

As religious organizations and denominations, we applaud the Biden Administration's establishment of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, the first proposed marine sanctuary to be Tribally nominated.

The Chumash National Marine Sanctuary designation is an avenue to not only protect God's ocean and the bounty therein, but is an opportunity to advance environmental justice efforts. The sanctuary sets an important precedent for elevating Indigenous perspectives, cultural values in ocean conservation, and collaborative management that includes all Central Coast Tribes. The designation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary honors the history and culture of Native Americans, the Chumash people and their ancestors, who have stewarded these waters for generations.

Stewardship of public land and waters, preservation of our historic and cultural heritage and striving for justice is an important part of our role as caretakers. Our National Marine Sanctuaries are places that not only care for ocean eco-systems but can also provide sanctuaries for sacred spaces. The designation of Chumash National Marine Sanctuary is an example of such stewardship.

Anabaptist Climate Collaborative
Creation Justice Ministries
Interfaith Power & Light
National Religious Partnership for the Environment
Network Lobby for Social Justice
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team