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Contact: Sarah Marquis, sarah.marquis@noaa.gov, 949-222-2212

Washington's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary supports jobs, boosts regional businesses.

41 percent of state households visited the region

Visitors to NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and the immediate area boosted the region's economy with \$102 million in spending, supporting nearly 1,200 jobs and generating \$46 million in local income for business owners and employees in 2014, according to a NOAA analysis using the most recent figures available.

The report looked at the spending patterns of recreational visitors to the sanctuary region, as well as what they did there. About 41 percent of Washington state's 2.62 million households visited the Outer Coast, benefiting the economies of an eight-county area near the sanctuary, which includes Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce and Thurston counties. Fourteen percent of these visitors participated in recreation in and near the sanctuary. On average, each of these visitors took roughly 1.7 trips to the area each year.

Visitors to the region participated in more than 32 different recreational activities in the sanctuary region, including fishing, watersports and diving. The top four most popular activities were visiting the beach, coastal sightseeing, wildlife watching and hiking/biking.

"Coastal recreation generates significant economic revenues to coastal economies," said Bob Leeworthy, NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries chief economist. "When people enjoy national marine sanctuaries, their activities and spending are contributing to the creation of local jobs and economic output. This report underscores the value of national marine sanctuaries as focal points for recreation and local economic development in Washington's Outer Coast."

The study also found:

- Washington residents who visited the Outer Coast spent roughly \$551.6 million in total, with the highest expenditures for lodging, car fuel, and food and beverages. Roughly 18 percent of the total spending – \$102 million – occurred directly within the sanctuary region.
- Recreation along the entire Outer Coast contributed roughly 6,500 jobs to the local economy in the study period, with 1,200 of those jobs linked to recreational activities in the sanctuary.
- On average, visitors who included the sanctuary region in their plans outspent those visiting elsewhere in the Outer Coast. \$48.41 per day to \$42.03.

A series of peer-reviewed volumes make up the full report, *Socioeconomics of Recreation on the Outer Coast of Washington State and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, 2014*. NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries produced the report in collaboration with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, Ecotrust/Point97, Surfrider Foundation, and Washington state. Information was collected from recreational users through an online survey conducted between 2014 and 2015. The survey included a total of 6,219 households representative of all households in the state and yielded a 90.3 response rate. The report is available at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/socioeconomic/olympiccoast/>.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary is managed by NOAA and was designated in 1994. It encompasses about 3,189 square miles off the Washington coast, extending from Cape Flattery to the mouth of the Copalis River. Significant natural and cultural resources include 29 species of marine mammals, such as whales, dolphins and porpoises, as well as large populations of nesting seabirds, shipwrecks, and some of the last remaining wilderness coastline in the lower 48 states.

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