

**Subject: Opposition to Commercial Seabed Mineral Leasing Offshore Virginia —
BOEM-2026-0100**

Dear BOEM Marine Minerals Division:

My name is [Name], and I live in [City/Town], Virginia. I am writing in strong opposition to BOEM's Request for Information on potential commercial mineral leasing offshore Virginia.

Virginia's coast is not an empty industrial zone. It supports our tourism economy, commercial and recreational fisheries, aquaculture industry, military operations, wildlife habitat, and coastal communities. From Virginia Beach to the Eastern Shore, our communities depend on clean water, healthy marine ecosystems, and a thriving ocean economy.

The proposed RFI Area covers approximately 2,764 square miles off Virginia's coast. Marine phosphate and heavy mineral sand mining would likely involve industrial-scale dredging and removal of large volumes of seafloor. That activity could destroy bottom habitat, increase sediment in the water, disrupt fish and shellfish habitat, and threaten the clean coastal waters that support Virginia's fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, recreation, and quality of life.

This proposal would introduce a new and risky industrial use into waters that already sustain major existing industries. Virginia's marine economy supports more than 130,000 jobs and contributes billions of dollars each year to the Commonwealth. The Eastern Shore also supports nationally significant aquaculture, migratory bird habitat, fish nurseries, tourism destinations, and some of the most important coastal wilderness remaining on the Atlantic seaboard.

The risks of commercial seabed mining are too great. This proposal could cause lasting harm to Virginia's ocean resources, coastal economy, and way of life.

I urge BOEM to remove the areas offshore Virginia from consideration for commercial mineral leasing and to abandon any plans for seabed mining off Virginia's coast. At minimum, BOEM should extend the public comment period and hold public meetings in affected coastal communities, including Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[City/Town], Virginia

[Optional: Business, profession, organization, or personal connection to the coast]