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## **MPA Watch**

## **Press Kit**



## Press Kit

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### MPA Watch Fact Sheet

#### MPA Watch Facts and Figures (2010-2015):

- Land-based surveys completed: 10,000+
- Boat-based surveys completed: 275+
- Volunteers actively engaged: 850+
- Number of MPAs Surveyed: 35
- Number of MPA Watch Control Sites: 53
- Geographic Span: Mendocino County to San Diego County
- To date, volunteers have submitted 20486 surveys

#### What is an MPA?

As defined by the World Wildlife Fund, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are areas designated and effectively managed to protect marine ecosystems, processes, habitats, and species, which can contribute to the restoration and replenishment of resources for social, economic, and cultural enrichment.

#### What is MPA Watch?

MPA Watch is a community science program that trains volunteers to observe and collect data on human uses of coastal and marine resources both inside and outside of marine protected areas (MPAs). Volunteers use standardized protocols to collect relevant, scientifically rigorous, and broadly accessible data.

Data are meant to inform the management, enforcement, and science of California's marine protected areas, and allow our network of programs and networks to track how the public uses coastal areas.



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By involving local communities in this MPA monitoring, MPA Watch programs inspire and empower stewardship, and educate the public about California's ocean ecosystems.

### **Networks currently training and supporting California MPA Watch volunteers:**

- **The Bay Foundation**
- **California Academy of Sciences**
- **California Ocean Science Trust**
- **Greater Farallones Association**
- **Green Info Network**
- **Heal the Bay**
- **Lighthawk**
- **Los Angeles Waterkeeper**
- **Marin Environmental Action Committee**
- **Orange County Coastkeeper**
- **The Otter Project**
- **Santa Barbara Channelkeeper**
- **West Marin Environmental Action Committee**
- **WILDCOAST**

### **Resources:**

#### **MPA Watch**

<http://www.mpawatch.org/site>

#### **More information about California MPAs and how to get involved**

<http://www.californiampas.org/>

#### **Information regarding California's MPA Collaborative network**

<http://www.mpacollaborative.org/>



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**California Department of Fish & Wildlife**

<http://dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/>

**California Ocean Protection Council**

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/>

**Ocean Science Trust**

<http://calost.org/>

For partnership opportunities or to get involved with MPA Watch programs, please contact any of the networks listed above or visit [www.MPAWatch.org](http://www.MPAWatch.org) for more information.

If you are interested in working with MPA Watch data, summary data can be found on the MPA Watch website's mapping page at [www.mpawatch.org/site/mpamap](http://www.mpawatch.org/site/mpamap). This webpage will allow you to explore MPA Watch sites, find locations that currently have data available, and view some simple aggregations.

To learn more about MPA Watch technical coordination or to request access to raw data, please contact the California MPA Watch Coordinator at [angela@wildcoast.org](mailto:angela@wildcoast.org).

### **Boiler Plate:**

**This should be included with every media outreach and on the website:**

Creating Human Use Profiles of California's Coastal Areas

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch is a network of programs that support healthy oceans through community science by collecting human use data in and around our protected areas. By training and supporting volunteers as community scientists, MPA Watch facilitates the collection of relevant, scientifically rigorous and broadly accessible data.

The data collected informs the science, management and enforcement of California's marine protected areas (MPAs) and coastal regions, documenting how coastal usage is changing as a result



of MPA implementation. By involving local communities in this important work, MPA Watch programs inspire and empower stewardship while educating community members about California's ocean ecosystems.

Formed into a cohesive statewide network in 2014 with the support of the Resources Legacy Fund, the California MPA Watch program has collected over 20,000 surveys as of August, 2018, and has engaged approximately 2,000 community scientist volunteers. All volunteers use standardized data collection and reporting methods, and submit data for inclusion in a quality controlled centralized information management system.

MPA Watch's core goals are:

1. To document human uses in MPAs and track trends over time
2. To provide contextual information on human use for interpretation of biological monitoring data
3. To inform MPA enforcement and engagement decisions regarding human activity inside MPAs
4. To train MPA Watch volunteers as stewards and effective public educators regarding MPAs

### **MPA Watch by the Numbers**

Between 2011 and August 2018, over 1,500 Southern California MPA Watch volunteers walked a total of 10,606 survey miles over 77 survey transects during 10,750 land-based surveys! Over 1,300 boat-based surveys have also been submitted.

### **Key Talking Points to each Stakeholder Group MPA Watch Talking Points One-Sheet**

#### California's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

California's coast and ocean are among our most treasured resources. The productivity, wildness and beauty found here is central to California's identity, heritage and economy.

California Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were designed by local stakeholders with guidance and feedback from scientists, managing agencies, experts, policymakers, and the general public, to achieve goals set forth in California's Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), which was passed in 1999.



MPAs conserve biological diversity and protect a variety of marine habitats, communities and ecosystems for their intrinsic value, while allowing for human use of marine resources. By protecting sensitive ocean and coastal habitat, marine life flourishes and, in turn, creates a healthier system overall.

California now leads the nation and the world in ocean protection, ensuring the preservation of ecosystems along the coastline of California. Currently, however, less than 3% of all ocean waters around the world are protected by MPAs.

### **MPA Watch**

MPA Watch trains volunteers to observe and collect unbiased data on coastal and marine resource use. Volunteers will be trained to collect valuable data on ocean users and their activities, such as surfing, kayaking, fishing, boating, running, etc. Specifically, the MPA Watch volunteers will observe and record both consumptive and non-consumptive offshore and onshore activities in and around MPAs, which will improve our understanding of how people are using these new MPAs.

Data collected by these volunteers are meant to inform the management, enforcement, and science of California's marine protected areas (MPAs) and allow us to see how human uses are changing as a result of MPA implementation. By involving local communities in this important work, MPA Watch programs inspire and empower stewardship, and educate citizens about California's ocean ecosystems.

Not only do local volunteers learn about their coastal environment and become “community scientists” and stewards of the area in which they live, but they generate quantities of monitoring data that would not be possible under the current state budget.

### **MPA Watch Networks**

The California MPA Watch program is implemented by 10 different networks throughout the state. They include:



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#### California Academy of Science

The California Academy of Science is a renowned scientific and educational institution, dedicated to exploring, explaining, and sustaining life on Earth.

#### Greater Farallones Association

The Greater Farallones Association is dedicated to protecting Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary's wildlife and habitats through the development of a diverse community of informed and active ocean stewards.

#### Heal the Bay – Los Angeles County

Heal the Bay is an environmental nonprofit dedicated to making the coastal water and watersheds of Greater Los Angeles safe, healthy and clean.

#### Los Angeles Waterkeeper - Los Angeles

Founded in 1993, Los Angeles Waterkeeper's mission is to protect and restore Santa Monica Bay, San Pedro Bay, and adjacent waters through enforcement, fieldwork, and community action.

#### Orange County Coastkeeper - Orange County

The mission of Orange County Coastkeeper is to protect and promote water resources that are swimmable, drinkable, fishable, and sustainable.

#### Santa Barbara Channelkeeper - Santa Barbara County

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's mission is to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through science-based advocacy, education, field work and enforcement.

#### West Marin Environmental Action Committee - Marin County

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin is dedicated to the protection and appreciation of West Marin's wild lands, wildlife, wilderness, watersheds, and rural character.

#### WILDCOAST - San Diego County

WILDCOAST conserves coastal and marine ecosystems and wildlife.



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## **Centralized Information Management System**

The California Ocean Science Trust is collaborating with MPA Watch programs to enhance and expand the relevance and utility of the data collected by exploring differences, and where possible, aligning methods and protocols. Together they are developing best practices, guidelines, and protocols that can be implemented by current and future locally organized MPA Watch programs.

While MPA Watch programs all take a similar approach to measuring human use of ocean resources, there are also differences across programs as a result of program size, total area covered, variation in regional characteristics or specific questions that are of interest to individual programs. The statewide MPA Watch effort helps connect all these individual programs together to ensure consistent and efficient implementation across regions.

As part of the collective efforts to promote consistency across all programs, MPA Watch obtains advice from scientists experienced in measuring human use of natural resources and potential users of MPA Watch data, such as the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. Through this engagement MPA Watch can identify opportunities to increase the utility of their results and the rigor with which data are collected by volunteers.

## **For more information about MPAs and MPA Watch, go to:**

MPA Watch

<http://www.mpawatch.org>

California MPAs

<http://www.californiampas.org/>

California Department of Fish & Wildlife

<http://dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/>

The MPA Monitoring Enterprise

[http://www.monitoringenterprise.org/role/citizen\\_science.php](http://www.monitoringenterprise.org/role/citizen_science.php)