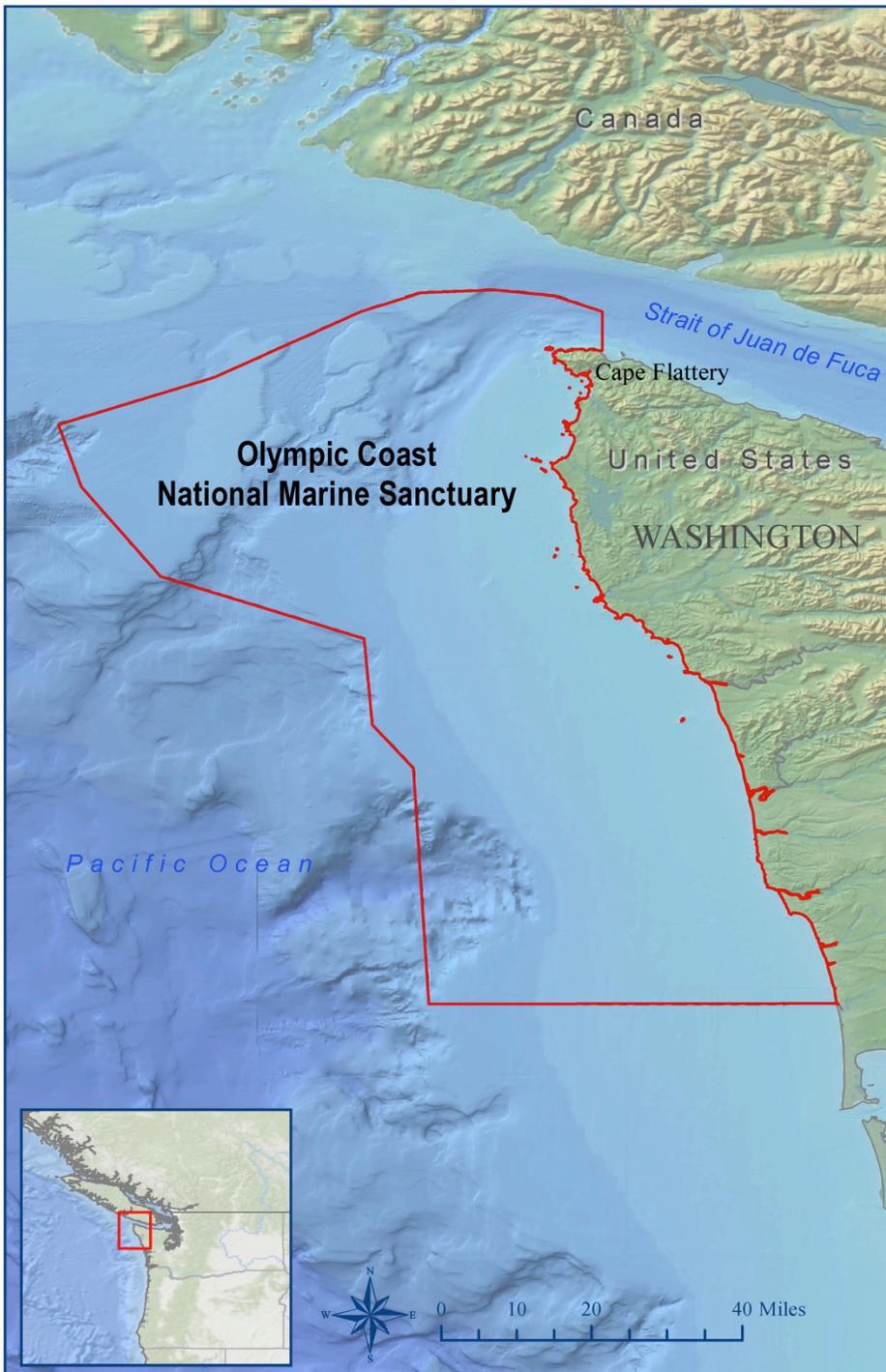


## FY19 Accomplishments



### 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 14 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.



## OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

### Partners lay out vision for new marine discovery center

Working together, NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and Feiro Marine Life Center are one step closer to enhancing visitor experiences on the Port Angeles waterfront. A conceptual design phase is complete and provides the vision for a new marine discovery center. This new center will serve as a primary site for ocean education on the Olympic Peninsula and will showcase science and research, facilitate learning experiences, and inspire marine stewardship.

### Sanctuary provides 20 years of oceanographic data to partners

2019 marked 20 years of the sanctuary's oceanographic mooring program. From approximately May to October each year, the research moorings measure physical and chemical properties of seawater at 10 sites in the coastal ocean to document changing ocean conditions and monitor biologically-important factors such as temperature and dissolved oxygen. Data from the program are applied by partners to support a variety of efforts ranging from ocean acidification forecasting to harvest management by Washington's Coastal Treaty Tribes.

### Seven years of marine debris monitoring on the Olympic Coast

Following the 2011 Japan tsunami, the sanctuary and NOAA Marine Debris Program began working with volunteer citizen scientists to track marine debris accumulations along Olympic Coast. Using NOAA Marine Debris protocols, more than 50 volunteers collected information on the types and quantities of tsunami and post-tsunami related marine debris during the past seven years. Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Marine Debris Monitoring Report and findings reported by Ernest F. Hollings Scholar interns identified the majority of collected debris as plastic, regardless of season or location.

### Looking Ahead to FY20

- The sanctuary will update its 2008 condition report assessing status and trends of water quality, habitat, living and maritime heritage resources, and the human activities that affect them. The new condition report will be the basis for updating the sanctuary management plan.
- The sanctuary will be officially designated as a Sanctuary Sentinel Site for Ocean Acidification. A steering committee will be established to help leverage funding, prioritize research and monitoring, and distribute results via coordinated education and outreach efforts related to ocean acidification.
- The sanctuary will continue to pursue acquisition of a new research vessel that will increase capacity to perform research and monitoring as the only research vessel dedicated to Washington's outer coast.



Photo: Florian Granier

A planned Marine Discovery Center will become a new resource for education on the Olympic Peninsula ecosystem.



Photo: NOAA

Sanctuary staff maintain moorings and buoys that record ocean conditions and seawater properties.



Photo: Karlyn Langiahr

Plastic related to the 2011 Japan tsunami event continues to be collected as part of sanctuary efforts to track marine debris.