

National Ocean Service (NOS)
Surveying and Mapping Projects
in U.S. Waters for Coastal and
Marine Data Acquisition

**Environmental Compliance
Fact Sheet**



*Florida Keys
National Marine Sanctuary*



*Thunder Bay
National Marine Sanctuary*



*National Marine Sanctuary
of American Samoa*

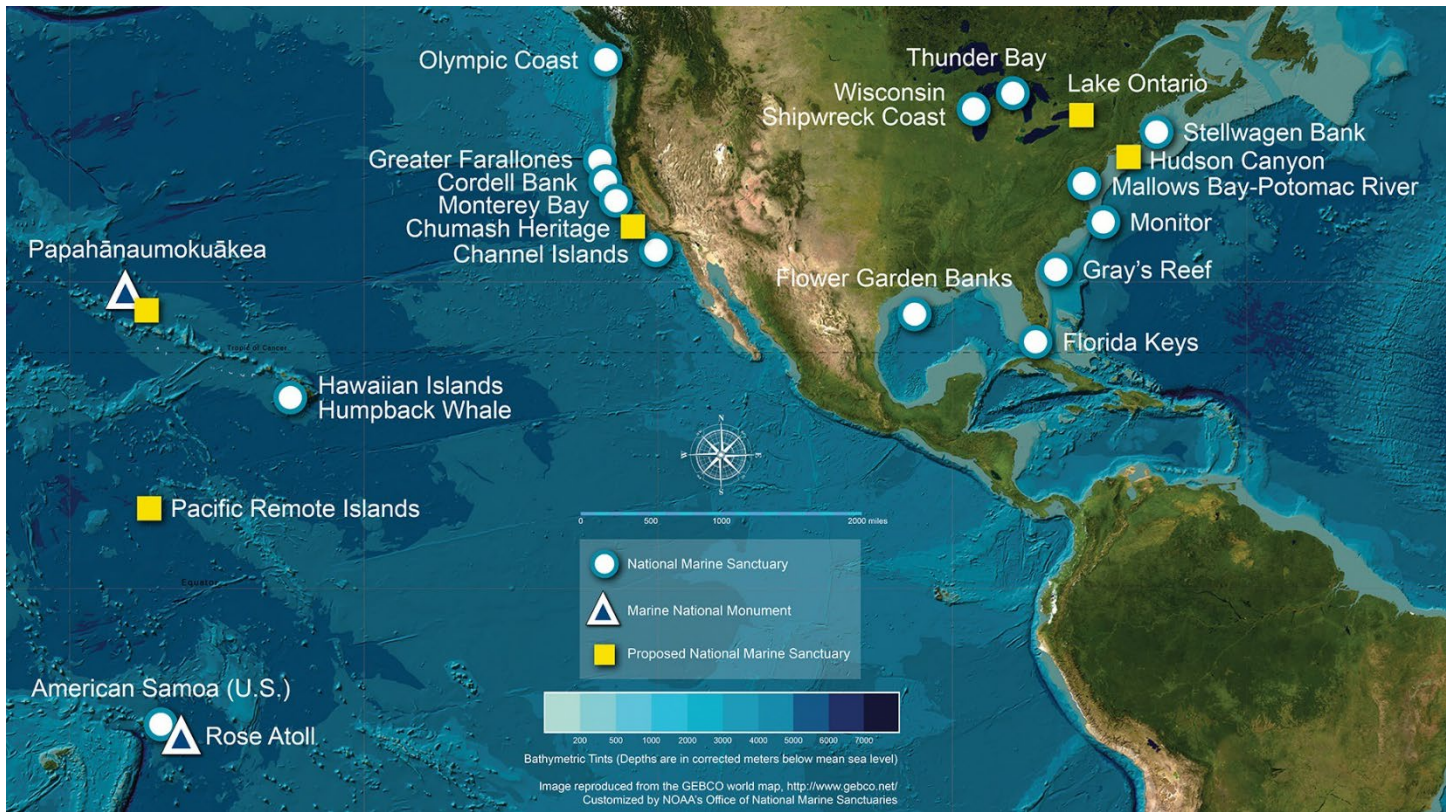
National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA)

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) regulates the management of national marine sanctuaries which are designated special areas set aside for long-term protection, conservation, and management. NMSA prohibits injury to sanctuary resources which include any living or non-living resource that contributes to the conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, research, educational, or aesthetic value of the sanctuary. Sanctuary resources include submerged features and the surrounding sea floor, corals, marine plants and algae, marine invertebrates, fish, seabirds, sea turtles and other marine reptiles, marine mammals, and historical resources.

The national marine sanctuary system includes 15 national marine sanctuaries encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. They contain deep ocean and cold freshwater habitats of aquatic life, kelp forests, coral reefs, whale migration corridors, deep-sea canyons, historically significant shipwrecks, and other underwater archaeological sites. Each sanctuary is a unique place that has been afforded special protection.



Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary



NOS Consultation with ONMS Under NMSA Section 304(d)



NMSA Section 304(d) requires federal agencies to consult with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) when the agency determines that a proposed action is likely to destroy, cause the loss of, or injure a sanctuary resource. The agency must provide ONMS a Sanctuary Resource Statement (SRS) describing the proposed action and its potential effects on sanctuary resources.

NOS submitted an SRS covering all 15 national marine sanctuaries to initiate consultation with ONMS in June 2022. ONMS informed NOS that the SRS was sufficient for consultation in September 2022. In the course of the consultation, ONMS and NOS agreed to a suite of mitigation measures to protect sanctuary resources. The consultation was completed on April 17, 2023.

Outcomes: NOS will coordinate with ONMS, as appropriate, to determine whether any ONMS permit or authorization is required for a project, NOS will always notify ONMS when a project is being conducted in or near a sanctuary.



Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary

Photo Credit (left to right): Matt McIntosh, NOAA and Ed Lyman, NOAA