

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Armor, Director
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

FROM: Carol Bernthal, Superintendent *Carol Bernthal*
Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

THROUGH: William J. Douros, Regional Director *WJ Douros* FEB 13 2018
West Coast Region

SUBJECT: Completion of Sanctuary Management Plan Evaluation

Pursuant to section 304(e) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA; 16 U.S.C. § 1434(e)), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of National Marine Sanctuary (ONMS), Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) staff conducted an evaluation of the progress made toward implementing the OCNMS Final Management Plan finalized in 2011. OCNMS also considered the prioritization of management goals. Based on this review, ONMS has determined that no immediate or urgent revisions to the management plan or the regulations are needed at this time. This evaluation demonstrates the sustained relevance of the goals, objectives, and priorities of the existing management plan.

Background

The 2011 management plan represents the culmination of a multi-year process that included extensive public involvement. The management plan is comprised of action plans that identify a series of management strategies and activities under each action plan. The management plan was developed with a 5-10 year implementation horizon. NMSA section 304(e) requires NOAA to conduct a periodic review of the sanctuary management plans and goals (16 U.S.C. § 1434(e)). Specifically, NOAA must (1) evaluate the substantive progress toward implementing the management plan and goals for the sanctuary including an evaluation of the effectiveness of site-specific management techniques and strategies; (2) include a prioritization of management objectives; and (3) revise the management plan and regulations as necessary to fulfill the purposes and policies of the NMSA.

Result of Management Plan Evaluation

In October 2017, OCNMS staff met during a period of three days to review the substantive progress made in implementing the six priority issues and twenty action plans identified in the 2011 OCNMS Final Management Plan, especially the effectiveness of site-specific management techniques and strategies (see Table 1).

Table 1: 2011 OCNMS Final Management Plan Action Plans

OCNMS Final Management Plan - Action Plans	
Fulfill Treaty Trust Responsibility (considered in the implementation of all Action Plans)	
A. Achieve Effective Collaborative and Coordinated Management	
	A1. Collaborative and Coordinated Sanctuary Management Action Plan
	A2. Community Involvement in Sanctuary Management Action Plan
	A3. Sanctuary Operations Action Plan
B. Conduct Collaborative Research, Assessments and Monitoring to Inform Ecosystem-Based Management	
	B1. Habitat Mapping and Classification Action Plan
	B2. Physical and Chemical Oceanography Action Plan
	B3. Populations, Communities and Ecosystems Action Plan
	B4. Data Management, Sharing and Reporting Action Plan
C. Improve Ocean Literacy	
	C1. K-12 Education Action Plan
	C2. Higher Education Action Plan
	C3. Visitor Services Action Plan
	C4. Community Outreach Action Plan
D. Conserve Natural Resources in the Sanctuary	
	D1. Spills Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Restoration Action Plan
	D2. Climate Change Action Plan
	D3. Marine Debris Action Plan
	D4. Wildlife Disturbance Action Plan
	D5. Water Quality Protection Action Plan
	D6. Habitat Protection Action Plan
	D7. Regional Ocean Planning Action Plan
E. Understand the Sanctuary's Cultural, Historical and Socioeconomic Significance	
	E1. Maritime Heritage Action Plan
	E2. Socioeconomic Values of Resources in the Sanctuary Action Plan

OCNMS staff discussed and assessed the work done and the level of completion for each of the 84 strategies within the 20 action plans of the management plan. Subsequently, the staff estimated the level of effort dedicated to each strategy over the course of the reporting period.

To fully implement every strategy of the 2011 management plan would have required resources well beyond those available at the time the plan was completed. Recognizing this, implementation ratings were assigned as “high,” “medium” and “low” to indicate expected progress for each strategy. The priority levels used in the management plan evaluation represent those associated with one of the three funding scenarios contemplated in the management plan (the level funding scenario, which is the closest to actual funding scenario since 2011). During the evaluation, OCNMS staff conducted a self-assessment of effort that has gone into each reported strategy from the completion of the management plan in 2011 through FY 2017. The criteria for assessing the level of efforts included:

- The amount of staff time and/or funding that was dedicated to each strategy;
- The thoroughness of consideration of listed activities;
- The consistency in completing planned actions in each reported fiscal year; and,
- The strategy’s level of complexity (e.g., new program development or rulemaking).

OCNMS subject matter experts reviewed a series of seven annual management plan implementation reports, which included brief summary statements of work accomplished for each of the 84 strategies. Using the above criteria, a relative level of effort, for the period from 2011 through 2017, was assigned. The results of this management plan evaluation can be found in the document accompanying this memo (“*OCNMS 2011-2017 Management Plan Implementation Report*”) and is summarized below.

1. Fulfill treaty trust responsibility

This priority issue was envisioned to permeate the entire management plan, where appropriate, rather than rely on a series of specific action plans. As such, this priority topic does not include specific action plans with determined priority levels. OCNMS dedicated substantial effort to fulfilling its treaty trust responsibilities with the Coastal Treaty Tribes (Hoh, Makah, Quileute tribes and the Quinault Nation). This effort included participating in the development of the 2013 NOAA Government-to-Government Consultation Handbook and establishing a permit consultation protocol specific to the Makah Tribe to consult with the tribe on sanctuary permit requests and issuance.

2. Achieve effective collaborative and coordinated management

A high level of effort was dedicated to 16 out of 23 strategies in the three action plans that address this priority issue, demonstrating this issue as a very important priority for OCNMS in the reporting period (see pages 28-31 of the report). Examples of the strategies included supporting the Intergovernmental Policy Council (IPC) to discuss and

collaborate on issues of ocean governance, working with the Coastal Treaty Tribes on a habitat framework for the Olympic Coast, supporting the multi-year Washington State Marine Spatial Planning efforts, and undergoing a number of interagency consultations as required by Section 304(d) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

3. Conduct collaborative research, assessments, and monitoring to inform ecosystem-based management
A high level of effort was dedicated to 7 out of 21 strategies in the four action plans that address this priority issue, with a strong emphasis on habitat mapping and characterization and on chemical and physical oceanography, including monitoring ocean acidification to better understand the effects of climate change on sanctuary resources (see pages 31-34 of the report).
4. Improve ocean literacy
A high level of effort was dedicated to 4 out of 14 strategies in the four action plans that address this priority issue, with a heavy emphasis on building partnerships through the Pacific Northwest B-WET program, recruiting talent through internships, helping provide opportunities for place-based education in Washington's outer coast and tribal communities, and increasing outreach efforts with social media and kiosks in strategic locations (see pages 34-37 of the report).
5. Conserve natural resources in the sanctuary
A high level of effort was dedicated to 10 out of 21 strategies in the seven action plans that address this priority issue, such as ATBA compliance monitoring, removing marine and beach debris including a 185-ton dock resulting from the Japanese tsunami of 2011, establishing OCNMS as sentinel site for ocean acidification, and working with the IPC to establish criteria for identifying important habitat types and their location and priorities for management (see pages 37-41 of the report).
6. Understand the sanctuary's cultural, historical, and socioeconomic significance
A medium level of effort was dedicated to 3 out of 5 strategies in the two action plans that address this priority issue, such as the completion of draft Maritime Heritage Resource Management Guidance (MHRMG) and a series of four reports on a 2014-2015 study on Socioeconomic Profiles of OCNMS Users and Economic Value of Coastal Recreation Uses (see pages 41-42 of the report).

The Management Plan Evaluation compared the level of effort dedicated to each action plan compared to its priority status in the 2011 management plan. 60% of the action plans had levels of effort matching their priority level (e.g., high priority areas had high levels of effort). For 26% of the action plans, the level of effort exceeded the priority level, and for 14% of the action plans, the level of effort was lower than the priority level. Since development of the management plan, nearly all of the included strategies have been at least partially addressed. Many of these strategies, however, are designed to be ongoing functions (e.g., monitoring programs, collaborative management, education programs), so even though significant

implementation activities have occurred, these strategies cannot be considered "completed." In addition, the human and environmental setting has not changed significantly since 2011, so most strategies would appropriately continue as prioritized in the 2011 management plan. Under current resource levels, the existing prioritization optimizes sanctuary efforts fulfill the purposes and policies of the NMSA. All six priority issues are still highly relevant and OCNMS will continue to pursue strategies to address them, with some strategies continuing to have a low priority and therefore likely to have a low level of effort moving forward (see "Implementation by Action Plan Table" in the accompanying implementation report). The information related to performance measures included in the implementation report provides information on the effectiveness of the sanctuary activities laid out in the management plan. Therefore, the evaluation showed that the action plans of the 2011 management plan accurately reflect the current management priorities and resource protection issues for OCNMS and are adequate to continue guiding OCNMS operations and programs.

Conclusion

The completion of this evaluation of the 2011 OCNMS management plan satisfies the requirements of NMSA section 304(e). Based upon this review, no urgent or immediate revisions to the management plan or to the regulations are needed at this time. NOAA will use this evaluation and an updated condition report as the management and scientific information basis to undertake the next periodic management plan review following the completion of a site condition report. Therefore, the evaluation showed that the action plans of the 2011 management plan accurately reflect the current management priorities and resource protection issues for OCNMS and are adequate to continue guiding OCNMS operations and programs.

Approved as written Approved with modifications (See below)
Denied Request for additional information
 _____ Date 2/23/2018
Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

