



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER  
DIRECTOR

April 5, 2021

Mr. Matt Brookhart  
Eastern Regional Director  
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
1305 East-West Highway, 11th Floor  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Brookhart:

Thank you for requesting our thoughts on the "Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary" nomination that Darryl Ertel of the Whitefish Point Underwater Preserve submitted to NOAA in December 2017. As you noted, the nomination for inclusion in the inventory of sites for possible designation as a sanctuary under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act is complete and meets NOAA's national significance criteria; however, it lacks evidence of state and tribal support.

Michigan finds great educational, cultural and tourism value in its partnership with NOAA in the management of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and would welcome sanctuaries in other parts of the state. But any such efforts must be developed in collaboration with the sovereign tribes that would be affected by the creation of a National Marine Sanctuary.

Because those who created this nomination had minimal conversations with Anishinaabe individuals, as opposed to working closely with tribal governments, we cannot recommend that the Governor support the nomination at this time. Were NOAA to decline the nomination and begin again with full tribal collaboration, we would be supportive. We would also support using the existing nomination as appropriate, but ensuring that tribal concerns, knowledge, and potential benefits are involved in shaping anything that moves forward. We believe this is the best way to honor Michigan's and NOAA's commitments to tribal consultation and build the trust needed for a successful effort.

Thank you for including us in your decision-making process and for all the resources you bring to Michigan through the National Marine Sanctuaries program. If you need further information, please contact Ms. Sandra Clark, Director, Michigan History Center, at [clarks@michigan.gov](mailto:clarks@michigan.gov) or at 702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, Michigan 48915.

Sincerely,

Daniel Eichinger  
Director  
517-284-6367

cc: Mr. Mark Hoffman, Chief Administrative Officer, DNR  
Mr. Trevor VanDyke, DNR  
Ms. Sandra Clark, DNR