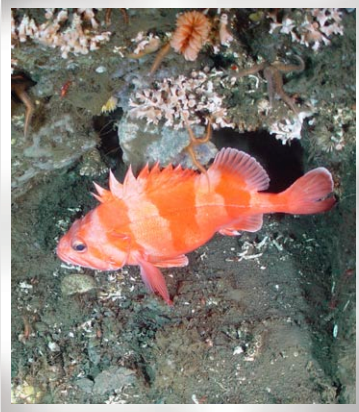


OLYMPIC COAST

2 0 0 7 A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S



Deep-water corals may provide important habitat for rockfish and other species. Photo: NOAA



Staff and volunteers remove debris from sanctuary waters. Photo: NOAA



A researcher deploys instruments used for hypoxia monitoring. Photo: NOAA

Tribes Begin Policy Discussions with Sanctuary

The Intergovernmental Policy Council, composed of representatives from the Makah, Quileute and Hoh tribes, Quinault Nation, and state of Washington, began its first year of high-level policy consultations with the sanctuary. As a new approach to coordinated marine resource management, the group developed a five-year strategic plan, secured dedicated funding for effective tribal participation and began preparing for the upcoming Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary management plan review.

Sanctuary and Aquarium Partner for Ocean Literacy

Sanctuary staff and the Seattle Aquarium completed the first year in a new partnership funded under a five-year ocean literacy grant from the NOAA Office of Education. With the funding, the sanctuary and the aquarium are linking teachers in rural coastal communities with those in the metropolitan Seattle area to spread awareness of the sanctuary and enhance ocean literacy. This year's activities included workshops attended by 36 elementary teachers, including six from Olympic coast communities. The workshop introduced the teachers to marine science and field investigation methods, with follow-up visits to the Seattle Aquarium and beach field trips for their classes. The workshops reinforced the aquarium's new focus on the Olympic Coast, following the opening of "Window on Washington Waters", the aquarium's \$40 million, 120,000-gallon exhibit featuring Olympic Coast rocky reef habitats.

State and Federal Ocean Action Begins

As Oregon, Washington and California governors move toward broad regional ocean conservation policies, sanctuary staff and the state of Washington have developed complementary strategies for developing priorities for sanctuary resource management. Sanctuary staff assisted the state's Ocean Policy Work Group in developing resource protection and education recommendations to the Washington state legislature. In 2007 habitat mapping emerged as a top priority for both the state and the sanctuary. The effort will help state and NOAA resource managers secure funds and prioritize remote sensing and mapping operations.

Deep Corals Important Habitat for Some Fish Species

Following discoveries of deep-water coral and sponge communities in the sanctuary in 2006, research staff developed several online features, a technical report and numerous high-level briefings on the significance of these habitats. Deep-water coral communities remain some of the sanctuary's least known but potentially important habitats for rockfish and other species. Because of the significance of the findings, sanctuary staff have presented them before the Pacific Fishery Management Council and decision-makers among Indian tribal and state resource management partners. For more information, visit http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/research/research_feat or www.oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/O6olympic.

<http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov>

Low Oxygen Events Observed

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary's hypoxia monitoring program contributed valuable data to regional monitoring efforts with partners at Oregon State University and the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies for Coastal Oceans. During recent summers, fish kills and dramatic "dead zones" have appeared off Oregon and Washington. In 2007 the sanctuary's own oceanographic instrument moorings revealed conditions slightly less dangerous than in 2006. These research findings were reported at the 54th Eastern Pacific Oceanographic Congress and will be presented as part of a major scientific review of the subject. The observation system has proven its value by improving our understanding of complex oceanographic events and trends that occur at a regional scale in the marine ecosystem.

Staff Continue Marine Debris Cleanup Efforts

For the eighth straight year, sanctuary staff partnered with Olympic National Park, Olympic Coast Alliance, Surfrider Foundation and others to mobilize volunteers to remove over 15 tons of debris from sanctuary beaches. Building on that experience, the sanctuary, with funding from NOAA's Marine Debris Program, led development of a long-term plan for removal of marine debris on wilderness beaches. The plan formalizes commitments from cleanup partners and improves the effectiveness of the volunteer cleanup effort. Works also continued with the Northwest Straits Commission and the Makah Tribe to survey and recover lost nets and crab pots, reducing their deadly toll on marine wildlife.



Sanctuary maps available at sanctuaries.noaa.gov

*To learn more about these and other accomplishments,
visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov*

