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Joint Initiative Hosts West Coast Ocean Leadership Roundtable in Seattle

January 27, 2016 (Seattle, WA)—Today, the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative (Joint Initiative) will host the West Coast Ocean Leadership Roundtable that convenes leaders in important sectors to identify regional approaches to major ocean challenges, generate creative solutions, and inspire state and local leadership. This Roundtable is third in a series of four roundtables hosted by the Joint Initiative as part of its 2014-2016 strategy to engage and generate conversation around ocean policy reform at the national, regional, state and local levels. Already, the Joint Initiative hosted the East Coast Ocean Leadership Roundtable in New York and the Arctic Ocean Leadership Roundtable in Fairbanks and Barrow, Alaska.

“The West Coast and the Pacific Ocean are experiencing both rapid and massive changes in the ocean environment. From ocean acidification to shifts in the shipping industry, the changes along the West Coast are important topics for discussion because of the profound impact they are having on the communities that rely on the Pacific for their economic livelihood and quality of life,” said Joint Initiative co-chair William Ruckelshaus. “This meeting is important to better identify what works and what doesn’t and bring it to bear on the national policy conversation.”

The West Coast Ocean Leadership Roundtable will bring together thought leaders, scientists, and experts from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to discuss managing changes facing the ocean and coastal areas off the West Coast of the United States. From shifting ecosystems to emerging economic activities, West Coast communities, states, and industries are facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The meeting will focus on the following themes:

- The impacts of a changing climate and changing ocean chemistry.
- Building a more resilient West Coast.
- National security and safety.
- The ocean and coastal economy.

Through this week’s discussions in Seattle, the Joint Initiative hopes to gain an understanding of the unique challenges facing the West Coast and generate momentum for managing change along the coastline. Following the meeting, the Joint Initiative will leverage its extensive network to amplify messages about changes facing the West Coast to our nation’s leaders and elevate key policy and action priorities shared by diverse stakeholders.

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission. The primary goal of the Joint Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.