



Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary Accomplishments Fiscal Year 2022

On August 16, 2021, Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary became our nation's 15th national marine sanctuary. Nominated in 2014, the 962-square-mile sanctuary provides stewardship for 36 historic shipwrecks with exceptional archaeological, historical, and recreational significance. Twenty-seven sanctuary shipwrecks are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Co-managed by NOAA and the state of Wisconsin, the sanctuary expands on the state's 30-year management of these historic sites, bringing new opportunities for research, resource protection, education, and community engagement. In partnership with local communities, the sanctuary provides a national stage for promoting heritage tourism. The collection of shipwrecks in the sanctuary represents vessel types that played a central role in building the nation between the 1830s and 1930s. Research suggests that another 60 shipwrecks may yet to be discovered.



Visit <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wisconsin/> for more information.

Sanctuary Designation Media Event

In October 2021, the sanctuary and its partners held a media event to formally recognize the sanctuary's designation. Held at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc with limited attendance due to pandemic precautions, invited guests included 50 members of the public and media, Governor Tony Evers, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Dr. Rick Spinrad, as well as mayors and state agency representatives. VIPs were treated with a boat ride in the sanctuary narrated by state maritime archaeologist Tamara Thomsen. The value of partnerships among the sanctuary, communities, and state was front and center in each of the speaker's remarks.



National, state and local partners gather during a sanctuary media event in October. Photo: Lake Coast Local.

Shipwreck Imaging and Assessments

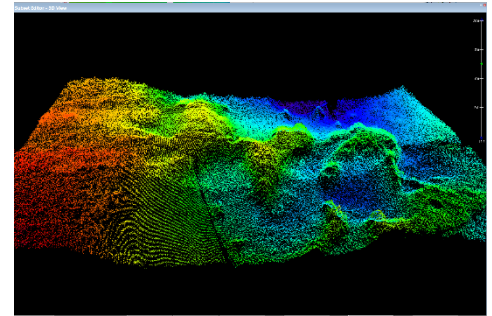
In June 2022, a team of sanctuary archaeologists and filmmakers conducted assessments of 10 sanctuary shipwreck sites and captured video and virtual reality footage. Geophysical surveys were conducted at these and additional sites, as well as 3D modeling. This work was a precursor to installing permanent mooring systems in 2023. Additionally, two teachers joined the team for an immersive "teacher-at-sea" experience. Much of the footage was utilized by Discover Wisconsin, who created a promotional video and companion podcast that have over 70,000 views to date.



An archaeologist captures images for a 3D photo-model. Photo: NOAA.

Mapping the Sanctuary

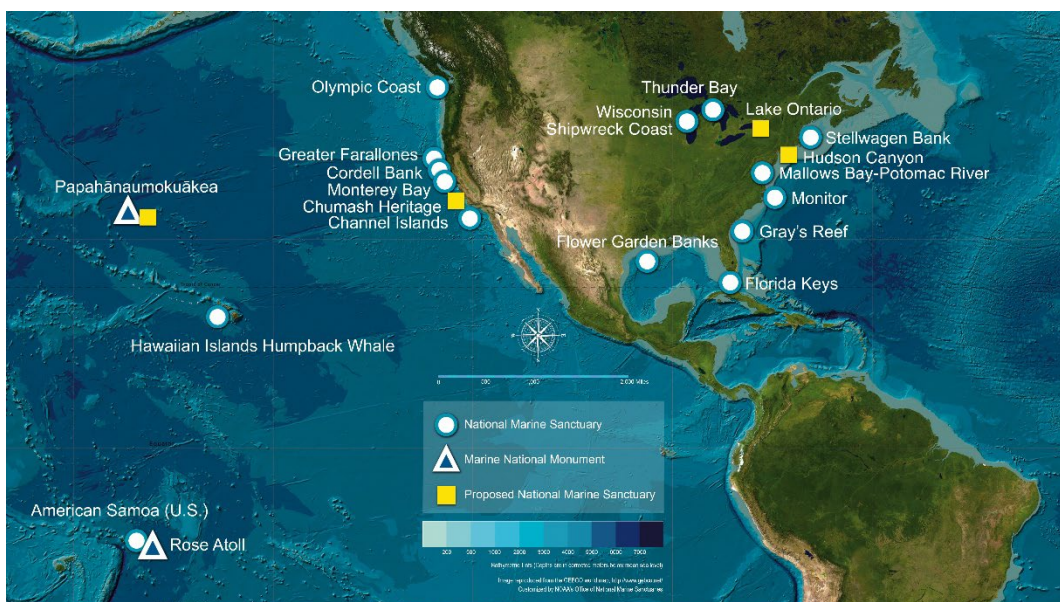
With support from NOAA's Office of Coast Survey the entire 962 square-mile sanctuary has been mapped to charting standards, building on previous work by the National Center for Coastal Ocean Science and the Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab. This is a remarkable achievement for a sanctuary in its first year, and a substantial contribution to the overall conservation and resource management of the area. The surveys provide the foundation for creating habitat maps and related products in cooperation with NOAA and other partners. These will be entirely new products offering resource managers, scientists, and the public an unprecedented understanding of the lakebed within the sanctuary.



Sonar image showing detailed bathymetry in the sanctuary. Photo: NOAA.

Looking Ahead

- In 2023, the sanctuary will seat its first sanctuary advisory council. The advisory council will bring members of the local community together to provide advice to NOAA and help guide sanctuary management. Council members also act as liaisons to their communities, building a strong connection between the sanctuary and stakeholders.
- In 2023, the sanctuary will finish its facility strategy report, which will identify infrastructure needed to support sanctuary programs and operations, as well as efforts aimed at promoting recreation, tourism, and education. The study takes a regional approach to developing options and priorities for creating a physical sanctuary presence in lakeshore communities and other key locations.



The National Marine Sanctuary System is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 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.