

## **Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Holds Public Scoping Meetings**

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Management plan review for NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary is underway, and the public is encouraged to participate. A series of public scoping meetings will be held from September 29, 2008 through October 5, 2008. During these meetings, comments on management considerations will be recorded as input to the management plan process.

Comments on future management priorities will also be accepted through November 14, 2008. During this period, comments can be sent via post, email, fax or telephone.

More information on public scoping meetings, ways to submit comments, and copies of the recent Federal Register notice and a variety of documents can be found on Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary's Navigating the Future web site <http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/protection/mpr/welcome.html>.

Management Plan Review phone contact: 360 457 6622, EX 28

### **Schedule for public scoping meetings:**

9/29: Port Angeles, 6-9 pm Peninsula College Longhouse, South Campus. 1502 East Lauridsen Blvd, Pt. Angeles

9/30: Neah Bay, 6-9 pm: Makah Marina Conference Center, Makah Reservation, Bayview Ave.

10/1: La Push: 6-9 pm: A-Ka-Lat Center, Quileute Reservation, La Push Road, La Push

10/2: Ocean Shores: 6-9 pm: Ocean Shores Convention Center, 120 W. Chance a La Mer NW, Ocean Shores

10/3: Westport: 6-9 pm: Westport Maritime Museum, 2201 Westhaven Drive, Westport

10/4: Olympia: 2-5 pm: Governor Hotel, Washington Room, 621 Capitol Way, Olympia

10/5: Seattle: 7-10 pm: Seattle Aquarium, Pier 59, 1483 Alaskan Way, Seattle

### **Preliminary Priority Topics**

NOAA, in consultation with the Intergovernmental Policy Council (State of Washington and the Coastal Treaty Tribes who have jurisdiction of resources within the sanctuary), has prepared a list of preliminary priority topics. This list represents our best professional judgment of the most important issues NOAA should consider in preparation of a new OCNMS management plan. We are interested in the public's comments on these topics, as well as any other topics of interest to the public or other agencies. It is important to note that this list does not preclude or in any way limit the

consideration of additional topics raised through public comment, government-to-government consultations, and discussions with partner agencies.

**Improved Partnerships** - Recent initiatives for regional ocean management, including the formation of the Olympic Coast Intergovernmental Policy Council (IPC), the Washington Ocean Action Plan and the West Coast Governors Agreement on Ocean Health, provide the sanctuary with new opportunities to strengthen partnerships, particularly with the four coastal treaty tribes and the state of Washington in their role as governments. The sanctuary will work in active partnership to provide a more transparent, cooperative and coordinated management structure of Olympic Coast marine resources within tribal, state and federal jurisdictions.

**Characterization and Monitoring** - There is a need to develop an understanding of baseline conditions of marine resources within the sanctuary, ecosystem functions, and status and trends of biological and socioeconomic resources to effectively inform management. OCNMS in conjunction with IPC and other entities will work to resolve these needs.

**Spill Prevention, Contingency Planning and Response** - The risk from vessel traffic and other hazards remains a significant threat to marine resources. The potential for a catastrophic oil spill remains a primary concern and while advances in maritime safety have been made since the sanctuary was designated, better coordination is needed for response to these threats. Oil spills cause immediate and potentially long term harm to marine resources as well as socioeconomic impacts to coastal communities.

**Climate Change** - Climate change is widely acknowledged, yet there is considerable uncertainty about current and future consequences at local, ecosystem and oceanic scales. Increased coordination and cooperation between resource management agencies are required to improve planning, monitoring and adaptive management to address this phenomenon.

**Ocean Literacy** - Enhancing the public's awareness and appreciation of marine, socio-economic, and cultural resources is a cornerstone of the sanctuary's mission. Recent regional initiatives offer opportunities for the sanctuary, in conjunction with IPC and other entities, to expand educational contributions and reach a larger audience.

**Marine Debris** - Coastal marine debris is a persistent and poorly diagnosed problem within the sanctuary that negatively impacts natural and socioeconomic resources and qualities.