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Other ocean and coastal newsletters of interest:

[USGS SoundWaves](#)

[BLM Frontiers](#)

[MMS Ocean Science](#)

Secretary Salazar Announces Schedule of Regional Meetings On Energy Development of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf

DOI PRESS RELEASE:

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar will host four regional public meetings in April to present Interior's findings on Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) energy resources and information regarding sensitive areas and resources in the OCS from their development. At the meetings, the Secretary will also hear comment from public officials, interested organizations, advocacy groups and private citizens on OCS's development.

The meetings will be held at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on Mon., April 6; Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, on Wed., April 8; Dena'ina Convention Center in Anchorage, Alaska, on Tue., April 14; and at the University of California-San Francisco's Mission Bay Conference Center in San Francisco, California, on Thursday, April 16.

"President Obama has laid out his vision for energy independence for the sake of our national security, our economic security and our environmental security," Secretary Salazar said. "The purpose of these meetings is to have an open, honest conversation with the American people to solicit the best information possible



Interior Secretary Ken Salazar introduces his new approach to offshore energy production. (Photo: Tami Heilemann/DOI)

about an offshore energy plan. The Department's efforts over the next six months to develop a comprehensive offshore energy plan will embrace the President's commitment to a government that is open and inclusive and that makes decisions based on sound science and the public interest."

Regional Governors and elected federal officials, private citizens, interested organizations, entities, energy producers, advocacy groups, and local governments are invited to attend and offer brief comments or to ask questions. After opening remarks by the Secretary, there will be presentation of a report being prepared by the Department concerning offshore energy resources. The rest of the day's meeting will be devoted to

hearing from these elected officials and public and private interests.

If persons cannot attend in person, or are unable to speak at the meetings, they are welcome to submit written statements, comments or documents, either at the meeting or during the extended public comment period. Written comments can be either submitted at the meeting or thereafter throughout the extended public comment period electronically at: <http://www.mms.gov/5%2Dyear/2010-2015DPPComments.htm>

or by mail to:

Ms. Renee Orr,
Chief, Leasing Division
MMS

MS 4010, 381 Elden Street
Herndon, VA 20170-4817.

Link to Press Release:

http://www.doi.gov/news/09_News_Releases/031109a.html

NPS Participates in San Diego Science Festival at Cabrillo National Monument

Over the course of this month, National Park Service staff at [Cabrillo National Monument](#) are participating in the first annual San Diego Science Festival, including a “scientist for a day” event and a park science day. They’re also offering “Yellow Submarine” live interactive virtual exploration (LIVE) programs from the park’s tidepools to select San Diego area middle schools.

In the “scientist for a day” program, citizen scientists who applied through the San Diego Science Festival are gaining up close and personal perspectives on park science at Cabrillo National Monument, joining the park’s tidepool monitoring team as they “step into the shoes” of National Park Service biologists for a day. These citizen scientists are learning about current monitoring programs and research and how park scientists and visiting researchers study and care for plants, reptiles and amphibians, small mammals, birds, terrestrial and marine invertebrates, lichens, weather, water and air quality. After a brief orientation and training, the new citizen scientists help team members measure and document indicator species that the park monitors as part of its vital signs program.

After an application process through the San Diego Science Festival, students and teachers in select San Diego area middle schools are



Park Service staff deploying the “yellow submarine” in the tidal pools of Cabrillo National Monument. Photo: NPS.

exploring the park’s rocky intertidal areas without ever leaving their schools, as they take a virtual ride on a miniature submarine. During the “Yellow Submarine” LIVE presentations, students and teachers in remote audiences accompany, explore and interact with Cabrillo rangers and scientists in real-time via the internet. A yellow, remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) which houses a camera – known as the “Yellow Submarine” – permits students to explore the underwater environment of the tidepools.

These LIVE programs are made possible through a partnership with the High Performance Wireless Research and Education Network (HPWREN) and the California Mediterranean Research Learning Center (www.researchlearningcenter.com). Images from LIVE presentations are stored on the HPWREN server and may be accessed at <http://hpwren.ucsd.edu>.

After the San Diego Science Festival, other opportunities will be available for schools and other organizations to participate in remote LIVE presentations from the park, one of a growing number of national park areas that are developing capabilities for providing educational programming to remote audiences.

Park Science Day will offer a unique opportunity to meet scientists who conduct on-going research on the flora, fauna and geology of the park’s threatened Mediterranean and fragile rocky intertidal habitat. Hourly presentations will include time to meet and chat with the scientists.



Cabrillo National Monument includes both terrestrial systems and intertidal areas. Photo: NPS.

Additional Links:

NPS Cabrillo website:
<http://www.nps.gov/cabr/>

LIVE WEB CAMS at Cabrillo National Monument:
<http://www.researchlearningcenter.com/webcams/>



Cabrillo National Monument features a statue of explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo overlooking San Diego Bay, Point Loma, and the San Diego skyline. Photo: NPS.

Ocean Quote of the Month

“Ocean: A body of water occupying about two-thirds of a world made for man - who has no gills.”

Ambrose Bierce

List of Existing MPAs Nominated to National System of MPAs Available for Public Comment (submitted by Kara Schwenke, MPA Center)

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has received the first round of [nominations for existing MPAs](#) to join the national system of MPAs, based on a call for nominations from November 2008 through February 2009. This [list of nominated sites](#) has now been published in the [Federal Register](#) for a 30-day public review period ending April 6. More information about the nominated sites is available at www.mpa.gov.

The group of 225 sites includes all 13 National Marine Sanctuaries, four National Estuarine Research Reserves, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, ten National Parks, 99 National Wildlife Refuges, and 101 sites managed by nine coastal state and territorial governments. Territorial and state governments nominating sites to the national system included American Samoa, California, Florida, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New

Jersey, Virginia, and Washington.

Following review of public comments, the final nominations will be formally accepted as charter members of the national system in April. More detail on the national system of MPAs can be found in the [Framework for the National System of Marine Protected Areas of the United States of America](#), which describes how the [national system](#) will be built from existing MPAs across all levels of government to enhance collective efforts to protect the nation's natural and cultural marine heritage.

What is a Marine Protected Area?

Some people interpret marine protected areas to mean areas closed to all human activities. Others interpret them as special areas set aside for recreation and commercial use, much like national parks. In



reality, “marine protected area” is a term that encompasses a variety of conservation and management methods in the United States.

The official federal definition of an MPA is: “any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by federal, state, tribal, territorial, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein.” - [Executive Order 13158](#) (May 2000)

Coast Guard Boards Vessel Believed to be Fishing Illegally in Northwestern Hawaiian Islands

The U.S. Coast Guard buoy tender dispatched from Honolulu intercepted a vessel illegally fishing in the protected waters of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. On February 27, a long-range C-130 aircraft documented the 79-foot U.S.-flagged long-line fishing vessel with its long-line fishing gear in the water approximately three miles inside the monument and approximately 875 miles from Midway Atoll.

The Coast Guard cutter *Kukui*, an Oahu-based 225-foot buoy tender, was diverted to the fishing vessel's last-known position in the monument and dispatched a law enforcement team via small boat to board the vessel in order to examine the logs and interview crew members.

The *Kukui*'s boarding team gathered evidence that was forwarded to NOAA's Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement then escorted the vessel back to Honolulu. The owner and operator of the vessel may face potential civil penalties and/or permit sanctions. The Coast Guard is the primary agency responsible for at-sea enforcement of federal fisheries laws, and works closely with federal and state partners effectively enforce the commercial fishing ban within the monument.

View the Coast Guard news article at: <http://coastguardnews.com/coast-guard-boards-vessel-believed-to-be-fishing-illegally-in-northwestern-hawaiian-islands/2009/03/02/>



The U.S. Guard intercepted this vessel believed to be illegally fishing in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. Photo: USCG.



The *Kukui*'s primary mission is to service weather and oceanographic buoys.. Photo: USCG.

MPA OF THE MONTH— Dry Tortugas National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



The [Dry Tortugas National Park](#), located approximately 70 miles west of Key West, Florida, consists of seven tiny keys and the surrounding tropical marine waters totaling 64,701 acres. The park's name dates to 1513 when the Spanish explorer Ponce De Leon called the islands "Las Tortugas" (meaning "the turtles" in Spanish) because of the abundance of sea turtles that provisioned his ships with fresh meat. The term "dry" was added to indicate that the islands contained no source of fresh water.

The central feature of the park is historic Fort Jefferson, the largest of the 19th century American coastal forts, built to protect the shipping lanes of the Florida Straits and the approaches to the Mississippi. In 1908, the area became a wildlife refuge to protect nesting birds from egg collectors and plume hunters. Although Fort Jefferson was designated a National Monument in 1935, the Dry Tortugas National Park was not created until 1992 and protects both the historical and natural features of the site. Recently, the Park Service initiated a multi-phased, multi-year preservation project to stabilize Fort Jefferson after it became clear that the fort's walls were in serious danger of collapsing.

The park also protects some of the most pristine coral reefs, seagrass

meadows, and coastal mangroves in the Gulf of Mexico. Seagrass and mangrove habitats are interlinked with the neighboring coral reefs as they capture sediments and excess nutrients from reaching these delicate ecosystems. While these natural systems are quite stunning, some of the park's most treasured wonders are at risk including the threatened elkhorn and staghorn corals and five species of sea turtles that are all listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2007, a 46 square mile marine reserve, the [Research Natural Area](#) (RNA), was declared around the Park to add another layer of protection for the marine resources. Together the RNA and the even larger Tortugas Ecological Reserve of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary help protect the marine and terrestrial ecosystems while offering outstanding opportunities for scientific research and public education.

The Dry Tortugas National Park is accessible by private boat, charter boat, ferry, or sea plane from Key West. The waters are renowned for the excellent Scuba diving, snorkeling, and sport fishing as well as the cultural history.



Aerial view of Fort Jefferson at the Dry Tortugas National Park. Photo: NPS.

Preview of next month's featured MPA.



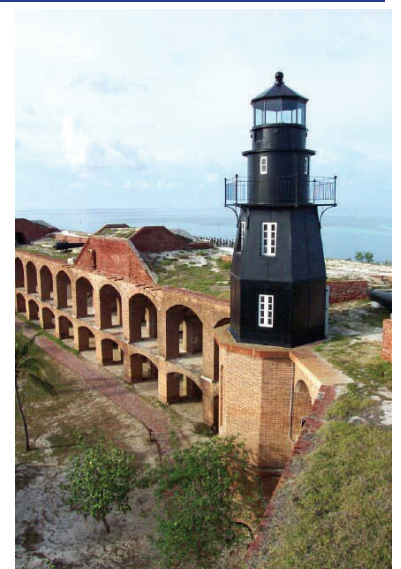
If you have an idea for a future "MPA of the Month" please submit them to terry_holman@ios.doi.gov.



Endangered Hawksbill Turtles nest on the sandy beaches of the Park. Photo: NPS.



The Park protects some of the most pristine coral reefs in the Caribbean. Photo: NPS.



The lighthouse at Fort Jefferson is accessible to the public. Photo: NPS.

CONGRESSIONAL OCEAN UPDATES:

Public Lands Bill with Important Ocean Legislation Passes Senate

On March 25, the final House vote was conducted on the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, which includes over 160 broadly-supported, bipartisan bills that would preserve key components of America's natural heritage and includes several ocean related measures. The legislation includes the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Act, Federal Ocean Acidification Research And Monitoring Act, Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act, NOAA Undersea Research Program Act, and the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act. President Obama is expected to sign it into law.

House Oversight Hearing on Administration and 111th Congress Ocean Priorities

On March 3, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans, and Wildlife held an oversight hearing on "Managing Our Ocean and Wildlife Resources in a Dynamic Environment: Priorities for the New Administration and the 111th Congress." Witnesses discussed issues with critical scientific gaps such as which coastal areas are most vulnerable to rising sea level and increased storm severity. Shirley Pomponi, from the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, identified five research priorities where additional funding is needed: ecosystem-based management, climate change, oceans and human health, ocean observing, and interagency cooperation.

There was no request for a DOI witness. Links to the testimony may be found here:

http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=27&extmode=view&extid=226

House Hearing on Illegal Fishing

On March 19, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing on H.R. 1080 (Bordallo) to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and for other purposes. Links to testimony may be found here: http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=54&extmode=view&extid=234

Upcoming Meeting and Events of Interest

World Ocean Conference 2009: May 11-15, 2009, Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. The World Ocean Conference (WOC) 2009 is a forum for the world community to discuss current issues in the marine field particularly those related to climate change. For more information visit the conference website: <http://www.woc2009.org>

International Marine Conservation Congress: May 19-24, 2009, George Mason University, near Washington, D.C. Serving as the 2nd International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC2) and hosted by the Marine Section of the Society for Conservation Biology, the aim of the IMCC is to advance marine conservation by facilitating discussion among scientists, managers and policy makers and developing science-based products that inform policy change and implementation. For more information visit: <http://www2.cedarcrest.edu/imcc/index.html>.

Capital Hill Ocean Week: June 9 - 11, 2009, Washington, D.C. The goal of this year's Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) is to highlight the inextricable link between the ocean and the economy, and to suggest tangible ways sound ocean policies might impact improvements in our economy. CHOW is sponsored by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. For more information visit: <http://nmsfocean.org/capitol-hill-ocean-week-2009>.

Coastal Zone '09: July 19-23, 2009, Boston, MA. Our coastal and ocean landscape is changing, whether it's the climate, shoreline, habitat, or even the people setting and implementing policy. The attendees of Coastal Zone 09 will explore the many facets of change and share tools and information to help in managing our changing coastal and ocean resources. For more information visit the conference website: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz/abstracts.html>.



To access the DOI Ocean and Coastal calendar, click the attachments tab on the left of the Adobe pdf. If you have events to add to the calendar, send them to terry_holman@ios.doi.gov.

For more information about ocean and coastal activities at DOI contact:

Terry Holman, Coordinator
DOI Ocean and Coastal Activities
Mail Stop 5120
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240
Telephone: 202-208-1944
Fax: 202-208-1067
E-mail: Terry_Holman@ios.doi.gov

*** DOI Ocean and Coastal Button Contest ***

Answer the question below to receive a prize. Submit your answer to Terry_Holman@ios.doi.gov and be sure to include the mailing address where you'd like your prize sent.



How many Oceans are there in the world?
Name them.

Answer to last month's question: What is the world's largest fully-protected marine protected area? And for a bonus, learn to pronounce it correctly. There were two acceptable answers. [Papahānaumokuākea](#), pronounced [Papa-ha-now-mo-koo-a-kay-a](#), is the world's largest "fully-protected" MPA. Kiribati (pronounced Kiri-bas), actually called the [Phoenix Islands Protected Area](#) (PIPA), is the world's largest MPA at 101.4 million acres but allows recreational and subsistence fishing. Papahānaumokuākea includes 89.5 million acres is a no-take

OCEAN FACTS

- The oceans cover 71% of the Earth's surface and contain 97% of the Earth's water.
- The ocean contains 99% of the living space on the planet.
- The average depth of the ocean is [3,800](#) m.
- The deepest known point in the ocean is "Challenger Deep" at [11,034](#) m deep, in the Marianas Trench in the western Pacific. If you placed Mt. Everest at the bottom of the trench there would still be over a mile of ocean above it.
- Antarctica has as much ice as the Atlantic Ocean has water.
- Each year, three times as much rubbish is dumped into the world's oceans as the weight of fish caught.
- More than 90% of the trade between countries is carried by ships and about half the communications between nations use underwater cables.

Please submit columns and stories that you would like to see featured?
We encourage all NewsWave readers to submit articles for future additions.

Send your submissions to terry_holman@ios.doi.gov.



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