

**The Oregon Ocean Resources
Management Task Force**

**INTERIM REPORT
to the
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
on
LAND USE**

July 1, 1988

**MANAGING OREGON'S
OCEAN RESOURCES**



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Interim Report

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**ONE
THE
OCEAN
PLANNING
BACKGROUND**

1. THE OCEAN PLANNING BACKGROUND

1.1. THE OREGON OCEAN PLANNING AREA

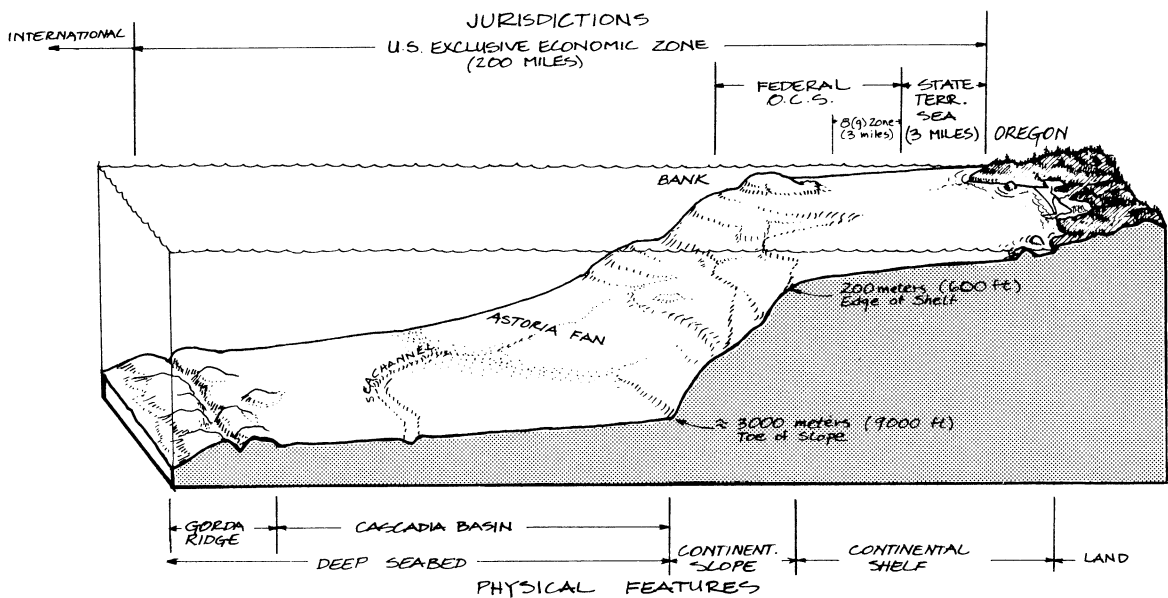
1.1.1 Jurisdictions

Oregon's ocean planning area extends from the Washington border in the Columbia River to the California border and westward to the extent of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) 200 miles at sea. Planning for this area must take into consideration the larger context of global ocean conditions and dynamics within which offshore Oregon is but a minute part.

The 1953 Submerged Lands Act established coastal states' statutory authority over offshore lands within three miles of their coastlines. This three-mile-wide strip is known as the territorial sea. In 1983, the United States asserted jurisdiction over resources and uses of the ocean within 200 miles of its coastline, an area known as the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Coastal states control the first three miles, and the federal government the remaining 197 miles, of the EEZ.

There is some practical difficulty establishing the exact line from which the western boundary of Oregon's territorial sea should be measured. However, its delineation is crucial to establishing Oregon's proprietary interests in seabed development activities.

Since Oregon owns the seabed within the territorial sea, state agencies have clear regulatory authority over activities that occur there. Coastal county boundaries extend to the western boundary of the state three miles at sea. However, Oregon's ocean planning law (SB 630) requires that planning for ocean resources and for submerged and submersible lands of the territorial sea be carried out under the Ocean Resources Management Task Force under SB 630.



1.1.2 Oceanographic Conditions and Resources

Three regions fall within Oregon's ocean planning area:

- The coastline and adjacent offshore rocks and islands.
- The continental margin, made up of the continental shelf and slope.
- The deep ocean beyond the continental margin, which includes several features such as Cascadia Basin, Gorda Ridge, and the Blanco Fracture Zone.

Oregon's coastline is composed of several unique regions defined by headlands and capes. Its continental shelf is only 43 miles at its widest, off of Newport, and only ten miles wide off Cape Blanco. Consequently, marine resources and ocean uses are restricted to a fairly narrow belt adjacent to the coastline. It is a highly dynamic environment, however, and is biologically quite productive. In fact, the most recent Minerals Management Service Five-Year OCS Program rates the Washington-Oregon Planning Area as the most biologically productive offshore area in the continental United States.

The physical and oceanographic setting of the Oregon ocean planning area has been described in detail in *The Oregon Ocean Book* published by the Department of Land Conservation and Development.

1.2. OCEAN PLANNING IN OREGON

1.2.1 The 1987 Oregon Ocean Resources Management Act (SB 630)

The 1987 Oregon Legislature enacted the Oregon Ocean Resources Management Act (SB 630), which directed the state to develop the means to manage the use of its offshore resources. Specific means required to be developed are summarized below.

Management Plans

The directions in SB 630 will result in a two-tiered plan to guide state and federal authorities and decisions concerning offshore activities.

- The Oregon Ocean Resources Management Plan

An overall management plan for ocean resources and uses within the 200-mile U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, including the Oregon Territorial Sea, must be completed by June, 1990 and approved by the Land Conservation and Development Commission by December 1, 1990.

- The Territorial Sea Management Plan

A more detailed management plan for Oregon's Territorial Sea must be completed by July, 1991, and adopted by the State Land Board.

Management Program

The Oregon Ocean Resources Management Act requires more than simply drawing up plans for the use of Oregon's offshore resources. It first extends the responsibilities of the state's coastal management program, which is part of its statewide land use planning program, to include the ocean off Oregon. It then establishes a program for ocean resource management wherein agencies can accomplish the