

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program



An Overview: “Finding Common Ground”





What Are National Marine Sanctuaries?

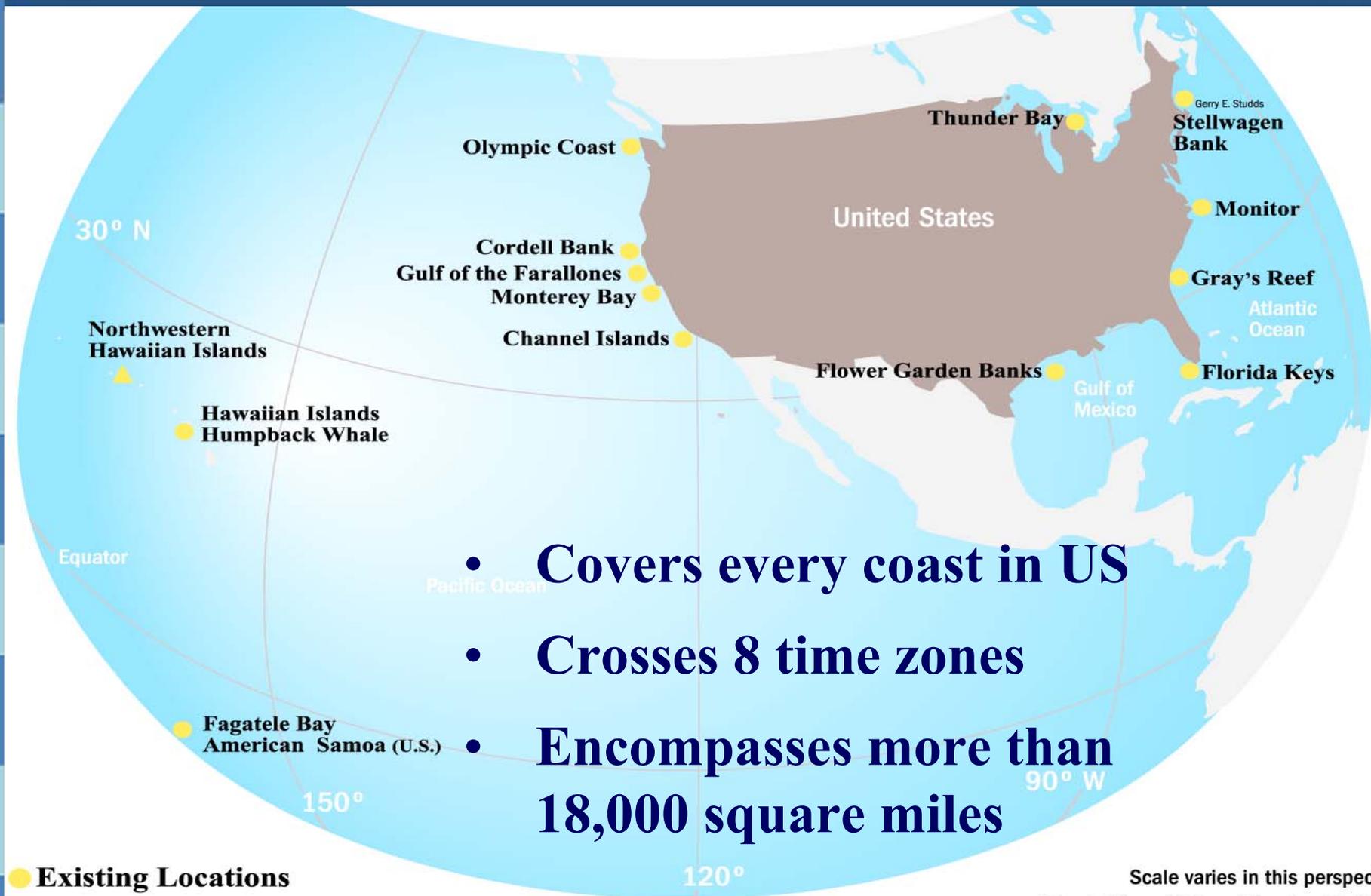


“Areas of the marine environment with special conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, cultural, archeological, or esthetic qualities...”

National Marine Sanctuaries Act (sec. 301)



Where are National Marine Sanctuaries?



- Covers every coast in US
- Crosses 8 time zones
- Encompasses more than 18,000 square miles

● Existing Locations
▲ Proposed

Scale varies in this perspective.
Adopted from National Geographic Maps.



- **Authorized by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act**
- **Includes 13 designated sites with one more (NWHI) in the designation process**
- **Including NWHI, system covers 150,000 square miles**
- **Over 30 years experience**



Photo: National Marine Fisheries Service



- **The full spectrum of uses is present...**
 - **Commercial Fishing**
 - **Recreational Fishing**
 - **Wildlife Watching**
 - **Boating**
 - **Diving**
 - **Swimming**





What do we do?



Under that mandate, we conduct:

- **Management and regulatory activities**
- **Education, outreach, and interpretation activities**
- **Research and monitoring activities**





Under that mandate, we conduct:

- **Stewardship programs for natural and cultural resources**
- **Volunteer programs**
- **Enforcement and emergency programs**



Exploring reefs with DeepWorker
Monterey Bay NMS



- **Employ transparent and participatory decision-making processes**
- **Conduct comprehensive and coordinated planning and management**





How Do We Approach Resource Protection?



- Pioneer innovative management techniques
- Make maximum use of available science and expertise
- Focus on place-based management





- **FMCs, NOAA Fisheries and NMSP must work together because we:**
 - **Serve a common constituency**
 - **Manage common resources, including fish populations as an integral part of a sanctuary ecosystem**
 - **Share common goals though standards and methods may differ**



Glenn Allen



- **The NMSP uses a variety of tools to conserve and manage sanctuary resources, including sanctuary regulations that may affect, restrict, or prohibit fishing**
 - **Under §304(a)(5) of the NMSA, the NMSP provides FMCs with the opportunity to draft sanctuary regulations**
 - **If NOAA finds that the regulations meet the goals and objectives of the sanctuary, and policies of NMSA, NOAA will publish the regulations as sanctuary regulations with full public notice and comment**
 - **Under specified conditions, the Secretary has the final opportunity to draft the regulations**



What Are Opportunities to Find Common Ground?

- **Improve communication by attending joint meetings and conferences**
- **Initiate communication and cooperation at beginning of management plan review activities and other actions**
- **Interagency coordination of personnel**
 - **FMC representation on sanctuary advisory councils and working groups**
 - **Sanctuary staff representation on FMC Sub-committees**



What Are Opportunities to Find Common Ground?

- **MOUs**
 - **Gray's Reef/NOS with South Atlantic FMC/NMFS Southeast Region**
 - **General MOU with NMFS**
 - **Office of Protected Resources regarding marine mammal strandings (in development)**





What Are Opportunities to Find Common Ground?

- **Formal cooperation under §304(a)(5) of NMSA**
- **Joint education projects**
 - **NMSP has extensive education, interpretive, and outreach resources and programs**
 - **Existing joint projects**
 - **Weather kiosks**
 - **Brochures in Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale Sanctuary**
 - **Future project opportunities**



Jeff Alexander



“Our Challenge”



Do we have the will to find common ground and find the best way to utilize our authorities to protect and sustain the nation’s marine ecosystems?

