

SANCTUARY WATCH

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NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES



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Olympic Coast Sunset. Photo: Greg McCormack, OCNMS



Letter from the Director

Summer is always a very busy time for the National Marine Sanctuary Program. Good weather means long hours at sea for our scientists. Our educators, meanwhile, are busy hosting public events to raise awareness about our sanctuaries and marine conservation. An event this summer at one sanctuary is particularly special. But I first want to mention an ongoing issue that will be of interest to all our readers.

On April 20, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy released its preliminary report with recommendations on the management of our coasts and oceans. The release of this report presents an historic opportunity to develop a coordinated, 21st-century vision of how to better understand and manage the nation's oceans and coasts. In the coming months, the U.S. Department of Commerce will work closely with the White House Council on Environmental Quality and other federal agencies to develop a collaborative Administration response to the final recommendations. I want to thank the commission for contributing to this issue (see "Sanctuary Voices," page 10). I encourage all Americans to stay engaged as the commission finalizes its recommendations later this year.

July 16 is a very important day for the National Marine Sanctuary Program. The Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary is hosting a series of events to celebrate its 10th anniversary. Olympic Coast is in many ways one of the least well known of our sanctuaries, even though it is the third largest in the sanctuary system. Located off the rugged Olympic Peninsula coastline, the sanctuary provides habitat for one of the most diverse marine mammal faunas in North America and a critical link in the Pacific flyway. The sanctuary also boasts a rich mix of cultures, preserved in the contemporary lives of members of Quinault, Hoh, Quileute and Makah tribes.

For some, the anniversary celebration may be their first introduction to the sanctuary. However, we will soon be seeking to engage all citizens of the Washington coast and beyond on how to best protect and manage this national treasure. Olympic Coast staff will be initiating a comprehensive review of the sanctuary's management plan—a document that serves as the blueprint for guiding a sanctuary's science, education and resource protection programs. Public participation is a key element in the management plan review process because it gives the public direct ownership on deciding how to best protect and manage the sanctuary. This philosophy of public participation was a key finding in the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy report. It is also a long-standing practice for the National Marine Sanctuary Program to involve the public in the management of our nation's marine resources.

In this issue, you will read about the many accomplishments achieved in the areas of science, education and resource protection by the Olympic Coast sanctuary staff and their many partners over the last 10 years. We will continue to work with the public to ensure that what makes this area so special will remain so for the next decade and beyond.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Basta, Director
NOAA's National Marine
Sanctuary Program

Newsplash

Two Prestigious Members Added to Sanctuary Foundation Board

The Honorable Leon Paneta and world-renowned marine photographer Bob Talbot have joined the board of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. They join a prestigious group already sitting on the board, including oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle, ocean explorer Dr. Robert Ballard, artist Robert Lyn Nelson, and National Geographic Society Vice-President Terry Garcia. Leon Paneta, a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives and chief of staff to President Clinton, is now a co-director of the Leon & Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy. Bob Talbot is best known for his spectacular images of whales and dolphins.

Oceans a Hot Topic Again During Capitol Hill Forum

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation hosted the third annual Capitol Hill Oceans Week June 9-10 to raise awareness about the importance of protecting America's special ocean places. Symposium themes included ocean education, managing marine resources, and exploring and monitoring the world's oceans. Attendees heard addresses from Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans, U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy Chairman Admiral James Watkins (USN-Ret.), and Jean-Michel Cousteau, Ocean Futures Society president and sanctuary foundation board member. For information on the symposium, please visit www.nmsfocean.org



From the left, beside the R/V Hawk, are Dr. Francisco San Juan of Elizabeth City State University's Department of Geological, Environmental, and Marine Studies Department, ECSU Vice Chancellor and Provost Dr. Carolyn Mahoney, and NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Tim Keeney. Photo: David Hall

the university in April, after serving for many years at NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. The vessel will be used for hands-on, student-based coastal and estuarine research projects.

Sanctuary Vessel Moves to New Home in North Carolina

Elizabeth City State University, located on North Carolina's Albemarle Sound, is the proud owner of a former NOAA sanctuary research vessel.

The 29-foot R/V Hawk was transferred to



NOAA's Cessna Citation aircraft. Photo: NOAA

Scientists Look from Above and Below to Map California Sanctuaries

Scientists are creating some of the most detailed shoreline and seafloor maps ever produced for Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank national marine sanctuaries. U.S. Geological Survey and NOAA scientists used side-scan sonar and



The NOAA Ship McArthur II. Photo: NOAA

video on recent 21-day research mission on the 224-ft. NOAA ship *McArthur II* to map and document benthic marine life in some areas of the sanctuaries for the first time. Meanwhile, a NOAA Cessna Citation jet flew along the central California coast in April using light detection and ranging, or LIDAR, technology to create detailed coastal maps. Mapping, describing and visualizing seafloor and coastal habitats and their biodiversity within the sanctuaries will help managers protect important habitats, plants and animals.

Three Sanctuary Conservation Series Reports Released

The National Marine Sanctuary Program recently released three Marine Conservation Series reports. The first documents the pre-restoration survey of the M/V *Wellwood* grounding site in the Florida Keys. The second summarizes a biogeographic analysis of the Tortugas Ecological Reserve. The third is a two-part review of the ecological effectiveness of subtidal marine reserves in central California. The Marine Sanctuaries Conservation Series provides a forum for publication and discussion of the complex issues faced by the National Marine Sanctuary Program. To access the reports, please visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/special/special.html#series

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Celebrates 10 Years of Stewardship

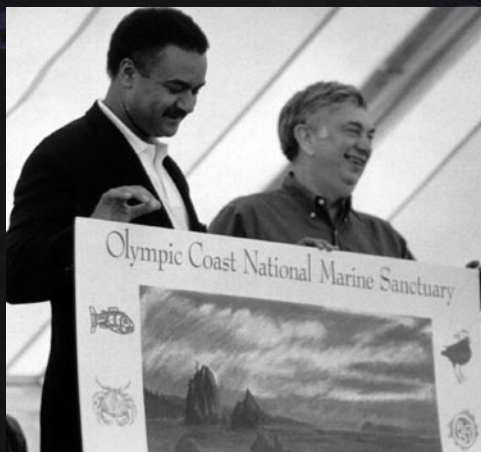


Orca. Photo: Michael Richlen

On Saturday, July 16, 1994, Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown joined other dignitaries high on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean to formally dedicate NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

"We must continue to work together—inspired by the delight in a child's eye when a harbor seal or gray whale is sighted, or the wrinkled grin of a fisherman when the catch is good," said Brown. "We must honor the tradition of this land as earliest caretakers who approached nature's gifts with appreciation and deep respect. And we must keep our promise to protect nature's legacy for future generations."

Spanning 3,310 square miles of marine waters and rugged beaches along Washington's Pacific coast, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary provides habitat for 29 species of marine mammals and serves as a critical link along the Pacific flyway for migratory birds. The sanctuary is also home to over 150 documented shipwrecks and the vibrant contemporary cultures of the Quinault, Hoh, Quileute and Makah nations.



The late Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, and former Congressman and Governor Mike Lowry at the designation ceremony for Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, July 16, 1994. Photo: Peninsula Daily News, used with permission.

Sadly, Secretary Brown did not live to see Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary fulfill its promise. His life ended tragically during an official trade mission to Bosnia. Nevertheless, his words of optimism and commitment remain an inspiration, guiding Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary in its crucial mission.

On July 16, 2004, the sanctuary celebrates 10 years of progress in that mission. It has been a decade

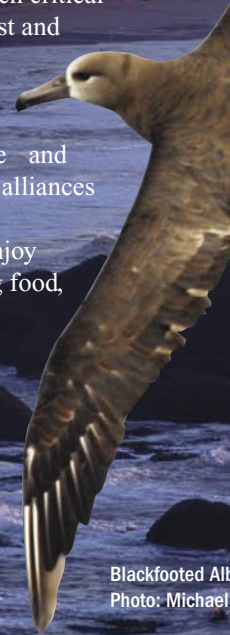
of successes and many lessons learned in forging partnerships, identifying priorities, and building programs that match critical needs for marine conservation in the Pacific Northwest and the Olympic Coast.

In a region that has seen decades of conflict revolving around fishing, logging, and treaty rights, Secretary Brown identified the greatest challenge and the most promising opportunity for success: building alliances based on shared visions of the future.

"Because of the very special interrelationship we enjoy with the coast and waters that surround us - providing food, sport, income, and recreation - it behooves us to also recognize our obligation to protect and preserve the great resources the ocean represents - and to do so in the spirit of allies, not adversaries," Brown said.

It has been that theme of interrelationships that has guided the sanctuary's work: complex physical and biological systems driving ecological processes; multi-disciplinary science asking big questions; collaboration among many parties with different interests; and the involvement of Indian Tribes, state, local and other federal agencies in the decision-making process.

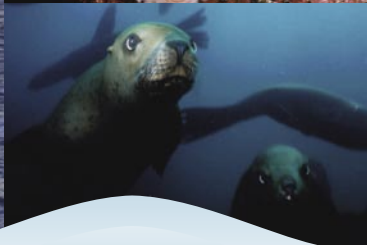
"At 10 years, the sanctuary is still new to the task of protecting—for all future generations—the legacy of the Olympic Coast," said Carol Bernthal, superintendent of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. "But for a moment, we pause to reflect on our accomplishments, renew ourselves for that work and even take inspiration from the Olympic Coast itself."



Blackfooted Albatross. Photo: Michael Richlen



Seabird.
Richlen



From Top to Bottom:

Sea Anemone. Photo: Steve Fisher

Ochre Sea Stars. Photo: Nancy Sefton

Tufted Puffins. Photo: OCNMS

Rocky Cliffs at OCNMS. Photo: OCNMS

China Rockfish. Photo: Steve Fisher

Small Octopus. Photo: Steve Fisher

Northern Sea Lions. Photo: Steve Fisher

Right Side Image:

Nereocystis Kelp Forest. Photo: Steve Fisher

Background Image:

Shi Shi Beach and Point of Arches, OCNMS.

Photo: Seattle Aquarium

Sanctuary Facts

Designated: July 16, 1994

Protected area: 3,310 square miles, from Kotilah Point on Cape Flattery to the mouth of the Copalis River, on Washington's Pacific coast

Key species: Tufted puffin, bald eagle, northern sea otter, gray whale, humpback whale, dolphin, Pacific salmon and rockfish

Key habitats: Rocky and sandy shores, kelp forests, seaweeds and islands, continental shelf, open ocean and deepwater canyons

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reserving Olympic Coast's Cultural and Maritime Heritage

Everyone is connected to the ocean in one way or another. But for some, that connection runs especially deep.

On the Olympic Coast, four Native American tribes—the Makah, Quileute, Hoh and Quinault Nation—maintain traditional ties to the sea that were forged over countless generations. Their cultures reflect a highly sophisticated understanding of marine resources, ancient technologies of travel and economic gain from the ocean, and languages, songs, and life-ways steeped richly in ocean lore. Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary works closely with the tribes to preserve the region’s rich cultural and maritime heritage.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary contains evidence of centuries, even millenia, of human occupation—canoe pathways cleared among intertidal boulders, petroglyphs, island redoubts, village sites, gathering sites, named places, both sacred and utilitarian—all of which remain alive in Native culture. As advances in technology enable us to penetrate even further into the ocean, evidence of human occupation prior to sea-level rise—on a geologic time scale—may well emerge.

Located on a major shipping and trade route, the sanctuary also encompasses the remains of many vessels that met their fate while sailing the region’s seas. One particularly treacherous stretch of the Olympic Coast bears the nickname “Graveyard of the Giants” after the many large ships that have foundered and sunk there. Among the relics of these wrecks are piles of ballast stones, rusted debris and a pair of small bronze memorials to the crews and passengers of two ships, lost on the rocks in the early 1900s.

“In addition to the task of preservation of objects and sites, the work of sanctuaries is to honor human values of the oceans,” said Robert Steelquist, the sanctuary’s education coordinator. “We work each day to perpetuate stories, memories and ways of life in addition to the rusted or recovered treasures we find. For this thread of human experience not only reminds us that all of us come from the past, but teaches us new meanings for living with the oceans of the future.”



Guy Capoenan, Quinault Nation dancer and artist. Photo: OCNMS

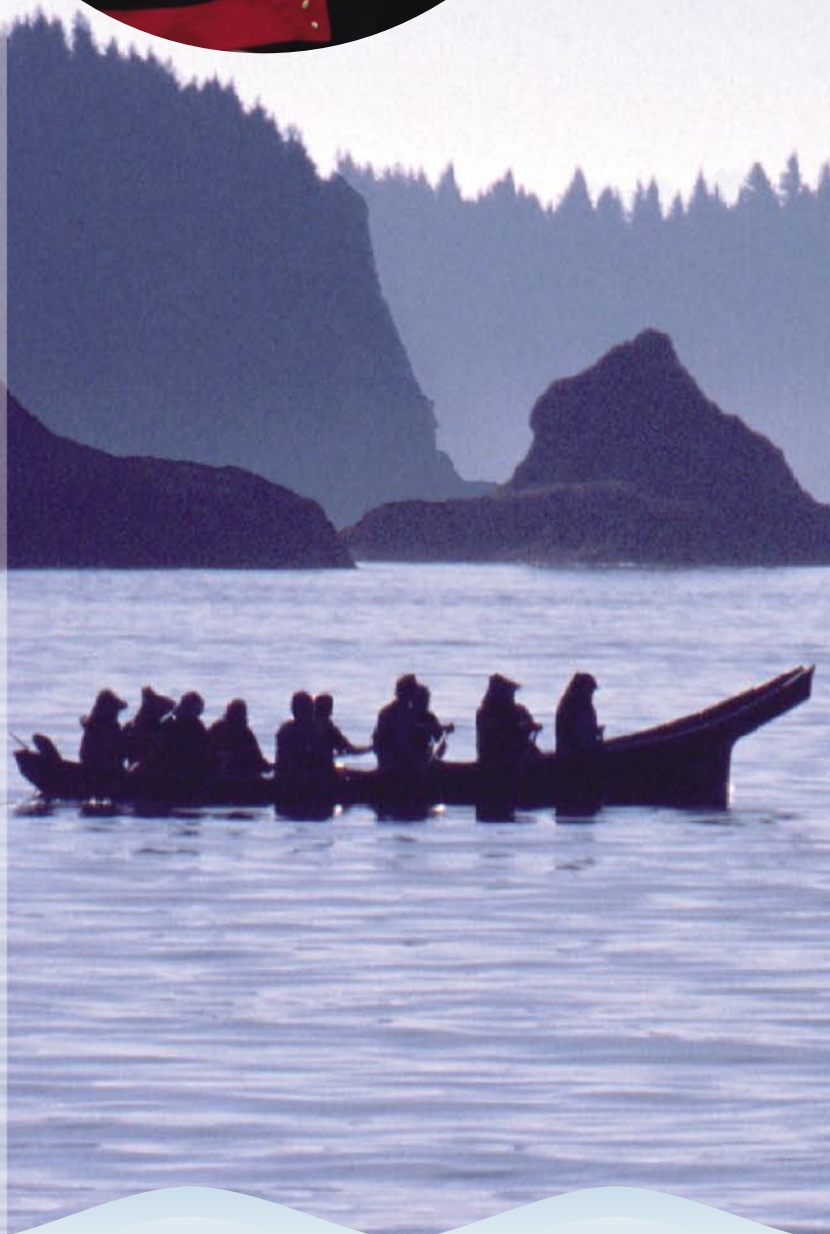


Photo: Bob Steelquist, OCNMS



NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES
OLYMPIC COAST
1994 - 2004

10th Anniversary

Critter Files: Sea Otter

In 1741, explorer Vitus Bering and his crew were shipwrecked off the Kamchatka Peninsula. Salvation literally presented itself in the form of sea otters, which approached the humans without fear. By eating their meat and clothing themselves in otter fur, the crew survived (Bering himself was not so lucky—he perished) and brought word back to Russia of a “new” mammal and the potential for riches in the North Pacific.

The following rush brought England, Spain, Russia and the fledgling United States into fierce competition for empires in the Pacific Northwest and, eventually, the depletion of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia sea otter populations. The Olympic Coast’s last native sea otters were wiped out before 1911, when an international treaty was enacted to protect them.

Sea otters were reintroduced, however, in 1969 and 1970. Drawn from populations in the Aleutian Islands, the animals were released between Pt. Grenville and the Quillayute River, along the Olympic Coast. In the 35 years since, the population has grown to over 600 animals, representing an astonishing success story of ecological restoration.

Researchers at Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary have played an important role in that success story. Along with scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey’s Biological Resources Division, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, sanctuary scientists have studied otter movements, behavior, population growth, environmental contaminants and foraging effects on sub-tidal communities of fish, shellfish, other invertebrates and kelp forests.

Concern over the health of populations of sea otters on the West Coast has led researchers to collect tissue samples, allowing them to better assess otter health. Both contaminants and infectious diseases are being evaluated to better understand why some populations aren’t growing at expected levels. In addition, otter prey is being analyzed as possible vectors for infectious diseases and contaminants.

Sea otters are among the most cherished of ocean animals. On the Olympic Coast, they are extremely shy and inhabit kelp forests off the most remote wilderness beaches and headlands. Watchful observers with spotting scopes and binoculars will see them, rafting in groups or traveling or feeding alone or in pairs. In spring, mother-pup pairs are common, identifiable by the yelps and squeals of demanding infants.



Researcher’s Notebook

- Common name: Northern Sea Otter
- Scientific name: *Enhydra lutris kenyoni*
- Max length: five feet
- Max weight: 107 lbs. (heaviest recorded sea otter was found within Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary)
- Max lifespan: 10-15 years males; 15-20 years females
- Distribution: Olympic Coast, Western Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound (rarely)
- Diet: Bivalves, crab, sea urchins, octopus
- Status: Federally protected under Marine Mammal Protection Act; Washington State-listed “Endangered,” Olympic Coast population growing; range expanding

Beyond their strictly charismatic appeal, however, sea otters are crucial working parts of the marine environment. They are keystones in the ecology of coastal kelp communities and indicators of trends in ecosystem health. Most importantly, they are lessons in what is at risk in our troubled oceans. History has taught us of their vulnerability to commercial exploitation. And it is a daily challenge to protect the Olympic Coast population from the risk of oil spills which are lethal to otters because their insulating coat is useless when soiled with oil. But a growing otter population, spreading into healthy habitat is a good sign—a reminder of the resilience of natural systems when they are adequately understood and protected.





Star of the Sea



Stephanie Harlan

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the non-profit partner to NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, presented its Volunteer of the Year award to Stephanie Harlan during the foundation's annual Leadership Awards Dinner on June 8, 2004 in Washington, D.C. Ms. Harlan was selected to receive the honor from among thousands of volunteers who donate their time and talent to the country's 13 national marine sanctuaries.

Ms. Harlan began her volunteer work for the National Marine Sanctuary Program in the early 1990s with her tireless efforts to win designation for Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. As both a citizen and member of the Capitola City Council, where she now serves as mayor, she regularly promoted the sanctuary. Ms. Harlan went on to become a member of the citizen-based advisory council for Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and served as its chair from April 2000 to April 2004.

"I have always considered it community service and part of being a responsible member of the planet," said Ms. Harlan of her volunteer work for Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. "I have met an incredible number of very hard working, dedicated individuals, both staff members and community activists, who continue to inspire me."

"Stephanie has been a passionate advocate for Monterey Bay," said Sanctuary Superintendent Bill Douros. "Her efforts have greatly advanced our programs and projects, as well as our visibility in the community."

Among her many accomplishments, Stephanie Harlan has brought to Capitola the sanctuary's Urban Watch Program to help clean local urban runoff, supported annual water quality monitoring efforts, and deployed new sanctuary signage. She is also the chair of the Santa Cruz County Sanctuary/Inter-Agency Task Force, which has helped to produce a brochure entitled *Santa Cruz County: 50 Ways to Get Your Feet Wet in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary*.

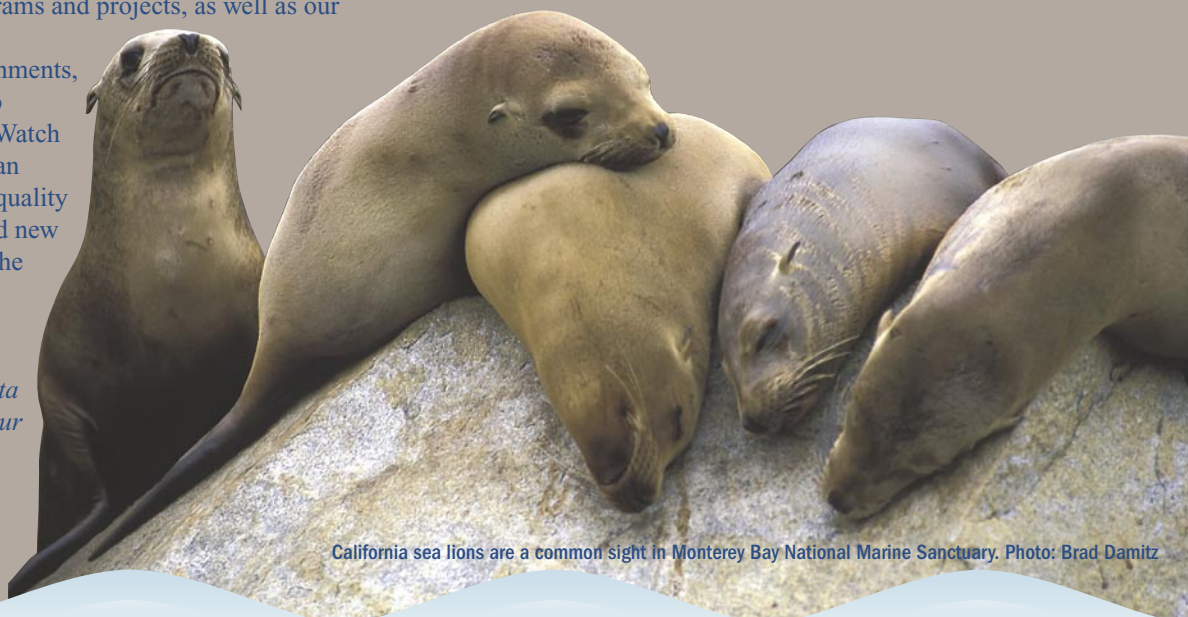
As an active participant of these groups, Ms. Harlan is also a leader in efforts to implement the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. The project is a coastal trail that connects the counties of Santa Cruz and Monterey, and their cities, with interpretive signs about Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary throughout the trail. Millions of annual visitors to Monterey Bay will soon know about the sanctuary due to Ms. Harlan's hard work and enthusiasm for the scenic trail project.

"We look for volunteers who have had maximum impact in their communities," said National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Executive Director Lori Arguelles. "It's clear that Stephanie not only meets that criteria, but exceeds it with her energy and dedication."

Ms. Harlan has a full-time job as a nurse and a busy schedule as the mayor of Capitola. In every aspect of her volunteer work for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, she provides a strong voice and solid support for the sanctuary and the National Marine Sanctuary Program.

"As a former school teacher, I feel that we must do everything we can to educate the public about the sanctuaries, and through this education, there will be a greater understanding of the need to maintain a healthy marine environment," Ms. Harlan said. "The threats to marine ecosystems are vast, and much work needs to be done to protect them. I look forward to continuing to be part of these efforts."

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation works to complement the outreach and education efforts of the nationwide network of 13 marine sanctuaries.



California sea lions are a common sight in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Photo: Brad Damitz

Breaching humpback whale. Photo: HIHWNMS NOAA Fisheries Permit #182-1438

SPLASH: A Whale of a Research Project

This summer, researchers will be keeping a close eye on endangered humpback whales in Olympic Coast, Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, Monterey Bay, and Channel Islands national marine sanctuaries as part of an ambitious \$3.3 million, three-year project to learn more about the endangered humpback whale. The study is known as "SPLASH"- the Structure of Populations, Level of Abundance and Status of Humpbacks.

It is the most comprehensive study ever attempted of the endangered North Pacific humpback whale population. The effort is a partnership of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program and NOAA Fisheries. It is unprecedented in its international cooperation and geographic scope.

"The results of this study will provide important new information to help protect humpback whales and their habitat in the North Pacific," said Richard Spinrad, Ph.D., NOAA National Ocean Service assistant administrator. "Our long-term goal is to recover the species to a viable, self-sustaining population throughout its range."



The humpback whale was listed as an endangered species in 1973. Scientists estimate that the pre-whaling population of the North Pacific stock of the humpback whales was approximately 15,000. In 1992, the last year with a reliable estimate, there were about 7,000. Current assessments indicate that the stock is slowly increasing.

Research involving photo-identification and tissue sampling will take place in all known humpback whale habitats throughout the North Pacific from the Bering Sea and Far East Russia south to Mexico and Costa Rica, and west to Hawaii and Asian tropical waters beyond.

"Hundreds of researchers from the U.S., Japan, Russia, Mexico, Canada, Philippines, Costa Rica, Panama, Nicaragua and Guatemala are collaborating to understand the population

(Cont'd. on pg. 9)

How You Can Participate in Sanctuary Resource Management

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program regards the involvement of communities as vitally important to successfully protecting sanctuary resources. Sanctuary advisory councils play a key role in representing the interests of the public in sanctuary matters by providing advice to sanctuary managers on the designation and/or operation of the site. In total, some 210 individuals (plus alternates) serve on 11 councils, representing interests such as conservation, education, research, fishing, whale watching, diving, boating and shipping, tourism, harbors and ports, maritime business, agriculture, and cultural resources. Local, regional, state, tribal and federal agencies are also represented. All sanctuary advisory council meetings are open to the public. Please consider attending a council meeting at your nearest sanctuary (see dates below). To learn more about sanctuary advisory councils, please contact National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator Karen Brubeck at 206-842-6084 or Karen.Brubeck@noaa.gov.

Upcoming Advisory Council Meetings

Channel Islands
Jul. 23
Sept. 24

Monterey Bay
August 6
October 1

Florida Keys
Aug. 17
Aug. 19-21 (Sanctuary summit)
Oct. 19

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve
Aug. 25-26 (tentative)
Oct. 20-21 (tentative)

Gulf of the Farallones
Aug. 31 (changed from Sept 1)

Olympic Coast
Sept. 24

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale
Sept 8, 2004

Thunder Bay NMS & Underwater Preserve
Aug. 10
Oct. 12



(Cont'd. from pg. 8)

SPLASH: A Whale of a Research Project

structure of humpback whales across the North Pacific, and to assess the status, trends and potential human impacts to this population,” said Sam Pooley, Ph.D., NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office acting administrator.

Hawaii is physically and historically at the center of humpback whale research in the North Pacific. The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary has played a major role helping to pull the project together.

“Hawaii research is scheduled during the winter season when the whales are here to mate and give birth,” said David Mattila, NOAA Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary researcher and rescue coordinator. “Some surveys have already been conducted in Hawaii to catch the early arrivals.”

SPLASH is supported by NOAA and a variety of organizations. The steering committee for SPLASH includes: NOAA, Interior Department’s National Park Service; Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Instituto Nacional de Ecologia, Mexico; and several academic and research institutions.

To learn more about SPLASH, please visit hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov



Spouting humpback whale.
Photo: HIHWNMS NOAA Fisheries Permit #782-1438



Humpback whale tail.
Photo: HIHWNMS NOAA Fisheries Permit #782-1438



Humpback whales with calf.
Photo: HIHWNMS NOAA Fisheries Permit #782-1438

Sanctuary Voices

Report Creates Tremendous Momentum for New National Ocean Policy

By Kate Naughten
Public Affairs Officer
U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy

The momentum created by the release of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's Preliminary Report on April 20, 2004 is still going strong, but the hard work needed to implement a new national ocean policy has only just begun. Public interest in the 400-page preliminary report, referred to as "An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century," has been astounding. To date, more than 163,000 people have downloaded copies of the full report from the commission's Web site.

Equally important, the commission's draft recommendations have been prominent in environmental, business, and scientific news stories across the nation. This unprecedented level of media coverage is bringing the plight of our oceans, coasts and the Great Lakes to the attention of countless numbers of people across the nation.



Admiral James D. Watkins, USN (Ret.),
Chairman, U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.
Photo: Juan Tricoche, DOC Staff Photographer

And, in the ultimate litmus test for momentum, this country's top elected officials in Congress held four hearings on the commission's report after its release. The hearings focused on the implications of the commission's major recommendations, including the new National Ocean Policy Framework, a strengthened NOAA and the establishment of a new Ocean Policy Trust Fund. Understanding these

major recommendations requires a brief overview of the whole commission report.

The over-arching principle in the report is ecosystem-based management. The commission concluded that ocean and coastal resources should be managed to reflect the complex interrelationships among the ocean, land, air, and all living creatures, including humans, and that managers should consider the interactions among the multiple activities that affect entire systems.

Building on that foundation, the commission then focused on three major themes – the creation of a new ocean policy framework, provision of better scientific information, and enhanced ocean education. Underscoring those themes, the report includes more than 200 action-oriented recommendations, including several that have relevance to national marine sanctuaries. The recommendations span the gamut of ocean and coastal issues, ranging from upstream areas to the depths of the oceans floor, from practical problem-solving issues, to philosophical approaches to will guide us through the next century.

At the top of the list, the commission called for the following critical actions:

- Establish a National Ocean Council in the Executive Office of the President
- Strengthen NOAA and improve the federal agency structure
- Develop a voluntary process for creating regional ocean councils
- Double U.S. investment in ocean research
- Implement the national Integrated Ocean Observing System
- Increase attention on ocean education
- Strengthen the link between coastal and watershed management
- Create measurable water pollution reduction goals
- Reform fisheries management by separating scientific assessment and allocation, improving the Regional Fishery Management Council system, and exploring the use of dedicated access privileges
- Accede to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; and
- Establish an Ocean Policy Trust Fund to pay for implementing the recommendations.

The commission's goal is to present the final version to the president and Congress by the end of July.

Much like its predecessor, the 1967 Stratton Commission Report, the current commission's report has been widely acclaimed. And, as was the case 35 years ago, achieving the recommended changes will require tremendous political and public support. The time to act is now. Swift implementation of the recommendations in the report will result in sustainable oceans that benefit and inspire all Americans for decades to come.

For more information on the report, please visit www.oceancommission.gov.



The opinions expressed by columnists in "Sanctuary Voices" do not imply endorsement by NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program of any particular product, service, organization, company or policy.



NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES

The National Marine Sanctuary
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National Ocean Service

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SANCTUARY
WATOH

vision

People value marine
sanctuaries as
treasured places
protected for future
generations.

mission

To serve as the trustee
for the nation's system
of marine protected
areas to conserve,
protect and enhance
their biodiversity,
ecological integrity, and
cultural legacy.

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National Marine Sanctuary System



The National Marine Sanctuary Program serves as the trustee for a system of 14 underwater parks, encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve, which is being considered for sanctuary status. The sanctuary program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which manages sanctuaries by working cooperatively with the public to protect sanctuaries while maintaining compatible recreational and commercial activities. The program works to enhance public awareness of our marine resources and maritime heritage through scientific research, monitoring, exploration, educational programs, and outreach.