



CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

January 14, 2009

The Honorable Bill Ross  
Secretary  
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
1601 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1601

Re: Governors' South Atlantic Alliance

Dear Secretary Ross:

I enjoyed our visit in Washington on October 28, 2008, to discuss your letter of that same date. I applaud the efforts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida to establish the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance. The Alliance will focus on ocean and coastal science and management priorities such as healthy coastal ecosystems and communities, clean coastal waters, working waterfronts, and disaster resilient communities, and will be a critically important forum for tackling key objectives identified in the President's U. S. Ocean Action Plan. The Plan requires enhanced intergovernmental coordination and strongly values the local and regional government involvement essential to effectively managing and protecting our ocean and coastal resources.

The Federal community stands ready to support the efforts of the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance. As outlined in the U. S. Ocean Action Plan governance structure, I asked the Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources (SIMOR) to identify federal representatives at the local level to cooperate in your endeavors. The following individuals will co-chair a federal work group that will provide direct support to the Alliance:

Department of the Interior

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Regional Executive, Southeast Region  
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Environmental Protection Agency

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

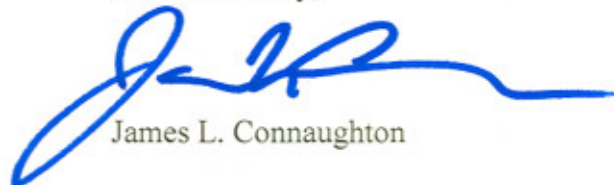
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These three co-chairs of the federal work group will identify representatives from other federal agencies to assist the Alliance.

When the Alliance is ready to meet with the federal representatives, please contact Hardy Pearce, Associate Director for Ocean and Coastal Policy, Council on Environmental Quality. Hardy will assist in making the necessary arrangements for a first gathering.

Again, I want to emphasize this Administration's support for organizing the Governor's South Atlantic Alliance and I will commend your effort strongly to the incoming Administration and my successor. We are ready to assist in any way we can.

Yours sincerely,



James L. Connaughton