



Key achievements

The State Ocean Caucus is a team of state agencies tasked with implementing the recommendations of *Washington's Ocean Action Plan*. The following list highlights some key activities and accomplishments of the State Ocean Caucus and other partners on recommendations in *Washington's Ocean Action Plan*.

- **Improved management with new partnerships.** Established partnerships to coordinate with local, state, tribal, regional, federal, and international entities and advance recommendations including: the State Ocean Caucus and Ocean Policy Advisory Group, the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health, the Olympic Coast Intergovernmental Policy Council, Coastal Marine Resource Committees Program, and the British Columbia-Washington Coastal and Ocean Task Force. These types of partnerships are a necessary mechanism for improving communication and management, especially given the diverse nature of the recommendations in *Washington's Ocean Action Plan*.
- **Created mechanism for additional progress on marine policy issues.** Washington Sea Grant founded the Hershman Fellowship and partnered with State Ocean Caucus agencies to implement this pilot project. This nine-month fellowship provides an opportunity for current or recent graduate students to work on ocean and coastal policy with state agencies. In its first year, two fellows are currently working on projects that advance recommendations in *Washington's Ocean Action Plan*. The project plans to place four more fellows over the next two years including two starting in fall of 2009.
- **Examined feasibility of renewable ocean energy and provided education on the issue by co-hosting a regional workshop.** Also provided input to federal agencies on policy and regulatory issues and improved communication with federal agencies including drafting a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Identified areas for future work such as research and monitoring, community outreach and education, and agency coordination.
- **Improved erosion and sediment management** by participating in the Lower Columbia Solutions Group, supporting a science-policy forum on sediment management issues in Southwest Washington's nearshore, advancing regional sediment management planning for the lower Columbia River, and developing a large project to use clean dredge material to replenish Washington beaches at or near Benson Beach.
- **Advanced efforts to characterize and map seafloor.** Assisted with elimination of Department of Navy's security restriction that prevented the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) from sharing high resolution data. Promoted development of strategic plan for mapping Washington's waters.

- **Increased ocean awareness and involved public by hosting several public meetings in outer coastal communities.** Meetings provided information on ocean science, policy and management with presentations from various experts.
- **Supported successful efforts to fund year-round Rescue Tug in Neah Bay.** The state legislature passed and Governor Gregoire signed a bill that establishes year-round funding for the emergency response and rescue tug currently stationed in Neah Bay. The bill shifts the burden for funding the tug from the taxpayers to the maritime industry starting in 2010.
- **Supported funding for Doppler weather radar for Washington's outer coast.** Senator Cantwell worked to obtain funding for NOAA to assess how to fill the radar gap on the coast and advocated for funding for a coastal weather radar system. President Obama's budget contains \$7 million needed for a Doppler coastal weather system in his fiscal year 2010 budget. This is an important step in the process, but the funding must be still be appropriated by Congress.
- **Supported ocean education.** Provided input on and letter of support for successful education grant (\$270,000 for three years) focused on developing stewardship projects for kids in outer coast school districts and creating an associated teacher and community-network.