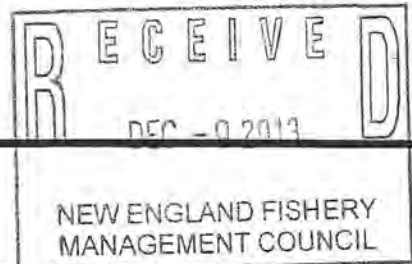
**From:** trboconnor1515@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 10:58 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** STELLWAGEN BANK AREA



To whom it may concern;

I Thomas O'Connor ,STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION.

Dated 12/08/2013



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Anthony Modestino <amsflinc@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 4:19 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area

Dear Mr. Nies:

Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Anthony Modestino  
AMS Florida Enterprises, Inc.  
141 Wagon Trail  
Hanson, MA 02341  
Phone: 781-826-4242  
Fax: 781-826-4206  
Cell: 617-842-8729  
email: [amsflinc@comcast.net](mailto:amsflinc@comcast.net)

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Fasulo, Anthony <Anthony.Fasulo@ynhh.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 8:36 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA

Hi Tom. I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No.1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

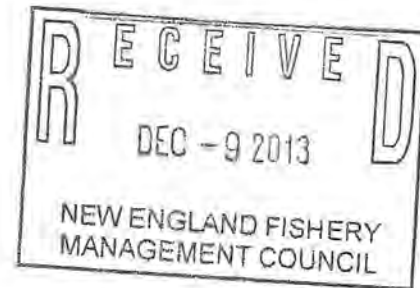
These additional closed areas will have a devastating detrimental impact for us recreational anglers and limit our ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other groundfish.

This proposal will have a devastating detrimental economic impact to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas.

Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.

Thanks, Anthony Fasulo

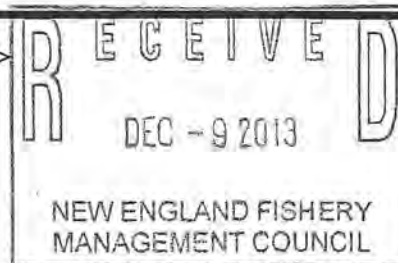
This message originates from the Yale New Haven Health System. The information contained in this message may be privileged and confidential. If you are the intended recipient you must maintain this message in a secure and confidential manner. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately and destroy this message. Thank you.



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** David Richardson <davefrommarshfield@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2013 8:15 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** URGENT



Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

I am writing you about a very serious matter. I live in Marshfield Massachusetts. I have grown up fishing on Stellwagen Bank. I have gone deep sea fishing every year since I can remember. I typically charter one of the local boats 3 or 4 times a season. I completely oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and support Alternative No. 1, No Action to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Please vote to keep us fishing. I love to fish and support local business

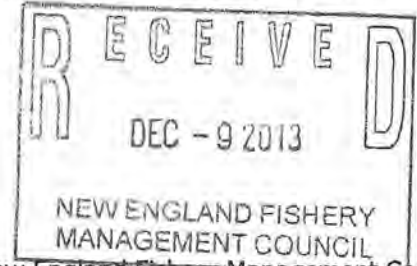
David Richardson  
781-389-9317



## Karen Roy

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 11:32 AM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council



**From:** Mike LaValley [mailto:malavalley@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 11:22 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council

Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

My name is Michael LaValley and I live in Charlemont Massachusetts. Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community.

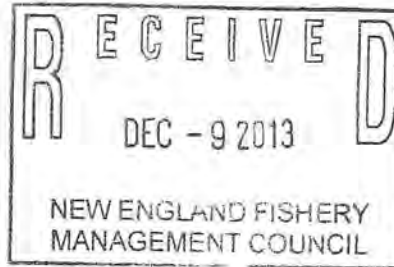
I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area."

Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.

Thank you

Michael A. LaValley

Email to: [TNies@NEFMC.org](mailto:TNies@NEFMC.org)



Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

My name is Kelly Donohue and I live in Marshfield Massachusetts. Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community.

I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area." Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.

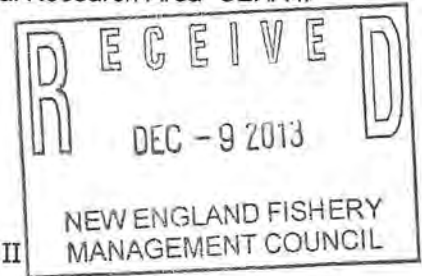
Thank you

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kelly Donohue".

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 10:52 AM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II



**From:** Steve Geryk [<mailto:stevegeryk@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 10:00 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

***I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION".***

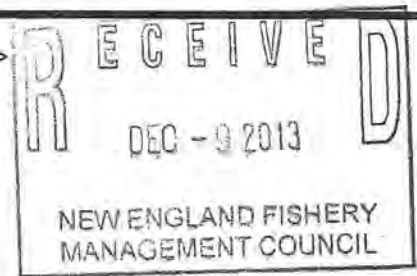
***Steven Geryk- Recreational Fisheran  
136 New City Rd  
Stafford Springs, CT. 06076***

**[stevegeryk@aol.com](mailto:stevegeryk@aol.com)**

**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** meghan casey snee <meghancasey@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 8:05 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** No Action



Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

My name is Meghan Snee and I live in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community.

I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area."

Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.

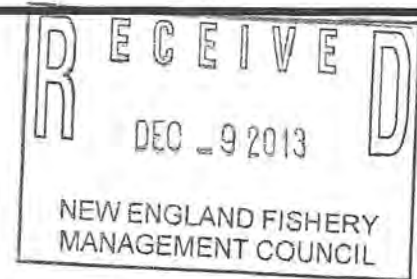
Thank you,

Meghan Snee

**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** Calin Stoicov <becks1976@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 4:50 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies



To Whom It may concern,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

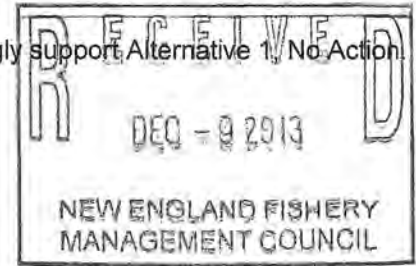
Calin Stoicov MD, PhD



## Karen Roy

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 4:26 PM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.



**From:** John Pozerski [mailto:john.pozerski@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 4:17 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

My name is John Pozerski and I live in Marshfield, Massachusetts. Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community.

I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area."

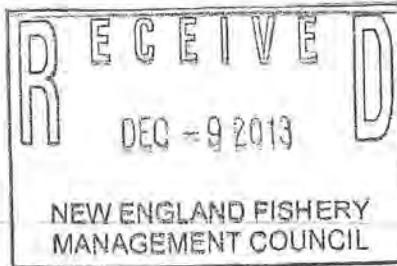
Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.

Thank you

## Karen Roy

---

**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 4:04 PM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Sera proposal



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**From:** Capt. Tom [mailto:capt.tom@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 4:03 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Sera proposal

Hi Tom

As a person who fishes in the proposed closed area east of Stellwagen Bank ,I obviously would object to its closing - and I do.

I witnessed first hand the destruction of the cod on Stellwagen Bank by a fleet of large draggers a few years back. The NMFS did not stop that wipeout of the cod. Do you have any idea of how much damage you did by allowing those draggers in, and wiping out many years of sacrifice by us fishermen who recreationally fish for cod and the charter boat operators?

To come in now and claim an interest in studying groundfish, by closing off what is one of the few areas left for us , shows a lack of integrity, and I hope you will not close off the proposed Sera area east of Stellwagen from 42-15 to 42-20, under the guise of studying cod, among other things. -Tom

Visit <http://newenglandsharks.com>



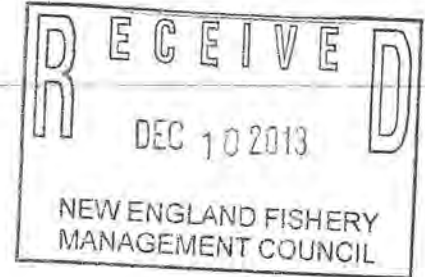
## Karen Roy

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**From:** Ralph Pratt <ralph.pratt@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 6:41 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed closure of Stellwagen Bank Marine Sanctuary Area

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**From:** Ralph Pratt [<mailto:ralph.pratt@verizon.net>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 6:36 AM  
**To:** 'TNies@NEFMC.org.'  
**Subject:** Proposed closure of Stellwagen Bank Marine Sanctuary Area



The Council should not consider doing the Sanctuary manager's dirty work.

A promise made during the Sanctuary creation garnered support among fishermen to help initiate forming the Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary. Now, the Sanctuary manager wants to change the rules to perpetuate a self-serving, useless, and endless task that will violate the original promise that this Sanctuary would not impact fishing rights.

Stellwagen Bank is not unique to New England waters. Other topographical structures like Cashes, Fippenies, Platts, and Jefferies banks are just as important to the New England eco system. Over 25 years of spotting tunas from my plane in these waters have shown me that the tidal movement creating the upwellings at Stellwagen do the same for other major undersea structures. As you know, it is these upwellings lifting the cold nutrient rich waters to the surface that are so important to the New England waters eco system.

I believe the Council should recommend to NOAA:

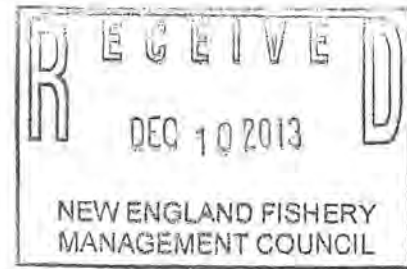
NOAA should investigate the cost vs. benefit of maintaining the Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary. It seems to me that a bill passed by our federal government could provide increased protection for the New England eco-system, encompassing a much larger area for less money. Protection of all our significant undersea topographical uprisings from mining, windmills, construction, and oil exploration, (as the original Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary was created to do), can be done for a lot less money and achieve much greater positive impact for our waters without impacting fishing.

Abolish the Sanctuary and save the money.

Ralph Pratt  
5 Springdale Terrace  
Canton, Ma. 02021

781-589-0815

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water St.  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



RE: **Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Reasearch Area**

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Jeff DePersia. I am a charter captain of fishing vessel "Chasin Tail". My boat is docked out of Greenharbor, MA. I have been brought up in the fishing buisness. I currently make my entire living as a fishermen.

I am writing to oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine Closed area. Any changes to this area would be detrimental to my business. I am in support of *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat area. Any changes to the status quo would severely affect my groundfishing charters. The proposed affected area is where I do the majority of my groundfishing.

In the past 10 years there have been too many negative changes in the groundfishing community. Problems have torn through the fishery. Thankfully some of these problems have been noticed in the public eye. We do not need any more problems or complications in this fishery. I ask you to please consider *Alternative No. 1, No Action*.

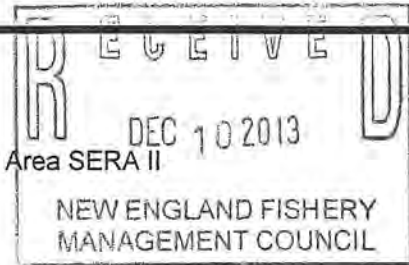
Sincerely,

Jeff DePersia  
f/v Chasin Tail  
214 Oak St.  
Marshfield, MA 02050

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** tia0x214@aim.com  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 5:29 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagen Bank Ecological Research Area SERA II



Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Christina Alfieri. I live in Medway, Massachusetts and fish for cod on Stellwagen Bank. I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

The proposed 55 square mile "Reference Area" is where my family and I go to catch: Cod, Haddock, and Pollack. Closing this area is unfair to the Recreational Anglers.

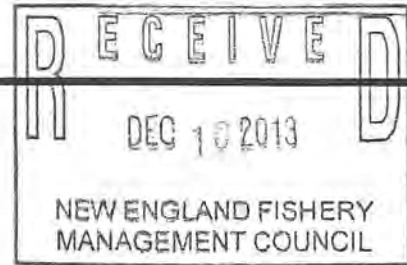
Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.  
Thank you.

Respectfully,  
Christina Alfieri

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Kevin DePersia <bluefinhunter614@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 5:09 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed SERA II "REFERENCE AREA"



*" I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION". I am a first mate on several charter boats and if this gets passed i will loose my livelihood. this will greatly affect my own, as well as many of my family and friends income. Please do not make any changes.*

*Thank you.*

*Kevin DePersia*

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

December 10, 2013

Re: Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 Management Alternatives.

Dear Mr. Nies,

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my comments regarding Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 Management Alternatives.

I would be opposed to alternatives that restrict recreational fishing from any of the suggested closed areas. Recreational fishing is very selective and its impacts to the existing habitat are minor if they exist at all.

In particular, I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

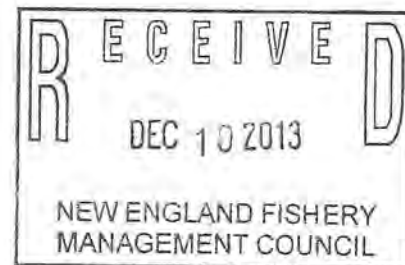
I believe any ecological and biological benefits from restricting recreational fishing from a proposed closed habitat area will be far outweighed by the economic impacts to the local communities and particularly the for hire industry. More robust data would be needed to accurately characterize the recreational fishing effort in these areas, and I would be supportive of efforts to collect improved temporal and spatial data (along with catch and effort data) prior to making decisions which could have consequences difficult to determine with the current data available.

I appreciate the opportunity to pass along my thoughts and I look forward to participating in future meetings as the Council and your Staff work to finalize this important amendment.

Sincerely,

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President  
RI Party and Charter Boat Association  
RAP Member

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Mark Gibson, RIDEM  
Mr. Barry Gibson, Chairman RAP  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC

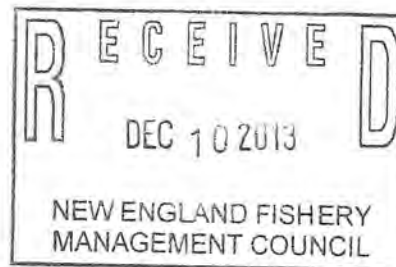


**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Tim Pokorny <peacorn99@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 11:28 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** NEW ENGLAND FISHERIS MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

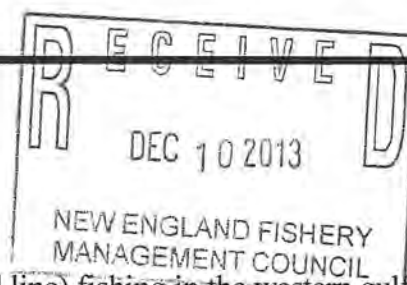
I STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY CHANGES TO THE WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA  
AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, NO ACTION



**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** Dan Dubois <ddubois9@nycap.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 11:36 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** New England Fisheries Management



I strongly oppose any plan that closes or prohibits recreational (hook and line) fishing in the western gulf of Maine or any part of stellwagen bank.





**Federal Affairs Office**  
1155 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1200  
Washington, D.C. 20036 phone 202 659-5800  
fax 202 659-1027 e-mail whorn@dc.bhb.com

*Formerly The Wildlife Legislative Fund of America*

December 10, 2013

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950



**Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank National Marine  
Sanctuary Ecological Research Area**

Protecting &  
Advancing  
America's  
Heritage  
of Hunting,  
Fishing &  
Trapping

Dear Mr. Nies:

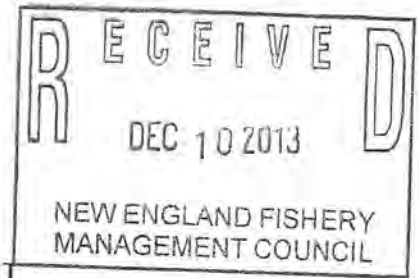
The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance ("USSA") submits the following comments regarding the Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement and its proposed changes to the Western Gulf of Maine ("WGOM") closed areas. USSA is an organization that works to protect the rights of recreational anglers, and we are concerned NEFMC is not sufficiently recognizing the rights and interests of recreational and charter anglers throughout this evaluation process. We see the designation of the Stellwagen Dedicated Habitat Research Area with the reference area closed to recreational and party/charter groundfish fishing as having a severe negative impact on these industries which specifically rely upon this fishing zone. The proposed closures would have significant deleterious effects upon those entities that support the recreational fishing industry in the area, including charters, marinas, restaurants, lodging facilities, and tackle shops. Therefore, we oppose any change to the WGOM closed area, and we urge New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) to adopt Alternative 1, No Action.

With the WGOM already severely restricted to groundfishing, any further closures to recreational fishing could imperil recreational angling businesses by exploding fuel costs and travel time, as charters and other recreational anglers are forced to travel further offshore due to the onerous restrictions. Additionally, the proposed closures threaten the ability of local recreational fishing businesses to operate where they can obtain reasonable amounts of groundfish.

We recognize conducting marine habitat research is an important function for NEFMC and for fishery conservation, but the recreational fishing industry should not face undue hardship as a result of NEFMC's actions during these tough economic times. We ask NEFMC to permit research in the area without any additional closures to recreational and for-hire fishing.

Sincerely,

William P. Horn  
Director, Federal Affairs



-----Original Message-----

From: Dan Dubois [<mailto:ddubois9@nycap.rr.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2013 1:16 PM

To: Tom Nies

Subject: Re: New England Fisheries Management

I strongly oppose any plan that closes or prohibits recreational (hook and line) fishing in the western gulf of Maine or any part of stellwagen bank.

If you want to improve fisheries (including groundfish stocks) on Stellwagen, I suggest you take a close look at a growing and unchecked spiny dog fish population that is impacting baitfish and juvenile species in the North Atlantic. Any fisherman in the area will tell you that this nuisance species is at an unprecedented level of population.

## Karen Roy

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 9:03 AM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Sera II

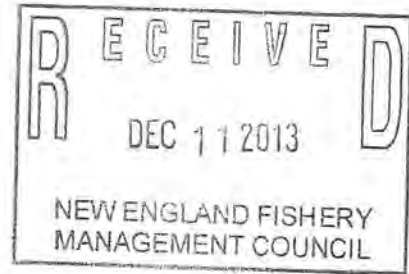
1 of many to come.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [captain497@gmail.com](mailto:captain497@gmail.com) [<mailto:captain497@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 8:33 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Sera II

I am opposed to the Sera II action.  
I support the alternative 1, no action.  
I am a charter boat captain member of SBCBA.

Captain Paul Carter  
49-7 South Meadow Village  
Carver, Ma 02330

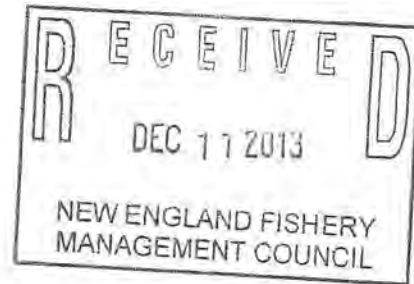


## Karen Roy

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 4:47 PM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Asking for your help

**From:** Dad/Pop/UF/Fred [mailto:fgtilley@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 4:46 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Fwd: Asking for your help



Dear Mr. Thomas Nies,

My name is Fred Tilley and I live in Marshfield, Massachusetts. Regarding the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational anglers will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five-and-a-half month closed season on GOM cod.

The type of research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55-square-mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There has been plenty of research conducted all over the world on unfished populations and the resulting fish sizes and stock structure, so it is unlikely we will learn anything new by closing this area to recreational bottom fishing. Furthermore, this proposed closure clearly does not justify the future adverse socioeconomic impact on the recreational fishing sector.

As a saltwater angler, I do not personally fish for profit, though my fishing participation supports many local businesses, from tackle shops and for-hire captains to owners of restaurants and lodging facilities. If the SERA II and the "reference area" initiative is put into place, anglers will be forced to transit greater distances up to 40 NM to find a few cod and haddock for the dinner table. We are already fishing over 28 NM from port, which has severely restricted our angling opportunities...this latest proposal will have a devastating impact on our recreational fishing community.

I would also point out that since catch share management was implemented, a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring has forced the charter/party and recreational anglers to fish east of Stellwagen Bank in order to locate cod and haddock. A simple analysis of the past two years of vessel trip reporting data would clearly indicate this change in fishing location, much of which is now taking place in the proposed "reference area."

Our recreational sector always seems to be left out of focus when it comes to spotlighting NEFMC issues and initiatives; in reality, the socioeconomic importance of recreational fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action, and ask that the NEFMC recognize the significance of our recreational fishing industry in supporting this winnable solution.

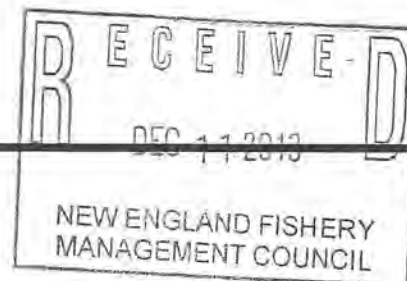
Thank you

Fred Tilley

**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Kingofsony@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 10:14 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** sera 2 reference area



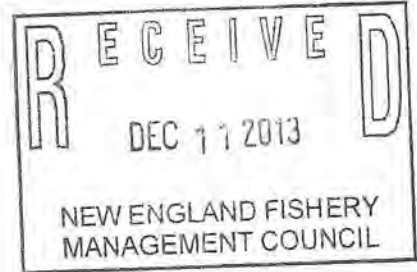
Dear Mr. Nies, as an active General Category commercial tuna fisherman on F/v Shadowline I have anchored in that area, fished for and caught bait with rod and reel on the bottom, and landed Bluefin tuna. The prohibitions and proposed "research" potentially impedes Bluefin fishing dead center in the middle of the most active fishing grounds for Bluefin fisherman- Stellwagen Bank. Just leave that research money in the pockets of taxpayers. Too many things change , all the time, in the ocean, you would have to have that area closed for decades and spend millions of dollars and you would not know any more than what one charter boat captain could tell you in an hour. If you need to know something, pay them to tell you, Sincerely, Putnam Maclean, 387 church st. Marshfield Ma. 02050- F/V Shadowline, Grenn Harbor, ma.



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** James Corbett <jcorb@tiac.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 10:13 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** WGOM Habitat/SERA II Proposal



Dear Mr. Nies,

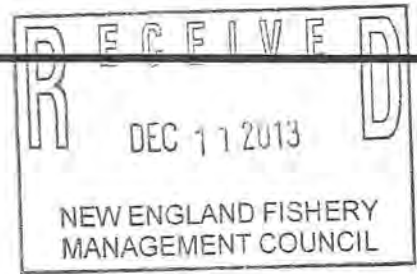
As a charter boat captain operating out of Duxbury, Massachusetts, I am writing to express my opposition to the plan to close 55 square miles of Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. If adopted, the closure would severely limit my ability to fish. Unlike many boats, I do not have the fuel capacity to travel the additional distances while maintaining sufficient fuel reserves. I request the NEFMC to vote for Alternative 1 - No Action

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

James Corbett  
Emily Laurel II

**Karen Roy**



**From:** Capt. Tom <capt.tom@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 10:06 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Stellwagen SERA

Hi Tom

As a person who fishes in the proposed closed area east of Stellwagen Bank , I obviously would object to its closing - and I do.

I witnessed first hand the destruction of the cod on Stellwagen Bank by a fleet of large draggers a few years back. The NMFS did not stop that wipeout of the cod. Do you have any idea of how much damage you did by allowing those draggers in, and wiping out many years of sacrifice by us fishermen who recreationally fish for cod and the charter boat operators?

To come in now and claim an interest in studying groundfish, by closing off what is one of the few areas left for us , shows a lack of integrity, and I hope you will not close off the proposed SERA area east of Stellwagen from 42-15 to 42-20, under the guise of studying cod, among other things. -Tom

Tom King  
18 Walnut Ave.  
Scituate , MA 02066

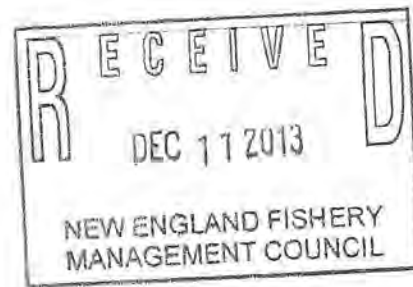
Tel: 781-545-6287

Visit <http://newenglandsharks.com>



December 10, 2013

Mr. Tom Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950



Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing in opposition to the SERA II "reference area" that proposes to prohibit recreational bottom fishing in a 55 nautical square mile area.

Contrary to the outdated VTR data that was used in the SERA proposal, the proposed SERA II Reference area is where the charter fishermen of Scituate, Green Harbor and Plymouth fish. This area is heavily fished by recreational fishermen from Cape Cod to Gloucester and is of critical importance to South Shore fishermen. The multiplier effect of socioeconomic losses to local harbor, hotel and fishing related businesses in these communities will certainly outweigh the value of knowledge gained by the de minimis impact of hooks and weights on bottom habitat.

Please do not confuse my opposition of the reference area prohibiting recreational bottom fishing with opposition to the DHRA proposal itself. When the Council chose the options to the Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment that we are now addressing, the Sanctuary proposal before them was SERA, not SERA II. The SERA II, proposed on October 9, 2012, by the SERA AD Hoc Working Group, shows no reference area. Published meetings of the Habitat Advisory Panel, the Plan Development Team and the Habitat Oversight Committee show no mention of the reference area as of the June 2013 meeting of the Council. The SAC's claim that the SERA is recommended by them only after "consulting with a large number and wide range of stakeholders, and thoroughly vetted and approved by all departments within NOAA"; "and with numerous peer reviews" cannot possibly be true of the reference area proposal. This claim was made in March of 2012; more than a year before the reference area was presented to the impacted recreational fishery.

The SERA proposal flawed, but it was vetted. The SERA II DHRA proposal has been on the table since October 9, 2012. It too has had time in committees. However, the reference area has not passed these tests. Any added restrictions to the DHRA proposal has been noticeably absent for the first nine months of plan development and vetting. In the minutes of the Habitat Oversight Committee meeting of March 19, 2013, a committee member asked that "if restrictions for more than just mobile bottom gear are envisioned for this location that the proponents of the area be more upfront about the restrictions they are looking for." Not being upfront is the key here. Withholding the reference area change from the process obfuscated the opposition's ability to respond. This is not typical of the Council's open process and should not be allowed.

The Council needs to balance research objectives and possible long term benefits of improved understanding of ecosystem dynamics with impacts to the fishery over the short-term. While the DHRA meets this standard, the reference area does not.

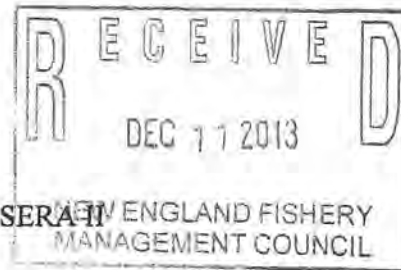
Please act to remove the reference area from the SERA II proposal so that the recreational fishing industry can support meaningful habitat research in this historic region.

Very truly yours,

Robert Briggs  
F/V Lorraine 'B'  
Hanover, Ma. 02339

Board Member SBCBA

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Dennis Pateras. I own a 21' Center Console boat that my family and I use to recreational fish out of Marshfield, MA. I'm also a resident of Marshfield and know how much the recreational and charter fishing fleets help this great New England town as well as the surrounding towns socially and economically.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

The proposed 55 square mile reference area is specifically where my family, friends and I fish for cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management, fishing was great along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. It's simply stunning to me how NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit and "rape" Stellwagen Bank (simply stunning). Now I'm forced to go out 30 to 35 miles each way in my small 21' center console to fish making every trip for me and my kids more dangerous.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire "reference area" to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore in an area loaded with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to me, my family, my friends and the rest of the Recreational Community and surrounding towns. This proposal will have a devastating detrimental economic & social impact to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities & marinas.

The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. It would be a travesty if the council took action and prevented common folks like me the opportunity to continue to spend quality time on the water with my kids fishing for ground fish in an area that I can reasonable get to inside the proposed 55 square mile reference area. Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Pateras". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

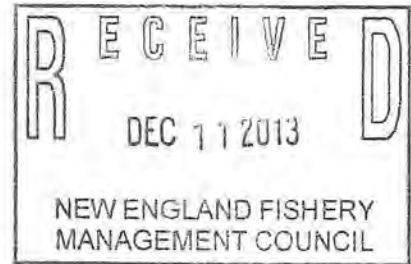
Dennis Pateras  
14 Parsons Walk  
Marshfield, MA  
781-837-7531  
Dennis\_Pateras@yahoo.com

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC

**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** Captaincurt <trucnoxam@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 11:07 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Fwd: WGOM Habitat/SERA II comments



Dear Mr. Nies

As a recreational fisherman and a charter captain I ask that NEFMC Members adopt Alternative 1, No action, to protect recreational fishermen and to not further restrict recreational bottom fishing in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. The proposed 55 nautical square nautical mile Reference Area identified in the SERA II proposal would inflict economic hardship upon our local fishermen, related businesses, and the South Shore communities.

Thank you for consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully Yours,

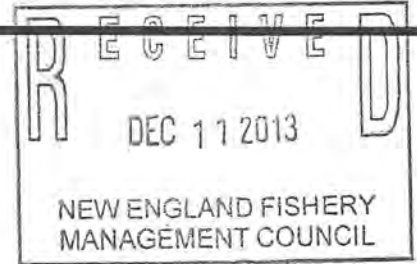
Captain Curtis Maxon

Norwood Ma 02062

**Woneta M. Cloutier**

---

**From:** l-ocharters@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 11, 2013 12:09 PM  
**To:** comments  
**Subject:** Sera 11



Dear Tom,  
Please accept my comment here as respectfully requesting the Council support it. No 1, NO ACTION.  
The numerous letters received on our behalf from very well organized large stakeholders should be sufficient.  
Sincerely,  
Capt Pete Murphy

**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** Mike Sawyer Sr. <captmikes@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 5:46 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Proposed Stellwagon Bank Sanctuary Research Area



Dear Mr. Nies,

I am a professional licensed captain who fishes both recreationally and as a for hire captain in the Massachusetts Bay and Gulf of Main waters. Rather than forward you a copy of the RFA's form letter or regurgitate all of the same general statements that you have been receiving on this issue, I will simply state that I am opposed to any proposal that would place any new restrictions on recreational and/or charter boar fishing in the Massachusetts Bay and /or Gulf of Maine waters.

**With respect to this particular proposal involving the Stellwagon Sanctuary, I would respectfully ask the NEFMC to support Alternative 1 (no action).**

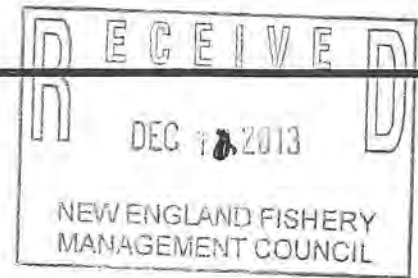
Respectfully Submitter,  
Capt. Mike Sawyer  
POB 1187  
Plymouth, MA

Recreational / Charter Fishing Vessel "Just Right", Plymouth, MA  
Recreational / Charter Fishing Vessel "Shaman", Green Harbor, MA  
Stellwagon Bank Charter Boat Assn. Member  
Cape Cod Charter Boat Assn. Member  
Green Harbor Tuna Club Member

**Karen Roy**

---

**From:** Tom DePersia  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 5:59 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** SERA II Proposal-"REFERENCE AREA"



Dear Mr. Nies

My name is Leo Gentile and I am 1st Mate on several charter fishing boats on the South Shore and also fish recreationally on my own boat. I live in Halifax, Massachusetts. Please pass these comments on to all NEFMC voting members. **I am strongly opposed to any changes in the Wesern Gulf of Maine Closed Area and support Alternative # 1., NO ACTION.**

I have earned my entire livelyhood working on charter fishing boats for many years. This proposal, if enacted, will cause my customers to go elsewhere for fishing trips because our catch will be further reduced because of greater transit times to fishing grounds. Please do not cause this financial disaster to my family.

There are already **14 Marine Protected Areas (national sanctuaries) in the United States for a total of 170,000 square miles of NO COMMERCIAL OR RECREATIONAL FISHING.** We don't need another 55 square miles to perform the same studies that have already been done in existing closed areas.

Please vote **Alternative # 1., NO ACTION, NO CHANGES to WGOM closed area.**

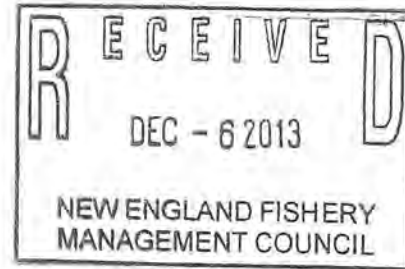
Sincerely

Leo Gentile





Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Thomas DePersia. I own and operate two charter fishing boats out of Marshfield, MA. and am a RAP member of the NEFMC.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is specifically *where we fish*. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200' to 400' of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100' to 150' of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire "reference area" to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. My expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and I have lost half my customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other "sanctuaries" all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don't stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators "promised" all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied. I was there in a public hearing hall in Duxbury, MA., packed with angry fishermen when they "promised" us we had nothing to worry about. I caution all NEFMC members who are fishermen. You are next once they get their foot in the door. Sanctuary Management will lie to you next. This is another back-door attempt by Craig McDonald to stop fishing on Stellwagen Bank.

The "SERA II reference area", if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,



Capt. Thomas DePersia  
Bigfish II Sportfishing Charters  
P.O. Box #238  
Marshfield Hills, MA. 02051  
781-834-7504  
[hugetuna@aol.com](mailto:hugetuna@aol.com)

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013



Mr. Nies,

I am in full support of Capt. Dave Waldrips letter below. I have worked with Capt. Dave's charter business in the past on respect his opinion.

Regards,

Jon Behm  
FV Beamie  
North River, Marshfield MA.

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dec 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing to you as an owner and operator of a charter boat fishing out of Green Harbor, MA regarding the proposed habitat protection measures that have been drafted and are being considered by the New England Fisheries Management Council. I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action. Any changes will result in a detrimental adverse affect on the charter boats which fish this area. We are barely covering operating expenses due to the regulations that have been put into place over the years.

Additional closed areas for the charter/party and recreational angler will create an adverse effect on a sector that is already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a five and a half month closed season on GOM cod. If the SERA II is created, charter/party boats fishing out of the South Shore of Massachusetts will be forced to

transit greater distances up to 40 NM to locate cod and haddock for anglers to take home for dinner. Currently we are already fishing over 28 NM from our homeport. The additional distances the charter boats are now transiting has resulted in a loss of customers who can fish out of other ports with less time transiting giving them more time to fish.

Please take under consideration the party boats fishing out of Plymouth have additional speed restrictions not being able to travel over ten knots in the spring for the protection of Right Whales. Forcing them to travel greater distances would mean a five hour transit to go cod fishing.

The creation of the SERA II will result in a major disadvantage to the charter party fleet from the south shore of Massachusetts and force many out of business.

Charter boats operate on an average day of ten hours leaving the dock at 5:00 AM and returning to the dock around 3:00 PM to conduct the logistics required for the following day including fueling where often fuel docks can close at 5:00 PM. By forcing boats to travel the additional distances many of the vessels would be unable to refuel and loose the next day's trip. Please understand we can not leave at any hour like a commercial vessel and have many variables which restrict our operating hours.

I also have concerns the creation of the SERA II will affect our tuna and shark charters as we often fish for ground fish while drifting to allow customers a chance to go home with a few cod and haddock.

It is my understanding the Vessel Trip Reports (VTR) data used to determine where the SERA would take place was from over three years ago when the cod stock was healthier and boats were able to locate fish on Stellwagen Bank on the shoal water (15-25 fathom). Since going to catch shares where a concentration of large draggers fishing 24/7 on the bank in the winter and spring, the charter/party and recreational anglers have been forced to fish east of the bank (WGOM) in order to locate cod and haddock. An analysis of the past two years of VTR data would clearly indicate this change in fishing locations. The WGOM especially the location of the proposed SERA II is one of the few locations we can find any fish for our customers to take home. Without landings, customers will not return to fish from the South Shore harbors and go elsewhere.



The recreational angler has little impact on the bottom using weights, cod jigs and hook and line to harvest fish for personal consumption. Creating a SERA II and shutting out the recreational angler will have no benefit to the protection of juvenile cod compared to the massive amount of juvenile fish consumed daily by spiny dog fish and seals in the area.

I recommend the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and the National Marine Fisheries Center work closely with the charter boat industry on a tagging program for cod, haddock and other species of groundfish. With the charter boats fishing the WGOM they could tag a large number of fish to provide scientific data to determine migration routes and growth rates like was done in the past. NMFS should be working with the charter boats to collect data through tagging and not keeping them out of the few areas where they can find fish for their anglers.

Any changes other than Status Quo, Alternative 1, No Action will virtually be the end of the charter/party industry from the South Shore of Massachusetts who fish Stellwagen Bank. It will also be a domino effect resulting in a loss of revenue to the local hotels, tackle shops, marinas, boat dealers etc. in the local area. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me anytime.

Respectfully,

David Waldrip  
Charter Boat Relentless, Green Harbor, MA  
[captdave@relentlesscharters.com](mailto:captdave@relentlesscharters.com)

Copy: Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS, NERO  
Mr. Terry Stockwell, Chairman NEFMC  
Mr. Barry Gibson, Chairman, Recreational Advisory Panel  
Mr. Stephen James, President, Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Assoc  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, Deputy Director, MA Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Douglas Grout, NH Chief Marine Fisheries  
Ms. Cherri Patterson, Supervisor, NH Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Mark Alexander, CT, Depart of Energy and Environmental  
Protection  
Mr. Vincent Balzano

Mr. Frank Blount  
Mr. Thomas Dempsey  
Mr. Peter Kendall  
Ms. Marybeth Nickell-Tooley  
Ms. Laura Ramsden  
Dr. Michael Sissenwine  
Mr. Terry Alexander  
Ms. Ellen Gothel  
Mr. Terry Alexander  
Mr. Matthew McKenzie  
Mr. John Quinn  
Mr. Mark Gibson  
Mr. Dave Preble  
Mr. Mark Alexander

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dec 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013



Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing to you as an owner and operator of a charter boat fishing out of Green Harbor, MA regarding the proposed habitat protection measures that have been drafted and are being considered by the New England Fisheries Management Council. I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support Alternative 1, No Action. Any changes will result in a detrimental adverse affect on the charter boats which fish this area. We are barely covering operating expenses due to the regulations that have been put into place over the years.

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Any changes other than Status Quo, Alternative 1, No Action will virtually be the end of the charter/party industry from the South Shore of Massachusetts who fish Stellwagen Bank. It will also be a domino effect



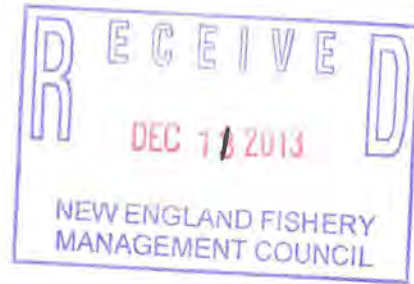
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Respectfully,

David Waldrip  
Charter Boat Relentless, Green Harbor, MA  
[captdave@relentlesscharters.com](mailto:captdave@relentlesscharters.com)

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Ms. Cherri Patterson, Supervisor, NH Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Mark Alexander, CT, Depart of Energy and Environmental  
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Mr. Vincent Balzano  
Mr. Frank Blount  
Mr. Thomas Dempsey  
Mr. Peter Kendall  
Ms. Marybeth Nickell-Tooley  
Ms. Laura Ramsden  
Dr. Michael Sissenwine  
Mr. Terry Alexander  
Ms. Ellen Gothel  
Mr. Terry Alexander  
Mr. Matthew McKenzie  
Mr. John Quinn  
Mr. Mark Gibson  
Mr. Dave Preble  
Mr. Mark Alexander





Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

**RE: Proposed Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Ecological Research Area**

Dear Mr. Nies:

As an owner and operator of the charter boat "Perseverance" located in Green Harbor, Massachusetts that fishes the Stellwagen Bank waters and as a member of the NEFMC Enforcement Advisory Panel, I oppose any change to the Western Gulf of Maine ("WGOM") closed area and support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on the charter/party and recreational anglers as well as a detrimental impact on their ability to land a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on Gulf of Maine ("GOM") cod.

The proposed SERA II, 55 square mile "reference area" is specifically where we fish and target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before the implementation of the flawed Catch Share System we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank. As a result, the NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 pound trip limit for draggers in the GOM. The present Catch Share System allows for the large sector draggers to fish 24 hours per day, 7 days per week ("24/7") within this area without a daily limit that results in overfishing and devastation of the bottom fish due to unrestricted 24/7 fishing pressure. This has resulted in a detrimental impact on the bottom fish in the Stellwagen Bank and WGOM waters. A change is necessary to the Catch Share system to prevent this constant 24/7 fishing pressure that wipes out the population of fish within a select area.

As a result of the constant fishing pressure by the large draggers we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east that is 30 to 35 miles offshore in 200 feet to 400 feet of water instead of the 15 to 21 miles offshore in 100 feet to 150 feet of water. This has almost doubled our fuel cost and transit time to fish further offshore. If SERA II is implemented we will be have to proceed further north of the "reference area" in productive waters that are approximately 40 to 45 miles offshore in an area that will be subject to gill nets and tub-trawl gear.

As set forth in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary ("SBNMS") Final Management Plan dated June 2010 ("SBNMS 2010 MGT Plan"), research has been conducted within the WGOM closed areas the last several years. The SBNMS 2010 MGT Plan and Draft SBNMS Proposed SERA dated September 14, 2011, provided several options to conduct the proposed



research that included permitting bottom fishing by the charter boat/party boat and recreational anglers within this area. Why is this option off the table when it was a feasible option in the Plans set forth above? The SBNMS 2010 MGT Plan also noted that there were areas further east of the "shelf" that were suitable candidates to conduct the research. Why are the areas further east not being considered? How can one even consider prohibiting bottom fishing within this area during these tough economic times? Closure will result in a devastating detrimental economic impact to all for-hire operators and recreational anglers as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. The Obama administration was adamantly against any closure approximately two years ago as a result of the detrimental impact on the economy. The proposed SERA II will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business.

I am all for research and recommend that the research be conducted within the proposed 55 square mile reference area without any fishing closure or restrictions to charter boat/party boats or recreational anglers as set forth above. In conclusion, I strongly support Alternative No. 1, No Action.

If you have any questions please email or give me a call at (617) 291-8914.

Very truly yours,



Capt. Michael J. Pierdinock  
CPF Charters, Charter Boat "Perseverance" Green Harbor, MA  
[www.cpfcharters.com](http://www.cpfcharters.com)  
cpfcharters@yahoo.com

Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association – Officer  
NEFMC Enforcement Advisory Panel  
Recreational Fishing Alliance - Member

cc: Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
David Pierce, PhD MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC

**John E. Richardson**  
**10 Ringbolt Road, Hingham, MA 02043**  
[jerinc@comcast.net](mailto:jerinc@comcast.net)

December 9, 2013

Mr. Tom Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950



Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing in opposition to the SERA II “reference area” that proposes to prohibit recreational bottom fishing in a 55 nautical square mile area.

Contrary to the outdated VTR data that was used in the SERA proposal, the proposed SERA II Reference area is where the charter fishermen of Scituate, Green Harbor and Plymouth fish. This area is heavily fished by recreational fishermen from Cape Cod to Gloucester and is of critical importance to South Shore fishermen. The multiplier affect of socioeconomic losses to local harbor, hotel and fishing related businesses in these communities will certainly outweigh the value of knowledge gained by the de minimis impact of hooks and weights on bottom habitat.

Please do not confuse my opposition of the reference area prohibiting recreational bottom fishing with opposition to the DHRA proposal itself. When the Council chose the options to the Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment that we are now addressing, the Sanctuary proposal before them was SERA, not SERA II. The SERA II, proposed on October 9, 2012, by the SERA AD Hoc Working Group, shows no reference area. Published meetings of the Habitat Advisory Panel, the Plan Development Team and the Habitat Oversight Committee show no mention of the reference area as of the June 2013 meeting of the Council. The SAC’s claim that the SERA is recommended by them only after “consulting with a large number and wide range of stakeholders, and thoroughly vetted and approved by all departments within NOAA”; “and with numerous peer reviews” can not possibly be true of the reference area proposal. This claim was made in March of 2012; more than a year before the reference area was presented to the impacted recreational fishery.

The SERA proposal flawed, but it was vetted. The SERA II DHRA proposal has been on the table since October 9, 2012. It too has had time in committees. However, the reference area has not passed these tests. Any added restrictions to the DHRA proposal has been noticeably absent for the first nine months of plan development and vetting. In the minutes of the Habitat Oversight Committee meeting of March 19, 2013, a committee member asked that “if restrictions for more than just mobile bottom gear are envisioned

for this location, that the proponents of the area be more upfront about the restrictions they are looking for.” Not being upfront is the key here. Withholding the reference area change from the process obfuscated the opposition’s ability to respond. This is not typical of the Council’s open process and should not be allowed.

The Council needs to balance research objectives and possible long term benefits of improved understanding of ecosystem dynamics with impacts to the fishery over the short-term. While the DHRA meets this standard, the reference area does not.

Please act to remove the reference area from the SERA II proposal so that the recreational fishing industry can support meaningful habitat research in this historic region.

Very truly yours,

John E. Richardson  
Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association  
Member and Director



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 2:51 PM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to WGoMCA changes in Omnibus...



**From:** [Rruais@aol.com](mailto:Rruais@aol.com) [<mailto:Rruais@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 10, 2013 2:50 PM

**To:** Tom Nies

**Cc:** Tom DePersia; [maguro@capecod.net](mailto:maguro@capecod.net); [patrick@compassseafood.com](mailto:patrick@compassseafood.com); [natitdtuna@gmail.com](mailto:natitdtuna@gmail.com); Chris Weiner; [weinersb@gmail.com](mailto:weinersb@gmail.com); [nantucketfish@comcast.net](mailto:nantucketfish@comcast.net); [ralph.pratt@verizon.net](mailto:ralph.pratt@verizon.net); [SBGETTO@COMCAST.NET](mailto:SBGETTO@COMCAST.NET); [dschalit@gmail.com](mailto:dschalit@gmail.com); Rich Ruais; [w.peter@verizon.net](mailto:w.peter@verizon.net)

**Subject:** Opposition to WGoMCA changes in Omnibus...

Dear Tom:

On behalf of the American Bluefin Tuna Association this comment on the Draft Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 Volume 3 is to oppose any changes to the **WESTERN GULF OF MAINE CLOSED AREA AND STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 1, (NO ACTION) - NO DHRA designations**. I do not know of a single potentially affected fisherman (the primary stakeholders of interests in the management of Stellwagen Bank), who supports alternative 2.3.3 which would deny access to Stellwagen Bank to all commercial and recreational fishermen with the exception of mid-water trawlers and pelagic gears. The obvious attempt of Sanctuary Manager Craig MacDonald to temporarily arrest the outrage of tuna fishermen by the an initial exemption of pelagic tuna gear, is an insult to the intelligence of all fishermen. We know quite well his intentions.

We emphatically reject the continuous effort of the leadership of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary to find a way into fishery conservation and management to justify the bloated and expensive bureaucracy it has become and contrary to the intentions and good honor of Congressman Gerry Studds, Senator Kerry and Senator Kennedy when they pushed for the designation in the early 1990's. Many commercial and recreational fishing groups and representatives had personal meetings with the above Senators and Congressman and received personal assurances that our industries would not have to bear the financial costs of monitoring and defending against wayward Sanctuary activities.

How many more times are we going to have expose Sanctuary Manager Craig MacDonalds despicable efforts to defy the original intentions of the well intended Sanctuary founders and create and even larger bureaucratic empire to harass hard working fishermen. Mr. MacDonald has been notified in writing by NOAA headquarters confirming that the Stellwagen Sanctuary designation document does not provide authority for fishery management or interference. The original objectives of the Sanctuary are well known to be a safeguard against oil and gas exploration, sand and gravel mining, tire reef proposals, floating Casinos and other activities that might interfere with the historical utilization of Stellwagen Bank as a nearshore fishing grounds for multispecies fishermen including tuna, lobster and groundfish fishermen.

ABTA members have had enough of the Sanctuary zealots desiring media attention and justification of a federal tax dollar annual budget to employ 17 full time staffers with questionable and unknown daily work tasks to simply monitor the Army Corp of Engineers and federal register for exotic proposals to denigrate the ocean bottom of Stellwagen Bank and post well known historical information of shipwrecks.

ABTA believes that this continued misguided mission of Mr. MacDonald needs to be investigated by Congress, the Stellwagen Sanctuary annual budget reviewed for consistency with the Congressional Designation including questionable "joint venture arrangements" with the Government of Bermuda and other entities. The investigation should review all travel by the Manager and staff to Bermuda, the specific benefits to Stellwagen Bank management identified as well as, all other costs associated with continuation and or growth beyond the original intent of Congress. Finally, the use of vessels purchased with federal funds to cruise the surface waters on good weather summer days watching whales and tuna fishermen should be logged and justification of consistency with the Sanctuary mission be explained for each trip.

ABTA intends on pursuing a Freedom of Information request to begin to uncover the full range of activities that may be consistent or inconsistent with the limited mission intended for the Sanctuary.

As you and the Council are aware, ABTA represents the interests of thousands of rod and reel and harpoon fishermen who either traverse or fish within the 132 square nautical mile overlap of the WGoMCA and the Stellwagen Bank Marine Sanctuary. We also represent many of the charter and party boats that depend in a very significant way upon groundfish fishing in the proposed area and who also rely on bluefin tuna as well.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Ruais, LLC, Executive Director  
American Bluefin Tuna Association  
P.O. Box 447, Salem, N.H. 03079  
(603)898-8862



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Thomas DePersia. I own and operate two charter fishing boats out of Marshfield, MA. and am a RAP member of the NEFMC.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically *where we fish*. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200’ to 400’ of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100’ to 150’ of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. My expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and I have lost half my customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other “sanctuaries” all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don’t stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators “*promised*” all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied. I was there in a public hearing hall in Duxbury, MA., packed with angry fishermen when they “*promised*” us we had nothing to worry about. I caution all NEFMC members who are fishermen. You are next once they get their foot in the door. Sanctuary Management will lie to you next. This is another back-door attempt by Craig McDonald to stop fishing on Stellwagen Bank.

The “SERA II reference area”, if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,

Capt. Thomas DePersia  
Bigfish II Sportfishing Charters  
P.O. Box #238  
Marshfield Hills, MA. 02051  
781-834-7504  
[hugetuna@aol.com](mailto:hugetuna@aol.com)

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Terry Stockwell, Chairman NEFMC  
Mr. Douglas Krout, NH Chief Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Cherri Patterson, Supervisor, NH Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Mark Alexander, CT, Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection  
Mr. Vincent Balzano-NEFMC  
Mr. Thomas Dempsey-NEFMC  
MR. Peter Kendall-NEFMC  
Ms. Marybeth Nickell-Tooley-NEFMC  
Ms. Laura Ramsden-NEFMC  
Dr. Michael Sissenwine-NEFMC  
Mr. Terry Alexander-NEFMC  
Ms. Ellen Gothel-NEFMC



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Joseph Sorcinelli. I enjoy fishing and at least twice a year charter a boat w/4 other friends to fish for Cod, Haddock & Pollack out of Cape Ann, MA.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No.1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will limit my ability to enjoy a sport I enjoy immensely. I believe we currently are able to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, Pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is specifically *where we fish*. This area is where we go to target the above-mentioned species. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed **Large Druggers** to come to Stellwagen Bank and rape the ocean floor leaving dead culled fish in their wake and killing the young spawn we depend on. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Druggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200' to 400' of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100' to 150' of water. That change in the rules has driven up charter costs and reduced the number of trips we book as well as the amount of gear & supplies we purchase. In addition to less revenue for charter captains there is less funding for the affordable care act (tax on fishing gear) and additional ripple effects.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire "reference area" to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. ***This is unfair to the Recreational Community.***

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already

performed in other “sanctuaries” all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don’t stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators “*promised*” all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied.

The “SERA II reference area”, if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote *Alternative No. 1, No Action***. Thank You.

Sincerely,

Joseph Sorcinelli  
80 First Avenue  
West Haven, CT  
203 996 0712



## Karen Roy

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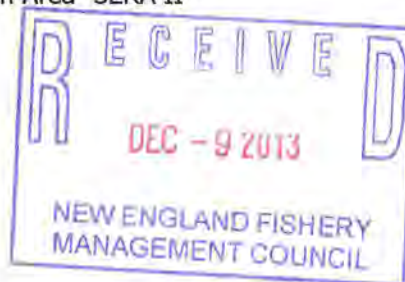
**From:** Tom Nies  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 1:40 PM  
**To:** Karen Roy  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

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**From:** [CharterWhiteCap@aol.com](mailto:CharterWhiteCap@aol.com) [<mailto:CharterWhiteCap@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 1:19 PM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

12/9/2013

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950  
[TNies@NEFMC.org](mailto:TNies@NEFMC.org)



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Capt Brad White. I own and operate a charter fishing boat WHITE CAP out of Scituate, MA

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support that you and others vote for *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically our fishing grounds. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit.

That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. I have lost many customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and required deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will most probably put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other “sanctuaries” all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don’t stop us from fishing. They can study the live areas just as well as the “research area”

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators “*promised*” all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. Only gaming, harvesting of gravel and oil exploration would be regulated, not fishing!

The “SERA II reference area”, if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,  
**Capt Brad White**

**"Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing it is not fish they are after".  
~ Thoreau**

**[WhiteCapCharters LLC](#)**

149 Old Main St, PO box 489, Marshfield Hills, MA 02051,  
Cell: (617) 966.1986, email: Email : [CharterWhitecap@aol.com](mailto:CharterWhitecap@aol.com)  
USCG Master Licensed ~ 100 Gross Tons, Towing and Sail

Memberships: Northeast Charterboat Captains Association, Stellwagen Charterboat Captains Association, National association of Charter Boat Operators, International Game Fish Association-Certified Captain, New Inlet Boating Association, SouthCoast Drug Free Alliance, South Shore Chamber, Metro South Chamber, Marshfield Chamber.



**Karen Roy**

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**From:** mark.carlson <mark.carlson@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 11:10 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** SERA II proposal



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Mark Carlson. I own and operate a charter fishing boats out of Plymouth, MA.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically *where we fish*. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200’ to 400’ of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100’ to 150’ of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. My expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and I have lost half my customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

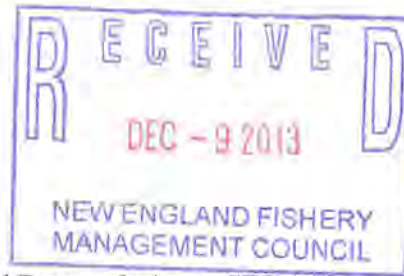


The “SERA II reference area”, if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,

Captain Mark Carlson  
Odyssey-Charters  
P.O. Box #21  
Pembroke, Ma. 02359  
781-294-0263  
[captain.carlson@gmail.com](mailto:captain.carlson@gmail.com)

Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically *where many charter boats fish*. This area is where charter boats south of Boston go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Druggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Druggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200’ to 400’ of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100’ to 150’ of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. Our expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and we have lost significant customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Opening the door to this type of closure means more closures in northern areas are likely if not sure to follow. This sets a dangerous precedent. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other "sanctuaries" all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don't stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators "promised" all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied. I was there in a public hearing hall in Duxbury, MA., packed with angry fishermen when they "promised" us we had nothing to worry about. I caution all NEFMC members who are fishermen. You are next once they get their foot in the door. Sanctuary Management will lie to you next. This is another back-door attempt by Craig McDonald to stop fishing on Stellwagen Bank.

The "SERA II reference area", if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,

Capt. Gary Cannell  
Tuna Hunter Fishing Charters  
4 Heritage Drive  
Rockport, MA. 02051  
978-407-1351  
[captain@tunahunter.com](mailto:captain@tunahunter.com)

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Lisa Twombly. My husband owns and operates two charter fishing boats out of Gloucester Id, MA. He is a RAP member of the NEFMC.

**I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No.1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.**

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically *where we fish*. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200’ to 400’ of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100’ to 150’ of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a *devastating detrimental economic impact* to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. My expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and I have lost half my customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile "reference area" is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other "sanctuaries" all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don't stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators "promised" all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied. I was there in a public hearing hall in Duxbury, MA., packed with angry fishermen when they "promised" us we had nothing to worry about. I caution all NEFMC members who are fishermen. You are next once they get their foot in the door. Sanctuary Management will lie to you next. This is another back-door attempt by Craig McDonald to stop fishing on Stellwagen Bank.

The "SERA II reference area", if implemented, is going to be the most devastating measure directly leveled at the recreational community to date especially the for-hire fleet from Boston to Provincetown. The socioeconomic importance of Recreational Fishing cannot be ignored in this critically important vote. **Please vote Alternative No. 1, No Action.** Thank You.

Sincerely,

Lisa Twombly  
Kayman Charters  
P.O. Box #252  
Gloucester, MA. 01931  
774-545-5251  
Lblu37@yahoo.com

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC



December 8, 2013



Mr. Tom Nies, Executive Director

New England Fishery Management Council

50 Water Street

Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Mr. Nies:

I am writing you on behalf of the 130+ charter boat businesses that comprise the Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association (SBCBA) and the SERA II "Reference area" that proposes to prohibit recreational bottom fishing in a 55 nautical square mile area.

Let me start by pointing out that the proposed SERA II Reference area encompasses portions of the most fertile and heavily fished grounds in all of Massachusetts Bay. The proposed Reference area is within day trip reach of the recreational and charter vessels from Cape Cod thru to Gloucester but it is the vessels based from the South Shore ports of Scituate, Green Harbor and Plymouth that heavily utilize this area as their primary ground fishing destination. The proposed Reference area sits atop the closest and most productive cod/haddock fishing grounds to these ports and subsequently, it is of critical importance to the South Shore fishermen, their clients and their communities.

Should the proposed no-bottom fishing Reference area be established, the South Shore charter and recreational boat operators will be forced to travel significantly farther off shore to find productive ground fishing locations and that entails burning additional fuel which leads to more maintenance and greater overall operating expense. This is troubling for recreational boaters considering the high cost of fuel and maintenance but much more of a hindrance to charter boat operators which are already struggling to survive in the current weak economy. Any attempt to recover additional operating expense by increasing the daily charter rate along with the extended run time to reach more distant fishing grounds makes the South Shore ports very undesirable locations to charter from.

Also, as the small day boats that make up the charter and recreational fleet are forced further off shore in pursuit of ground fish, they expose their respective customers and crews to greater safety risks when inclement weather suddenly creates hazardous sea conditions.

Any loss of charter business and recreational fishing opportunity created by the proposed Reference area will not only impact the South Shore Fishermen, Marinas and Bait & Tackle Shops but it also harms industry related businesses including Boat Retailers/Brokers, Marine Insurance Agencies, Marine Retail/Wholesale Supply Stores, Hotels, Restaurants and other industry related service providers.

Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association has a long history of working closely with numerous State and Federal Fishery Management Agencies and we recognize the importance of ongoing scientific research. However, the SERA II proposed Reference area with its no-recreational bottom fishing restriction inflicts unwarranted economic hardships when considering the potential value of the proposed research.

*National Standard Eight, set forth at 16 U.S.C. § 1851(a)(8) mandates that Conservation and management measures shall take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities by utilizing economic and social data to: (A) provide for the sustained participation of such communities, and (B) to the extent practicable, minimize adverse economic impacts on such communities.*

Further, the fundamental premise of a "Reference area" which prohibits recreational bottom fishing so its impact can be studied is fatally flawed at its very conception when other forms of bottom fishing are permitted in the Reference area. Specifically, commercial lobster fishing would not be restricted in the proposed Reference area, which means we have no way to account for the following:

- the impact of hauling commercial lobster gear on the sea floor
- the loss of forage that removed lobsters represent to some species including to themselves
- the loss of predation that removed lobsters represent to some species including to themselves
- the removal of other species including crabs and fin fish caught and retained in lobster gear
- the impact of foreign lobster baits on the environment

The unknown impact of the variables associated commercial lobster fishing undermine any meaningful research that could be derived from establishing a no-recreational bottom fishing Reference area. Subsequently, in all likelihood, commercial lobster fishing would need to be prohibited in the Reference area as well. This is significant as it inflicts more economic loss to the region and effects yet another sector of the struggling fishing industry.

At the core of this matter is whether the potential scientific advances of the proposed no-recreational bottom fishing Reference area warrant the very real economic hardships that it imposes on the region. The SBCBA members feel very strongly that it is NOT warranted and therefore we ask the Council to adopt Alternative 1, No Action or to revise an existing DHRA Alternative by completely removing the Reference area and any recreational "no bottom fishing" restriction as the preferred alternative.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully Yours,

Capt. Steven James

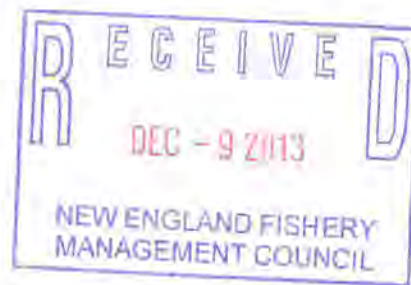
President, SBCBA



## Karen Roy

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**From:** Chris Graham <chrisgraham60@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 07, 2013 8:05 AM  
**To:** Tom Nies  
**Subject:** Over fishing



Mr. Tom Nies  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 West Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

Re: Proposed Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Ecological Research Area- SERA II

Dear Mr. Nies,

My name is Thomas DePersia. I own and operate two charter fishing boats out of Marshfield, MA. and am a RAP member of the NEFMC.

I strongly oppose any changes to the Western Gulf of Maine closed area and strongly support *Alternative No. 1, No Action* to the proposed habitat protection measures being considered by the NEFMC.

Any additional closed areas for the charter/ party and recreational anglers will have a devastating detrimental economic impact on these anglers and impede their ability to catch a reasonable amount of cod, haddock, pollack and other targeted groundfish. We are already operating under rules with strict bag limits, minimum size limits, a hard TAC and a 5 ½ month closed season on GOM cod.

The proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is specifically where we fish. This area is where we go to target cod, haddock, pollack, redbfish, and cusk. Before Sector Management we fished with great success along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank and the nearby shoals about 15-21 nautical miles each way. Now, we have been forced to fish in the WGOM closed area much farther east because Sector Management has allowed Large Draggers to come to Stellwagen Bank and clean out all stocks of cod, haddock, pollack etc. on the Western edge and all Non-WGOM closed area grounds. This happened when NEFMC and NMFS discontinued the 800 lb. trip limit in the Gulf of Maine and allowed Large Sector Draggers to operate without a daily limit. We have been forced to go way out farther- 30 to 35 miles each way and fish in 200’ to 400’ of water instead of the 15-21 miles each way before in 100’ to 150’ of water. That change in the rules has already cost us to double our fuel cost and double our transit time to the fishing grounds, giving us less fishing time and more dissatisfied customers.

If this SERA II proposal is approved we will have to transit the entire “reference area” to get north of it to get to any potentially fishable waters 40 to 45 miles offshore which will also be loaded now with gill nets and tub-trawl gear. This is unfair to the Recreational Community.

This proposal will have a devastating detrimental economic impact to all for-hire operators and recreational fishermen as well as other supporting businesses such as tackle shops, restaurants, lodging facilities and marinas. My expenses have already doubled because of catch shares/ sectors and I have lost half my customers from poor catches due to less fishing time and deeper fishing waters with fewer and smaller fish. This SERA II proposal will put the for-hire community from Boston to Provincetown out of business. Cod is the desired species to charters in New England.

The type of Research that the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary wishes to conduct in the proposed 55 square mile “reference area” is unnecessary. There are plenty of studies already performed in other “sanctuaries” all over the country and the world. They can do their research just don’t stop us from fishing.

When Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary was first proposed in 1991, the sanctuary administrators “*promised*” all fishermen that the Sanctuary would never attempt to regulate fishing. They lied. I was there in a public hearing hall in Duxbury, MA., packed with angry fishermen when they “*promised*” us we had nothing to worry about. I caution all NEFMC members who are fishermen. You are next once they get their foot in the door. Sanctuary Management will lie to you next. This is another back-door attempt by Craig McDonald to stop fishing on Stellwagen Bank.

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Sincerely,

Capt. Thomas DePersia  
Chris Graham  
Sharon L  
pier 4 green Harbor

Ps smarten up stop dragging gill netting and long liners seriously this would repair our recourse and provide large healthy stocks of sea life while allowing for Smart Harvesting of sea life

cc. Mr. John Bullard, Administrator, NMFS  
Mr. Paul Diodati, Director, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Dr. David Pierce, MA. Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Barry Gibson Recreational Fishing Alliance  
Mr. Frank Blount NEFMC  
Mr. Stephen James SBCBA  
Mr. Dave Preble NEFMC

Christopher M Graham