

**The NewsRoom**

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**Minerals Management Service Begins Comprehensive Study to Gather Information on Marine Environment along the West Coast of the United States***Study to Assist in Analyses of Future Activities in Federal Offshore Waters*

**CAMARILLO, CA.** – The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded a \$692,581 contract to Mangi Environmental Group, Inc. to study the marine environment along the West Coast.

The primary goal of the study is to update the agency's scientific baseline data through collection and synthesis of information that will be used for environmental review of existing and future activities on federal offshore submerged lands along selected areas along California, Oregon and Washington.

"As the MMS looks at future opportunities for offshore activities along the West Coast, notably opportunities for alternative energy development, the need for expanding the agency's scientific knowledge is critical," said Ellen G. Aronson, MMS Pacific Region Manager. "Information from this study will not only assist the MMS, it will prove useful to other Federal, State and local agencies in addressing potential impacts of human activity and natural phenomena off our coasts."

Topics covered in the study will include major disciplines of Biology, Geology, and Physical and Chemical Oceanography as well as Socioeconomics. Special emphasis will be placed on collection of information available on benthic invertebrates, fish and fisheries, seabirds and shorebirds, marine mammals, and human activities.

The study area boundaries include Southern California, from northern Santa Barbara County to the Mexican border, and the Pacific Northwest, from Grays Harbor, Washington to San Francisco Bay, California.

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