

NOAA releases proposal to designate a national marine sanctuary in eastern Lake Ontario

NOAA proposes a new national marine sanctuary in Lake Ontario to recognize the national significance of historical, archaeological, and cultural resources.

NEW YORK, USA, January 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- NOAA this week released its proposal to designate a new national marine sanctuary in eastern Lake Ontario to recognize the national significance of the area's historical, archaeological, and cultural resources and to manage this special place as part of the [National Marine Sanctuary System](#).

The proposal includes the following draft provisions for establishing the sanctuary: boundary, regulations, and the terms of designation. NOAA invites the public to comment on this proposed rule-making through March 20, 2023.

NOAA is proposing a sanctuary in a 1,724 square mile area in eastern Lake Ontario in the state of New York that would protect 43 known shipwrecks and one aircraft representing events spanning more than 200 years of the nation's history.

"Archival research suggests an additional 20 shipwrecks, three aircraft, and several other underwater archaeological sites may yet to be discovered," according to NOAA. "In addition, the sanctuary would highlight the connection to the ancestral lands and waters of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy."

In January 2017, leaders of four New York counties (Jefferson, Oswego, Cayuga, and Wayne) and the City of Oswego, with support from the Governor of New York, submitted a nomination to



Two divers investigate the wreck of the St. Peter, one of the most visited recreationally accessible shipwrecks in the proposed Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary. The 135-foot, three-masted schooner rests upright in 117 feet of water. Credit: NOAA

NOAA, noting that sanctuary designation would bring new opportunities for research, educational programming, community engagement, and economic development.

With this designation, NOAA would manage the sanctuary through a regulatory and non-regulatory framework; document, explore, and monitor the sanctuary's resources; provide interpretation of the sanctuary's cultural, historical, and educational value to the public; and provide a national stage for promoting heritage tourism and recreation.

The designation proposal is consistent with the goals and recommendations in the Biden-Harris Administration's Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful report, which specifically recommends expanding the National Marine Sanctuary System, as well as supporting Indigenous and locally-led conservation.

The public can comment on the sanctuary proposal until March 20, 2023, through the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#). The docket number is NOAA-NOS-2021-0050. In addition, NOAA will host three in-person and one virtual public meetings during which members of the public can offer oral comments.

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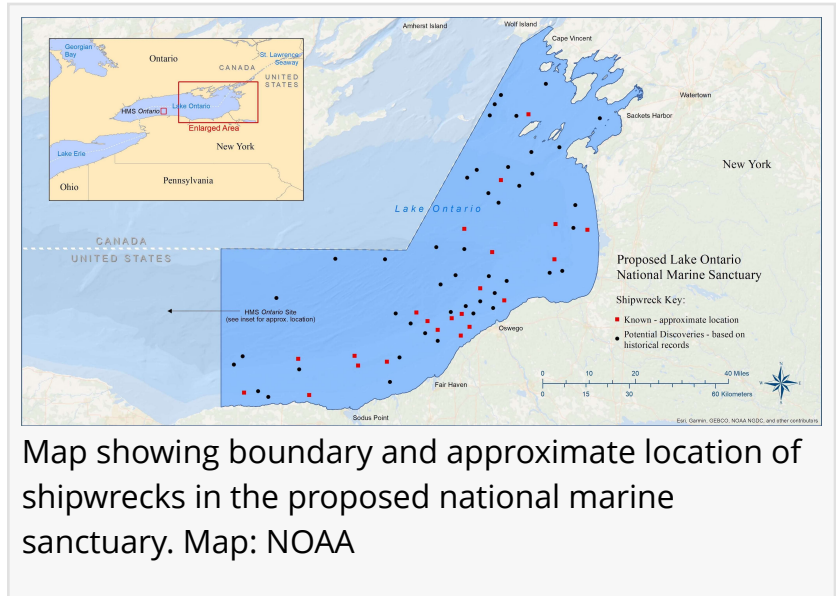
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



The wreck of the steamer David W. Mills, a typical 19th century cargo vessel, lies within the proposed sanctuary. Photo courtesy of the Collection of Bowling Green State University.

A detailed description of the proposed sanctuary, as well as additional information about opportunities to provide public comment, can be found on the website for the proposed [Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary](#).

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Map showing boundary and approximate location of shipwrecks in the proposed national marine sanctuary. Map: NOAA

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