

5th Annual Heceta Head Coastal Conference

"Oregon's Ocean: The Land/Sea Connection"

SUMMARY of CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Keynote Address

Oregon's Ocean Policy: Working in Partnership with NOAA

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Dr. John V. Byrne, President Emeritus of Oregon State University and former Administrator of NOAA, introduced Dr. Jane Lubchenco, the ninth Administrator of NOAA,. She delivered her address from Washington D. C. via video. As part of his introduction Dr. Byrne described the organization of NOAA and the history of its formation by the Executive Order of President Richard Nixon in 1970. He then summarized the education, achievements, and awards of Dr Lubchenco.

(Address abridged)

My remarks will summarize some of the actions of the federal government as they relate to Oregon and highlight ways in which NOAA and the federal family can work in partnership with Oregon.

I applaud your continued efforts to address resource issues in a holistic and comprehensive fashion. This proactive approach is evident in your intrastate efforts such as the Ocean Policy Advisory Council, and inter-state efforts such as the West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health. These efforts position you to participate actively in developing and implementing the emerging national ocean policy framework.

The federal government is beginning to catch up to efforts underway by many state and regional alliances. Under President Obama's leadership, the federal agencies are embarking on a collaborative effort to create a strengthened vision for our nation's oceans and coasts.

On June 12, President Obama issued a memorandum establishing the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, which is comprised of 24 senior policy-level members from executive departments and agencies across the Federal government. The President charged the Task Force with developing recommendations for:

- A national policy for the ocean, our coasts and Great Lakes,
- A framework for policy coordination of efforts to improve our stewardship of the oceans, coasts and Great Lakes ,
- An implementation strategy that identifies and prioritizes a set of objectives the U.S. should pursue to further a national policy, and
- A recommended framework for effective coastal and ocean marine spatial planning.

On September 17th the Task Force submitted its interim report to the President and released it for 30-days of public comment. This report focuses on the first three tasks and includes proposals for a National Policy for the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, a policy coordination framework for improved stewardship, and nine implementation strategies that identify and prioritize a set of objectives the US should pursue to achieve the National Policy.

The Task Force is now focused squarely on Task number 4 – Marine Spatial Planning. Your participation in

this phase is equally important to ensure that regional and sectoral interests are heard and considered. I encourage everyone to send the Task Force comments via the CEQ website at www.whitehouse.gov/oceans.

The importance to our Nation of West Coast coastal and marine resources is reflected in the nearly \$60 million that NOAA has invested to support marine navigation and coastal restoration through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects in California, Oregon and Washington.

These projects range from seafloor mapping for safe navigation and ecosystem stewardship, to restoring fish habitats, removing unneeded dams, and cleaning up marine debris. All of these projects represent a commitment to invest in green jobs for Americans, and to help enable our coastal economies and communities to benefit from a healthy environment.

The effects of climate change, coastal development, and the increasing number of ocean users brings both challenges and opportunities. We are already seeing a rise in ocean-use conflicts involving fishing, energy development, shipping and tourism. Many of those activities will place additional, significant stress on ocean ecosystems and our Nation's ability to protect its people and exercise its sovereign rights.

In every ocean basin around the world, the collective impact of multiple activities has led to widespread depletion and disruption, often despite good intentions. The Ocean Policy Task Force provides an opportunity for the federal government to work with states to chart a new course to healthy oceans and vibrant coastal communities.

Marine Spatial Planning is a tool to achieve healthy, productive and resilient oceans that are needed to support vibrant coastal communities. I believe the West Coast is uniquely positioned to lead on this type of integrated planning and management.

Oregon and your west coast partners are positioned well to collaborate strategically in this process. This is an historic time in which to contribute to the conversation for how the nation will organize itself and think anew about managing our coastal and ocean resources holistically.

Reflections on Dr. Lubchenco's Address

Onno Husing noted the State of Oregon is one of the leaders in the United States on ocean planning. Dr. Lubchenco spoke about the emerging federal efforts on marine spatial planning. She praised the work happening at the state and regional level on MSP and said federal efforts would seek to build upon these existing efforts.

In response to concerns the federal government might, in time, stifle the creativity of local/state/regional initiatives on MSP, Husing said the most effective thing Oregon can do is just keep moving forward, as swiftly as we can, to get a plan in place and to lead by example.