

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Secretary Sally Jewell
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

May 6, 2014

Dear Mr. President and Secretary Jewell:

We the undersigned are writing to urge you to halt proposed seismic airgun testing for oil and gas in the Atlantic Ocean. Proposed seismic airgun testing would span from Delaware to Florida, but the impacts would be felt in communities throughout the entire East Coast—potentially harming sea life, ecosystems, fisheries and coastal economies.

The use of airguns to conduct these seismic tests threatens fish populations and profitable fisheries. In fact, airgun noise has been shown to decrease catch rates of certain fisheries. Commercial and recreational fishing off the mid and south Atlantic generate billions annually and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs. Department of the Interior's assessment ignores the economic impacts the proposed seismic testing will have on fisheries and the fishermen who rely on the oceans for their livelihoods.

Additionally, the type of seismic airgun testing used to search for oil and gas is incredibly harmful and could injure or possibly kill thousands of marine mammals and fish, including the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale. Seismic airguns fire intense blasts of compressed air - almost as loud as explosives - every 10-12 seconds, 24 hours a day, for days to weeks on end. These loud airgun blasts can be heard for many hundreds of miles in the ocean and can drive whales to abandon their habitats, go silent, and cease foraging over vast areas. At shorter distances, airguns can cause permanent hearing loss, injury, and even death for whales, dolphins and fish.

Proposed seismic airgun testing will result in serious negative impacts to our marine resources that form the foundation of economic vitality for communities all along the Atlantic coast. We urge your administration to stop this process and focus on ensuring the vitality of vulnerable coastal economies along the Atlantic Coast. We cannot continue to put our ocean environment, beaches, marine resources, and coastal economies at risk.

Respectfully,

North Carolina State Representative Pricey Harrison

North Carolina State Senator Gladys Robinson

North Carolina State Senator Mike Woodard

North Carolina State Senator Earline Parmon

North Carolina State Senator Angela Bryant

North Carolina State Representative Alma Adams

North Carolina State Representative Becky Carney

North Carolina State Representative Trisha Cotham

North Carolina State Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield

North Carolina State Representative Susan Fisher

North Carolina State Representative Rick Glazier

North Carolina State Representative Duane Hall

North Carolina State Representative Yvonne Holley

North Carolina State Representative Verla Insko

North Carolina State Representative Darren Jackson

North Carolina State Representative Paul Luebke

North Carolina State Representative Grier Martin

North Carolina State Representative Bobbi Richardson

North Carolina State Representative Winkie Wilkins

North Carolina State Representative Graig Meyer

North Carolina State Representative Annie Mobley

North Carolina State Representative Michael Wray