MONITOR
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

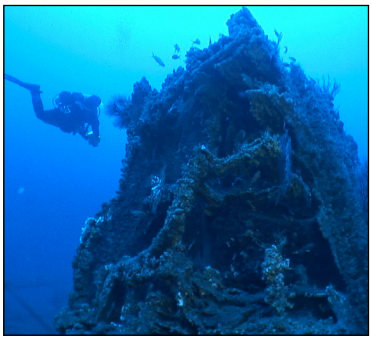


Photo: Silverstein-Wedig Expedition

Monitor Sanctuary Releases Condition Report

In May 2008, *Monitor* sanctuary staff released a comprehensive report outlining the current condition of sanctuary resources. The *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary Condition Report summarized that the *Monitor* wreck has become a productive artificial reef housing numerous fish species. NOAA scientists continue to conduct archaeological surveys to document the wreck, although increasing attention is being devoted to the water quality and marine environment of the wreck site. The sanctuary's remote distance from shore poses special challenges for enforcement, but it also means access to the site remains limited, mostly to research dives. Many of the artifacts recovered from the *Monitor* continue to be conserved by sanctuary staff and partners at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., so that future generations can enjoy our nation's most famous ironclad.

Photo: Monitor Collection NOAA

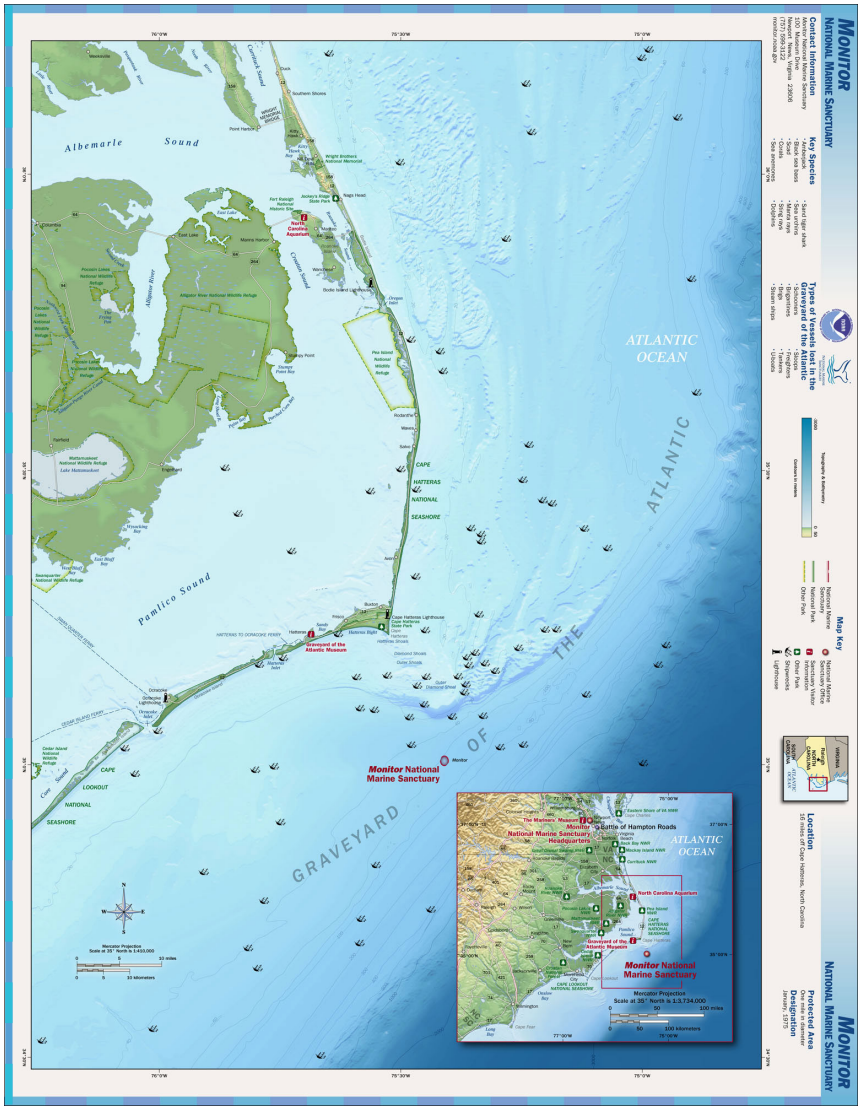
Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Begins Management Plan Review

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary staff initiated the management plan review process for the site at the sanctuary's fall 2008 advisory council meeting. Management plans are sanctuary-specific documents that guide the future management and activities of each site, providing a blueprint for protecting sanctuary resources. New challenges and opportunities emerge over time, and federal law requires periodic updating of sanctuary management plans. The current *Monitor* sanctuary's management plan was written in 1983. The sanctuary has achieved many significant milestones since its designation, so a new management strategy is needed to guide the site's future direction. The management plan review will take place through a proven, community-based process that guarantees opportunities for the public and government agencies to share their knowledge, voice their opinions, and directly participate as active stewards of the sanctuary.

Photo: The Mariners Museum

Sanctuary Partners with the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum

Monitor sanctuary staff began working with the state of North Carolina and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation in 2008 to create an exhibit design at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras, N.C. The exhibit will showcase *Monitor* artifacts and highlight the sanctuary's role in protecting one of our nation's most famous shipwrecks. This partnership between the foundation, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the state of North Carolina will highlight the history of the *Monitor* and other important maritime heritage resources lost off the Outer Banks of North Carolina. It will also provide a strategic venue in coastal North Carolina to communicate the mission and work of the sanctuary system to a larger public. The exhibit is expected to open within 36 months.



Sanctuary maps available at sanctuaries.noaa.gov

Exhibit Unveiled at the North Carolina Aquarium

Sanctuary staff helped support a multi-media presentation at the North Carolina Aquarium at Roanoke Island, including a high-definition screen, a mock-up of the *Monitor's* canvas canopy, new video text panels and new lighting. The Graveyard of the Atlantic exhibit, located next to a 300,000 gallon tank, tells the story of the USS *Monitor* and the sanctuary. The large tank houses a 1:3 scale replica of the USS *Monitor* wreck site and is also home to numerous marine species found in the waters surrounding the site. With the USS *Monitor* located 16 miles off the coast of North Carolina in 240 feet of water, the scaled replica allows visitors to get a glimpse of the wreck without getting their feet wet.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Adds Two New Seats

The *Monitor* sanctuary revised its sanctuary advisory council charter in 2008, adding two seats to the council in order to better serve its constituents. The new recreational/commercial fishing seat and youth seat will provide additional input from members of the public, further enhancing the council's advice to the sanctuary superintendent. The fishing seat will be selected from qualified individuals who are knowledgeable of the fishing rules and regulations as well as the local community. The non-voting youth seat will represent the youth of the community, defined as ages 14-17, and will serve for a term of two years, helping to advise sanctuary management on issues that affect the youth of today and their future.