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# OSU Researchers Propose Sea Floor Map Plan

CORVALLIS, Ore., Apr. 8, 2006

**(AP)** Researchers at Oregon State University and other state agencies are proposing the most ambitious mapping ever done of the sea floor off Oregon \_ and are hoping for state and federal funding to get it done.

Their idea is to produce a highly detailed map using multibeam sonar of the 3-mile-wide strip of ocean bottom along Oregon's coast, an area of 950 square nautical miles of undersea terrain that is now understood only in crude terms.

Researchers say the two-year, \$5.6 million project would produce long-term benefits for everything from fisheries management to tsunami planning and creation of marine reserves.

Supporters plan to take the idea to the State Land Board, which consists of Oregon's governor, secretary of state and treasurer. State and federal support will ultimately be sought.

About 95 percent of Oregon's territorial ocean region is known only by crude depth charts and contours, experts say.

Without a more coordinated and focused research plan, the scientists say, it will take decades to completely map this area using the current fragmented and piecemeal approach.

A total of 20 different OSU and state agency officials signed a statement saying, "Understanding the nature of Oregon's Territorial Sea is critical to sustaining sport and commercial fisheries, coastal tourism, and a broad range of other ocean derived ecosystem services valued by Oregonians, in addition to addressing the threat posed by a major tsunami."

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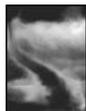
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