

WEST COAST GOVERNORS ALLIANCE on OCEAN HEALTH

CALIFORNIA OREGON WASHINGTON

Introduction to the WCGA

The West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health (WCGA) is a proactive, regional collaboration to protect and manage ocean and coastal resources along the entire West Coast. The Executive Committee of the WCGA is comprised of three state leads, including the offices of the Governors of California, Oregon, and Washington, and three federal leads, including the Department of Commerce (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management).

In August 2012, the Executive Committee identified four priority areas for the West Coast: **marine debris, adaptation to climate change, increasing access and discovery of science through the West Coast Ocean Data Portal, and ocean acidification.** The WCGA is now in the process of updating its structure and Action Plan with input from tribal and local governments.

WCGA Key Accomplishments - 2012 - 2013

- Launched the [West Coast Ocean Data Portal](http://portal.westcoastoceans.org) to increase the discovery and connectivity of ocean data and people to better inform regional ocean management, policy development, and planning. The Portal leverages existing efforts, including State Coastal Atlases and Federal data catalogs, by connecting the community of data providers in a single portal. (<http://portal.westcoastoceans.org>)
- Released the [WCGA Marine Debris Strategy](#) aimed at monitoring, reducing, and preventing the impacts of marine debris on the West Coast. Developed a **West Coast marine debris database**. This database is the first of its kind in the US and will help determine baseline estimates of marine debris along the West Coast, enable disparate marine debris data to be accessed, and allow for temporal and geographical comparison of marine debris location and density.
- Created a **Tribal Outreach Plan** in order to communicate and collaborate with Tribal governments on ocean issues of mutual interest. This project included engaging with West Coast Tribes on how they will participate in the regional planning body, ways they will engage on coastwise and National Ocean Council related issues and provide support for tribal capacity for these purposes.

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- Held the [Third National Working Waterfronts and Waterways Symposium](#) to share ideas and information about working waterfronts, from all coastal areas of the United States.
- Completed a [WCGA-requested sea level rise study by the National Research Council](#). The study evaluated the major contributors to global sea level rise; predicted the range of sea level rise for 2030, 2050, and 2100, and evaluated uncertainties. The WCGA hosted a series of workshops along the West Coast to provide this critical information to decision makers, planners, and stakeholders.
- Signed an **Agreement To Advance Ocean And Coastal Health Issues** - The WCGA and the West Coast Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems (OOS) signed a two-year agreement in October of 2012 to advance effective management of coastal and ocean resources for the benefit of current and future generations, with a specific focus on using ocean observing systems to help address harmful algal blooms and ocean acidification as well as advancing surface current mapping and contributing to the West Coast Ocean Data Portal.

WCGA Key Initiatives - 2014 – 2015

- Update the **Climate Change ACT work plan** with a focus on resiliency and adaptation to climate change and coastal hazards on the west coast. Priorities in the work plan will include proposals for 1) A decision-support tool and maps to assist in assessing hazards from sea-level rise and storms along the West Coast, and a 2) funding opportunity database to inform a broad range of entities (state and local governments, tribes, etc) on funding sources for work related to sea-level rise, storms inundation, and shoreline change.
- Organize and co-sponsor a **Tribal Ocean Summit** in Fall 2014. The purpose of the Ocean Summit is to bring together representatives from the Governors' offices in California, Oregon, and Washington, with federal agencies and tribal governments to discuss common interests surrounding ocean health along the entire West Coast. It is also an opportunity to explore how the Governors' offices can begin to integrate tribal voices into regional ocean policy creation and implementation.

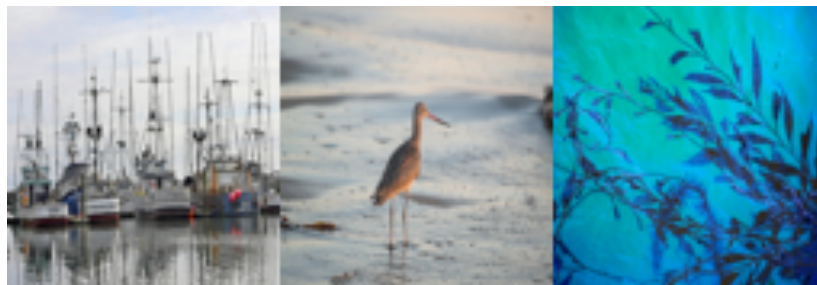
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- Host **Local Government Workshops** in Washington, Oregon and California to improve coordination between the WCGA and local governments, resulting in the development of shared priorities for ocean and coastal health and a set of strategies to ensure lasting communication between local entities and the WCGA.
- Launch a **Marine Debris Coalition** to facilitate implementation of the Marine Debris Strategy. The vision is that the Coalition will be a diverse coordinating body that adds value by breaking barriers between state agencies, federal government, NGOs, and industry to advance actions that implement the Strategy. It will provide a means to further efficient action and coordination to eliminate marine debris.
- The **West Coast Ocean Data Portal**, will add functionality to map priority West Coast ocean data, including marine debris sources, sinks and transport. In order to address and prevent marine debris from impacting our coastlines. The Portal will also feature communication tools for the **West Coast Ocean Data Network**, including a blog and member directory, to better connect ocean data producers and users.



WEST COAST OCEAN DATA PORTAL



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WCGA Background

Launched on Sept. 18, 2006 by Gov. Gregoire of Washington, Gov. Kulongoski of Oregon, and Gov. Schwarzenegger of California, the WCGA advances regional ocean governance efforts as called for in the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission.

The alliance seeks to advance the goals of:

- Ensuring clean coastal waters and beaches.
- Protecting and restoring ocean and coastal habitats.
- Promoting the effective implementation of ecosystem-based management.
- Reducing adverse impacts of offshore energy development.
- Increasing ocean awareness and literacy among residents.
- Expanding ocean and coastal scientific information, research and monitoring.
- Fostering sustainable economic development in our communities.

An action plan for the WCGA, released in 2008, identified 26 critical actions for the West Coast. Following that, a total of 11 region-wide work groups, known as Action Coordination Teams (ACTs), were established to develop comprehensive work plans for tri-state coordination and communication for coast-wide implementation of the WCGA Action Plan. These ACTs are comprised of a diversity of tribal sovereign government representatives as well as stakeholders, including academia, nongovernmental organizations, industry, and local, state, and federal governments. The Executive Committee informs and helps guide the timely progress of the Action Coordination Teams on activities in the [WCGA Action Plan](#).

For more information on the WCGA, visit
<http://www.westcoastoceans.org/>

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