

2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



PROMOTING VOLUNTOURISM FOR OLYMPIC COAST

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) developed a campaign to increase tourism and stewardship in the sanctuary during the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) event in September. In partnership with Washington CoastSavers, OCNMS promoted “voluntourism,” a form of tourism in which visitors participate in volunteer stewardship activities. Following the campaign, volunteer participation in the ICC event in Washington increased by more than 360 percent. To attract volunteers, staff engaged local businesses and chambers of commerce to provide volunteer-specific incentives. Additionally, sanctuary staff advertised local promotions through social media, newspapers and flyers.



PREVENTING OIL SPILLS

The risk of a large oil spill is a major concern for Washington’s coast. OCNMS worked with the United States Coast Guard to establish an Area to be Avoided (ATBA) to reduce this risk. The ATBA is a voluntary measure that directs large vessels to stay offshore the rugged Olympic Coast’s sensitive and dangerous environment. In 2014, the estimated compliance rate was 97 percent for vessels greater than 400 gross tons with compliance higher for large commercial vessels. The sanctuary has monitored compliance and conducted outreach to mariners since 1998.



IMPROVING OCEAN LITERACY

OCNMS increased educational programs for Washington’s coastal communities in 2014. Approximately 1,300 elementary school students and 66 teachers and more than 200 chaperones participated in Ocean Science and North Olympic Watershed classroom activities, field trips and trainings. Staff also supported summer programs for more than 100 youth including specific programs designed for tribal youth from the Makah and Quileute tribes. Tribal representatives presented programs on Traditional Ecological Knowledge and marine resource use from a cultural perspective for students from the Makah, Quileute and Hoh Tribes and the Quinault Indian Nation.



WORKING TO PROTECT CULTURAL RESOURCES

OCNMS and Office of National Marine Sanctuaries maritime heritage staff conducted an extensive review of the OCNMS maritime heritage database. In order to enhance the protection and management of Olympic Coast’s historic resources, the information was provided to the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. This information will improve permit review related to NOAA’s obligations under the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.



LOOKING AHEAD

- Working with Olympic Coast Intergovernmental Policy Council, a team is developing a common understanding and catalog of habitat information critical to supporting healthy marine ecosystems. Coastal managers will use this information to improve protection and sustainable use of marine resources.
- Driven by the Juan de Fuca eddy, nutrient rich waters off Washington and British Columbia create one of the region's most productive ecosystems. OCNMS is a key partner in The Big Eddy Ecosystem Initiative, which is raising public awareness and evaluating options for protecting this transboundary area.
- Washington State plans to complete a marine spatial plan in 2015. The sanctuary is supporting the effort by contributing to a seafloor atlas, assisting in habitat mapping prioritization, completing a recreational survey and providing vessel traffic data.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary spans 3,189 square miles of marine waters off the rugged Olympic Peninsula. The sanctuary is home to many marine mammals and seabirds, diverse populations of kelp and intertidal algae, and thriving invertebrate communities. The sanctuary is also rich in cultural resources, with more than 180 documented historical shipwrecks and the vibrant contemporary cultures of Makah, Quinalt, Hoh tribes and the Quileute Indian Nation. The sanctuary was established on July 16, 1994.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is committed to supporting lives and livelihoods across the nation and in sanctuary communities through socioeconomic research and monitoring to understand the economic and social drivers of sanctuary resources and improve management practices.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

- Olympic Coast
- Cordell Bank
- Gulf of the Farallones
- Papahānaumokuākea
- Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale
- Monterey Bay
- Channel Islands
- American Samoa (U.S.)

- Thunder Bay
- Stallwagen Bank
- Monitor
- Gray's Reef
- Florida Keys
- Flower Garden Banks

○ National Marine Sanctuary
 ▲ Marine National Monument
 Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a system of 14 marine protected areas encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>