

Oct 25, 2007

Mr. Jim Nussle  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Fyl- M. Bopp

Dear Mr. Nussle,

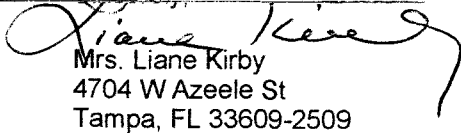
I am writing to you today to urge you to approve as soon as possible the above-referenced ship speed rule proposed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). While this rule may have a very small impact on the shipping economy, it will make a big difference in helping to save the right whale species from extinction and other marine wildlife from harm. I am willing to pay the minimal extra cost on goods to save whales with slower ship speeds.

Specifically, the ship speed rules would reduce the likelihood and severity of ship strikes by requiring ships 65 feet and above to reduce their speed to 10 knots or less in certain areas, times of the year, or conditions. Speed restrictions are necessary to protect right whales and their calves in their calving grounds off Florida and Georgia, on their feeding grounds in New England, and along their mid-Atlantic migratory route. It would also establish Dynamic Management Areas to protect temporary aggregations of right whales.

Ship strikes are the greatest known cause of right whale mortality. With only about 350 right whales remaining on Earth, time is running out to implement adequate protections for this critically endangered marine mammal. NOAA has recently demonstrated the leadership to issue regulations to protect whales from entanglements in fishing gear. Finalizing the ship speed rule would ensure that right whales have protections in place from their two main causes of death.

Please consider my concerns carefully and approve this life-saving rule as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

  
Mrs. Liane Kirby  
4704 W Azeele St  
Tampa, FL 33609-2509