



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
OFFICE OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES
Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
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Washington State Marine Spatial Planning Team:

Congratulations on releasing the Draft Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for Washington's Pacific Coast, an important milestone for the state of Washington and our shared vision for the long-term sustainability of marine resources, treaty rights, and compatible uses.

We have reviewed the MSP and believe it provides a scientifically sound basis and framework for future management of the Washington coast and evolving uses such as alternative energy, and fully support it. We appreciate the strong public engagement throughout its development, and the leadership Washington State has shown in areas of mutual interest with NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS or sanctuary) such as the spatial prioritization and additional work to characterize seafloor habitats, identification of ecologically important areas, and the studies to characterize ocean uses and values. We also commend your efforts to make the process transparent and data readily available to the public and resource agencies.

The MSP has the potential to enhance the excellent coordination that already exists between the sanctuary and Washington State. Collaboration and coordination are priorities identified in the sanctuary's management plan, which has informed our efforts to support the MSP process. We believe the MSP effort has been mutually beneficial to both the sanctuary and the state of Washington. In some cases, the MSP team has been able to leverage OCNMS research into data products that we would not otherwise been able to deliver to the public on our own such as production of the Washington State Outer Coast Seafloor Atlas. The MSP will be an important guide for NOAA as we consider future permit and authorization applications within the sanctuary. The detailed information and analysis collected to support the MSP will be of great value to the sanctuary as we prepare to update our 2008 Condition Report, and eventually update our 2011 management plan.

We would like to recognize Washington's involvement in the OCNMS Advisory Council (AC), with representation from the WA Department of Ecology, WA Department of Natural Resources and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. Those staff have been active participants in the AC and related working groups, providing the sanctuary with excellent advice, and regular updates on state agency activity throughout the MSP process.



We believe periodic meeting with these representatives, the sanctuary and the State's Ocean Caucus could continue this productive relationship and serve as a venue for discussing OCNMS role in MSP implementation, as appropriate. We are specifically interested in identifying collaborative projects that support both the MSP and the sanctuary's management plan.

I look forward to working together in the future and to the finalization of Marine Spatial Plan for Washington's Pacific Coast.

Sincerely,



Carol Bernthal,
Sanctuary Superintendent

