

OASeS 2021 Annual Accomplishments Report

The Olympic Coast Ocean Acidification Sentinel Site (OASeS) focuses on ocean acidification (OA) related science and trends in carbonate chemistry and hypoxia. The sentinel site works to inform resource managers and coastal communities by telling the story of OA and its impacts on Washington coastal marine resources, coastal cultures, communities, and economies. The sentinel site will seek to ensure that the Olympic Coast is well prepared for changing ocean conditions, with research and management actions in place. The OASeS Steering Committee first met in September of 2020. Since then, OASeS has met quarterly and achieved several successes in a largely virtual environment.



OASeS has selected three co-chairs to lead the steering committee to serve a two-year term. The co-chairs are: Russell Callender, Director of Washington Sea Grant; Micah Horwith, Senior Scientist for Washington Department of Ecology; and Tom Moore, Oceanographer for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. The co-chairs have provided solid direction and guidance on meeting the goals and objectives of this partnership, as well as leading several subcommittees focused on the three overarching goals of management, science, and education and outreach.

Over the past year, OASeS has been focused on developing and prioritizing a work plan through 2022, which was finalized and approved in late 2021. This work plan outlines key tasks the steering committee will focus on, including website development, hosting an annual symposium, filling key management and science gaps, and expanding our formal and informal education and outreach efforts.

OASeS has also worked on branding our partnership through a logo that is representative of our vision. OASeS held a logo competition with local middle and high schools for students within Clallam, Jefferson, and Grays Harbor Counties with a \$500 scholarship awarded to the winner. The logo selected was designed by a 7th grader at Sequim Middle School, reflecting the species at risk from changing ocean conditions as well as humans being part of the ecosystem and working to address these issues.

In addition to the three subcommittees already mentioned, we have had two additional subcommittees focused on the development of an OASeS website and an annual Symposium. An OASeS website will allow the steering committee to share information to broader audiences on what changes are being observed on the Olympic Coast, science and information needs, connections to formal and informal educational materials, and more. We are also planning our first Symposium with a goal to meet in person on the outer coast. This Symposium will bring people together to talk about the issue (changing ocean conditions),

what can be done to better understand and address the issue, and how we are sharing this information to broad audiences.

OASeS is working to develop a communications plan that will address the long-term and short-term communication needs of the steering committee, including website, targeted outreach, and development of informational materials. To date, we have provided overview presentations of OASeS to two coastal marine resource committees (MRCs), Grays Harbor and North Pacific Coast as well as the Olympic National Park Science Symposium. OASeS has also developed an introductory 2-pager, providing background context on the problem, what a sentinel site is, and what OASeS is focusing on. These materials were shared with the OASeS steering committee and posted on our OASeS Team page through the Ocean Acidification Information Exchange (oainfoexchange.org).

The distinctive physical, biological, cultural, and governance attributes and vulnerability to acidification and other CO₂-related stressors make the Olympic Coast an excellent natural laboratory for studying ocean change and understanding its impacts on local communities. As such, several relevant proposals targeting the Olympic Coast region have been submitted by partners to several funding opportunities. Furthermore, OASeS co-chairs have developed a draft tiered budget proposal, outlining several OASeS priorities for future funding opportunities.

Overall, OASeS has strengthened existing partnerships in the region. Fostering communication and collaboration among these partners will result in stronger science and more holistic management. Ultimately, an improved ability to understand, forecast, and communicate the environmental and societal impacts of ocean change on the Washington coast can serve as a model for the broader Pacific Northwest and coastal regions around the world.

Upcoming activities for 2022:

- 1. OASeS Symposium in May 2022 will kick off our first biennial symposium, hopefully in person, on the outer coast;**
- 2. OASeS Website will be developed to share more information and host an “intake form” to better capture research occurring in the region; and**
- 3. Expanded field season to collect biological samples paired with oceanographic monitoring, new Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary research vessel focused on outer coast research, and possibly several funded proposals by OASeS partners.**