

MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

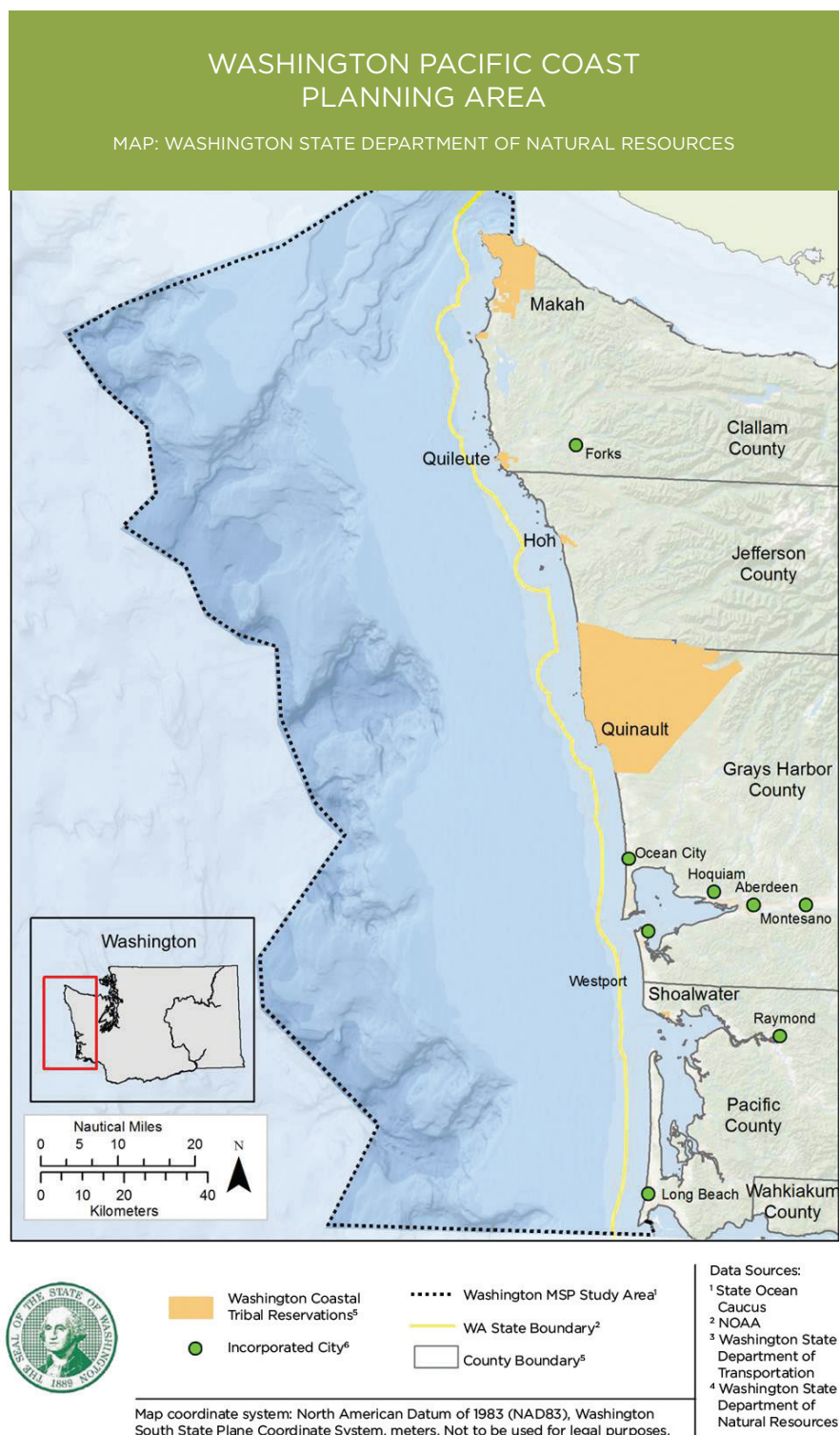
Washington Uses Spatial Planning to Honor its Pacific Coast and Offshore Waters—Past, Present and Future

The Washington State Pacific Coast and offshore waters are diverse in both their natural resources and how the people who live and work there use them. The area's rich inshore and offshore waters teem with commercially valuable finfish and shellfish, marine mammals, and rare deep-sea corals. The people who call this area home include several federally recognized Tribes, marine users ranging from commercial fishermen to surfers, and private citizens. All have a long-standing relationship with and reliance on these natural resources. It is not surprising that they also have long played an active role in the management of these waters. Their goal? Protect the natural resources they depend upon and appropriately manage increased human activity.

WASHINGTON STATE

In 2002 and 2007, proposals for renewable energy facilities off the Washington Pacific coast became the driver for implementing marine spatial planning (MSP) for these waters. When the industry leader of the 2007 proposal shared his vision of the ocean in 2050, crab fisherman Dale Beasley said: "There'd be no room for anything else in the ocean . . . our legislators said absolutely that is not the vision for this state!" The response was the state's 2010 "Marine Waters Planning and Management" law, spearheaded by state Senator Kevin Ranker. That law would outline a way to both strategically plan for new uses while protecting existing uses in state waters. While the initial renewable energy proposals did not come to fruition, the MSP process continues today — driven both by the law and by the need to consider possible future development in these waters.

Planning has started with the Pacific Coast area. Boundaries — based on agency, stakeholder and public input — include state waters out to 3 nautical miles and federal waters out to 700 fathoms deep (4200 feet).





In public workshops on the marine spatial plan, stakeholders repeated: “protect and preserve existing sustainable uses.” These exact words were integrated into the plan’s goals and objectives.

Washington’s Pacific Coast has a history of spatial planning and community-led initiatives to manage its waters. There’s the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary “Area to be Avoided,” which guides ships away from sensitive marine environments. A second tool, the Crabber Towboat Lane Agreement, reduces conflicts between crab fishermen and towing vessels. Both tools successfully balance protection of natural resources with appropriate human uses.

Washington’s four Coastal Treaty Tribes — the Hoh, Makah, and Quileute Tribes and the Quinault Indian Nation — manage shellfish and finfish in tribal “usual and accustomed areas” in accordance with tribal law. Washington Pacific Coast municipalities and counties have community-developed Shoreline Master Programs that manage shoreline lands and waters out to 3 nautical miles. Pacific Coast counties have longstanding, active Marine Resources Committees — citizen volunteers promoting stewardship of coastal and marine resources. The communities of the Pacific Coast are dedicated. They help lead the management of Pacific Coast resources.



The plan should not just preserve Pacific Coast and off-shore natural resources but must “protect and preserve existing sustainable uses.” Agency leads agreed and incorporated this wording into the plan’s goals and objectives. This goal, which is now integral to the planning process, honors the coast — past, present and future.

The MSP law and process became, and continues to be, an opportunity for the state and coastal communities to work together to plan for Pacific coastal and offshore waters comprehensively and with an eye toward the future.

Washington State’s Pacific Coast and offshore waters are a study in contrasts. This region has low sandy shorelines in the south and rocky elevated shorelines in the north. It hosts diverse marine life in its waters and a migratory pathway for millions of sea birds. That’s the natural environment.

But, who are the people who live, work and play there? These are individuals who have relied heavily on the natural resources for their living and/or as part of their history and culture. Four Coastal Treaty Tribes – the Hoh, Makah, and Quileute Tribes and the Quinault Indian Nation — as well as the Shoalwater Bay Tribe call this coast home. Under 19th century treaties with the federal government, the Coastal Treaty Tribes have the right to take 50 percent of all naturally occurring finfish and shellfish in tribal “usual and accustomed areas,” and they are co-managers of these resources. They fish both for subsistence and employment. In other communities, commercial fishermen target Dungeness crab, whiting, albacore and other species, while aquaculturists farm clams, oysters and geoducks. Offshore, cargo ships travel through these waters and service Pacific Coast ports including Grays Harbor and Port Angeles. Closer to shore, residents and visitors alike enjoy recreational fishing, surfing and other activities. These natural resource-dependent industries have ebbed and flowed with economic and environmental change, yet they have defined the culture and traditions of many Pacific Coast communities.

During the public scoping process for the marine spatial plan, stakeholders voiced their sentiment loud and clear.

The Washington Coast MSP process will result in a non-regulatory marine spatial plan for Pacific coastal and offshore waters that is intended to ensure a resilient and healthy marine ecosystem to support sustainable economic, recreational, and cultural opportunities for coastal communities, visitors and future generations.

The Washington Department of Ecology, working closely with Washington’s Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife, is leading the MSP pro-



cess. Their work is coordinated and officially led by the State Ocean Caucus, a state interagency team that meets regularly to coordinate on MSP and ocean resource management activities. Stakeholder engagement is coordinated through the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council, an advisory body to the governor. Council members include representatives of county Marine Resources



Committees and stakeholders including fishermen, shellfish farmers, recreational users, conservation interests and many others. Washington Sea Grant, another important player, coordinates a Science Advisory Panel and many of the state-organized outreach activities. Other key partners who provide both professional expertise and firsthand experience include the Coastal Treaty Tribes and environmental organizations. All of these participants — whether government agencies or stakeholders — are important both for their role in plan development and because they will use the final plan once completed.

Planning for the Pacific Coast began in earnest in 2012 with the allocation of \$2.1 million in state funding and an expected completion date of late 2016. Actions to date include:

- “Pre-planning,” including defining the plan area and management goals and objectives
- “Understanding impacts” tasks, including conducting numerous mapping, research, and assessment projects with examples that include:
 - A Sector Analysis, identifying current and future projections for the shipping, fishing, aquaculture, recreation and tourism, and renewable energy sectors; and
 - An Ecosystem Assessment with ecological, social and economic indicators



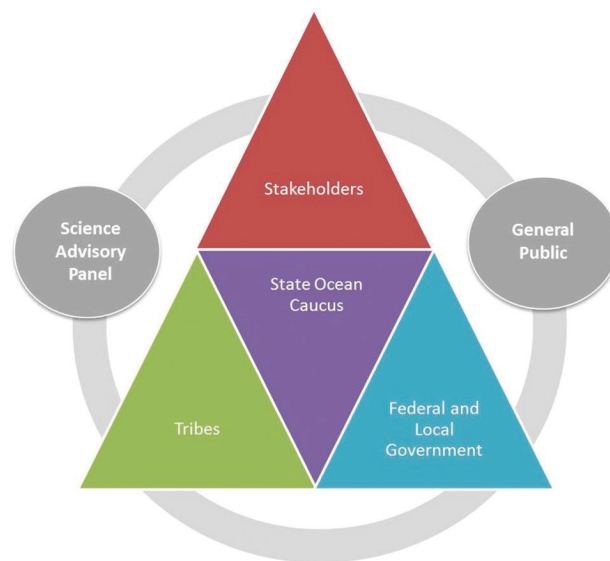
PHOTO: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

What lies ahead? The final plan will identify potentially suitable areas for new uses as well as those areas to avoid. It will include maps of areas with high potential for renewable energy and minimal potential for conflicts with existing uses or sensitive environments. Currently, the state is using GIS tools to assess the potential spatial interactions between existing and possible new uses. It is also drafting maps showing the intensity of existing uses and total number of uses — maps the public will have the chance to review and vet.

Washington's MSP law requires that the plan include an adaptive management strategy. As new information on the marine environment and specific projects arises, the state must consider the need to update the plan.

Last, once the state adopts the marine spatial plan, it will use information and analysis from the MSP process to develop a Geographic Location Description — a coastal management tool that allows states to list the federal licenses or permits for activities in a defined area of federal waters that are automatically subject to state review because of the potential impacts of those activities on state coastal resources and uses.

Participants in the Washington Coast MSP Process



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Stakeholder involvement, tribal consultation, government coordination and public input throughout process

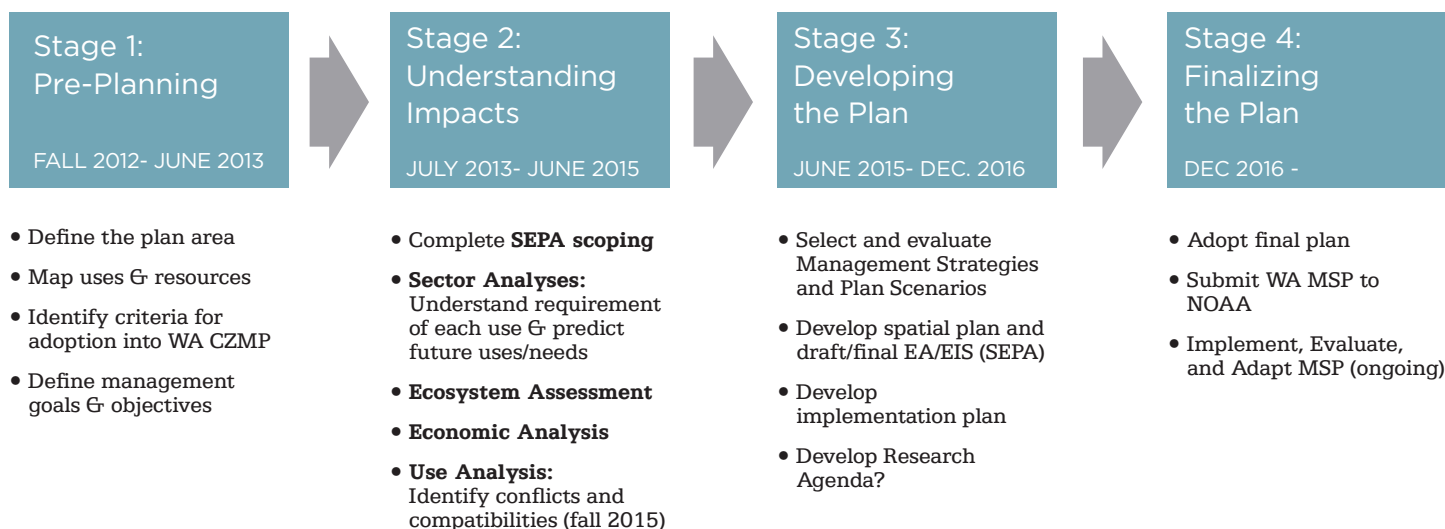


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Lessons Learned from Washington State



Washington State's MSP process has not yet concluded. Nevertheless, it has generated lessons learned that can continue to inform Washington practitioners as they finalize and implement their plan and be equally useful for other MSP and coastal management practitioners throughout the U.S. and the world. For a more complete description of these lessons, please visit the website www.crc.uri.edu/initiatives_page/msp/

Understand Where You're Starting From

Which planning efforts worked and which did not work in the past? Why? How were successful decisions made? Who was involved? Learn from and build on past successes and avoid repeating the same mistakes. These are questions practitioners need to ask during the initial phase of developing a marine spatial plan.

Manage Expectations

Know what is realistic and help others understand. Marine spatial planning can be complex. Outline realistic goals and a process and commit to clear and transparent communication. Make sure more than one person is delivering the communication, and that they are communicating the same message and communicating it widely.

Be Flexible and Adapt to Keep Your Driver Compelling

If a planning driver stops being relevant — for example, if the driving issue becomes less pressing or ceases to be a problem — stakeholders may drop out of the process. They may ask, "What's in it for me?" If this happens, talk with stakeholders. Learn their priorities. From that, identify another compelling issue that fits within the scope of the planning process and can become the new driver for the MSP effort. If no alternate driver emerges, complete tangible stand-alone products that will be useful to stakeholders. Keep your stakeholders in the game!



PHOTO: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Washington Coast marine spatial plan's goal is to ensure "a resilient and healthy marine ecosystem on Washington's coast that supports sustainable economic, recreational, and cultural opportunities for coastal communities, visitors, and future generations."



PHOTO: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

This document was produced in 2016 by the Coastal Resources Center and Rhode Island Sea Grant College Program at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography. It is one of a series of products sharing lessons learned from the practice of marine spatial planning in the United States and abroad. These products include the "Case Studies in Marine Spatial Planning Report Series" edited by Jennifer McCann. They are part of our ongoing research and capacity-building initiative to strengthen the network of MSP and coastal management practitioners.

For further information, and for access to other documents including technical reports summarizing