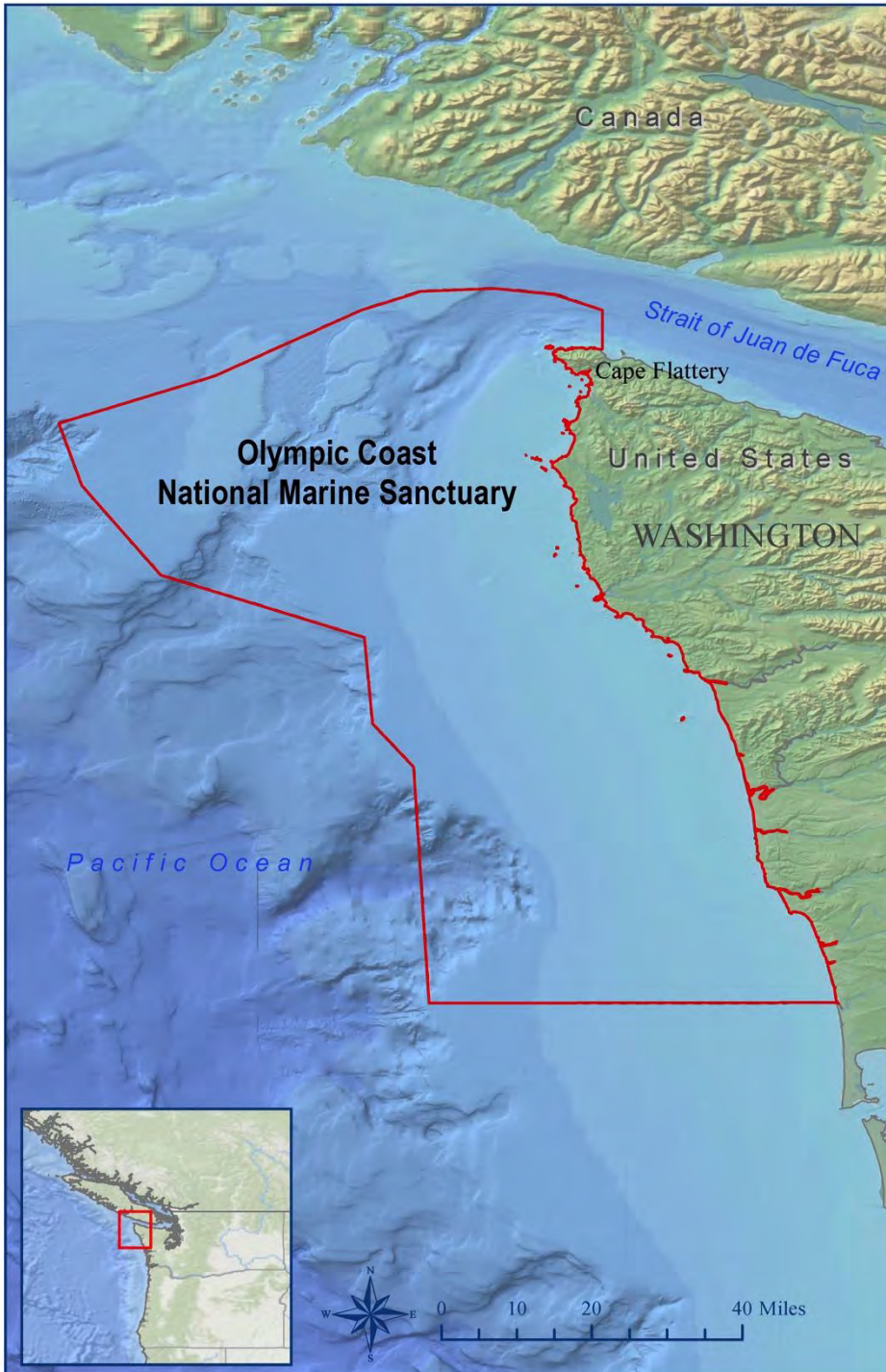


FY17 Accomplishments



BACKGROUND

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary was established in 1994 to protect and preserve a productive upwelling zone - home to marine mammals and seabirds. Along its shores are thriving kelp and intertidal communities, teeming with fishes and other sea life. In the darkness of the seafloor, scattered communities of deep-sea coral and sponges form habitats for fish and other important marine wildlife.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary is part of the National Marine Sanctuary System, which is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. National marine sanctuaries are managed for the conservation of their natural and cultural resources, while supporting sustainable recreation, tourism and compatible commercial activities. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and **Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll** marine national monuments.

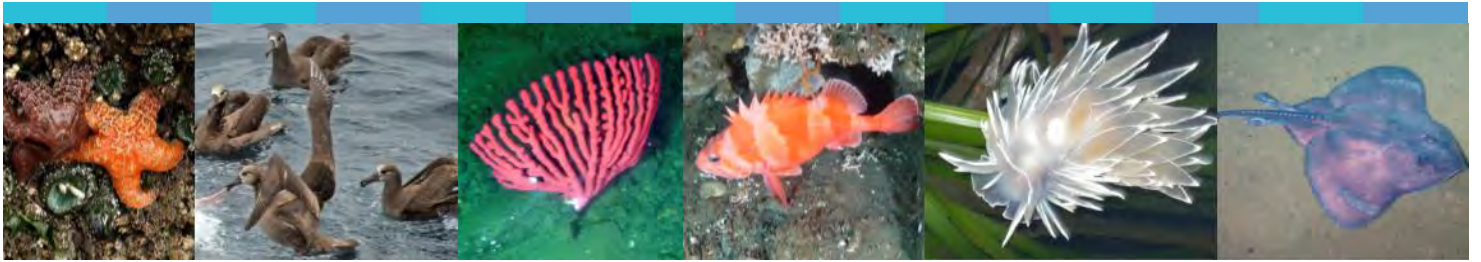


Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA

Hikers enjoy the view of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary from the coastline of Olympic National Park.



Photo: NOAA

ROV Hercules explores the submarine canyons of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.



Photo: Quinault Indian Nation

The Fishing Vessel *Qualay Squallam* grounded in Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary on December 7, 2016.

Sanctuary celebrates our shared ocean and enhances regional tourism. Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary engaged regional tourism agencies to celebrate the beauty and diversity of Olympic Coast, while working jointly to protect the allure and nourishment it provides. The sanctuary was featured during the Olympic Peninsula Tourism Summit as a destination for exploration and adventure. At the Dungeness Crab and Seafood Festival, which reached a record 20,000 visitors this year, the sanctuary showcased Dungeness Crab Ocean Acidification placemats to provide information on how to protect this valued and tasty resource for future generations.

Sanctuary explores submarine canyons and deep-sea habitats. Using cutting-edge technologies, the Exploration Vessel *Nautilus* explored three previously unexplored submarine canyons of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, in search of deep-sea coral and sponge communities. In addition, an archaeological survey was conducted on an important WWII era submarine, the *USS Bugara*. The *Nautilus* uses sophisticated “telepresence” capability to broadcast from the bottom of the sea to viewers throughout the world. Scientists provided live expertise to over 1,175 people. Also highlighted were messages, stories, and perspectives provided by Washington state’s Coastal Treaty Tribes.

Sanctuary works with partners to prevent vessel incidents. Vessels that run aground or sink pose a threat to Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary habitats and resources. The sanctuary’s advisory council created a Vessel Incident Working Group to review the circumstances of 46 vessels lost in the sanctuary from 1994 through 2016. Representatives from marine industry, commercial fishing, resource agencies, academia, marine salvage, and vessel responders provided recommendations on actions that the sanctuary, or partner agencies, could consider to prevent future incidents including enhancing boater education, improving insurance coverage for vessels, and improving incident reporting and response.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Looking Ahead to FY18

- The newly formed Olympic Coast Chapter of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation will work with partners on developing a new marine discovery center in downtown Port Angeles.
- A two-year project to synthesize information about ocean acidification will assess social and ecological vulnerabilities and strengthen the capacity of the Coastal Treaty Tribes to adapt to changing conditions.
- The national marine sanctuaries located along the West Coast, NOAA Fisheries, and NOAA’s Ocean Acidification Program, are piloting an innovative technology that could make ocean acidification monitoring more accessible.