



*Larry Hogan, Governor*  
*Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor*  
*Mark Belton, Secretary*  
*Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary*

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## **Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary Designation Frequently Asked Questions**

***Q: What is a National Marine Sanctuary?***

**A:** The primary objective of a national marine sanctuary is to protect an area's cultural and natural features while allowing people to enjoy and use it in a sustainable manner. National marine sanctuary waters conserve habitat for species and protect historically significant shipwrecks and artifacts as well as serve as natural classrooms and laboratories for schoolchildren and researchers alike to promote understanding and stewardship of our waters. They often are cherished recreational spots for diving, kayaking and sport fishing, and strongly enhance tourism.

***Q: What restrictions or regulations come with a National Marine Sanctuary designation?***

**A:** There are no pre-determined restrictions or regulations. The resources and uses at each national marine sanctuary differ widely. For example, most national marine sanctuary waters are open to recreational and commercial fishing; however there are some especially vulnerable places within the national marine sanctuary system where restrictions are placed on certain activities. One example is the national marine sanctuary at Thunder Bay in Michigan, which has restrictions on damage to shipwrecks, but allows charter, commercial and recreational fishing.

***Q: What is the boundary of the proposed Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary?***

**A:** The proposed boundary comprises approximately 14 square miles and is aligned with the Mallows Bay-Widewater Historical and Archeological National Register District, which has recently been designated in the National Register of Historic Places. This area includes vessels associated with the ghost fleet beyond those contained within Mallows Bay itself as well as other nationally significant historical, cultural and archaeological resources. The final boundary will be determined during the sanctuary designation process through public input and development of a sanctuary management plan.

***Q: Will commercial and recreational fishing be allowed following the designation of Mallows Bay as a National Marine Sanctuary?***

**A:** The Maryland Department of Natural Resources regulates recreational fishing in state waters. At present, similar regulations exist for all tidal waters in Maryland, including Mallows Bay. The department has not put forward any new restrictions on fishing in the Potomac River associated with this national marine sanctuary nomination.

During the sanctuary designation process, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration engages with partners, the public, partners and user-groups to consider management activities necessary for the protection of specific resources, such as shipwrecks. The administration is interested in the public's help in identifying how or whether certain activities, such as anchoring or use of particular gear, could impact the shipwrecks in this area. Any proposed management action by the administration is subject to public review and coordination with other local, state or federal agencies. Furthermore, per the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, the governor of any state affected by proposed national marine sanctuary regulations reserves the right to reject any of those regulations intended for their state waters.

*The public can visit the department's webpage to learn more about the Mallows Bay National Marine Sanctuary at: [dnr.maryland.gov/mallowsbay](http://dnr.maryland.gov/mallowsbay). To submit comments, please go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and search for NOAA-NOS-2015-0111, then click on "Comment Now!" The public comment period closes January 15, 2016.*