

July

NewsWave

2009



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Other ocean and coastal newsletters of interest:

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[BLM Frontiers](#)

[MMS Ocean Science](#)

DOI OCEAN AND COASTAL ACTIVITIES RECEIVES PARTNERSHIP AWARD AT COASTAL ZONE 09

The [Coastal Zone 09](#) conference was held from July 19 to 23, 2009 in Boston, Massachusetts. The conference, themed "Revolutionary Times: Catching the Wave of Change," explored the many facets of climate change, and shared tools and information to help manage our changing coastal and ocean resources. At the conference's plenary session, Laura Davis, Assistant Deputy Secretary of DOI, presented DOI's climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy and how it impacts coastal communities. Other noted speakers included NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco and Susan Schwartz of EPA. The DOI Ocean and Coastal Activities office hosted a session on ocean regional governance featuring regional executives Dave Russ, Leon Carl, Jess Weaver, and Fred Piltz. The session was moderated by Terry Holman.



bureaus and projects. DOI was also recognized with a special partnership award from NOAA for supporting Coastal Zone 09. Congratulations, and thanks to everyone who participated and helped prepare for CZ 09!

DOI Ocean and Coastal Activities will be taking a more active role as an event co-sponsor at the next Coastal Zone meeting scheduled for 2011. Look for updates in future NewWaves.

The DOI Ocean and Coastal Activities office debuted a new display booth which showcased DOI's top ten ocean and coastal responsibilities, and provided literature from a variety of

At right: Susan Russell-Robinson poses with the Ocean and Coastal Activities display which was debuted at Coastal Zone 09.



DOI APPROVES CALIFORNIA'S PLAN FOR THE COASTAL IMPACT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

On July 13, DOI announced its approval of [California's plan](#) for the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP), a major step toward providing more than \$24.7 million in federal grant money to the state and 17 of its coastal counties. The approval of California's plan allows the state to submit grant applications for projects involving conservation, restoration, and protection of natural coastal resources.

"The Interior Department is glad to partner with the State of California and its coastal counties to fund projects that will restore and protect the treasured marine and coastal resources along the Golden State," Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar said. "Projects outlined in California's plan will support the management of the state's coastal environments to ensure that present and future generations will be able to explore these natural wonders for years to come."

California became the sixth state to receive approval for its plan for the

CIAP when MMS Acting Director Walter Cruickshank joined California's Secretary of Natural Resources Mike Chrisman in a signing ceremony onboard the State's marine-patrol vessel *Thresher*, in Dana Point, CA. The *Thresher* is part of the California Department of Fish and Game's fleet of patrol boats. California's plan includes a grant application for \$1 million to fund upgrades to existing patrol boats and to purchase new patrol boats used to enforce marine laws, investigate fish and wildlife violations, perform search and rescue missions, respond to marine environmental incidents, and to assist with marine research operations.

The California CIAP funds will be divided with 65 percent of the funding (\$16.0 million), going to the State of California and 35 percent (\$8.7 million), being divided among 17 coastal counties. California's CIAP Grant Program Announcement are posted on www.Grants.gov. The announcement provides instructions and guidance on the CIAP grant



process. Funding is made available to the State and counties when the grants are awarded. California's CIAP Plan contains 89 projects.

The CIAP was created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Through the program, DOI will provide \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to six eligible OCS oil and gas producing states - Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, Mississippi, and Texas.

For more information on the CIAP go to: <http://www.mms.gov/offshore/ciapmain.htm>

CEQ LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE FOR THE INTERAGENCY OCEAN POLICY TASK FORCE



The White House Council on Environmental Quality has launched a new website that will track the progress of President Obama's Ocean Policy Task Force.

On June 12, 2009, President Obama sent a [memorandum](#) to the heads of executive departments and federal agencies establishing an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality. The Task Force is charged with developing a recommendation for a national policy that ensures protection, maintenance,

and restoration of oceans, our coasts and the Great Lakes. It will also recommend a framework for improved stewardship, and effective coastal and marine spatial planning.

The website includes a form for submitting public comments to the Task Force. Public comments are also posted for viewing.

Visit the website at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/oceans/>

Ocean Quote of the Month

"I call upon all Americans to learn more about the oceans and what can be done to conserve them."

President
Barack Obama

USGS AND COASTAL SALISH TRIBES PARTNER TO STUDY WATER QUALITY

From July 20 – August 3, USGS and the Coast Salish Tribal Nation will partner for their second cruise to study the water quality of the Salish Sea. The Salish Sea is a traditional name for the interconnected straits, sounds and inlets including Puget Sound, the Strait of Georgia, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Water quality conditions throughout these ancestral waters have been deteriorating for decades, causing population declines of some of the areas most valued species – salmon, orcas, and a number of sea birds. The traditional way of life of the Salish Tribes depends upon a healthy ecosystem that stretches from the mountains to the tidelands.

Each year members of the Coast Salish Gathering, a coalition of more than 50 tribes and first nations, take part in the Annual Canoe Journey through the water ways of the Salish Sea. This will be the second year that these canoes will tow USGS water quality probes on this journey. During the 2008 Tribal Journey more than 100 canoes from locations throughout Washington and British Columbia covered 607 miles of the Salish Sea and collected 45,000 data points that included surface-water

temperature, salinity, pH, dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, and turbidity. Canoes are ideal for gathering water quality data because they are slow moving and do not add any toxins to the environment. This cooperative effort combines traditional Tribal knowledge of their local environment with USGS science and technology.

Last year, numerous areas of poor water quality were identified along the travel routes. This year's journey will include additional activities to identify the extent and causes of impairments to water quality relating to changes in land use and climate. The project will provide a snapshot of current water quality conditions and data that can be compared with future measurements along successive journeys. This information is important to improve management of ancestral waters that are experiencing environmental decline.

This May, the Coast Salish – USGS Tribal Journey Water Quality Project was recognized with the Department of the Interior's Partners in Conservation Award. "Over the last 100 years, people have looked at our



Salish Tribal Gathering members on the 2008 Canoe Tribal. Photo credit: USGS.

most sacred site (the Salish Sea) as a dump site," said Swinomish Chairman Brian Cladoosby. "You have heavy metals, toxins, farm runoff, nonpoint pollution and it ends up in the Salish Sea. It's up to this generation and future generations to make everyone aware of the conditions. We as Coast Salish have decided no more and we are stepping forward to restore and protect our most precious waters of the Salish Sea."

To read the USGS press release announcing the award visit: <http://www.coastsalishgathering.com/news/CSPartnershipAward09.pdf> Follow the progress of this year's Tribal Journey's through press releases, maps, videos and photos by

SECRETARY SALAZAR ANNOUNCES FIVE EXPLORATORY LEASES FOR OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT OFF COASTS OF NEW JERSEY AND DELAWARE

Calling it a major step forward in President Obama's new energy frontier, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, joined by New Jersey Gov. Jon S. Corzine, today issued five exploratory leases for renewable wind energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf offshore New Jersey and Delaware.

"We are entering a new day for energy production in the United States – a time of clean energy from renewable domestic sources on our Outer Continental Shelf," Secretary Salazar

said. "Other nations have been using offshore wind energy for more than a decade. We made the development of offshore wind energy a top priority for Interior. The technology is proven, effective and available and can create new jobs for Americans while reducing our expensive and dangerous dependence on foreign oil."

Secretary Salazar issued the exploratory leases, the first of their kind ever issued by the Federal Government, to Bluewater Wind New Jersey Energy, LLC; Fishermen's

Energy of New Jersey, LLC; Deepwater Wind, LLC; and Bluewater Wind Delaware, LLC. The leases were developed under an Interim Policy and authorize data gathering activities, allowing for the construction of meteorological towers on the Outer Continental Shelf from six to 18 miles offshore to collect site-specific data on wind speed, intensity, and direction. For more information please visit http://www.doi.gov/news/09/News_Releases/062309.html

U.S. CONSIDERS LAW TO BAN SHARK FINNING

The U.S. is considering legislation that would ban the practice of shark finning in all U.S. waters. Sponsored by Sen. John Kerry (D-MA), the [Shark Conservation Act of 2009](#) would ban the removal of shark fins at sea, close loopholes left open by previous legislation, encourage international shark conservation programs, and establish a process that would impose to sanctions against countries that fail to protect endangered shark species. The House already passed a similar bill (H.R. 81) via a voice vote on March 2.

Shark finning is the fishing method where sharks are caught, typically on long lines, their fins cut off and then the animals thrown back into the sea to die. The fins are the primary ingredient in shark fin soup, a delicacy in many Asian countries especially China. Shark fins actually provide no flavor of their own and absorb the flavor of the soup's other ingredients, typically chicken or beef broth. The fins provide only thickness and texture. Historically served only on special occasions, the popularity of the soup has been increasing in China along with their growing economy.

The expensive soup is often seen as a status symbol by the expanding middle class. This has created a huge demand for shark fins. Sets of fins can sell for more than US\$700/kg, with Hammerhead Shark fins among the most valuable by weight. A single Whale Shark pectoral fin can sell for up

to US\$15,000. In Hong Kong restaurants, a single bowl can cost US\$100-300.



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Finning is most common in high seas fisheries where long-line fishermen target fish using thousands of baited hooks on miles of long-line. Until relatively recently sharks were considered bycatch and usually just cut lose. However, as the fins have become increasingly valuable, sharks have been specifically targeted and landings have increased. Since shark meat doesn't quickly spoil in a ship's hold, finning allows fishermen to fill their holds solely with the valuable fins. It is estimated that 10-100 million sharks are killed each year merely for their fins.

Shark finning is highly wasteful and completely unsustainable. Sharks reproduce much more slowly than other commercial fish species making them more vulnerable to over-fishing. As apex predators, sharks play an important role in the ocean ecosystem and their removal can have a cascading affect on the whole marine food chain. A recent [study](#) from the International Union for Conservation of Nature reported that 35 of 64 known species of pelagic shark and rays are either Threatened or Near Threatened with extinction primarily due to overfishing. Some estimates suggest that shark numbers have dropped 90% from historical levels.

The U.S. passed the Shark Finning Prohibition Act in 2000 making it unlawful for any federally regulated fishing vessel to carry or land shark fins without the entire shark carcass and regulations have been adopted in most international waters. However, lenient enforcement standards, the difficulty of enforcement on the high seas, and the covert nature of the fin trade has hampered the effectiveness of these laws.

To support enforcement efforts, the US FWS and NOAA have [partnered](#) to expand their ability to analyze dried shark fins to identify the species from which they were removed. These two agencies recently [coordinated](#) with the U.S. FDA in investigating the illegal export of shark fins caught in U.S. waters, leading to a conviction.



Grey reef sharks at Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge. Photo: Jim Maragos / USFWS.

Earlier this month an unusual group of lobbyists came to D.C. to press Congress to support the Shark Conservation Act. Nine shark attack survivors turned shark advocates met with members of the Senate and the media to express their support for the bill. Read the article at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/14/AR2009071403248.html>

Also, throughout the [Discovery Channel's 22nd annual "Shark Week"](#) starting Aug. 2, public service announcements will run and push an online petition to support the bill.



U.S. EXTENDED CONTINENTAL SHELF PROJECT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE



From www.continentalshef.gov:

The mission of the U.S. Extended Continental Shelf Project is to establish the full extent of the continental shelf of the United States, consistent with international law. Since 2003, the United States has been gathering and analyzing data to determine its extended continental shelf, following the criteria contained in Article 76 of the [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](#). There are six areas in which the U.S. likely has an extended continental shelf: the Atlantic Margin, Arctic Ocean, Bering Sea, off the west side of Guam/Northern Mariana Islands, and in two areas in the Gulf of Mexico. There are nine areas in which the U.S. may have an extended continental shelf: the Gulf

of Alaska, the western end of the Aleutian Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawaii's Necker Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef and Palmyra Atoll, and three areas off the U.S. west coast ([see map](#)).

The United States has an inherent national interest in knowing, and declaring to others with specificity, the extent of our sovereign rights with regard to the U.S. extended continental shelf. Certainty and international recognition are important in establishing the necessary stability for development, conservation and protection of these areas, likely rich in resources.

The U.S. Extended Continental Shelf

Project has a [Strategic Plan](#), which details the Project's mission, vision, goals and objectives, and also a Project Plan, a long-term plan that specifies the remaining work to determine the outer limits of the U.S. extended continental shelf. The Project is directed by the [U.S. Extended Continental Shelf Task Force](#), an inter-agency body headed by the U.S. Department of State.

U.S. AND CANADA PARTNER SURVEY THE ARCTIC EXTENDED CONTINENTAL SHELF (ECS)

Beginning on Aug. 7, the U.S. and Canada will be partnering for a 41-day cruise to survey the extended continental shelf (ECS) of the Arctic. The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Healy* and the Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Louis S. St-Laurent* will work together to collect data both countries will use.

Healy will collect multibeam bathymetric data, which provides information on the depth and shape of the seafloor. *Healy* will also collect gravity and sub-bottom profiler data to help characterize the nature of the sediment and sub-bottom. *Louis S. St-Laurent* will collect seismic data, which provides information on the depth and characteristics of sub-bottom sediments, as well as gravity data.

This mission is the second year of collaboration between the U.S. and Canada on extended continental shelf

data collection in the Arctic, and expectations are that the two nations will work together again in the summer of 2010. The 2009 mission will emphasize the region north of Alaska onto Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge and eastwards toward the Canada Archipelago.

Research is coordinated by the Extended Continental Shelf Task Force, a government-wide group headed by the U.S. Department of State. Participants in this Task Force include the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, National Science Foundation, Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Navy, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Executive Office of the President, Minerals Management Service, and the Arctic Research Commission.



The Coast Guard Cutter HEALY (WAGB-20) is United States' newest and most technologically advanced polar icebreaker.

To learn more about this mission visit the new ECS website: <http://continentalshef.gov/missions.html>

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DOI Ocean and Coastal Button Contest

Answer the question below to receive a prize. Submit your answer to DOINewswave@ios.doi.gov and be sure to include the mailing address where you'd like your prize sent.



This Month's Question.

The Blue Whale is the world's largest animal. What is the world's largest fish?

Answer to last month's question:

France has the world's second largest EEZ. The countries with the top five largest EEZs are:

1. U.S.A	11,351,000 km ²
2. France	11,035,000 km ²
3. Australia	8,148,250 km ²
4. Russia	7,566,673 km ²
5. Indonesia	6,159,032 km ²

The DOI Ocean and Coastal Activities Office has a new e-mail address. Please send your articles, questions, and comments to: DOINewswave@ios.doi.gov.

Announcements and Upcoming Meetings of Interest:

2009 International Coastal Cleanup, Sept. 19 at a beach near you. Last year, nearly 400,000 volunteers collected more than 6.8 million pounds of trash in 104 countries and 42 U.S. states. For more info visit: www.oceanconservancy.org.

CERF 2009, Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation 20th Biennial Conference: Estuaries and Coasts in a Changing World, Nov. 1-5, Portland, OR. Visit the conference website at: <http://www.erf.org/newsletter/Winter07-CERF09-ExecDir.html>.

WILD9, the 9th World Wilderness Congress. Nov. 6-13, Merida, Mexico. One of this year's themes is "Marine Wilderness". Visit the conference website at: <http://www.wild.org/main/world-wilderness-congress/>



To access the DOI Ocean and Coastal calendar, click the attachments tab at the left of the Adobe pdf. If you have events to add to the calendar, send them to terry_holman@ios.doi.gov.



Click on the links above to learn more about the ocean and coastal activities at DOI bureaus.