



November 4, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Preserving Georgia's Coast. Forever.

Dear President Obama,

Thank you so much for your service to our great country. Over the past eight years, you have demonstrated amazing leadership and proven to be a real champion for issues that matter to my family and my community. In particular, I want to thank you for withdrawing the South Atlantic Planning Area and the East Coast as a whole, from the Department of Interior's 5-year program to lease offshore land for oil and gas development.

In your last days in the Oval Office I encourage you to permanently protect the Atlantic Ocean and our ocean-dependent East Coast communities from the threat of seismic testing.

I grew up in Louisiana and have seen first-hand the impacts the oil and gas industry can have on communities. Among other realities, pipelines criss-cross the Gulf landscape, daily dredging of marshes and wetlands results in loss of function and form, and helicopter traffic and noise are a consistent part of life on the Louisiana coast.

Now that I live in Brunswick, Georgia on the East Coast, I have come to intimately know Georgia's coastal landscape to be an amazing, unique and largely uncompromised place. Nearly all of our fourteen major barrier islands are protected, either publicly or privately. We are home to 378,000 vast acres of salt marsh – a natural system that is beautiful, biologically productive, and rich in history. The father of modern ecology Dr. Eugene Odum studied Georgia's salt marsh systems for decades. His studies, and many others since, document that Georgia marshes provide food and refuge for largely 70% of the crab, shrimp and fish that are collected in the marine and estuarine environments of the Southeast. These assets of coastal Georgia led me to help found One Hundred Miles, a non-profit organization devoted to protecting and enhancing Georgia's tiny, but mighty 100-mile coast.

One aspect of the South Atlantic environment that not often discussed, is that the function and structure of our salt and freshwater systems are the result of ingenuity and industry of Africans brought to our country against their will. My children are descendants of the slaves who were brought to Georgia to work the fields and wetlands of Sapelo Island. Our community takes great pride in the African resourcefulness and hard work, that under unfathomable conditions, created the landscapes that serve us still today – offering protection from storms, nursery habitat for fish and shrimp, and providing scenic and spiritual repose. We have an obligation to preserve the landscape that continues to share their story, the same landscape that holds a promise of hope for our future generations.

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www.OneHundredMiles.org

Our community leaders are working hard to protect coastal Georgia's landscapes and our people. The cities of Savannah, Brunswick, Hinesville, Tybee Island, Kingsland, St Marys and Porterdale, Georgia, have passed local resolutions opposing seismic testing and the development of oil and gas reserves off Georgia's coast. In a largely rural region, local opposition of this nature is significant.

We at One Hundred Miles are grateful to you that the Atlantic is no longer being considered for offshore drilling in the upcoming five-year program. However, our oceans and our ocean-based local economies are far too valuable to put at risk for oil and gas development. **Please use your presidential authority to permanently protect the Atlantic Ocean and our communities from offshore drilling and seismic testing.**

Thank you again for your dedication to our country and your service. If I can support you in any way, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Alice M. Keyes
Vice President of Coastal Conservation

ECC: The Honorable Sally Jewell
Janice Schneider
Abigail Hopper
Christy Goldfuss
Brian Deese



Thank you
President Obama for
your loyal service to
our country!



I know you
will do what you
can to protect the
future of my children's coast
from the dangers of seismic testing!

Alice Keyes
(along with Molly (8), Walker (3), Willow (2)
and Ila (4 mos))