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*Digital Images Available Upon Request*

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## **OCEAN EXPLORERS TO JOIN NOAA AND AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC AT FIRST FORUM TO DEVELOP A U.S. NATIONAL OCEAN EXPLORATION PROGRAM**

***About 95 percent of the ocean remains unexplored, leaving new species, historical artifacts, medicines and other resources potentially undiscovered***

- WHAT:** While the health and our understanding of the ocean are intricately connected to the health of our nation's economy, 95 percent of our ocean remains unexplored. However, experts hope that will change. More than 100 ocean explorers and representatives from federal agencies, state governments, non-governmental organizations, universities, ocean institutes and industry will gather to develop a National Ocean Exploration Program for the United States. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Aquarium of the Pacific are the hosting the invitation-only forum, on July 19-20 at the Southern California aquarium. The public can view live streaming video from the forum and share their comments with the explorers on [oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/oceanexploration2020](http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/oceanexploration2020). The forum culminates on July 21 with [Explorers Day](#), an event where the public can meet ocean explorers at the Aquarium, see remotely operated vehicles, interact with explorers at sea, see live video of the deep ocean and meet the lead character and creators of the children's television program *Octonauts*. Explorers Day was made possible by support from Felix Williams and Susan Slavik Williams. The event is part of the Aquarium's Ocean Exploration program, which includes the new *Wonders of the Deep* gallery featuring exhibits funded by the Richard Lounsbery Foundation. More people have walked on the moon, more than 240,000 miles away, than have gone to the deepest part of the ocean, less than seven miles deep. Humans rely on the ocean for oxygen, food, recreation, medicines, commerce and other resources.
- WHEN:** **Forum:** Fri.-Sat., July 19-20 / **Explorers Day:** Sun., July 21, 2013, from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- WHERE:** **Aquarium of the Pacific, 100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, CA 90802**
- INFO:** 562-590-3100 / [aquariumofpacific.org](http://aquariumofpacific.org) / [oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/oceanexploration2020](http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/oceanexploration2020)
- PARTNERS:** Forum partners include: NOAA, Aquarium of the Pacific, the Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration, the Schmidt Ocean Institute, Google, Inc., the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Esri, NASA, the National Geographic Society, the National Research Foundation, the Ocean Exploration Trust, the Roddenberry Foundation, the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Department of State.
- NOAA:** NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research explores the ocean for the purpose of discovery and the advancement of knowledge. NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and other [social media channels](#).
- AQUARIUM:** The nonprofit [Aquarium of the Pacific](#) is a leader in ocean exploration education, bringing current ocean exploration and research initiatives to the forefront and connecting the public to scientists and explorers daily. Explorers Day is included with general admission: \$25.95 adult (12+), \$22.95 senior (62+), \$14.95 child (3-11), and free for children under age 3 and Aquarium members. Join them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and other social media channels.