

the OREGON NEARSHORE STRATEGY



Chapter 1: Introduction



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Oregon Department
of Fish and Wildlife



OregonConservationStrategy.org

Table of Contents – Chapter 1: Introduction

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLANNING – THE OREGON NEARSHORE STRATEGY	1
HOW THE NEARSHORE STRATEGY IS USED	2

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This PDF is a chapter of the Oregon Nearshore Strategy, the marine component of the official State Wildlife Action Plan for Oregon. The complete Oregon Conservation Strategy is available online at <http://oregonconservationstrategy.org/>. Since Conservation Strategy content will be updated periodically, please check the website to ensure that you are using the most current version of downloadable files.

Contact ODFW

For more information on the Oregon Nearshore Strategy or to provide comments, email Nearshore.Strategy@state.or.us or write to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Marine Resources Program 2040 SE Marine Science Drive, Newport, OR 97365

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Feature Image: Nearshore Rocky Reef, © Ian Chun



CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLANNING – THE OREGON NEARSHORE STRATEGY

Photo Credit: Ian Chun

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW's) Marine Resources Program has identified opportunities for ODFW and others to augment ongoing conservation and management efforts and support the long term sustainability of nearshore resources in Oregon. The result is the Oregon Nearshore Strategy (Nearshore Strategy). The information and recommendations contained in the Nearshore Strategy complement, rather than supplant, the core functions performed by ODFW and its resource management partners.

The **mission** of Oregon's Nearshore Strategy is:

To promote actions that will conserve ecological functions and nearshore marine resources to provide long-term ecological, economic, and social benefits for current and future generations of Oregonians.

To achieve this mission, the Nearshore Strategy provides information on nearshore marine fish and wildlife and related conservation needs in a broad social and ecological context. It does not create or propose regulations. The Nearshore Strategy presents recommendations for voluntary actions that can contribute to the sustainability of marine resources and ecological functions.

The information and recommendations in the Nearshore Strategy are the result of a collaborative process led by ODFW. Members of the public, ocean-related businesses (including fishing), recreational interests, conservation groups, government agencies, tribes, universities, and many other sectors contributed to the Nearshore Strategy, both during its initial development for publication in 2006 and in 2015 for the 10-year revision. The collaborative process has strengthened the Nearshore Strategy and provided the opportunity for participants with diverse backgrounds to build relationships while sharing their respective visions, values, and concerns for the nearshore environment. This cooperation between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the public is essential to the **vision** guiding the Nearshore Strategy:

Oregon's nearshore marine resources are thriving in a healthy, functioning ecosystem due to cooperative efforts and support by current and future generations of Oregonians.

HOW THE NEARSHORE STRATEGY IS USED

One of the most important outcomes of the diverse inputs to the Nearshore Strategy process is the identification of a collective set of voluntary conservation and policy priorities that can guide strategic investment of time and funding in a manner consistent with public interest. The Nearshore Strategy is intended to facilitate action on priority nearshore issues and areas that are not specifically addressed by existing processes. The Nearshore Strategy highlights issues that transcend the authority of a single management entity or existing regulatory authority. It suggests how to augment the conservation and sustainability of Nearshore resources, so that when opportunity arises, collaborations can quickly mobilize to implement these broad strategies.

ODFW is an active participant in many management and policy processes — for example, the Pacific Fishery Management Council, which develops policy and management for federally managed marine fisheries species; and Oregon’s Ocean Policy Advisory Council which is a forum for advancing policies related to the state’s three-mile territorial sea. The Nearshore Strategy is not intended to supplant or redirect those activities; rather, it will help direct attention and resources to priority areas where they can have the most positive impact on nearshore fish and wildlife, their habitats, and the nearshore ecosystem as a whole.

For the purposes of this document, “nearshore” is defined as the area from the outer boundary of Oregon’s Territorial Sea at 3 nautical miles to the supratidal zone affected by wave spray and overwash at extreme high tides on our ocean shoreline, and up into the portions of our estuaries where species depend on the saltwater that comes in from the ocean (Figures 1.1a and 1.1b). Oregon’s nearshore environment is home to a vast array of fish, invertebrates, marine mammals, birds, algae, plants, and a diversity of other organisms. This region includes a variety of habitats ranging from open waters dotted with islands to submerged high-relief rocky reefs, soft sandy and muddy bottoms, broad expanses of sandy beaches interspersed with rocky headlands, mudflats, sloughs and channels in estuaries. These are the species and habitats that are the focus of the Oregon Nearshore Strategy. Each one is an integral part of a complex nearshore ecosystem interconnected through food webs, nutrient cycling, habitat usage, ocean currents, atmospheric forcing, and a multitude of other biological, physical, chemical, geological, and human use factors.

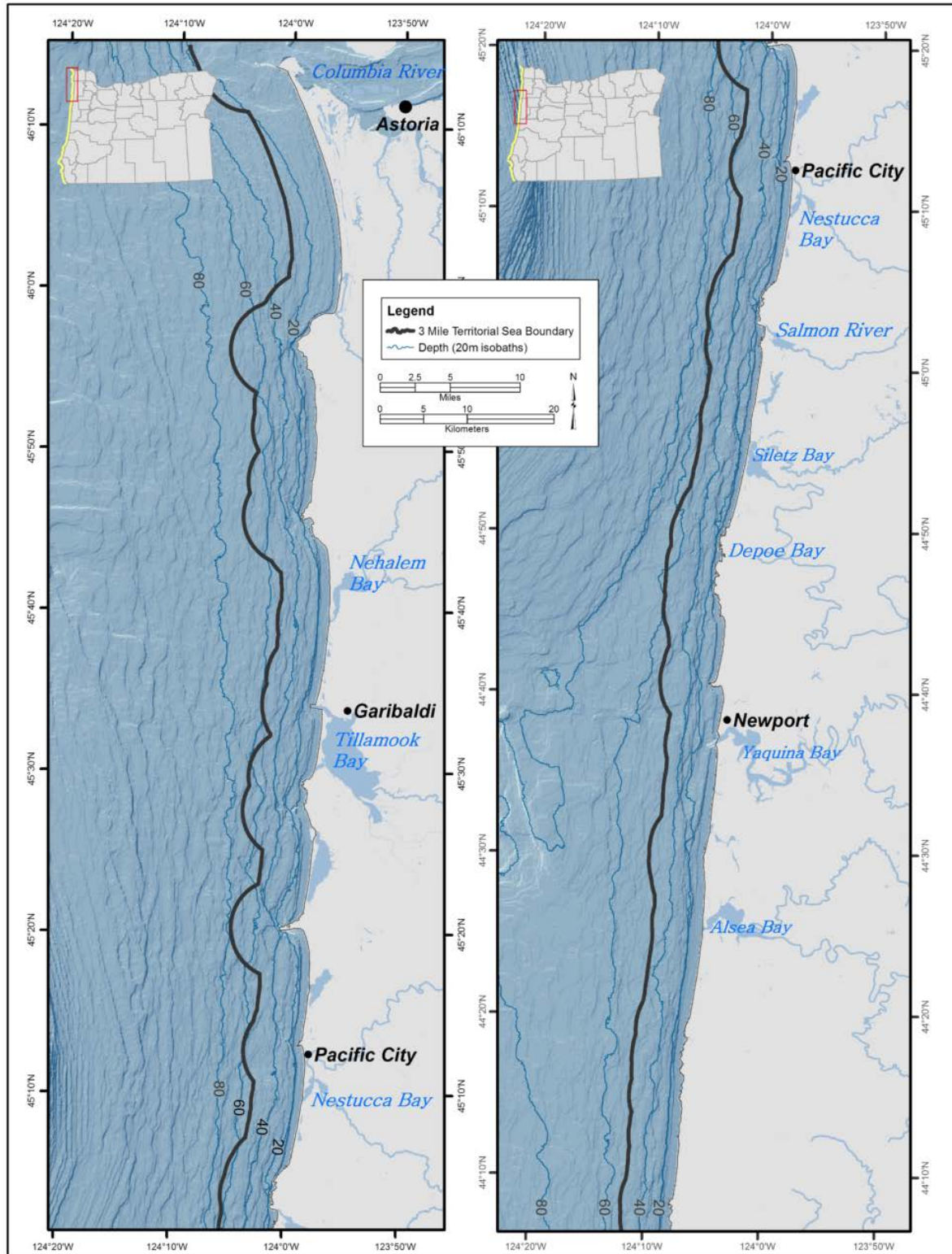


Figure 1.1a. Oregon's north coast. Oregon's Nearshore is defined as the area from the outer boundary of the territorial sea to the shoreline affected by extreme high tides and up into the estuaries where species depend on saltwater from the ocean.

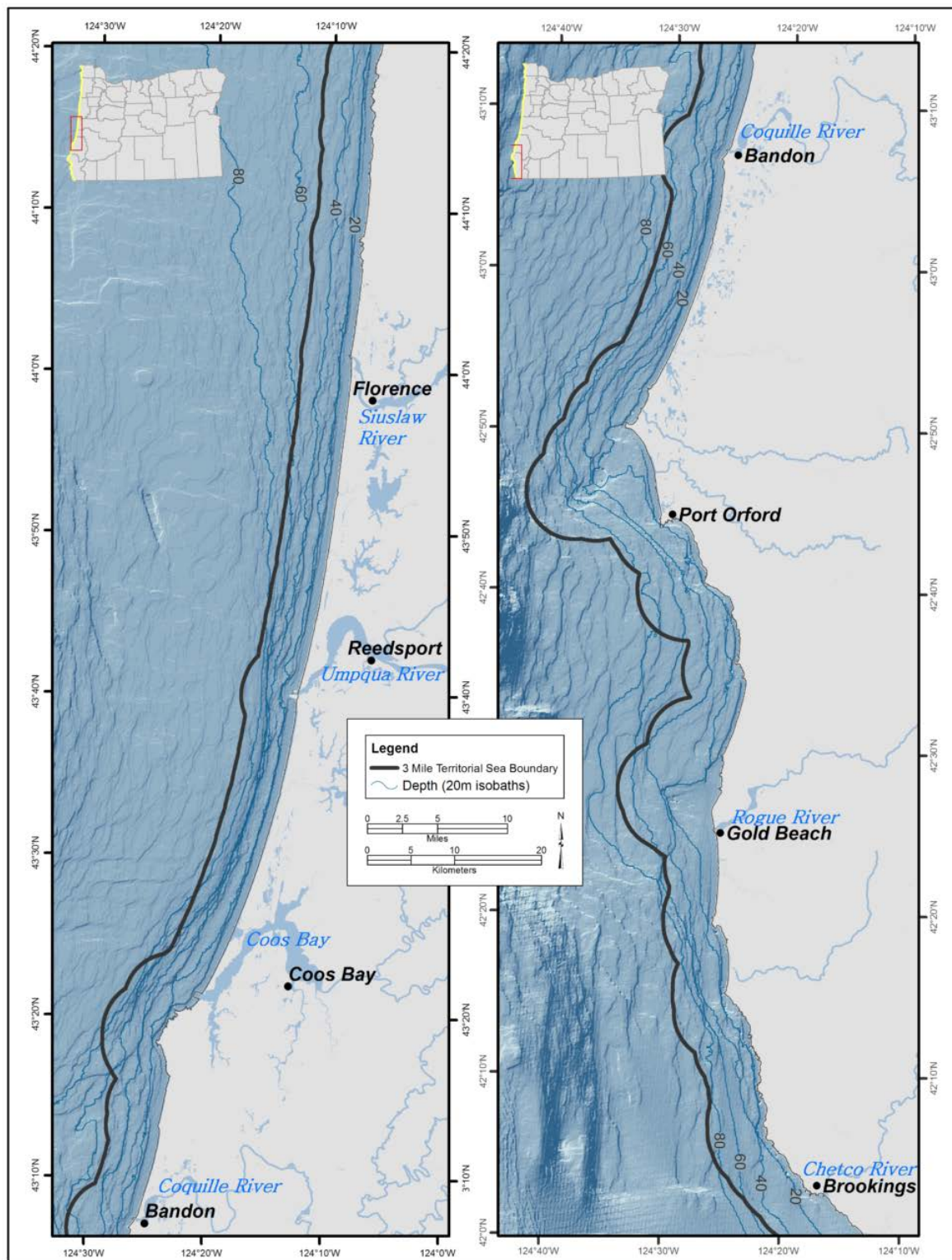


Figure 1.1b. Oregon's south coast. Oregon's Nearshore is defined as the area from the outer boundary of the territorial sea to the shoreline affected by extreme high tides and up into the estuaries where species depend on saltwater from the ocean.