

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Regional Report

San Luis Obispo County
January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

Map of Region's MPAs



Statewide, coastal State Parks staff and volunteers continue to be trained in MPA Watch protocol and collect data from transects and control sites along the length of the coast. State Parks' survey data has been incorporated into the other regional data reports from other MPA Watch managers with the exception of San Luis Obispo County where State Parks is the only partner collecting and contributing MPA Watch Data.

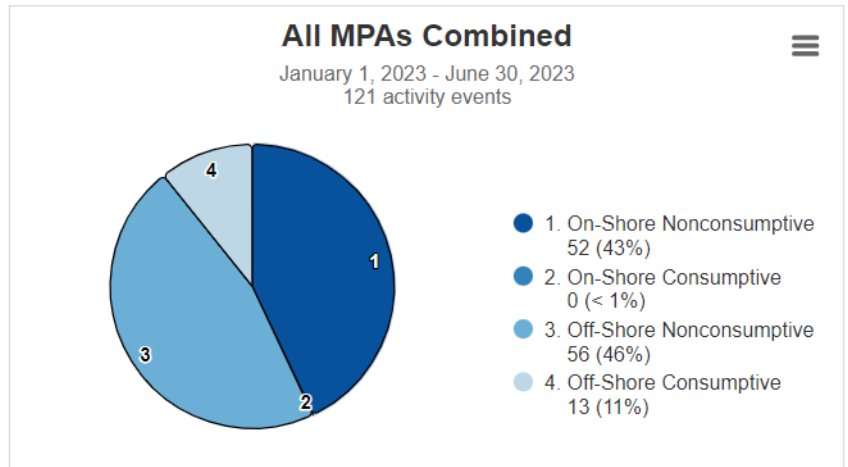
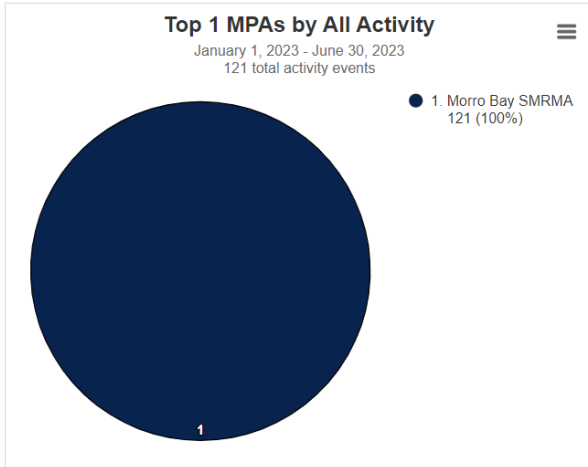
Executive Summary

- 17 surveys were collected by two State Parks volunteers during this reporting period.
- Two transects within the Morro Bay SMRMA were studied.
- Dogs off-leash is the highest recorded violation in this important shorebird habitat.



HUMAN USE OF MPAS JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30, 2023

OVERVIEW



ACTIVITY CLASSIFICATIONS

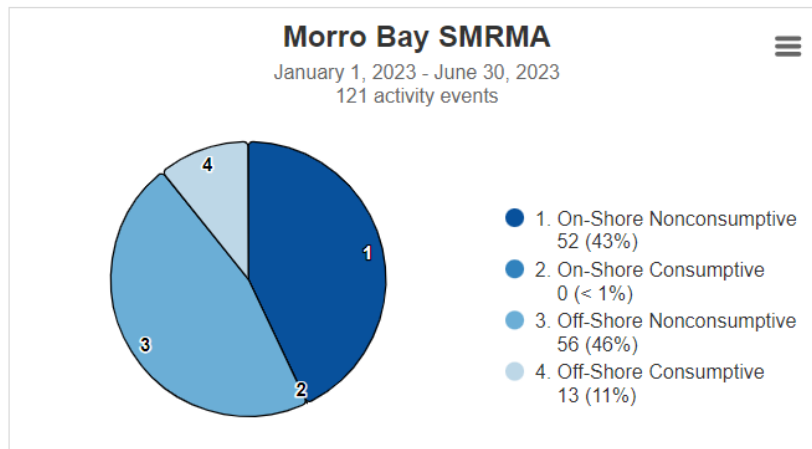
On-Shore - Activities that take place on a sandy or rocky beach. Excludes bluffs, trails, sea walls, parking lots, or other man-made structures. Includes recreation, tidepooling, shore-based fishing, etc.

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

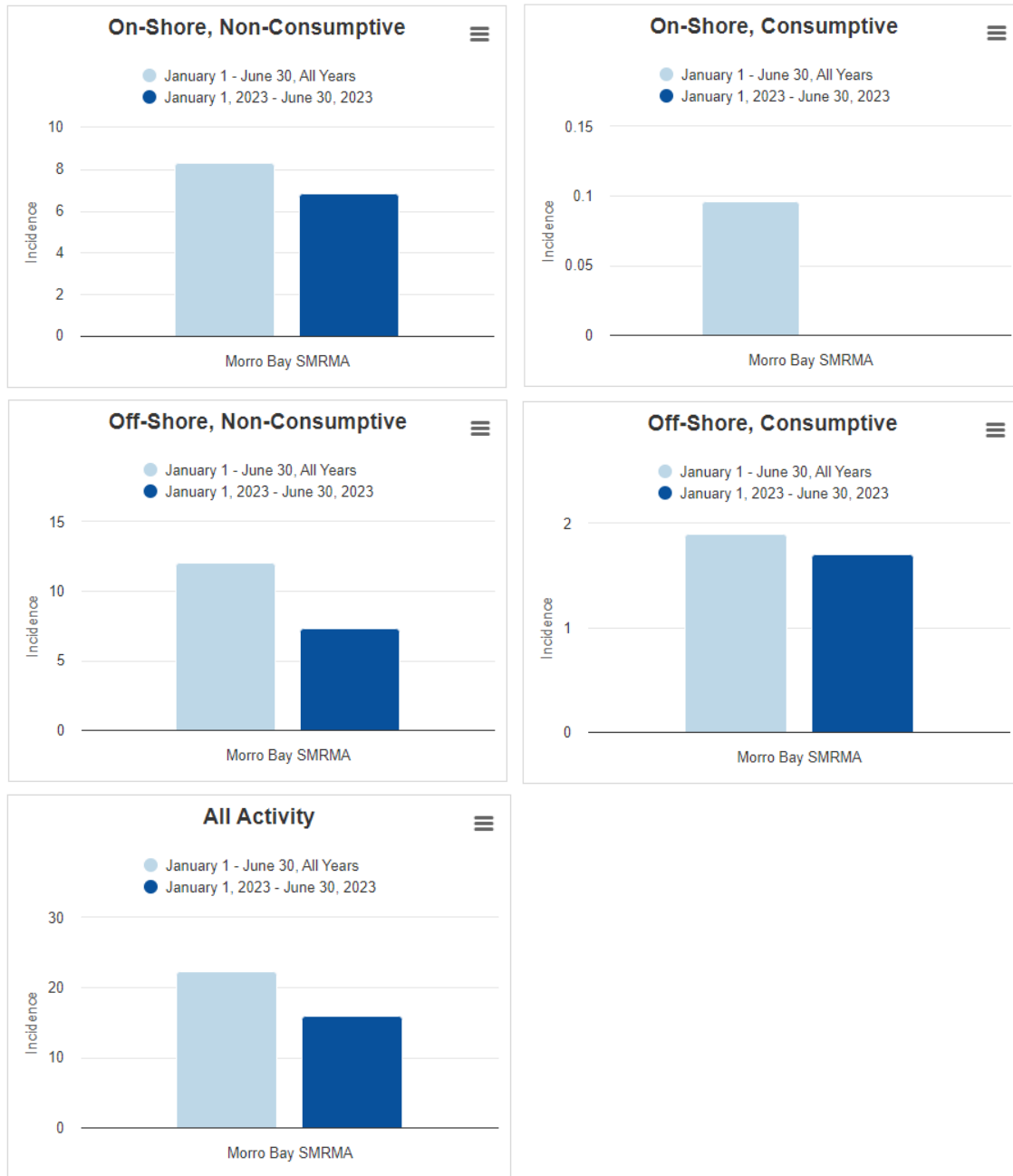
Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

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

ACTIVITY BY MPA



ACTIVITY INCIDENCE BY MPA



NOTE: Morro Bay SMRMA allows commercial oyster farming. There is no category for this activity in MPA Watch, so it is recorded as consumptive “Boat fishing, trap, commercial, active” when oyster farmers are actively working on the farm’s barge or in the oyster beds.

The above charts show incidence values for Morro Bay SMRMA in San Luis Obispo County. Incidence is calculated as number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.

Incidence Tables

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
Morro Bay SMRMA	8.3	6.8	0.1	0.0
All MPAs Combined	8.3	6.8	0.1	0.0

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
Morro Bay SMRMA	12.1	7.4	1.9	1.7
All MPAs Combined	12.1	7.4	1.9	1.7

MPA	Total Combined	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023
Morro Bay SMRMA	22.4	15.9
All MPAs Combined	22.4	15.9

NOTE: Morro Bay SMRMA allows commercial oyster farming. There is no category for this activity in MPA Watch, so it is recorded as consumptive “Boat fishing, trap, commercial, active” when oyster farmers are actively working on the farm’s barge or in the oyster beds.

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

Morro Bay SMRMA

For the months of June and July there has been an anecdotal minor increase in human usage along the two transects found within Morro Bay State Park; however, the survey data shows a slight reduction of human activity compared to years past. Park staff report there are more visitors on the shore as well as in the water in both kayaks and SUPs.

POTENTIAL VIOLATIONS

Along the Windy Cove transect in Morro Bay State Park, there is a continued problem of visitors allowing their dogs off leash along the shore. This is a popular mudflat for shorebirds foraging and dogs off leash pose as a threat to these birds.

NEXT STEPS

During this reporting period, many of the surveys have been taken during the early morning hours between 8-9:30 a.m., so there is an effort to collect surveys in different parts of the day. Currently only two volunteers are collecting surveys, so State Parks staff have been encouraged to submit more surveys during different times of the day throughout the year.

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.

For additional information about California State Parks Marine Protected Area Outreach and Education Program, please contact Erika Delemarre at erika.delemarre@parks.ca.gov or at (916) 704-5042.

California State Parks' involvement is funded by a Once-Through Cooling grant from the Ocean Protection Council which supports a team of MPA interpreters working across nine State Parks districts along the California coast.