

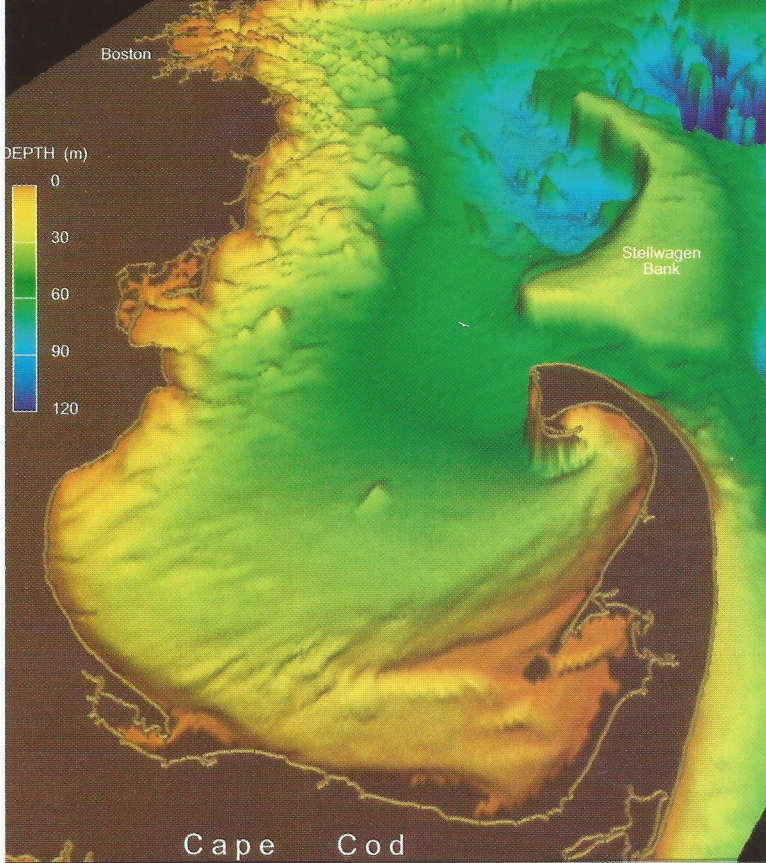
STELLWAGEN BANK National Marine Sanctuary

*An investment
in our nation's
environmental future*

Andy Martinez

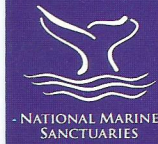


Cape Ann



Cape Cod

US Geological Survey



Center for Coastal Studies

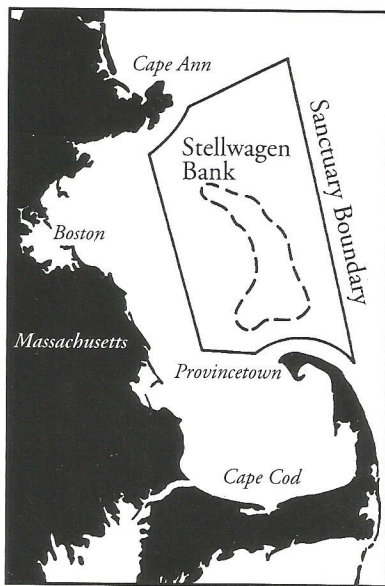


Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

The Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 638 square nautical miles (842 square miles) of open ocean, stretching between Cape Ann and Cape Cod at the mouth of Massachusetts Bay. Here, the surface of the ocean may look no different than any other spot off the New England coast. But below the surface sits a geological feature that makes this part of the Gulf of Maine particularly productive and worthy of special protection.

Underneath the waves, the Bank reaches up from the depths, levelling off at an average of 100 feet below the water's surface and partially blocking the mouth of the bay. The shallow southwest corner has a depth of only 65 feet. Cold water containing nutrients

from the depths creeps up along the Bank's flanks, reaching sunlight in the upper levels of the water column. This meeting of food and light supports a rich diversity of marine life ranging from small, single-celled plants to some of the largest animals alive today — the great whales. These majestic marine mammals, including the endangered northern right whale, humpback whale, and fin whale, use parts of the Sanctuary for their spring and summer feeding grounds.



Visitors are welcome to the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary — to traverse its waters, to fish its depths for a wide variety of species, to view its varied marine life, and to study its secrets. This natural environment is one of nature's gifts all of us can share. But this gift, like others of value, requires care and attention in order to endure for the benefit and enjoyment of current users and future generations. To that end, the Sanctuary supports a wide range of research and educational efforts that contribute to better understanding and management of this area today and for years to come.

Gerry E. Studds

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