

CHOW 2022 – Sea: The Future



Happy 50th, National Marine Sanctuaries

In 1972, the United States enacted a wave of legislation—the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act and amendments to the Clean Water Act—to sustain our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes.

Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW), an annual multi-day conference that gathers together policymakers, scientists, managers, business leaders, conservationists, educators, students, and members of the public, was convened by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation the week of

June 6 in Washington D.C., to celebrate fifty years of progress and lay out a course for the new policies and actions necessary to sustain our coasts and oceans and transform our future.

One of the main subjects of discussion and celebration: The forthcoming Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary off the Central Coast of California.

A [landmark study of U.S. marine protected areas](#) published in May in *Frontiers in Marine Science* identified significant gaps in our nation's ocean protections. More (and better) marine protected areas are needed to meet conservation goals laid out in the U.S. Department of the Interior's America The Beautiful initiative to conserve at least 30% of the ocean by 2030.

In a [letter to editor of the The Washington Post](#), NMSF President Kris Sarri wrote, "Marine biodiversity is declining faster now than at any other time in our history. Our nation has an effective system of public lands that helps conserve biodiversity and build resilience, but the same does not exist for our ocean.

"This year, we are celebrating [the 50th anniversary of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act](#), and it is time to launch a continuing, national assessment of marine biodiversity and build a national system in U.S. waters to conserve biodiversity and its contributions to people."