

**Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch  
Regional Report**  
Santa Barbara County – Chumash Lands  
January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023



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. The Santa Barbara Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Program, organized by Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, engages community scientists in conducting surveys in three MPAs in southern Santa Barbara County—Campus Point State Marine Conservation Area, Naples State Marine Conservation Area, and Kashtayit State Marine Conservation Area. Additional MPA Watch surveys are also conducted by California State Parks staff at Kashtayit State Marine Conservation Area (Gaviota State Beach).

### Executive Summary

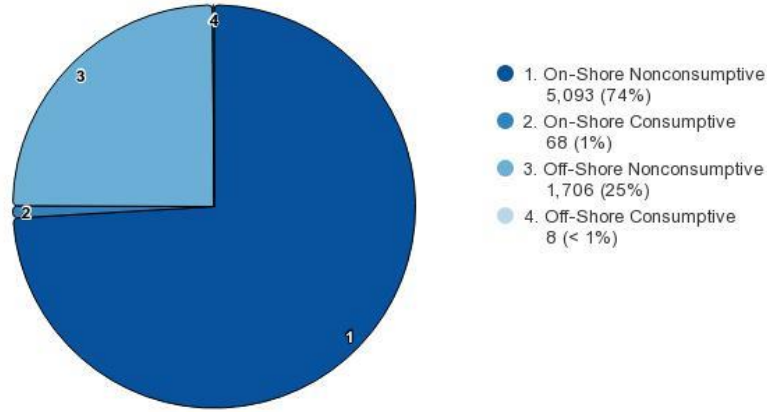
- Non-consumptive activities (onshore and offshore) account for 99.65% of observations in the Campus Point, Naples, and Kashtayit MPAs.
- While most of the reported activities were non-consumptive, volunteers report potential poaching (recreational onshore hook and line fishing) is still a problem, especially in the western portion of Campus Point SMCA near the Ellwood Bluffs.
- Channelkeeper trained 36 community members about MPAs and MPA Watch during the January to June 2023 time period.
- MPA Watch surveyors reported derelict lobster traps that washed up on the beaches following winter storms. This data was shared with California Department of Fish & Wildlife staff to facilitate trap return if possible.



## HUMAN USE OF MPAS January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

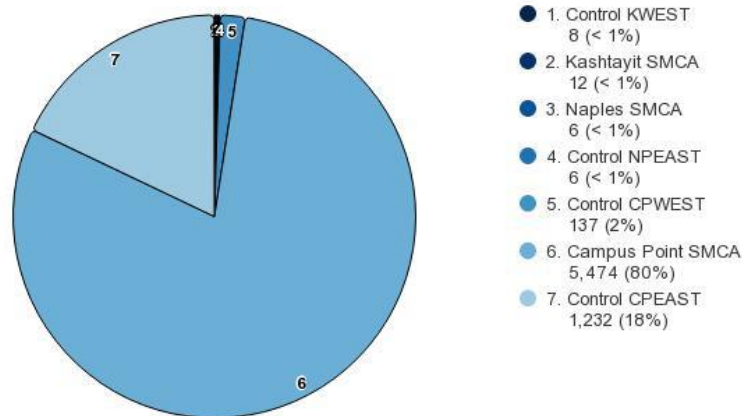
### All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023  
6,875 activity events



### Top 7 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023  
6,875 total 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.

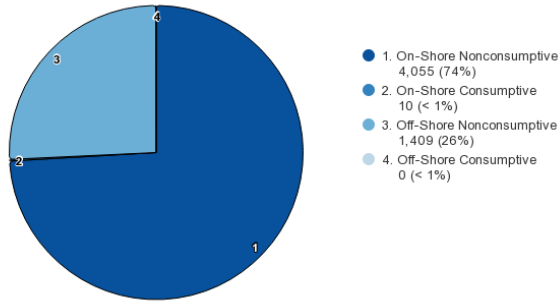
**Off-Shore** - Activities that take place offshore, typically in knee-deep water or deeper. Includes surfing, SCUBA diving, kayaking, boat fishing, etc.

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

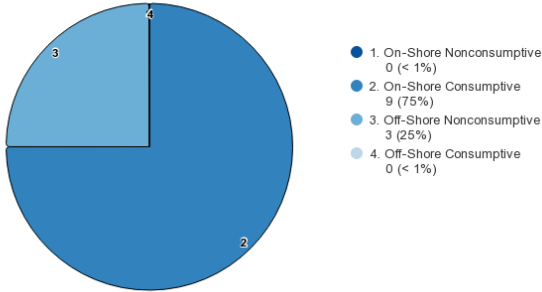
**Non-Consumptive** - An activity in which a natural resource is not collected.

## ACTIVITY BY MPA

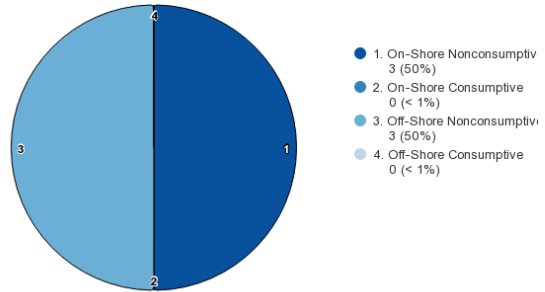
**Campus Point SMCA**  
January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023  
5,474 activity events



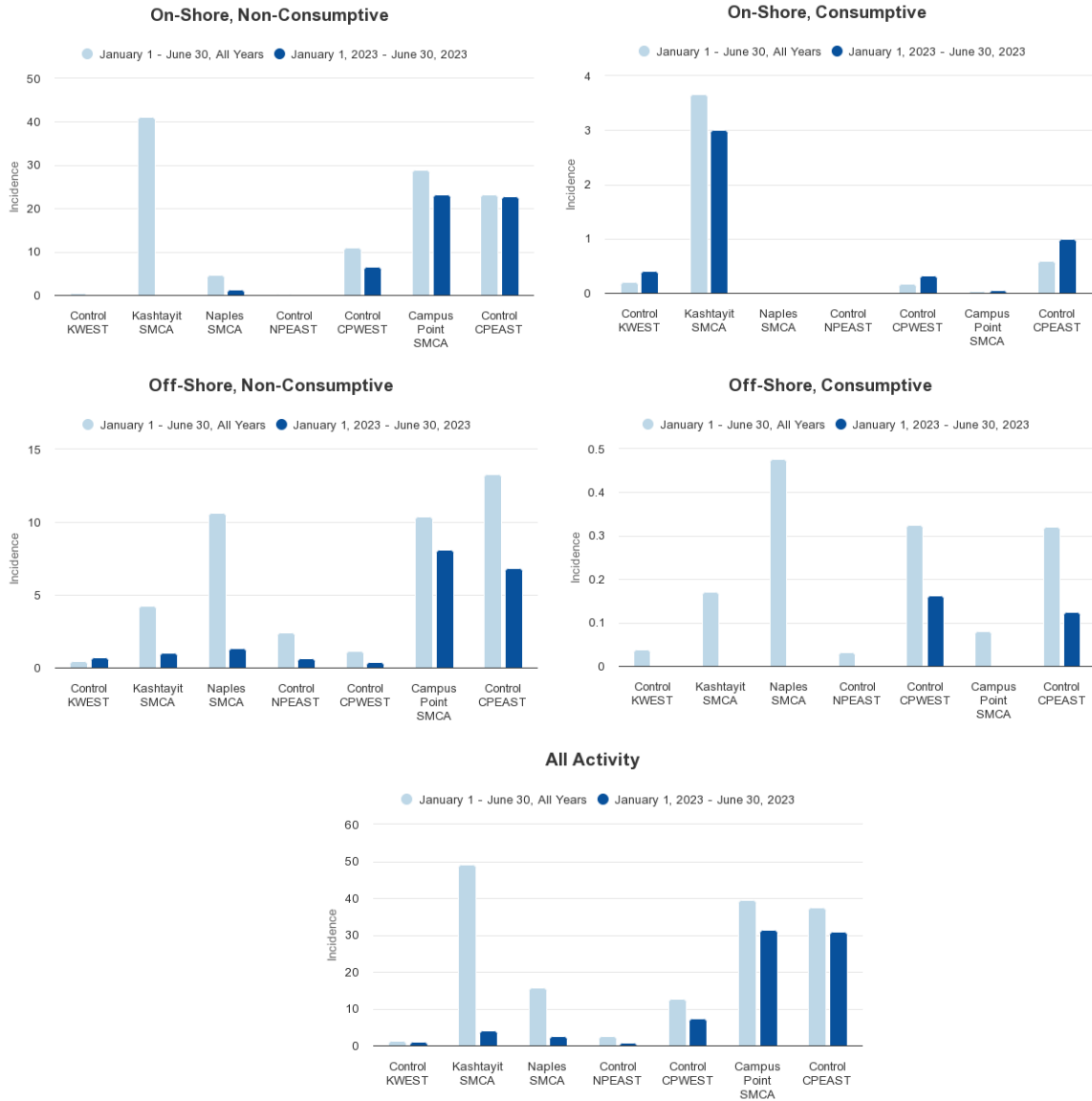
**Kashtayit SMCA**  
January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023  
12 activity events



**Naples SMCA**  
January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023  
6 activity events



## ACTIVITY INCIDENCE BY MPA



The above charts show incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch in Santa Barbara County.

**Incidence is calculated as number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.**

## ACTIVITY INCIDENCE BY MPA

MPA	On-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		Consumptive	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023
Control KWEST	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.4
Kashtayit SMCA	41.1	0.0	3.7	3.0
Naples SMCA	4.6	1.3	0.0	0.0
Control NPEAST	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Control CPWEST	11.0	6.6	0.2	0.3
Campus Point SMCA	28.9	23.2	0.0	0.1
Control CPEAST	23.3	22.9	0.6	1.0
All MPAs Combined	29.5	20.0	0.3	0.3

MPA	Off-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		Consumptive	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023
Control KWEST	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.0
Kashtayit SMCA	4.2	1.0	0.2	0.0
Naples SMCA	10.6	1.3	0.5	0.0
Control NPEAST	2.4	0.7	0.0	0.0
Control CPWEST	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.2
Campus Point SMCA	10.4	8.1	0.1	0.0
Control CPEAST	13.3	6.8	0.3	0.1
All MPAs Combined	9.4	6.7	0.1	0.0

MPA	Total Combined	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023
Control KWEST	1.2	1.1
Kashtayit SMCA	49.1	4.0
Naples SMCA	15.8	2.6
Control NPEAST	2.6	0.7
Control CPWEST	12.6	7.4
Campus Point SMCA	39.4	31.4
Control CPEAST	37.5	30.8
All MPAs Combined	39.3	27.0

### 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 MPAs 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 MPAs 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.

## BREAKDOWN BY MPA

### Campus Point SMCA

In January- June 2023, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Marine Protected Area (SB MPA) Watch volunteers conducted 271 land-based surveys within the Campus Point State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) and 96 surveys outside of the MPA on the eastern and western borders.

Between January and June 2023, Santa Barbara MPA Watch data shows a rate of 31.4 total use count per total miles surveyed in the Campus Point SMCA. This rate of total use is lower than the average over all years (average 39.4 total user per miles surveyed). The most observed activity in the Campus Point SMCA was beach recreation at 62% of all observations. Surfing accounted for the second most observed activity at 21% of all observations. There were three observations of shore-based recreational hook and line fishing in the western portion of the MPA near the Ellwood Bluffs and seven observations of hand collection of biota from throughout the MPA.

### Naples SMCA

In January-June 2023, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Marine Protected Area (SB MPA) Watch volunteers conducted 23 surveys within the Naples State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) and 23 surveys outside of the MPA on the eastern border.

During the first six months of 2023, MPA Watch surveys from Naples MPA observed much lower levels of activity, both onshore and offshore, than the previous few years which saw an increased total use count. The total use count per mile for this time period was only 2.6 while in comparison it was 38.2 for 2022. Part of this decrease in observed activity could also be due to the winter storms, which limit access to the beach at Naples MPA.

### Kashtayit SMCA

During the January-June 2023 time period, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Marine Protected Area (SB MPA) Watch volunteers conducted limited surveys of the Kashtayit MPA as the Gaviota State Park beach, which one of the surveys falls into, was closed due to damage from the January 2023 winter storms. The road that accesses the western portion of the MPA was also closed for a period of time due to the storm damage. Channelkeeper MPA Watch volunteers conducted 15 surveys of the western end of the MPA and 15 surveys outside of the MPA at a control transect on the western side.

Of the surveys that SB MPA Watch volunteers conducted, mainly at a beach in the western portion of the MPA accessed by a bluff trail to the beach, recreational hook and line fishing accounted for 75% of all observations. The other 25% of observation was offshore recreational boating activities. Kashtayit SMCA allows for the recreational take of most species except for mussels and scallops. No potential violations were observed.

State Parks also conducts surveys of the main beach Gaviota State Park within the Kashtayit MPA. During this time period when the State Park beach was closed, their staff/volunteers observed that individuals were still accessing Kashtayit SMCA by walking into the park. The main user group identified in the MPA Watch surveys are kayakers who are engaging in hook

and line fishing. These individuals are typically fishing for halibut as observed when they have landed on shore. Individuals fishing have brought in 45 to 50 pound halibut as of a survey conducted in early June 2023. External reports of MPA violations have been reported; although, no MPA violations have been observed. Historically, the main violations are dogs off leash from day-use recreationists and from the campground. With the park closure, this issue has been mitigated. Additional observations of wildlife, including a raft of 17 sea otters have been observed frequently during the MPA Watch Surveys at Kashtayit SMCA. Park Staff will train the new Camphosts to conduct MPA Watch Surveys at Kashtayit SMCA once the park re-opens.

### BOAT-BASED SURVEYS

In addition to the shore-based MPA Watch surveys, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper staff conducts offshore surveys from the Research Vessel *Channelkeeper* of Campus Point and Naples MPAs. Surveys are also conducted at control sites for two miles on the eastern and western areas adjacent to the Campus Point and Naples MPAs. Channelkeeper has conducted boat-based surveys of these two coastal MPAs since 2013.

As conditions permit surveys are also conducted at the northern Channel Islands including Anacapa, Santa Cruz, and Santa Rosa Islands in the following MPAs: Anacapa SMCA, Anacapa SMR, Painted Cave SMCA, Carrington Point SMR, Skunk Point SMR, Gull Island SMR, Footprint SMR, and Scorpion SMR. Control surveys are conducted for two miles on either side of the MPAs at the Channel Islands as well. Channelkeeper began conducting surveys at the Northern Channel Islands in 2019.

During boat MPA Watch surveys SBCK documents all consumptive and non-consumptive boating activity, as well as all fishing and other consumptive activities observed taking place on or in the water, as well as all onshore fishing and any other consumptive activity occurring in and around the MPA's, including control areas. Channelkeeper staff are present and conduct all surveys.

Due to an exceptional stormy winter and typical windy and foggy conditions in the spring resulting in numerous small craft advisories and gale warnings, fewer boat surveys were conducted than planned for during this time period. Channelkeeper completed four coastal boat MPA Watch surveys of Campus Point and Naples SMCA's and one Channel Island survey trip during the first half of 2023.

No potential violations were observed during the boat-based surveys conducted during January – June 2023.

Due to the limited amount of surveys conducted, and therefore limited data, heat maps of the boating activity observed during boat-based surveys were not generated for this January – June time period, but will be generated for the January – December 2023 MPA Watch report. For the coastal boat-based surveys of Campus Point and Naples MPAs, recreational hook and line fishing from the Goleta Pier in the control survey is the most observed activity and most recent surveys documented recreational hook and line boats fishing just offshore of the pier as well.

At the Northern Channel Islands, the most observed activity was recreational kayaking inside the Scorpion MPA at Santa Cruz Island followed by fishing (hook and line) in the Anacapa Gap area outside of the Footprint MPA and east of the Scorpion MPA.

### POTENTIAL VIOLATIONS

Rate of consumptive activities observed in Kashtayit, Naples, and Campus Point MPAs remains relatively low accounting for less than 1% of all observations recorded by shore-based surveys. In the Campus Point (No-Take) SMCA, shore-based MPA Watch volunteers observed three potential violations of shore-based hook and line fishing activity in the western portion of the MPA and seven observations of hand collection of biota. No potential observations were observed at Naples or Kashtayit MPA for this reporting period.

No potential violations were observed during the boat-based MPA Watch surveys conducted on the Channelkeeper vessel at MPAs along the coast or at the Northern Channel Islands during this time period.

Even if the noncompliance rate is low, it is important to note that any illegal take from MPAs jeopardizes the success of the MPA and health of the ecosystems which they protect.

### NEXT STEPS

Channelkeeper will continue to educate and train new MPA Watch volunteers to conduct shore-based surveys at the three coastal MPAs in southern Santa Barbara County. As conditions and weather permits, we will also conduct boat-based surveys of the coastal MPAs at Campus Point and Naples SMCAs and at eight of the MPAs in the Northern Channel Islands (Carrington Point SMR, Skunk Point SMR, Gull Island SMR, Footprint SMR, Anacapa Island SMR and SMCA, Scorpion SMR, and Painted Cave SMCA).

### 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](http://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](http://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 Santa Barbara Channelkeeper does to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds, including to monitor and build support for local MPAs, please visit [sbck.org](http://sbck.org).