

## **Washington State Launches New Website for Coastal and Ocean Planning** **Local News**

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OLYMPIA — An interagency team charged with improving how Washington's coastal and ocean resources are managed has launched a new interactive website that supports "marine spatial planning." Marine spatial planning brings together multiple users of Washington's coast—including energy, industry, government, conservation, and recreation—to make informed and coordinated decisions about how to use marine resources sustainably. The process is similar to land-use planning but for marine waters. Marine spatial planning collects, interprets, and uses data to develop a plan that balances the needs and goals of the broader public, recreationists, the economy, and the marine environment.

The [website](#) will help the comprehensive planning process by giving interested parties—such as coastal residents and visitors, planners, and resource managers—a tool to: Learn more about marine spatial planning and projects. Get involved with the planning process. Access maps and information. In 2010, Senator Kevin Ranker (Orcas Island) initiated legislation that created Washington's marine spatial planning law.

"With an ever-increasing number of competing uses in our marine waters, the advancement of marine spatial planning in Washington state is critical if we are to limit costly user conflicts," Ranker said. "Washington's marine spatial planning will allow us to protect critical existing uses, such as fishing and aquaculture, while advancing new opportunities, such as offshore renewable energy. With this planning process, we can protect our coastal and ocean resources and the jobs that depend upon them." Visitors can use the website to: Join a listserv to get updates on the planning process. Learn more about marine spatial planning projects and events. Get basic information about marine spatial planning. Marine spatial planning generally uses maps to create a more comprehensive picture of a marine area—identifying natural resources and habitat in the ocean and coastal areas and the location of human activities that may affect them. In June, the website will offer an interactive data mapping tool, which will provide information on human uses, habitats, marine life, oceanography, and infrastructure. Website visitors will be able to use this interactive tool to view and print maps, as well as search and download data. Visit the Marine Spatial Planning website at [www.msp.wa.gov](http://www.msp.wa.gov). Core agencies involved in the interagency marine spatial planning effort include: Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Washington Department of Ecology Washington Sea Grant Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission