

Vessel Transits Through Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and Area to Be Avoided (ATBA) - 2014 Estimated Compliance

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) has released its annual report on estimated compliance to an Area to be Avoided (ATBA), established to protect sanctuary resources. Designated in 1994 by the International Maritime Organization, the ATBA is a voluntary vessel routing measure that requests all vessels 400 gross tons (GT) and above that are transiting the area, to stay a safe distance off shore, mitigating the potential impact from spills and allowing more time for assistance to disabled vessels. OCNMS monitoring estimates 2014 compliance at 98%. Monitoring data show 12,431 transits of vessels over 400 GT off the Washington coast, with 4,676 passing through the sanctuary. Of those 104 passed through the ATBA. For those vessels that do not comply OCNMS works with Canadian and U.S. Coast Guards to conduct outreach to seek future compliance.

The OCNMS report can be found at
http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/protect/incidentresponse/2014_ais.pdf

See below for OCNMS ATBA Information Flyer

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)

AREA TO BE AVOIDED

OFF THE WASHINGTON COAST

Effective December 1, 2012

In order to reduce the risk of a marine casualty and resulting pollution and damage to the environment of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, all ships and barges that carry oil or hazardous materials in bulk as cargo or cargo residue, and all ships 400 gross tons and above solely in transit should avoid the area bounded by a line connecting the following geographical positions:

- 1 48°23'.30N 124°38'.20W
- 2 48°24'.17N 124°38'.20W
- 3 48°26'.15N 124°44'.65W
- 4 48°26'.15N 124°52'.80W
- 5 48°24'.67N 124°55'.71W
- 6 47°51'.70N 125°15'.50W
- 7 47°07'.70N 124°47'.50W
- 8 47°07'.70N 124°11'.00W

Contact Tofino Traffic on VHF-FM Channel 74 when inbound and crossing longitude 127 W and latitude 48N

PACIFIC OCEAN



NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

OLYMPIC COAST

KEY

- OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
- AREA TO BE AVOIDED
- TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME

NOT FOR NAVIGATION

CANADA

Vancouver Island
British Columbia

Strait of Juan de Fuca

Tatoosh Island

Cape Flattery

Cape Alava

La Push

Destruction Island

Queets

Cape Elizabeth

USA

Washington State

Grays Harbor

The ATBA off of Washington State's northern coast was established in 1994 by the International Maritime Organization at the request of the U.S. Government, to protect the newly established Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

Why does the IMO establish ATBAs?

- The IMO establishes ATBAs in defined areas where navigation is very hazardous or where it is important to avoid casualties.

Why is it important for vessels to remain offshore and avoid this area?

- Reduces risk of vessel grounding on shore
- Reduces risk of collision with small vessels traveling close to shore
- Allows more time for assistance to arrive to help a disabled vessel
- Increases protection of coastal resources
- In the event of an oil spill:
 - Allows more time for spill cleanup and containment crews to arrive
 - Decreases the chance of spill impacts on the shoreline
 - Increases spill evaporation and degradation time

How were the boundaries of the ATBA chosen?

- The boundaries were chosen to protect Sanctuary resources most at risk from vessel casualties.
- The boundaries are compatible with the Traffic Separation Scheme

How was the vessel applicability chosen for the ATBA?

- Vessels greater than 400 gross tons were selected because of the substantial amount of bunker fuel that they carry and the risk that a spill would pose to sanctuary resources
- Vessels that carry oil or hazardous materials in bulk as cargo or cargo residue were selected due to the risk that a spill would pose to sanctuary resources
- The ATBA applies to vessels solely in transit and does not apply to vessels engaged in activities otherwise allowed in the sanctuary, such as fishing and research. The ATBA also does not apply to government vessels, although they are encouraged to avoid the area when solely in transit.

Natural characteristics of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary:

- 128 species of seabirds within the Sanctuary
- 29 species of whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals reside or visit the area
- Washington State's only sea otter population
- Many species of fish and shellfish harvested for commercial, subsistence or recreational purposes
- Over 300 species of resident intertidal invertebrates, aquatic plants, and fish
- Diverse habitat types supporting complex food chains, including kelp communities, rocky intertidal zones, sand beaches, and offshore rocks
- Within the usual and accustomed fishing grounds of the Hoh, Makah, Quileute tribes and the Quinault Indian Nation
- Adjacent to Olympic National Park, Washington Islands National Wildlife Refuges, and Washington State Seashore Conservation Area

FOR MORE VESSEL TRAFFIC INFORMATION:

U.S.C.G. Sector Puget Sound, Waterways Management Division
1519 Alaskan Way S, Seattle, WA 98134
Phone: 206-217-6051
e-mail: SectorPugetSoundWWM@uscg.mil
<http://www.uscg.mil/d13/cvts/>

FOR MORE SANCTUARY INFORMATION OR COPIES OF THIS PUBLICATION:

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<http://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/protect/incidentresponse/atba.htm>

