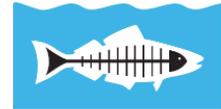
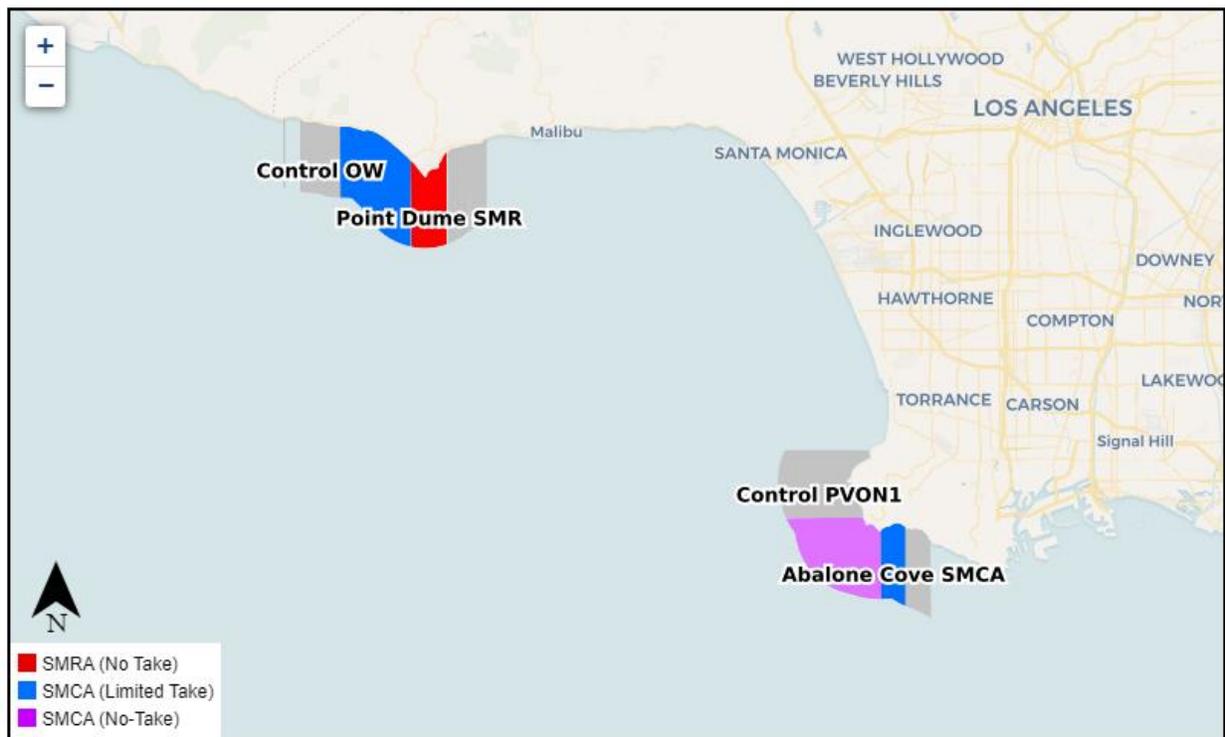




**Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch  
Regional Report  
LA County Shore-Based  
January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019**



Heal the Bay



California's network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) was established by the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) of 1999 to safeguard our marine resources and ecosystems. To ensure success and to inform adaptive management, long-term monitoring of these protected areas must be conducted. Developed in 2008, MPA Watch was designed as a community science program to collect data on human use inside and outside MPAs. In Los Angeles County, the non-profit organization Heal the Bay manages MPA Watch shore-based data collection. Our volunteers monitor four MPAs: Abalone Cove State Marine Conservation Area, Point Vicente No-Take State Marine Conservation Area, Point Dume State Marine Conservation Area, and Point Dume State Marine Reserve.

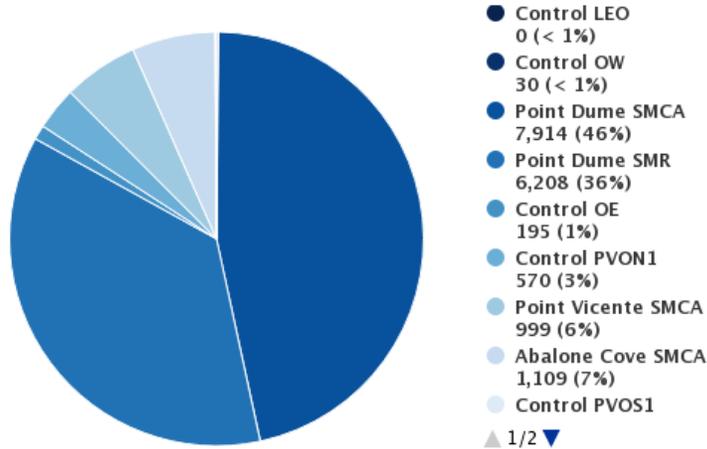
### **Executive Summary**

- In 2019, 53 volunteers conducted 462 surveys across 273 miles. They counted a total of 17,043 activities, the vast majority of which were non-consumptive.
- Rate of activities in LA County MPAs decreased or remained the same in the reporting period compared to the baseline.
- Consumptive activity made up only 1.5% of the total activity observed in 2019, which is an increase from a baseline of just 1% of total activity.
- Illegal take is a concern in the Point Vicente SMCA and the Point Dume SMR where volunteers observe illegal fishing both onshore and offshore.

## Human Use of MPAs January - December 2019

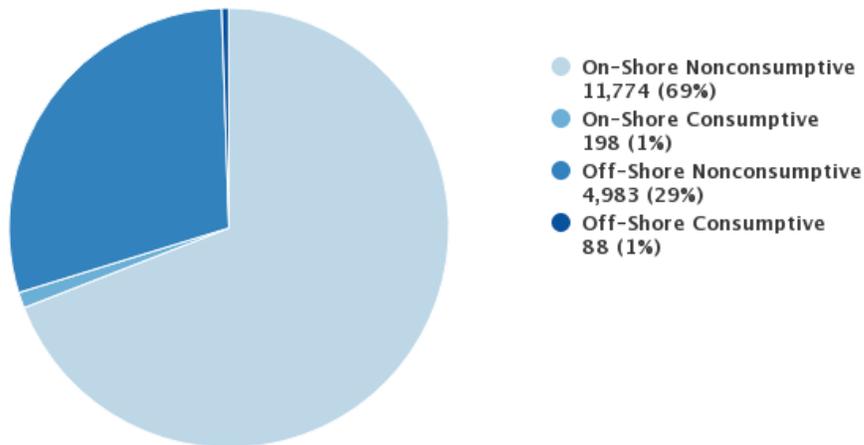
### Top 10 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019  
17,043 total activity events



### All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019  
17,043 activity events



### *Activity Classifications*

**On-Shore** - Activities that take place on a sandy or rocky beach. Excludes bluffs, trails, sea walls, parking lots, or other man-made structures. Includes recreation, tidepooling, shore-based fishing, etc.

**Off-Shore** - Activities that take place offshore, typically in knee-deep water or deeper. Includes surfing, SCUBA diving, kayaking, boat fishing, etc.

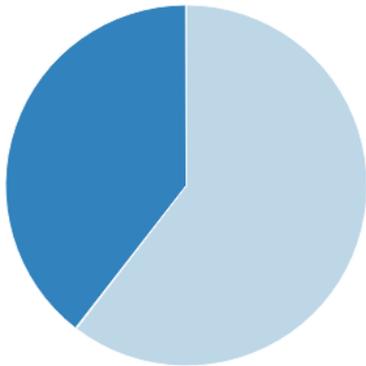
**Consumptive** - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

**Non-Consumptive** - An activity in which a natural resource is not collected.

## Activity by MPA

### Point Dume SMCA

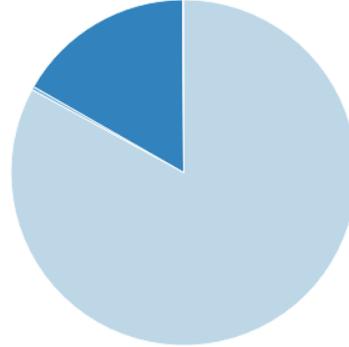
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019  
7,914 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive  
4,781 (60%)
- On-Shore Consumptive  
7 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive  
3,125 (39%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive  
1 (< 1%)

### Point Dume SMR

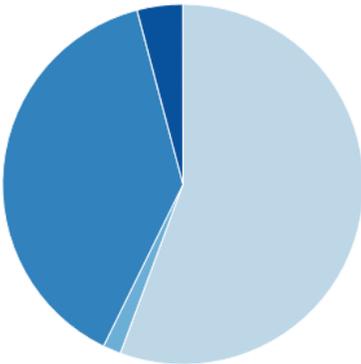
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019  
6,208 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive  
5,150 (83%)
- On-Shore Consumptive  
19 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive  
1,033 (17%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive  
6 (< 1%)

### Point Vicente SMCA

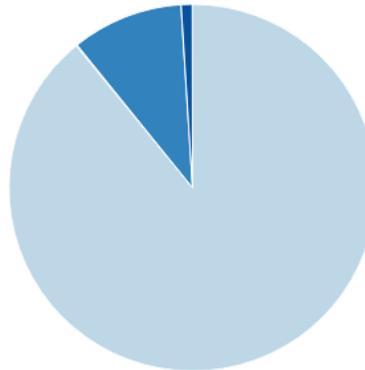
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019  
999 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive  
556 (56%)
- On-Shore Consumptive  
16 (2%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive  
386 (39%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive  
41 (4%)

### Abalone Cove SMCA

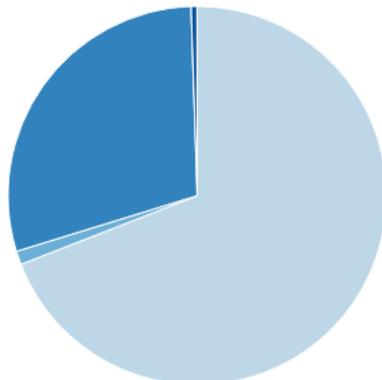
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019  
1,109 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive  
988 (89%)
- On-Shore Consumptive  
1 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive  
109 (10%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive  
11 (1%)

### All MPAs Combined

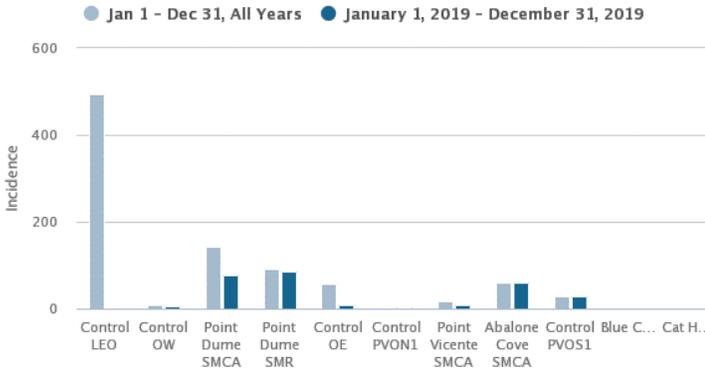
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019  
17,043 activity events



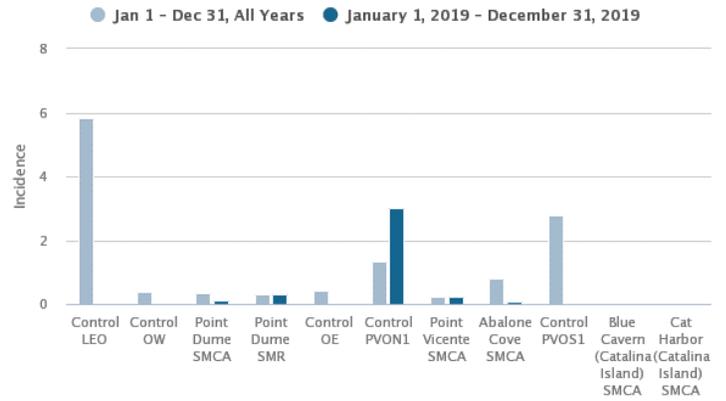
- On-Shore Nonconsumptive  
11,774 (69%)
- On-Shore Consumptive  
198 (1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive  
4,983 (29%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive  
88 (1%)

## Activity Incidence by MPA

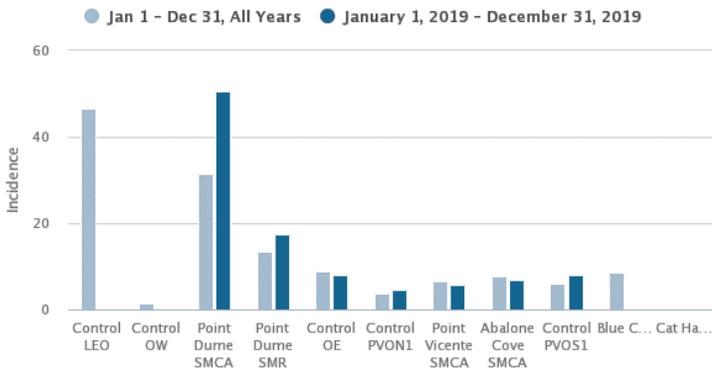
On-Shore, Non-Consumptive



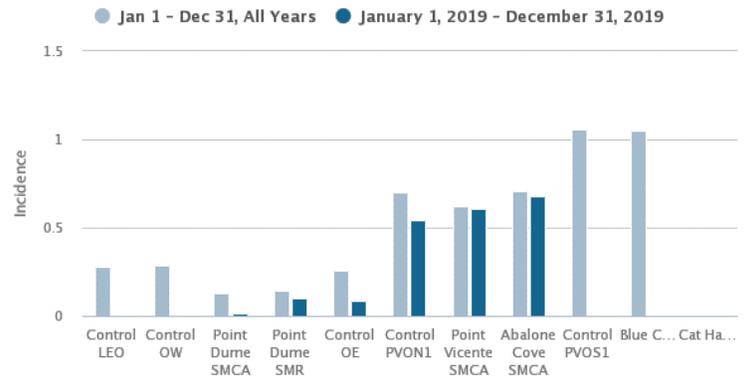
On-Shore, Consumptive



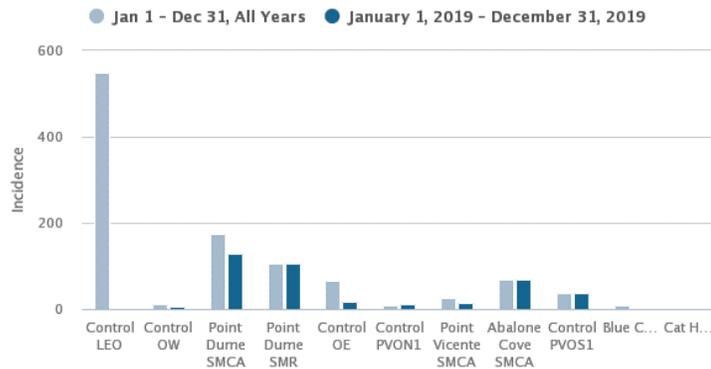
Off-Shore, Non-Consumptive



Off-Shore, Consumptive



All Activity



The above charts show incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in San Diego County. Incidence is calculated as number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.

## Activity Incidence by MPA

MPA	On-Shore				
	Non-Consumptive			Consumptive	
	Jan 1 Dec 31 All Years	Jan 1, 2019 through Dec 31, 2019		Jan 1 Dec 31 All Years	Jan 1, 2019 through Dec 31, 2019
Control LEO	494.4	nan		5.8	nan
Control OW	9.6	6.6		0.4	0.0
Point Dume SMCA	141.9	77.5		0.3	0.1
Point Dume SMR	90.5	86.8		0.3	0.3
Control OE	57.4	9.4		0.4	0.0
Control PVON1	4.1	2.9		1.3	3.0
Point Vicente SMCA	18.2	8.2		0.2	0.2
Abalone Cove SMCA	59.0	61.0		0.8	0.1
Control PVOS1	27.5	28.0		2.8	0.0
Blue Cavern (Catalina Island) SMCA	0.0	nan		0.0	nan
Cat Harbor (Catalina Island) SMCA	inf	nan		inf	nan
All MPAs Combined	72.8	43.2		0.5	0.7

MPA	Total Combined	
	Jan 1 Dec 31 All Years	Jan 1, 2019 through Dec 31, 2019
Control LEO	547.2	nan
Control OW	11.7	6.8
Point Dume SMCA	173.6	128.3
Point Dume SMR	104.3	104.7
Control OE	66.9	17.4
Control PVON1	9.9	11.1
Point Vicente SMCA	25.5	14.7
Abalone Cove SMCA	68.2	68.5
Control PVOS1	37.5	36.0
Blue Cavern (Catalina Island) SMCA	9.7	nan
Cat Harbor (Catalina Island) SMCA	inf	nan
All MPAs Combined	87.6	62.5

MPA	Off-Shore				
	Non-Consumptive			Consumptive	
	Jan 1 Dec 31 All Years	Jan 1, 2019 through Dec 31, 2019		Jan 1 Dec 31 All Years	Jan 1, 2019 through Dec 31, 2019
Control LEO	46.7	nan		0.3	nan
Control OW	1.5	0.2		0.3	0.0
Point Dume SMCA	31.3	50.6		0.1	0.0
Point Dume SMR	13.4	17.4		0.1	0.1
Control OE	8.9	7.9		0.3	0.1
Control PVON1	3.8	4.6		0.7	0.5
Point Vicente SMCA	6.5	5.7		0.6	0.6
Abalone Cove SMCA	7.7	6.7		0.7	0.7
Control PVOS1	6.1	8.0		1.1	0.0
Blue Cavern (Catalina Island) SMCA	8.6	nan		1.1	nan
Cat Harbor (Catalina Island) SMCA	inf	nan		inf	nan
All MPAs Combined	13.9	18.3		0.3	0.3

*The above table shows incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in San Diego County. Incidence is calculated as number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.*

### Notes on Calculating Incidence

The baseline rate for the reporting period was calculated by summing the total use count for each category during the same period from each previous year and dividing this value by the transect miles surveyed at each site. The miles surveyed were calculated by first identifying the length of each transect for all the MPA's in question and multiplying the length of the transect by the number of surveys that had been taken along that transect during the same time period. For MPA's with multiple transects, the total distance traveled for each transect within the MPA were summed together to get the total miles surveyed within that MPA. In the tables, "inf" references a rate too small to calculate and "nan" references a rate of 0.

## **Breakdown by MPA**

### **Point Dume State Marine Reserve**

Point Dume became a State Marine Reserve (SMR) in 2012 as part of the third phase of the California Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). Point Dume SMR is located at Point Dume in Malibu, California and encompasses a total of 7.53 square miles. Classified as an SMR, all take is strictly prohibited in this MPA. With panoramic views and miles of visibility down the Malibu coast, Point Dume is known today as an ideal location for hiking, rock climbing and beach recreation.

Centuries before the settlement of Spanish missionaries in the area, the indigenous Chumash tribe inhabited Point Dume. Living closely in relation to their natural environment, the Chumash treated Point Dume as a sacred place and a sun shrine. Point Dume's significance relates directly to its position, as it juts out into the Pacific Ocean. Chumash people used the top of Point Dume as an outlook to observe seasonal migrations of marine mammals, schools of fish, and movements of people along the coastline.<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, total activity count remained unchanged from previous years at 104.7 total activities per mile. This MPA was one of the few to see an increase in specific activity count, with offshore non-consumptive activity jumping from 13.4 in previous years to 17.4 in 2019. Consumptive activity remained unchanged in this MPA in 2019 and contributed to less than 1% of the total activity recorded, including both onshore and offshore. The most common activities recorded in this MPA in 2019 were sandy and rocky beach recreation, offshore recreation, surfing, and tidepooling.

### **Point Dume State Marine Conservation Area**

Located adjacent to the Point Dume State Marine Reserve, Point Dume SMCA encompasses 15.92 square miles and runs along Zuma and El Matador beaches in Malibu, CA to the northwest of Point Dume. Adopted in 2012 along with Point Dume SMR during phase three of the MLPA adoption process, this MPA was chosen as the location for a SMCA due to diverse habitats, high species diversity and monitoring & research opportunities. Similar to the Point Dume SMR, this site plays a significant role in Chumash maritime culture and is well suited for tribal co-management, maritime cultural preservation, and education and outreach.

As a conservation area, Point Dume SMCA does allow some consumptive activity. The recreational take by spearfishing of white seabass and pelagic finfish is permitted, along with the commercial take of swordfish by harpoon and coastal pelagic species by round

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, T., Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration - Point Dume Natural Preserve (2003). Retrieved from [https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/980/files/Point Dume MND\\_ Draft2.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/980/files/Point_Dume_MND_Draft2.pdf)

haul net, brail gear, and light boat. There is an incidental take limit of no more than 5% by commercial fishing activity, and take pursuant to beach nourishment and sediment management practices is also permissible.

Point Dume SMCA has the most activity of all survey sites in LA County with 46% of recorded activities. Total activity count in this MPA decreased from 173.6 in previous years to 128.3 in 2019. This MPA, however, still sees the highest activity rate of all four MPAs in LA County, both this year and in previous years. Offshore non-consumptive activity count saw an increase in 2019 from only 31.3 in previous years to 50.6 in 2019. Consumptive activity, both onshore and offshore, decreased in 2019 from previous years and together make up less than 1% of total activity in this MPA. As a highly trafficked sandy beach, it comes as no surprise that the most common activities in this MPA are sandy beach recreation, offshore recreation, and surfing.

### **Point Vicente No-Take State Marine Conservation Area**

Point Vicente State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) is a no-take MPA established in 2012. This MPA protects key habitats and covers fifteen square miles. Home to the Point Vicente Lighthouse and 3.7 miles of scenic shoreline, Point Vicente attracts many tourists. Beach access in this MPA is limited which makes beach recreation and other activities less likely, however, tourists can still enjoy the views and occasional wildlife viewing from the bluff trails. As a no-take SMCA, no recreational or commercial take is permitted within its boundaries. Specially permitted incidental take for infrastructure maintenance is legally permissible.

Point Vicente SMCA saw the most consumptive activity of all LA MPAs this year, as is consistent with all years of MPA Watch Data. A total of 41 counts of offshore non-consumptive activity and 16 counts of consumptive activity were recorded inside this protected area, making up 6% of the total activity. Similarly to other MPAs in LA County, the activity count at Point Vicente SMCA is lower than other years, totaling 14.7 activities per mile. The largest decrease of activity in 2019 was in onshore non-consumptive activity, dropping from 18.2 to just 8.2. The other categories of activity stayed relatively the same this year as compared to all other years. Point Vicente SMCA has the lowest total activity count of all four MPAs in LA County. The most common activities recorded in Point Vicente SMCA are rocky and sandy beach recreation, kayaking, sailing, and power boating.

### **Abalone Cove State Marine Conservation Area**

Located adjacent to Point Vicente SMCA, Abalone Cove SMCA spans just 1.2 miles of shoreline and encompasses only 4.7 square miles. The smallest of the MPAs in LA County, this protected area is located on the south of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. It

was adopted in 2012 and along with Point Vicente SMCA, includes the only south-facing headland in the entire region. The shoreline of this MPA is known for its rocky intertidal habitat. As an SMCA, Abalone Cove SMCA does allow some take of marine organisms. Within the MPA boundaries, the recreational take by spearfishing of white seabass and pelagic finfish; and market squid by hand-held dip net is permitted. The commercial take of swordfish by harpoon; and coastal pelagic species and Pacific bonito by round haul net, brail gear, and light boat are also permitted. Additionally, like Point Vicente SMCA, this MPA partially contains a superfund site, and therefore take pursuant to the mitigation actions of the superfund site is permitted inside Abalone Cove SMCA.

In 2019, onshore non-consumptive activity made up the vast majority of recorded activity inside Abalone Cove SMCA at 89%. Total activity count stayed the same in this MPA as compared to previous years, but onshore activity saw a decrease in 2019 from 0.8 activities per mile to just 0.1 activities per mile. There was a small increase in onshore non-consumptive activity count from 59.0 to 61.0. A small amount of consumptive activity was observed inside this MPA at 1% of the total activities. The most common activities in this MPA in 2019 were sandy and rocky beach recreation, making up 86% of the total. Other common activities were powerboating and other recreational boating, domestic animal walking and SCUBA diving.

### **Potential Violations**

The rate of consumptive activities in all LA MPAs surveyed by MPA Watch remains low, accounting for just over 1% of all activity. As compared to certain control sites, where consumptive activity observed was found to be as high as high as 28%, this percentage is very low. There is still some concern, however, with potential violations inside 2 MPAs: Point Vicente No-Take SMCA and Point Dume SMR. These two MPAs are the only sites where observers reported potential violations during 2019: 7 violations at Point Dume SMR and 13 violations at Point Vicente SMCA. Anecdotal evidence from MPA Watch observers, local residents, and Heal the Bay science staff presents a particular problem with illegal fishing activity in the Point Vicente SMCA, where illegal hook and line fishing, spearfishing, and lobster diving have been observed. It is important to note that, even if the noncompliance rate is low, illegal take from MPAs jeopardizes the success of the MPA and health of the ecosystems which they protect.

### **Next Steps**

In the coming years, Heal the Bay will continue as the shore-based partner for the statewide MPA Watch program. Through funding from the California Ocean Protection Council and the Resources Legacy Fund from the Once-Through Cooling Fund, Heal the Bay will continue recruiting and training new volunteers, updating our manual and

data sheets, and contributing data reports to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. We also are continuing to expand our monitoring program to include environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling of Point Dume MPAs through a partnership between the MPA Watch team and researchers at UCLA. We greatly look forward to participating in the 2022 decadal review of California's Marine Protected Areas by contributing data, participating in stakeholder engagement, and continuing to act as a steward of the MPAs of Los Angeles County.

### **Additional Information**

LA County MPA Watch is part of a larger statewide MPA Watch effort. For more information about this program, please visit [www.mpawatch.org](http://www.mpawatch.org). If you are interested in joining the Heal the Bay MPA Watch volunteer team, please attend one of our monthly volunteer orientations for more information. Volunteer orientations are held once a month, and are a necessary prerequisite to attend one of our 3 yearly MPA Watch 2-day trainings.

For additional information on MPA Watch, including survey sites, participating organizations, protocols and datasheets, media kit, and how to get involved, please visit [mpawatch.org](http://mpawatch.org). Connect with MPA Watch on social media @MPAWatchOrg.

To learn more about Heal the Bay's MPA Watch Program and to register for an orientation or training, please visit [www.healthebay.org/take-part](http://www.healthebay.org/take-part). For information on California's network of marine protected areas, please visit [californiampas.org](http://californiampas.org). For details on the rules, regulations and management of California's MPAs, please visit [wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs](http://wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs).

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