



## Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Accomplishments

Fiscal Year 2021

Established in 1994, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary includes 3,188 square miles of marine waters off the rugged Olympic Peninsula coastline. The sanctuary extends 25 to 45 miles seaward, covering much of the continental shelf and several major submarine canyons. The sanctuary protects a productive upwelling zone, home to marine mammals and seabirds. Along its shores are thriving kelp and intertidal communities, teeming with fish 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.

Visit [olympiccoast.noaa.gov](http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov) for more information.



### New Addition to the Sanctuary Small Boat Fleet

The sanctuary took ownership of a 52' research vessel, the R/V *Storm Petrel*. The custom-built catamaran will support the on-water mission requirements of NOAA and national marine sanctuaries, including research concentrating on climate change and ocean acidification monitoring. This larger, more stable vessel will not only expand the potential for sanctuary operations but also make it a more viable asset for partners. This new vessel will help the sanctuary provide science-based solutions that address evolving environmental pressures on our ocean and coasts.



The sanctuary's new vessel, the R/V *Storm Petrel* went on a test cruise.  
Photo: NOAA

### Sanctuary Designated as Ocean Acidification Sentinel Site

After recent designation as a sentinel site for ocean acidification, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary will focus on related science and identify trends in carbonate chemistry and hypoxia through collaborative monitoring, research, outreach, and public engagement. The Ocean Acidification Sentinel Site Sanctuary Advisory Council working group is composed of 18 entities, including the four Coastal Treaty Tribes, federal and state agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations. The working group finalized a work plan focused on collaborations in research, management, and education. Additionally, the group developed outreach materials and held a regional youth competition to design a new logo.



A new logo was designed via a regional youth competition. Photo: NOAA, artwork by Kailah Blake

## Grand Opening of Sanctuary Exhibit at Ocean Shores Coastal Interpretive Center

Ocean Shores Coastal Interpretive Center celebrated its grand opening which included a new exhibit focused on Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA science, and stewardship. Visitors can explore the sanctuary “I-Spy” mural and have fun investigating plankton at the microscope observation area. They can also enjoy the mini-theatre, circle the lighthouse to learn about the habitats of Olympic Coast, and step into an immersive pilot house to steer through ocean waves! The center attracts over 20,000 guests during the summer season, as well as hundreds of students throughout the year.



New sanctuary exhibits were installed in Ocean Shores, Washington. Photo: NOAA

### Looking Ahead

- The sanctuary anticipates the release of a condition report covering 2008-2019, which presents important status and trend information for sanctuary habitats and living resources, as well as the ecosystem service benefits to human communities.
- The sanctuary will complete efforts to better characterize how climate change is affecting its marine resources and what can be done to improve resiliency in the face of such changes.
- The sanctuary is partnering with the Pacific Islands Region to collaborate with Indigenous partners in hosting a cross-Pacific Indigenous Exchange in summer 2022 to build relationships and facilitate ideas on appropriate and meaningful mechanisms for engagement between sanctuaries and Indigenous communities.



The National Marine Sanctuary System is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. The network includes a system of 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.