



Courtesy Todd Marsee, Michigan Sea Grant



Courtesy Doug Helton, NOAA



Courtesy Victor Lundquist, NMFS-AFSC

Courtesy Jean Kenyon, NOAA



Courtesy Laurel Jennings, NOAA



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Courtesy Doug Helton, NOAA





Courtesy Caroline Rogers, USGS



Courtesy Todd Marsee, Michigan Sea Grant



Courtesy Tony Perry, NOAA

PROTECT THE EARTH

Courtesy NOAA



In addition to exploring and understanding the Earth, NOAA programs are also concerned with protecting Earth's Ecosystems. Here's a little challenge: How many benefits can you think of that depend on oceans and coasts? Next, how many things can you think of that might damage oceans and coasts? Your list of benefits should include food, habitat for thousands of plants and animals, marine transportation, fishing, tourism and recreation, and places for communities (more than half of the U.S. population lives and works within 50 miles of the coast). Your list of threats may include pollution (many kinds), habitat destruction for development (many types), overuse (such as over-fishing), storms, and climate change.

NOAA's mission is to find ways to enjoy the benefits of oceans and coasts and at the same time protect and restore these resources for future generations. NOAA programs include protected areas, endangered species, fisheries, pollution control, and projects to restore damaged resources. Volunteers are an important part of many of these projects. In fact, the key to protecting Earth's Ecosystems is public understanding and action. **YOU CAN HELP PROTECT THE EARTH BY TEACHING OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT EARTH'S ECOSYSTEMS!**

The more you know, the more you can do! The activities in this section will give you some tools for teaching other people about what **EVERYONE** can do to help protect the ecosystems that sustain life on Earth.

Courtesy Kathy Crane, NOAA

