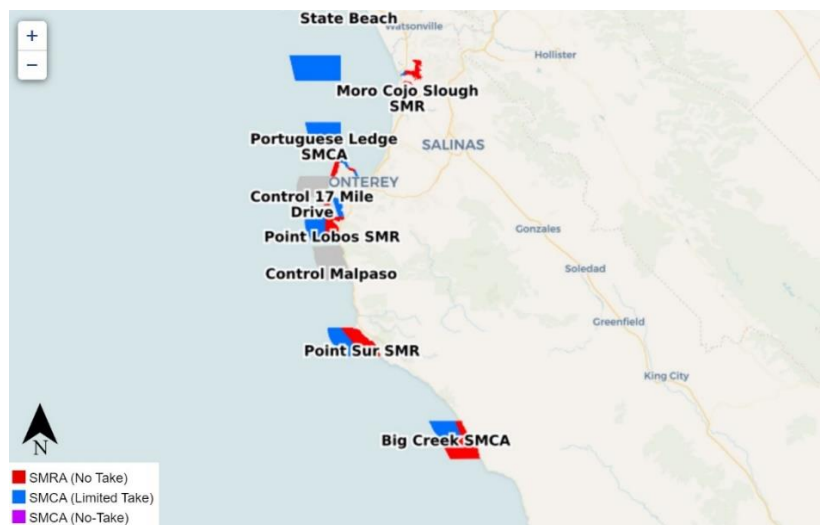




Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Regional Report Monterey County January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020



MPA Watch is a statewide collaborative effort to collect critical human use data to enhance the management and conservation of marine protected areas (MPAs). MPA Watch data informs the management, enforcement, and science of California's MPAs and allows us insight on 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 California communities about ocean ecosystems. MPA Watch trains volunteers to observe and collect unbiased data on coastal and marine resource use. MPA Watch in Monterey County is implemented through a joint effort among WILD COAST, The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, and California State Parks.

Executive Summary

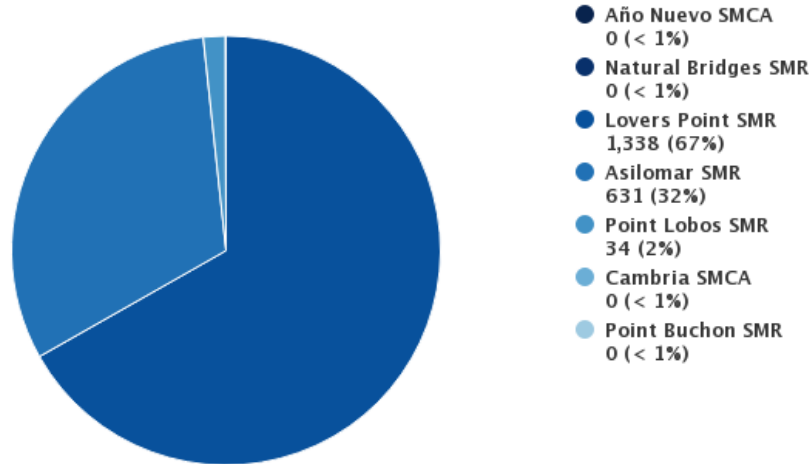
- Following local, state, and federal health guidelines regarding COVID-19, Monterey County's MPA Watch program suspended data collection from *March 16, 2020 - April 27, 2020*. In-person trainings for new volunteers were suspended starting *March 16, 2020* to adhere to physical distancing guidelines.
- Several California State Parks staff and docents were trained on MPA Watch transects at Asilomar State Beach in 2018. State Parks' new MPA Outreach and Education Project Coordinator, Erika Delemarre hopes to host a training refresher with select staff to ensure data collection in the second half of 2020.
- No data was collected from Año Nuevo, Natural Bridges, Cambria or Point Buchon due to low participation due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Human Use of MPAs January - June 2020

Overview

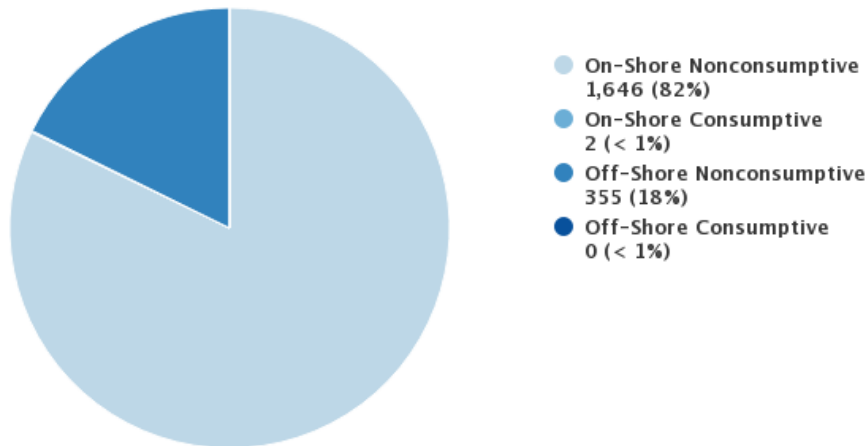
Top 7 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020
2,003 total activity events



All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020
2,003 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.

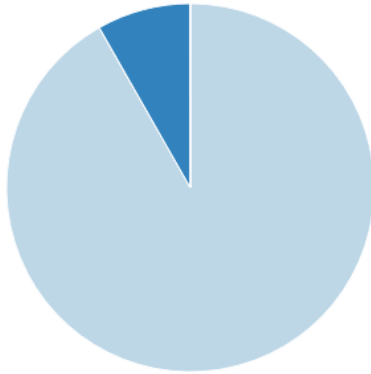
Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

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

Activity by MPA

Asilomar SMR

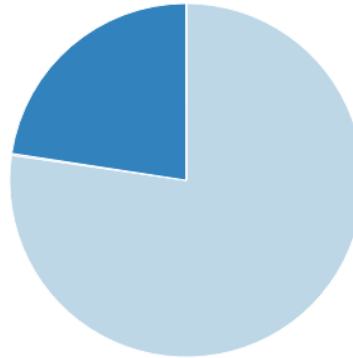
January 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020
631 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive
579 (92%)
- On-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
52 (8%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)

Lovers Point SMR

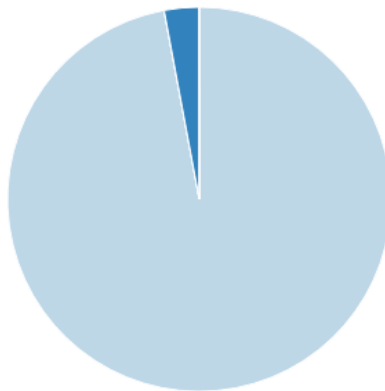
January 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020
1,338 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive
1,034 (77%)
- On-Shore Consumptive
2 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
302 (23%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)

Point Lobos SMR

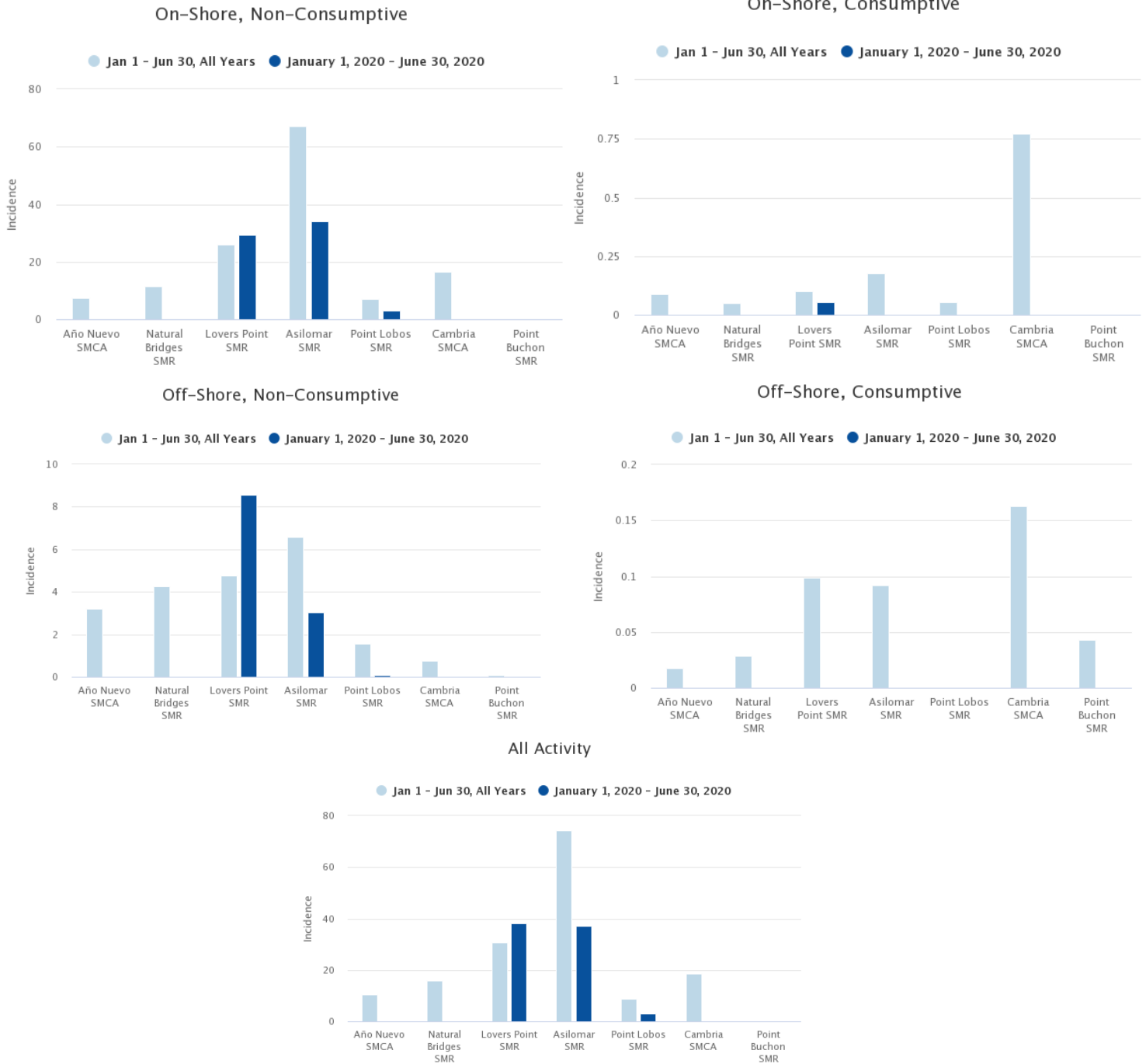
January 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020
34 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive
33 (97%)
- On-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
1 (3%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)

Año Nuevo SMCA and Natural Bridges SMR not shown due to no data collected. Cambria SMCA and Point Buchon SMR are part of San Luis Obispo County, but are still listed in as they are monitored by the same program.

Activity Incidence by MPA



The above charts show incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in Monterey County. Cambria SMCA and Point Buchon SMR are in San Luis Obispo 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 Jun 30 All Years	Jan 1, 2020 through Jun 30, 2020		Jan 1 Jun 30 All Years	Jan 1, 2020 through Jun 30, 2020	
Año Nuevo SMCA	7.3	nan		0.1	nan	
Natural Bridges SMR	11.6	nan		0.1	nan	
Lovers Point SMR	25.9	29.4		0.1	0.1	
Asilomar SMR	67.2	34.1		0.2	0.0	
Point Lobos SMR	7.1	2.9		0.1	0.0	
Cambria SMCA	16.7	nan		0.8	nan	
Point Buchon SMR	0.0	nan		0.0	nan	
All MPAs Combined	21.6	25.8		0.2	0.0	

MPA	Off-Shore					
	Non-Consumptive			Consumptive		
	Jan 1 Jun 30 All Years	Jan 1, 2020 through Jun 30, 2020		Jan 1 Jun 30 All Years	Jan 1, 2020 through Jun 30, 2020	
Año Nuevo SMCA	3.2	nan		0.0	nan	
Natural Bridges SMR	4.2	nan		0.0	nan	
Lovers Point SMR	4.8	8.6		0.1	0.0	
Asilomar SMR	6.6	3.1		0.1	0.0	
Point Lobos SMR	1.6	0.1		0.0	0.0	
Cambria SMCA	0.8	nan		0.2	nan	
Point Buchon SMR	0.1	nan		0.0	nan	
All MPAs Combined	3.0	5.6		0.1	0.0	

MPA	Total Combined			
	Jan 1 Jun 30 All Years	Jan 1, 2020 through Jun 30, 2020		
	Año Nuevo SMCA	10.6	nan	
Natural Bridges SMR	15.9	nan		
Lovers Point SMR	30.9	38.0		
Asilomar SMR	74.1	37.1		
Point Lobos SMR	8.7	3.0		
Cambria SMCA	18.4	nan		
Point Buchon SMR	0.1	nan		
All MPAs Combined	24.9	31.4		

The above table shows incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in Monterey County. Values shown as 'nan' means no data was collected during the reporting period. Cambria SMCA and Point Buchon SMR are in San Luis Obispo 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. Sites which did not have any data collected show an incidence of nan (not a number).

COVID-19

Monterey County Beach Closures due to COVID-19 (some local variations may occur)

April 3, 2020 Beaches limit number of entrants and may have closed parking areas

May 22, 2020 Beach is open for active recreation with social distancing. Limited beach access.

May 26, 2020 Lovers Point Beach open for water activities. No beach use.

June 12, 2020 Charter boat operations begin opening

July 3, 2020 Beaches close for Fourth of July weekend. Swimming, surfing, and other water activities are still allowed. No sitting or BBQing.

July 6, 2020 Beaches reopen, social distance guidelines in order

Following local, state, and federal health guidelines regarding COVID-19, Monterey County's MPA Watch program suspended data collection from *March 16, 2020 - April 27, 2020*. In-person trainings for new volunteers were suspended starting *March 16, 2020* to adhere to physical distancing guidelines.

Due to the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, all sites except for Lovers Point SMR showed lower sampling rates than previous years, possibility resulting in error in the calculation of incidence rates due to low sample size.

Breakdown by MPA

Año Nuevo State Marine Conservation Area

No data collected during the reporting period due to COVID-19.

Natural Bridges State Marine Reserve

No data collected during the reporting period due to COVID-19

Lovers Point State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and June of 2020, Monterey MPA Watch data shows a use rate of 38.0 in Lovers Point State Marine Reserve (SMR). This is a 22.9% increase in human use within the MPA compared to the rate calculated from the data collected by MPA Watch volunteers between the months of January and June in previous years.

People in the MPA were only engaging in onshore non-consumptive and offshore non-consumptive activities, a majority taking place onshore. Two potential violations occurred at Lovers Point. Lovers Point has a very low violation presence, showing 0% during this reporting period. However, volunteers still reported potential violations, and data may be skewed from low survey numbers during COVID.

Asilomar State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and June of 2020, Monterey MPA Watch data shows a use rate of 37.1 in Asilomar State Marine Reserve (SMR). This is a 50% decrease in human use within the MPA compared to the rate calculated from the data collected by MPA Watch volunteers between the months of January and June in previous years.

People in the MPA were primarily taking part in both onshore and offshore non-consumptive activities, with a majority taking place onshore. These activities accounted for 100% of the observations logged in MPA Watch surveys. No consumptive activities were recorded during the reporting period. This reflects a history of low violations occurring, only happening during 4% of surveys in 2019. This reporting period shows a 0% violation presence at the MPA. However, data may be skewed from low survey numbers due to COVID.

Point Lobos State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and June of 2020, Monterey MPA Watch data shows a use rate of 3.0 in Point Lobos State Marine Reserve (SMR). This is a 34.4% decrease in human use within the MPA compared to the rate calculated from the data collected by MPA Watch volunteers between the months of January and June in previous years.

People in the MPA were primarily taking part in both onshore and offshore non-consumptive activities, with a majority taking place onshore. These activities accounted for 100% of the observations logged in MPA Watch surveys. No consumptive activities were recorded during the reporting period.

Potential Violations

Rate of consumptive activities observed remains relatively low in all MPAs surveyed, accounting for less than 1% of all observations recorded. According to volunteers, two violations occurred, both at Lovers Point. Lovers Point Beach is an easily accessible site as well as a popular tourist destination, which most likely contributed to the presence of violations. One incident of two men fishing, which was reported to non-emergency police. Another additional potential violation occurred with shore-based hand collection of biota where a child and adult were spotted looking through a tidepool with a bucket in hand. Lovers Point and Asilomar have historically low percentages of violations, with <1% and 4% of consumptive activities at Lovers Point and Asilomar last year, respectively.



Next Steps

The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History aims to increase the number of volunteers conducting human use data collection in Monterey County's Marine Protected Areas. While much of our volunteering has been on hold due to Covid-19, we are looking into planning a virtual MPA Watch training on Zoom for our new and current volunteers so that they are able to get involved and collect data without having to meet in person or shadow other volunteers, which is how we have trained volunteers in the past. We would be able to offer volunteers opportunities while increasing the amount of MPA Watch volunteers at the museum.

MPA Watch intends to collaborate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to distribute MPA Watch reports to regional managers in order to improve the management and enforcement of MPAs. MPA Watch is also looking to expand its network of partner organizations to enhance the scale and scope of MPA monitoring across California. MPA Watch will be making our human use data available on our website to make it accessible to partners, resource agencies, municipalities, and other interested parties. One of the hopes of MPA Watch is that volunteers and community members help spread knowledge and awareness of MPAs to the communities that surround them, inspiring marine stewardship in our populations.

Additional Information

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. Connect with MPA Watch on social media @MPAWatchOrg.

For additional information regarding MPAs and regulations specific to the various classifications of MPAs please visit wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs. If you see an activity that violates MPA regulations, please call CalTip to report the violation at (888) 334-2258.