

Right whales and feather stars are some of the unique species found in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument.



A Valuable Ecological Treasure at Risk

The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument is an ecological treasure. In 2016, the Obama administration extended strong and lasting protection to the area by declaring it the first marine national monument in the U.S. Atlantic Ocean.¹ The Trump administration, however, is threatening to remove this vital protection, putting this vital resource at risk.

The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument is a unique ecological resource

The Monument consists of 4,913 square miles off the coast of Cape Cod, including nine different ecosystems.² The Monument includes submarine canyons plunging up to 4,000 feet deep, bridging the gap between the upper continental shelf and the deep sea.³

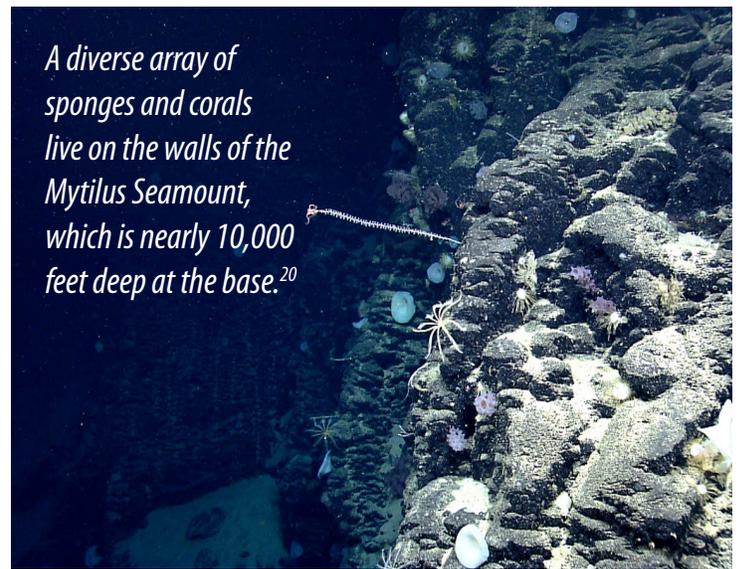
- The area is remarkable for its diversity, richness and abundance of marine species, and variety of habitats.⁴ The Monument is home to at least 10 dolphin species, seven large whale species – including the North Atlantic right whale – and six medium whale species, along with over 100 species of deep-sea corals that are hundreds to thousands of years old.⁵
- The area is one of the most productive areas in the deep sea.⁶ Its unique topography and geology promote upwelling of nutrient-rich water and foster an abundance of plankton, which is the base of the marine food chain.⁷
- Areas within the Monument cycle key nutrients and transport critical organic carbon to coral and deep-sea ecosystems.⁸ The Monument's unique landscape also enhances carbon sequestration, mitigating climate change.⁹

The Monument's ecosystems are fragile and irreplaceable

- The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument is home to rare, unusual and endangered species, many of which grow slowly, are easily damaged, and take a long time to recover from disturbance.¹⁰ Some deep-sea coral communities, for example, could take thousands of years to recover from damage, if they recover at all.¹¹
- Commercial fishing and extractive practices such as seabed mining and oil and gas drilling would destroy fragile habitats and kill marine mammals, sea turtles and seabirds.¹² Seabed mining harms or kills deep sea organisms, destroys deep sea habitats, and degrades the water column and seabed with sediment plumes that expose marine organisms to heavy metals and acidic waste.¹³

Marine protected areas are crucial for preserving ecologically important places

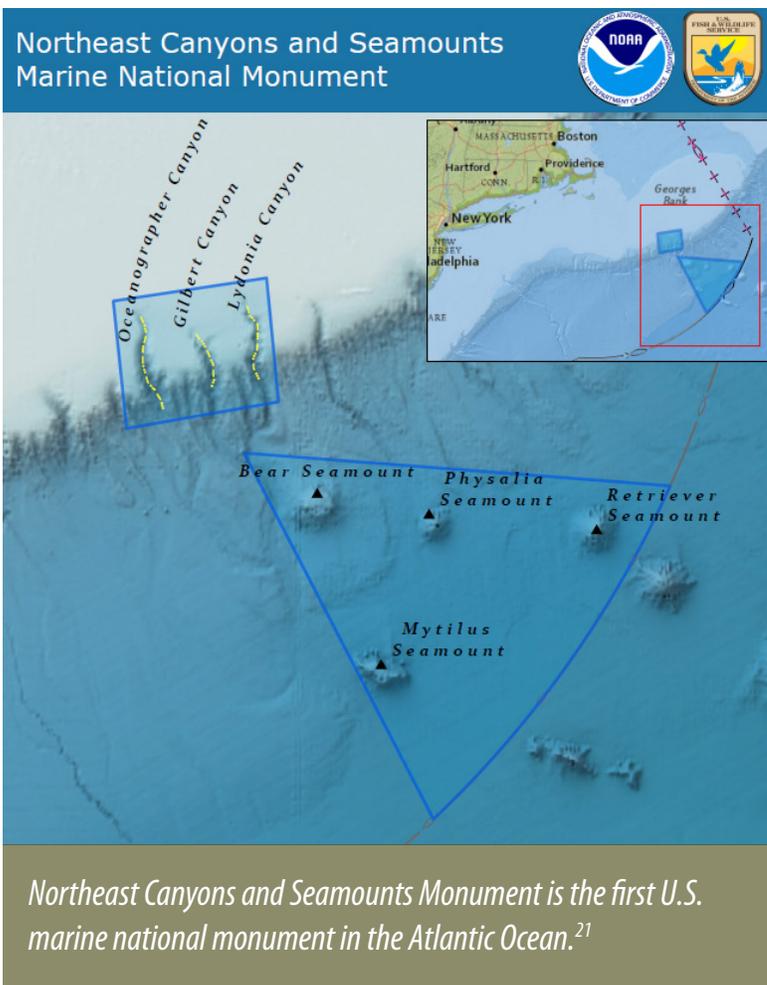
- Marine monuments preserve special, fragile and ecologically important ecosystems. Continued protection of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument would offer rare opportunities to find and study new species, as well as the impacts of commercial fishing, drilling and climate change on marine species and habitats, while also conserving genetic diversity.¹⁴
- Protecting the Monument would allow a vast array of marine species to thrive and would support nearby fisheries and ecosystems, ultimately benefiting other marine areas off the Northeast coast and beyond.¹⁵



Support for protecting the Monument is overwhelming

Support for the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument is strong and widespread. It includes elected officials, the public, numerous businesses, aquariums and conservation groups, religious leaders and organizations and a variety of other stakeholders such as recreational fishing and boating groups.¹⁶

- More than 99 percent of over 2.7 million public comments opposed the Trump administration's executive order putting national monuments under review.¹⁷



Communities are taking action

The Trump administration is currently reviewing the Monument's status and is considering weakening its protections by opening the area to commercial fishing or potentially scrapping its protected status entirely.¹⁸ Citizens, along with scientists, businesses, elected officials and a variety of other groups, have voiced their support for the Monument's continued protection by writing formal letters, submitting public comments and forming coalitions to express their collective support.¹⁹



Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Monument is the first U.S. marine national monument in the Atlantic Ocean.²¹

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