



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE  
**Office of National Marine Sanctuaries**  
1305 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

**NOV 06 2019**

Lee Whitford  
Chair, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council  
115 East Railroad Ave.  
Suite 301  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Dear Ms. Whitford,

This is a follow up from my September 12, 2019, letter regarding the Sanctuary Advisory Council's resolution requesting the formal designation of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) as a Sentinel Site for Ocean Acidification. In my letter I noted this would be the first of what could be many such designations and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) leadership would carefully assess how it will be implemented, any budget implications it might have, and how it might set a model for future proposals around the sanctuary system.

I am excited to report that our assessment is complete and your request to formally designate OCNMS as an Ocean Acidification Sentinel Site is approved. This includes approval for your request to have a steering committee be convened to further refine the deliverables of the Sentinel Site and for OCNMS staff to serve as the coordinating entity and provide support to the Sentinel Site.

As you know, the concept of making national marine sanctuaries as sentinel sites has been in development for a few years now. A key consideration in this designation is the framework for sentinel sites in the sanctuary system. This framework requires the sanctuary office commit to planning, funding, and implementing efforts in six focus areas addressing the conservation issue at hand, in this case, ocean acidification. These focus areas include science, education, outreach, partnerships, management goals, and the formation of a steering committee. As part of this designation as a sentinel site, I am committing our program to engage with the steering committee to help identify a suite of activities to help address the six focus areas.

Finally, I want to highlight the investments ONMS is making in FY20 to help with this initiative:

- OCNMS will continue support for our oceanographic mooring program. The OCNMS moorings continue to provide robust data to the longest-term oceanographic dataset on Washington's outer coast, directly supporting the Sentinel Site. The annual investment to these moorings is in excess of \$250K (staff/contractor time, vessel maintenance and fuel, equipment servicing and calibrations, etc.).



- In addition, the ONMS is pursuing the possibility of replacing the R/V *Tatoosh*, pending appropriations. An updated and more capable vessel will serve the sanctuary and our key partners in supporting Sentinel Site efforts.

We look forward to working with you on the Sentinel Site and the key focus areas. As always, thank you very much for your service, thoughtful advice, and tremendous support for OCNMS and the National Marine Sanctuary System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JA', with a large flourish extending to the right.

John Armor  
Director