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Contact: Lou Cafiero
(240) 205-0400

**LEADING EXPERTS TO DISCUSS STATE OF THE WORLD'S OCEANS
AT CAPITOL HILL OCEAN WEEK FORUM**

Topics to include developing a legislative agenda for the oceans, the future of ocean management and the effects of ocean noise on marine mammals.

Washington, D.C., June 4, 2007 — Leading ocean experts from the federal government, private industry, academia and nonprofit organizations will convene in Washington, D.C., for Capitol Hill Ocean Week from June 5-7 to review the current state of the oceans and discuss how to best protect them. The three-day forum, hosted by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, will feature presentations by such dignitaries as ocean explorer Jean-Michel Cousteau, Senator Ted Stevens, Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Co-chair Leon Panetta and Vikki Spruill, president and CEO of the Ocean Conservancy.

- WHO:** Speakers and attendees include members of Congress as well as representatives from federal and state governments, industry, academia and nonprofit organizations.
- WHAT:** Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2007 is an annual event coordinated by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The three-day forum features ocean leaders participating in panel discussions on a variety of ocean and coastal issues, including ocean legislation, planning future ocean management, underwater acoustic impacts on marine mammals, the economics of coastal communities, and others.
- WHERE:** Reserve Officers Association, Fifth Floor, One Constitution Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. (See NMSF Web site below for latest schedule and locations)
- WHEN:** June 5-7, 2007. The Honorable Leon Panetta will deliver the opening keynote address at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 5. The conference continues from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., June 6 & 7.
- WHY:** Through public and private sector partnerships, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation creates conservation-based programs designed to preserve, protect and promote America's underwater treasures. The foundation supports the outreach and education efforts of the National Marine Sanctuary Program, managed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Capitol Hill Ocean Week is one of the main programs coordinated by the foundation that bring together a wide-range of stakeholders to discuss current ocean and coastal issues.

For more details about the Capitol Hill Ocean Week events, including the schedule of sessions, speakers and their biographies, please visit the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Web site at www.nmsfocean.org. For interviews with speakers and honorees, or if any member of the media wishes to attend any part of the three-day conference, please contact Lou Cafiero at (240) 205-0400.

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