UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries | West Coast Region
99 Pacific Street, Bldg 100, Suite F
Monterey, CA 93940

March 31, 2020

Fred Collins
Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Sent via email

RE: Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary – NOAA ONMS Five-year Review

Dear Mr. Collins:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) added the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) to the inventory of candidate sites on October 5, 2015. NOAA's regulations for consideration of community-based nominations for potential new national marine sanctuaries indicates that a nomination will be considered active for a five-year period. NOAA published a clarification of procedures for the sanctuary nomination process on November 13, 2019 that described the process to assess a nomination that is reaching the five-year period.

This letter serves as the first step in our review of the nomination for CHNMS – specifically to give the Northern Chumash Tribal Council as the original nominating party an opportunity to update ONMS regarding how the nomination meets, or does not meet, the 11 national significance criteria and management considerations NOAA uses to assess sanctuary nominations. Specifically, we are interested in knowing what has changed in the past five years regarding the resources and reasons for nominating CHNMS. For instance, there may be new information you want to bring to our attention about the national significance of natural or cultural resources proposed for protection. Or, perhaps management conditions have changed that may no longer require a national marine sanctuary to best protect the resources in the area. Your input will assist us in determining the degree to which the natural, cultural, historical and management elements of the nominated area are still relevant and responsive to the 11 criteria.

Please provide my office with a written response by April 30, 2020. NOAA will likely soon announce a plan to also receive public input on the same questions we are posing to the Northern Chumash Tribal Council. We initially thought to hold public workshops but our concerns about COVID-19 and limits on public gatherings warrants consideration of alternative means to hear from the public. We will advise you of the approach we choose.

Please contact me (william.douros@noaa.gov) or Dr. Lisa Wooninck (lisa.wooninck@noaa.gov) if you would like to set up a call to discuss this request.

Sincerely,

William J. Douros, Regional Director