




"You always have one wreck you want to go to, and one that's your favorite," says Hatteras dive mate Marc Corbett. "My favorite right now is the *Lancing*. It's huge it's with big boilers spilling out of it. But it's hard to dive because it's up near Diamond Shoals where the water's usually murky or there's lots of current. The one I want to go to is the *E.M. Clark* [pictured here], which is 100 feet deeper. But every day you get out, you're really happy you did." Photo: NOAA/CSI

"This area has had a lot of challenges over the years," he says. "And they have every right to be leery of the federal government. This is a community where actions speak louder than words. So we can tell them what our plans are — or aren't — but more important will be what we actually do."

Ultimately, it's the wrecks themselves that just might force consensus, as the more time the players on both sides of the debate dive together, the easier it will become to trust each other to do the right thing. For now, NOAA will continue to gather stakeholder input as they prepare for public hearings in the fall. Until then, both private charters and PhDs will pray for calm weather and clear water as they continue to swim back through time to record fresh experiences — and with a little luck, maybe discover a new wreck — while embarking on adventures most of us can only imagine.

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"I've dived from Maine to Venezuela," says Sommers, "and Hatteras is still my favorite place. Because it's high-energy. You might see a big wreck. Or a manta ray. Or some plate that was last touched by a guy who died 100 years ago. That's what makes it exciting: you never know what's going to happen."

— Matt Walker 

For more on diving off the Outer Banks, including descriptions of wrecks and dive footage, go to www.divehatteras.com and www.capt-jt.com. For more about NOAA's "Battle of the Atlantic" project, and to follow the process of possible sanctuary expansion, go to www.sanctuaries.noaa.gov. For a firsthand look at artifacts, scuba gear and the U-85's Enigma machine, visit the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras Village. And for a history lesson of how they all got there, read Kevin P. Duffus' [War Zone: World War II Off the North Carolina Coast](#).

Ed note: On June 5, the Expansion Working Group will present their recommendations to the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. This meeting is open to the public and will be held at the UNC Coastal Studies Institute, room 262, at 10am.