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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **West Coast Governors Launch Ocean Action Plan** *California, Oregon and Washington Will Work Together to Safeguard Critical Marine Resources*

The Governors of California, Oregon and Washington today joined together via satellite to launch a historic action plan to address challenging ocean and coastal management issues along the West Coast.

[The West Coast Governors' Ocean Action Plan](#) is the result of a 2006 agreement signed by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski and Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire. The regional agreement, known as the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health, forged a long-term partnership to tackle obstacles facing the Pacific Ocean and its coastal communities. To support the states' agreement, a Federal Working Group, co-led by the U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, has been established and will work with the states in implementing the actions.

The action plan released today is the result of our three states working side-by-side to identify problems and develop a comprehensive action plan to solve them. It commits our three states to collaborate closely with each other and our federal partners on seven priority areas related to ocean protection:

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

As part of the plan, California, Oregon and Washington will work together, along with the Federal Working Group, on 26 bold actions to help combat polluted runoff and reduce marine garbage, advocate for stricter ocean going vessel emission standards, prevent the introduction of invasive species, explore the feasibility of offshore alternative ocean energy development, improve ocean research, increase ocean education and prevent and respond to offshore oil spills, among others.

Each action within the plan contains benchmarks and a timeframe for action. The governors have formally committed to report on the status of actions at the end of two years.

“This agreement is another key step in our aggressive efforts to maintain clean water and beaches along our coast,” said Gov. Schwarzenegger. “I believe our commitment to working together and putting this plan into action will help effectively tackle critical issues up and down the West Coast—ensuring a healthy ocean environment for current and future generations.”

Gov. Kulongoski heralded the effort as one more successful regional compact. “Just as we’ve seen with the Western Regional Climate Action Initiative, collaboration on complex natural resource issues leads to improved management, inspires innovation and ensures a healthier environment. Together, we can sustain our marine resources and the communities that depend upon them.”

“While Washington is making significant strides with state initiatives such as the Puget Sound Partnership, the crisis facing salmon this year is an example of why we must address these issues together as a region,” Gov. Gregoire said. “Our waters know no boundaries. This plan commits us to combining our resources and ideas, and prioritizes restoring and maintaining the health of our marine and coastal waters to ensure a sustainable future.”

California, Oregon and Washington have worked closely with key federal agencies as well as ocean users, academic institutions, the public, tribes, and other state and regional entities to develop the plan and will continue to collaborate with these groups to accomplish the tasks identified in the plan.

Also today, the three governors sent a joint [letter to Congress](#) asking for \$5 million in federal support for implementation of the action plan. Congress has provided funding and support for similar regional ocean initiatives, such as the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.

To learn more about the West Coast Governors’ actions and to read the action plan in its entirety, go to [www.westcoastoceans.gov](http://www.westcoastoceans.gov).

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