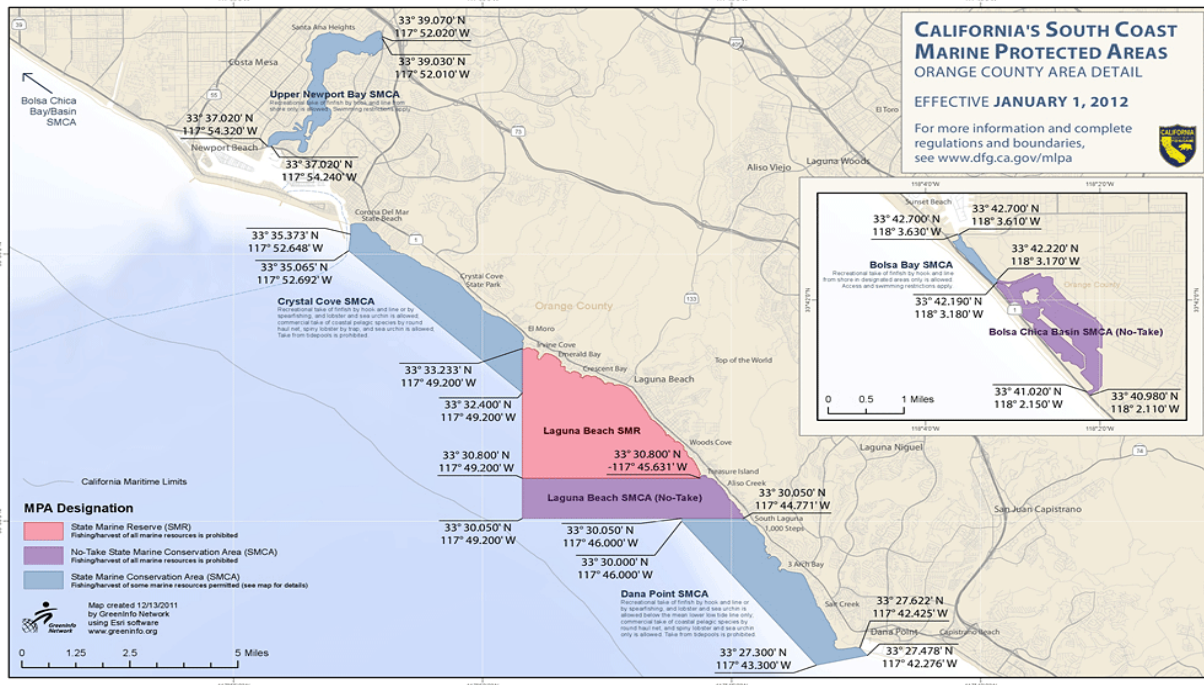


Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Regional Report Orange County January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022



Orange County Coastkeeper (Coastkeeper) is a nonprofit clean water organization that serves as a proactive steward of our fresh and saltwater ecosystems. We work collaboratively with diverse groups in the public and private sectors to achieve healthy, accessible, and sustainable water resources for the region. We implement innovative and effective programs in education, advocacy, restoration, research, enforcement, and conservation.

The Orange County Marine Protected Area (OCMPA) Watch Program enlists volunteers, community groups and local government to monitor human activity in the Laguna Beach State Marine Reserve and Conservation Areas (SMRs & SMCAs), Crystal Cove, Dana Point, and Upper Newport Bay State Marine Conservation Areas (SMCAs). MPA Watch is a statewide program with the Orange County component run by Orange County Coastkeeper (OCCK). The goal of MPA watch is to provide information to enhance management and performance of Marine Protected Areas.

Executive Summary

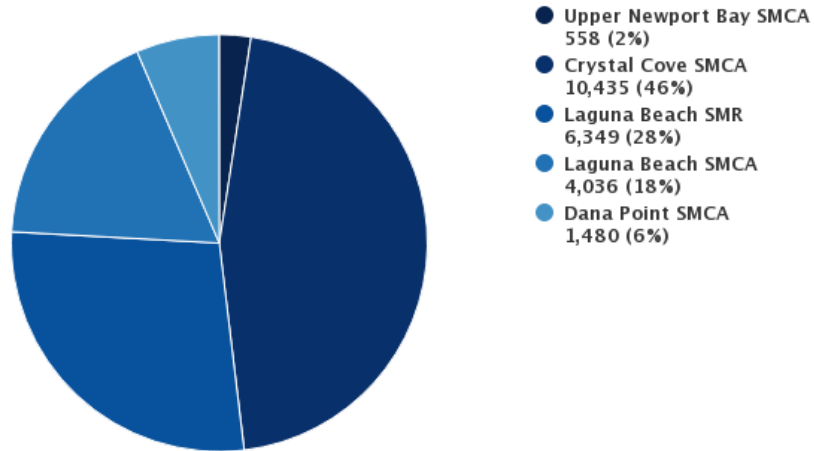
- We continue to follow local, state, and federal health guidelines regarding COVID-19.
- During this period 468 surveys were completed at 30 MPA survey sites by 10 volunteers. There were 26 potential violations observed out of 22,858 total activities documented.

Human Use of MPAs January – June 2022

Overview

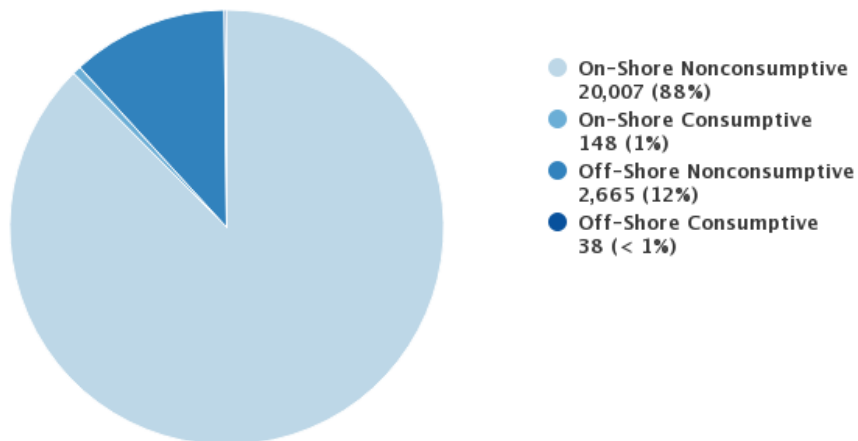
Top 5 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
22,858 total activity events



All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
22,858 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.

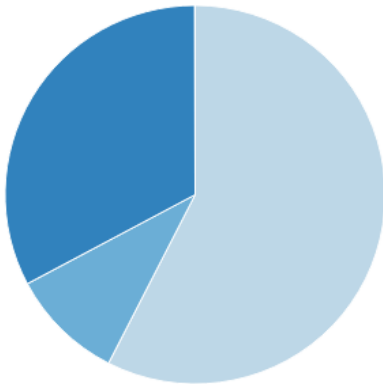
Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

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

Activity by MPA

Upper Newport Bay SMCA

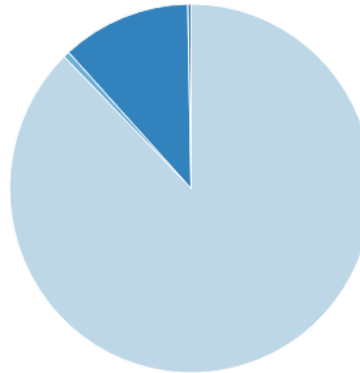
January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
558 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive 321 (58%)
- On-Shore Consumptive 54 (10%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive 183 (33%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive 0 (< 1%)

Crystal Cove SMCA

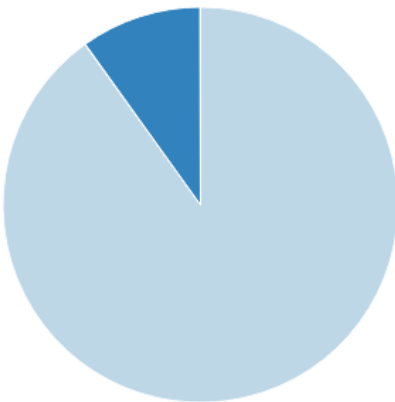
January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
10,435 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive 9,149 (88%)
- On-Shore Consumptive 57 (1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive 1,200 (11%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive 29 (< 1%)

Laguna Beach SMCA

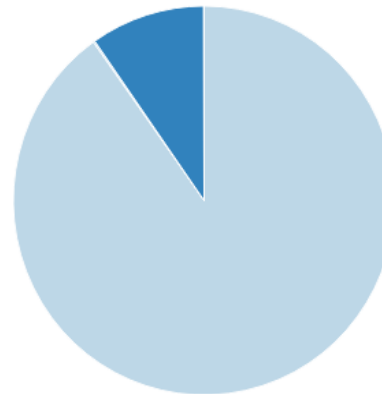
January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
4,036 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive 3,635 (90%)
- On-Shore Consumptive 1 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive 400 (10%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive 0 (< 1%)

Laguna Beach SMR

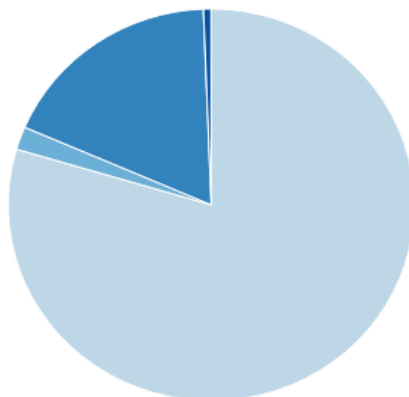
January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
6,349 activity events



- On-Shore Nonconsumptive 5,724 (90%)
- On-Shore Consumptive 8 (< 1%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive 617 (10%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive 0 (< 1%)

Dana Point SMCA

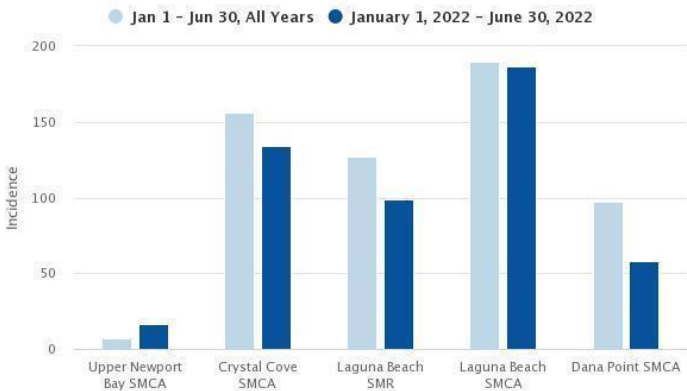
January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022
1,480 activity events



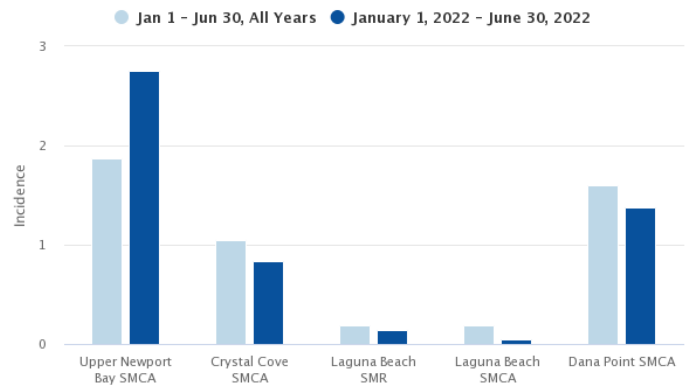
- On-Shore Nonconsumptive 1,178 (80%)
- On-Shore Consumptive 28 (2%)
- Off-Shore Nonconsumptive 265 (18%)
- Off-Shore Consumptive 9 (1%)

Activity Incidence by MPA

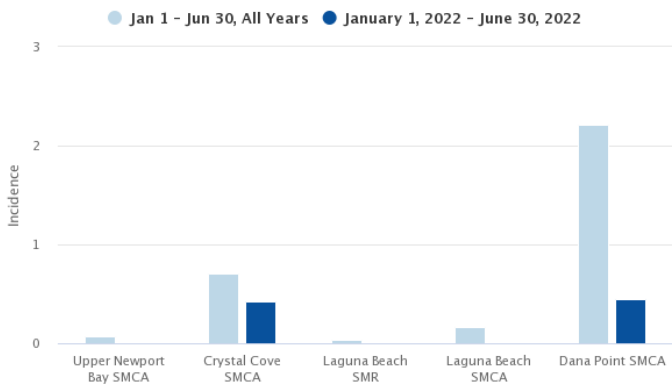
On-Shore, Non-Consumptive



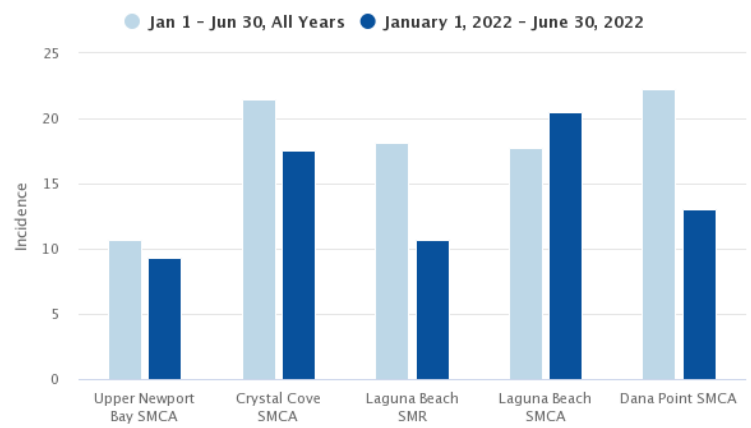
On-Shore, Consumptive



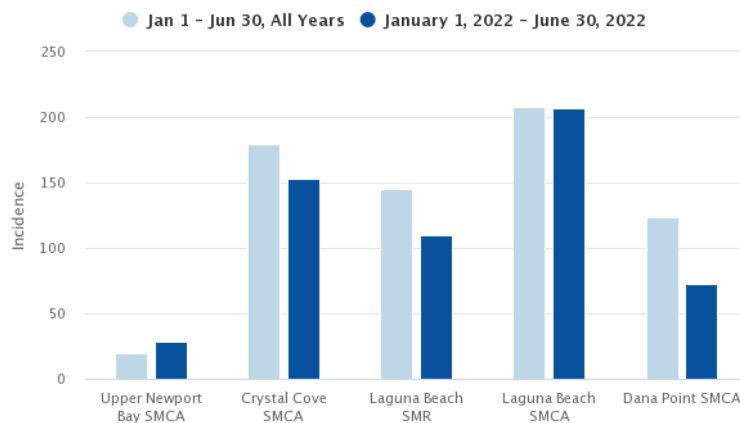
Off-Shore, Consumptive



Off-Shore, Non-Consumptive



All Activity



The above charts show incidence values for some MPAs monitored by MPA Watch in Orange County. **Incidence is calculated as the number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.**

Activity Incidence by MPA

On-Shore					
MPA	Non-Consumptive			Consumptive	
	Jan 1 Jun 30	Jan 1, 2022 through	Jan 1 Jun 30	Jan 1, 2022 through	
	▲ All Years	◆ Jun 30, 2022	◆ All Years	◆ Jun 30, 2022	◆
Upper Newport Bay SMCA	6.9	16.4	1.9	2.8	
Crystal Cove SMCA	156.3	133.8	1.0	0.8	
Laguna Beach SMR	127.0	99.0	0.2	0.1	
Laguna Beach SMCA	189.9	186.4	0.2	0.1	
Dana Point SMCA	97.0	58.0	1.6	1.4	
All MPAs Combined	118.7	107.8	0.9	0.8	

Off-Shore					
MPA	Non-Consumptive			Consumptive	
	Jan 1 Jun 30	Jan 1, 2022 through	Jan 1 Jun 30	Jan 1, 2022 through	
	▲ All Years	◆ Jun 30, 2022	◆ All Years	◆ Jun 30, 2022	◆
Upper Newport Bay SMCA	10.7	9.3	0.1	0.0	
Crystal Cove SMCA	21.5	17.5	0.7	0.4	
Laguna Beach SMR	18.2	10.7	0.0	0.0	
Laguna Beach SMCA	17.8	20.5	0.2	0.0	
Dana Point SMCA	22.3	13.1	2.2	0.4	
All MPAs Combined	18.7	14.4	0.6	0.2	

Total Combined			
MPA	Jan 1 Jun 30	Jan 1, 2022 through	
	▲ All Years	◆ Jun 30, 2022	◆
Upper Newport Bay SMCA	19.6	28.5	
Crystal Cove SMCA	179.6	152.6	
Laguna Beach SMR	145.4	109.8	
Laguna Beach SMCA	208.0	207.0	
Dana Point SMCA	123.0	72.9	
All MPAs Combined	139.0	123.2	

The above table shows incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in Orange 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.

COVID-19

In 2022 we continued to run the program while recognizing and adapting to the pandemic. We continued our practice of live online classroom training followed by individual or small group field training for new volunteers. While the pandemic continues to wane and surge with time our program has now adapted to that reality. We continue to follow all local, state and federal guidance on working with COVID, and even with the new Omicron variants on the rise we are able to continue our operations with little disruption. For the rest of 2022, we will continue to recruit volunteers and adapt to the changing pandemic while putting the health and safety of our volunteers and the public first.

Breakdown by MPA

Upper Newport Bay State Marine Conservation Area

For the months January through June 2022 there were 54 surveys submitted to the MPA Watch database. Orange County MPA Watch data showed a rate of 8.4 total use count per total miles (66.42) surveyed in the Upper Newport Bay's State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA).

People observed in the MPA were primarily taking part in Beach Recreation activities (55%). Onshore hook and line fishing comprised 10% of the total activities in the MPA. Surfing, Paddle Boarding, and Kayaking accounted for 21.0% of total activities. During this period (January through June 2022), we observed no potential MPA violations in the Upper Newport Bay SMCA. The recreational take of finfish by hook and line is allowed from shore only.

Crystal Cove State Marine Conservation Area

For the months of January through June 2022 there were 127 surveys submitted to the MPA Watch database. Orange County MPA Watch data showed a rate of 20 total use count per total miles (514.35) surveyed.

People in the MPA were primarily taking part in both onshore (88.0%) and offshore (12.0%) activities. Tidepooling accounted for 5.0% of total activities. During this period (January through June 2022), we observed sixteen (16) potential MPA potential violations in the Little Corona, Los Trancos, Pelican Point, and Reef Point MPA Watch survey area. According to volunteers, illegal hand collection from tidepools is commonly observed. Regulations do not allow any take from tidepools in the Crystal Cove State Marine Conservation Area.

Laguna Beach State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January through June of 2022, there were 184 surveys submitted to the MPA Watch website. Orange County MPA Watch data shows a rate of 10 total use counts per total miles (631.12) surveyed.

People in the MPA were taking part in onshore (57.0%) and offshore (43.0%) activities. Board sports comprised 2.0% of the total activities in the MPA area. During this period (January through June 2022), we observed eight (8) potential MPA violations (taking from tidepool) in the Heisler (7) and Woods Cove (1), MPA Watch areas. According to volunteers, illegal hand collection activities are commonly observed. Regulations do not allow any take in the Laguna Beach SMR

Laguna Beach State Marine Conservation Area

For the months of January through June 2022 there were 75 surveys submitted to the MPA Watch database. Orange County MPA Watch data shows a rate of 43 total use count per total miles (93) surveyed.

People observed in the MPA were primarily taking part in non-consumptive activities (99.97%). Consumptive activities only comprised 0.02% of the total activities in the MPA. Onshore activities accounted for 96.0% and offshore 4.0% of total activities. During this period (January through June 2022), we observed one (1) potential MPA violation (taking from tidepool) in the Table Rock area. No take is allowed from Laguna Beach No-Take SMCA.

Dana Point State Marine Conservation Area

For the months of January through June 2022 there were 28 surveys submitted to the MPA Watch database. Orange County MPA Watch data shows a rate of 17.5 total use count per total miles (84.6) surveyed.

97.5% of the Dana Point coastal uses surveyed since MPA implementation are non-consumptive. The most popular coastal activities in Dana Point are general beach recreation (75.5%). Other common activities are boat fishing (1.5%) and offshore activities such as surfing and paddle boarding (14.5%). During this period (January through June 2022), we observed one (1) potential MPA violation in the Dana Point SMCA area. Regulations do not allow any take from tidepools in the Dana Point SMCA.

Potential Violations

Rate of consumptive activities observed remains relatively low in all MPAs surveyed, accounting for less than 1% (0.11) of all observations recorded. According to volunteers there were no MPA potential violations observed during surveys in the Upper Newport Bay Marine Conservation Area. However, during this period (Jan- June 2022), we observed sixteen (16) potential MPA violations in the Little Corona, Los Trancos, Pelican Point, and Reef Point MPA Watch area. In these areas, recreational take of finfish by hook and line or by spearfishing is allowed; but no take allowed from tidepools. According to volunteers, recurring issues with the illegal take and disturbance of tide pool organisms continues to be a problem during low tides.

Also, during this period (January through June 2022), we observed eight (8) potential MPA violations (Taking from tidepools) in Heisler and Woods Cove MPA Watch areas. No take is allowed in the Laguna Beach SMR. According to volunteers there are occasional take violations in the reserve including the collection of biota and illegal fishing offshore.

Volunteers observed one (1) potential violation in the Laguna Beach State Marine Conservation Area (Table Rock)). No take is allowed from the Laguna Beach No-Take SMCA. According to volunteers illegal fishing occurs occasionally on and offshore.

Volunteers observed one (1) potential violation in the Dana Point State Marine Conservation Area (Dana Point). No take is allowed from tidepools at the Dana Point SMCA. According to volunteers, illegal take is rare here. This may be due to the long history of tidepool protection in the area.

Next Steps

MPA Watch collaborates 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. Earlier this year our MPA Watch data was submitted to the CDFW for use in their decadal review of MPAs. We will actively work to inform the public of the upcoming decadal review and how they can participate in it. MPA Watch is also looking to expand its network of partner organizations to enhance the scale and scope of MPA monitoring and is now working with OC Habitats to get them started on MPA Watch.

MPA Watch makes 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](https://twitter.com/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.

For more information about the work OC Coastkeeper does to conserve California's MPAs and other conservation projects please visit coastkeeper.org.