



## Science Needs Assessment Human Dimensions

### Conservation Issue

The participation of the public and resource users is critical to all aspects of resource management. A better understanding and quantification of the socioeconomic impacts of Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS), as well as public perception of the sanctuary and its resources, is needed to make informed management decisions.

### Description

MNMS and its outreach and educational partners, including museums and aquariums, are often referred to as important economic drivers to the state of North Carolina. Within the MNMS management plan, Strategy ED-3 of the Education and Outreach Action Plan section and Strategy RP-5 of the Resource

Protection Action Plan section note that it is essential for resource managers to identify key user groups and understand how policy and actions will affect and support the local and regional economies. In order to accurately assess any changes in impacts to local communities, benefits to local economies, and perceptions of key user groups such as the fishing and recreational diving communities, further baseline data are needed.



The wreck of the USS *Monitor*, a Civil War era ironclad, is a valuable historical and cultural resource that provides a unique window into the past, drawing interest from scuba divers from across the region. Photo: NOAA

## Data and Analysis Needs

1. Perceptions of residents and visitors regarding the importance and value of MNMS in coastal North Carolina and the region
2. Economic impacts of each user group or stakeholder within the region
3. Measurable impacts of MNMS on local communities and economies
4. Ability of MNMS and partner institutions (museums, aquariums, etc.) to stimulate local economies (e.g., heritage tourism)
5. Indicators of the changes in market and nonmarket economic values that can be used to evaluate the change in ecosystem services provided by natural and historical resources

## Potential Products

- Scientific papers and reports
- Baseline social science data
- Incremental reevaluation reports
- Communication and outreach materials aimed at stakeholder and community member audiences focused on the importance and value of MNMS



The USS *Monitor* Center at The Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia, provides visitors with the opportunity to learn about the USS *Monitor* via exhibits, including a full-scale replica of the vessel. Photo: NOAA

**For more information about this assessment, contact [monitor@noaa.gov](mailto:monitor@noaa.gov).**