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**RE: Shipwreck Coast NMS Nomination (Michigan, Whitefish Point, Lake Superior)  
Suggested Correction to Michigan DNR Director Daniel Eichinger's Letter of 4/05/2021**

Director Eichinger states (paragraph 3 of letter addressed to NOAA) :

*"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."*

In paragraph 2 of our update to the record dated 3/12/2021 we made it explicitly clear that we were instructed by our NOAA and MI DNR contacts to not further contact Tribal entities:

*"Our team was advised to let NOAA and the State of Michigan handle negotiations related to Tribal Fishing Treaties and NMS compatibility. We understand that treaty negotiations are handled on a "sovern-nations basis" beyond the narrow scope of our nomination."*

We want the record to reflect that we were so directed by MI DNR and NOAA. It would be perhaps more accurate to say that at this time MI DNR and NOAA were unable to find common ground with tribal governments to form any basis to advance a National Marine Sanctuary

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nomination within treaty fishing waters of eastern Lake Superior. Future nominators for other areas may learn from our experience as they pursue similar endeavors.

We greatly appreciate the historical background in the letters from Tribal Contacts to the record including:

Bay Mills Indian Community letter dated 6/8/2021

Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians letter dated 5/19/2015

It is obvious that the treaty partners have more critical long term survival rights and resources to protect. As to future endeavors to attempt to leverage NOAA National Marine Sanctuary status in the described area, perhaps the lead applicants should be those same Tribal Nations the Bay Mills Indian Community and/or the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians. We would be honored to help them as possible should an opportunity arise for the Tribes to do so as best meets their needs. Indeed, a collaboration to protect and interpret the underwater historical/cultural resources in the Treaty waters while also specifically preserving an abundant fisheries resource and vested treaty rights could realistically only be led by these Tribal Nations with a longer term view. This could be a model collaboration to show how partners can create a powerful platform for superior resource protection and exciting educational opportunities for classroom and cultural sustainable tourism interests. Weaving the tribal resource stewardship stories into the exciting landscape of shipwreck tragedies and heroic rescues would help visitors/learners to discover important aspects shared by humanity. In many cases, spiritual lessons emerge from the stories of human encounters with the powerful unrelenting forces of nature underlying our mutual ability to exist on Earth. The Tribes are free to use any of the information or documentation provided in our nomination materials should the need arise. We would be pleased to work in support of such an effort as possible further on down the road even if it was done outside of the standard NOAA-led process.

We apologize for any misunderstanding on our part and are hopeful that by working together under Tribal Leadership at some point in the future, we may yet find a way to better preserve, protect, and interpret the abundant collection of pristine (for now) shipwrecks in what we call Lake Superior's Shipwreck Coast. Please contact with any questions or ideas as appropriate.

Respectfully yours,

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