Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch
Regional Report from Beach Watch Project Data
Mendocino, Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties
January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Beach Watch Survey Beaches Emphasizing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Beach Watch Survey Beaches
- Live & Beach Cast Survey
- Live Only Survey

Beach Watch Survey Beaches Adjacent to MPAs
- MPAs

National Marine Sanctuary Boundary

Marine Protected Area Type
- SMCA
- SMCA (No-Take)
- SMR
- SMRMA
- Special Closure

Background

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 North-central Coast Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Program, conducted by the Beach Watch project, a joint program of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) and Greater Farallones Association (GFA) which engages 150 community scientists in 10 MPAs, spanning 5 counties. California State Parks also collects data at one site Russian River SMCA and is included in this report.
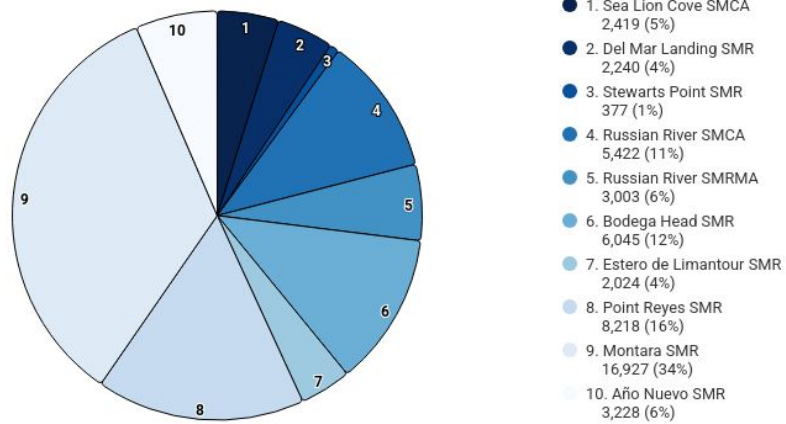
January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024 Highlights

- Overall, at 5 of 10 MPAs monitored we observed significant decreases in human activities from our 10-year baseline rate, at 2 we observed significant increases from baseline (Del Mar Landing and Bodega Head), and 3 MPAs saw no change from baseline.
- 2,997 activity events were observed during 2024. Shore-based recreational activities accounted for 96% (n=2,864) of observed activities. Offshore recreational activities accounted for 4% (n=116) of observed activities. Permitted shore-based consumptive activities accounted for <1% (n=3) of observed activities. Offshore consumptive activities accounted for <1% (n=14) of observed activities.

Human Use of MPAs January - December 2024

Top 10 MPAs by All Activity

January 1 - December 31, All Years
49,903 total activity events

- 1. Sea Lion Cove SMCA
  2,419 (5%)
- 2. Del Mar Landing SMR
  2,240 (4%)
- 3. Stewarts Point SMR
  377 (1%)
- 4. Russian River SMCA
  5,422 (11%)
- 5. Russian River SMRMA
  3,003 (6%)
- 6. Bodega Head SMR
  6,045 (12%)
- 7. Estero de Limantour SMR
  2,024 (4%)
- 8. Point Reyes SMR
  8,218 (16%)
- 9. Montara SMR
  16,927 (34%)
- 10. Año Nuevo SMR
  3,228 (6%)

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, tide pooling, 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.
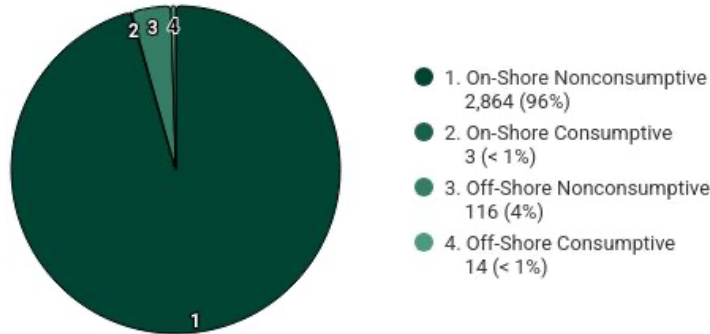**Consumptive -** An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.
Non-Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource is not collected.
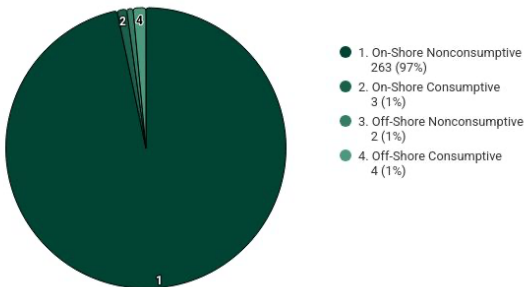
Overview

All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
2,997 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
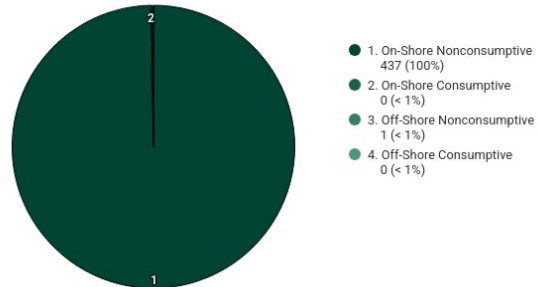 2,864 (96%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  3 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  116 (4%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  14 (< 1%)

Activity by MPA

Sea Lion Cove SMCA

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
272 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  263 (97%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  3 (1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  2 (1%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  4 (1%)

Del Mar Landing SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
438 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  437 (100%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  1 (< 1%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)

Stewarts Point SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
17 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  16 (94%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  1 (6%)
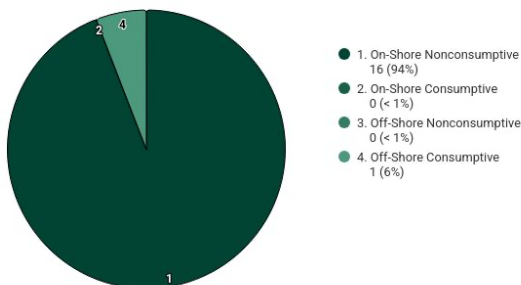
Russian River SMCA

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
666 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  626 (94%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  3 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  34 (5%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  3 (< 1%)
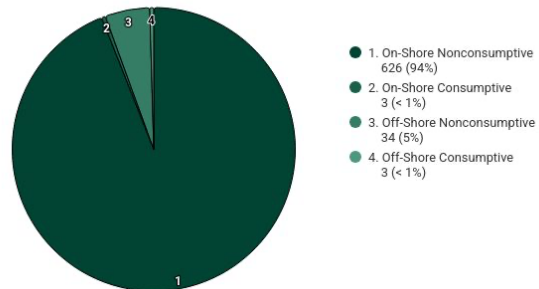
Russian River SMRMA

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
245 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  194 (79%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  51 (21%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
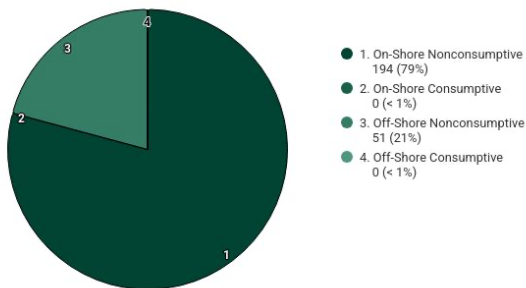
Bodega Head SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
479 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  472 (99%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  3 (1%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  4 (1%)
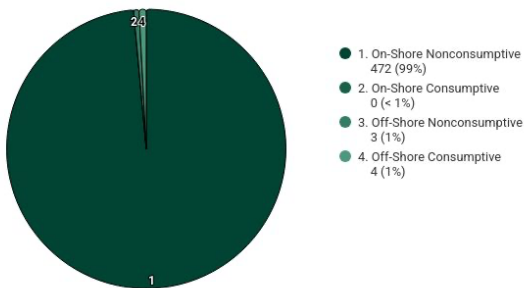
Point Reyes SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
96 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  90 (94%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  6 (6%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
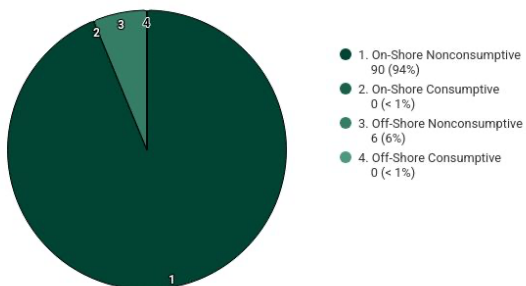
Estero de Limantour SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
110 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  104 (95%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  4 (4%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  2 (2%)
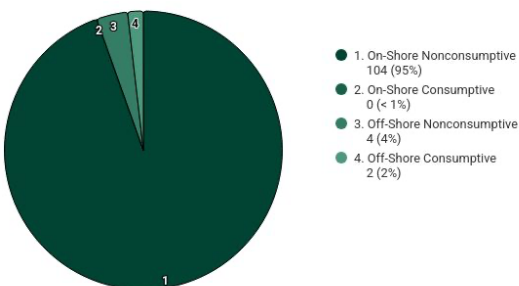
Montara SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
847 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  839 (99%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  8 (1%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
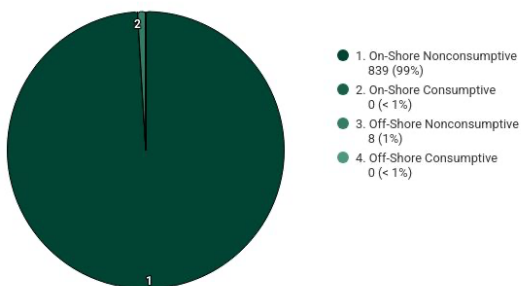
Año Nuevo SMR

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024
117 activity events

- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
  104 (89%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
  0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
  13 (11%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
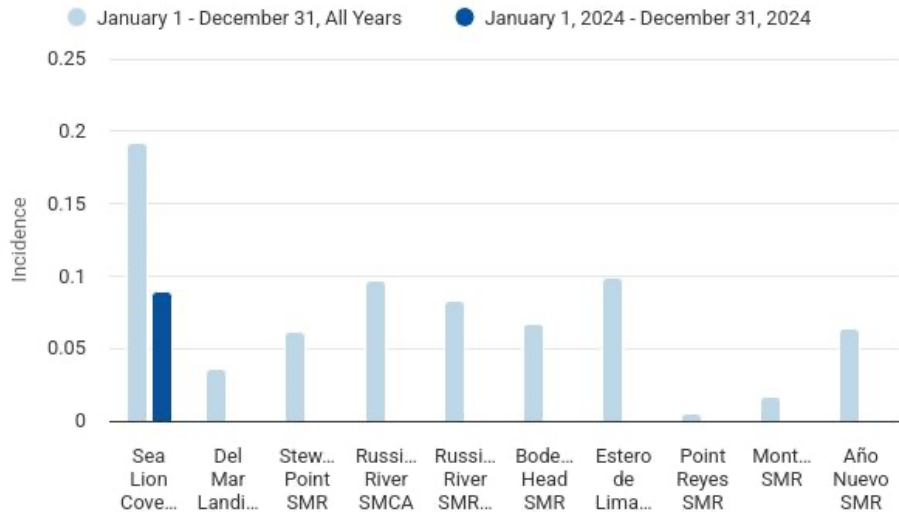 0 (< 1%)
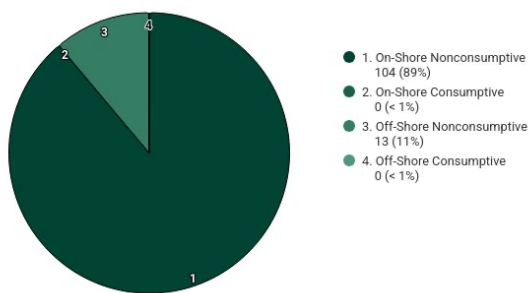
Activity Incidence by MPA

The charts below show incidence values for each MPA monitored by the Beach Watch project. ***Incidence is calculated as number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.***
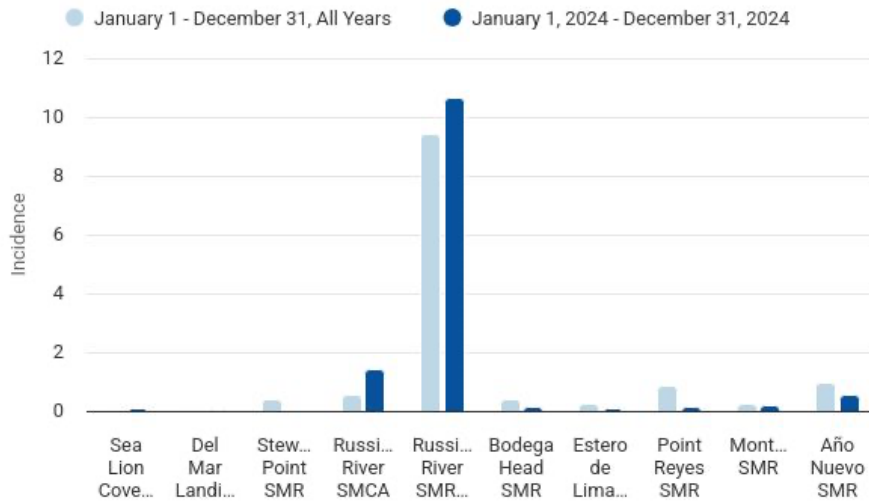
On-Shore, Non-Consumptive
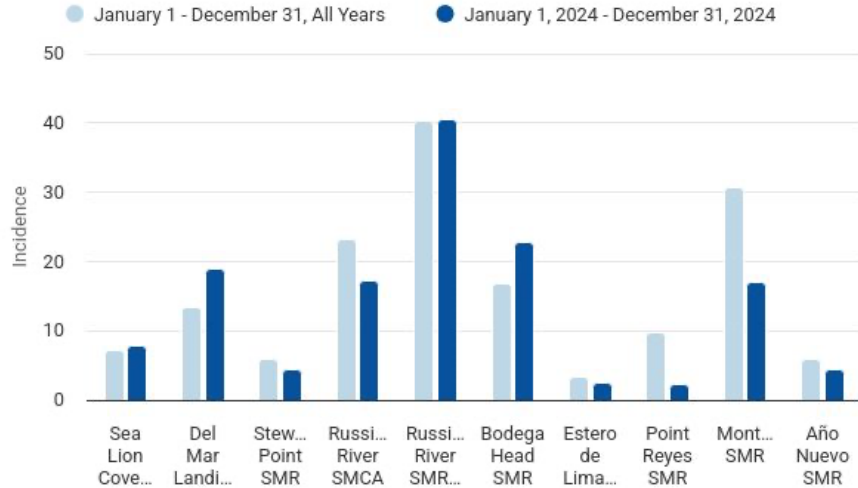
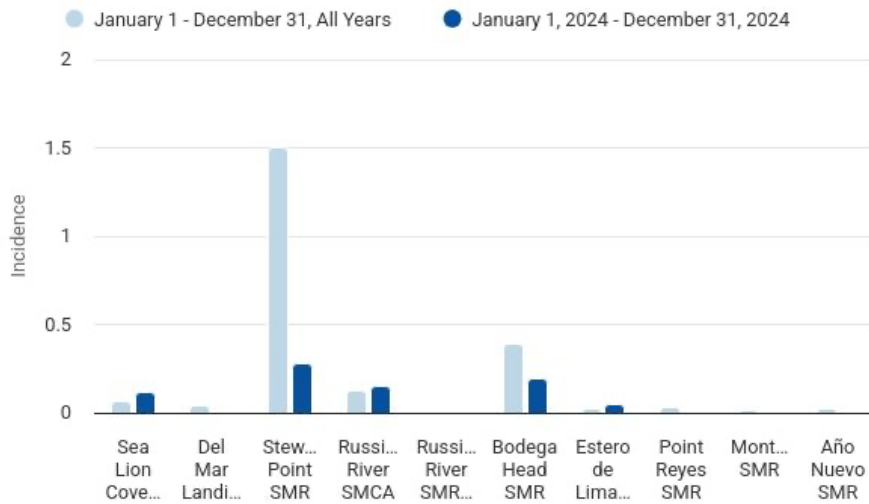## On-Shore, Consumptive

Off-Shore, Non-Consumptive

Legend: January 1 - December 31, All Years ● January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

Off-Shore, Consumptive

Legend: January 1 - December 31, All Years ● January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

Activity Incidence by MPA

	On-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		**Consumptive**	
MPA	**January 1 December 31 All Years**	**January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024**	**January 1 December 31 All Years**	**January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024**
Sea Lion Cove SMCA	7.2	7.8	0.2	0.1
Del Mar Landing SMR	13.4	19.0	0.0	0.0
Stewarts Point SMR	5.8	4.4	0.1	0.0
Russian River SMCA	23.1	17.3	0.1	0.0
Russian River SMRMA	40.3	40.4	0.1	0.0
Bodega Head SMR	16.7	22.7	0.1	0.0
Estero de Limantour SMR	3.4	2.5	0.1	0.0
Point Reyes SMR	9.7	2.3	0.0	0.0
Montara SMR	30.6	17.1	0.0	0.0
Año Nuevo SMR	5.8	4.3	0.1	0.0
All MPAs Combined	13.4	11.0	0.1	0.0

	Off-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		**Consumptive**	
MPA	**January 1 December 31 All Years**	**January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024**	**January 1 December 31 All Years**	**January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024**
Sea Lion Cove SMCA	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Del Mar Landing SMR	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stewarts Point SMR	0.4	0.0	1.5	0.3
Russian River SMCA	0.5	1.4	0.1	0.2
Russian River SMRMA	9.4	10.6	0.0	0.0
Bodega Head SMR	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.2
Estero de Limantour SMR	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
Point Reyes SMR	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.0
Montara SMR	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0
Año Nuevo SMR	0.9	0.5	0.0	0.0
All MPAs Combined	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.1

MPA	Total Combined	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024
Sea Lion Cove SMCA	6.3	7.9
Del Mar Landing SMR	11.7	14.7
Stewarts Point SMR	5.7	4.2
Russian River SMCA	23.8	17.8
Russian River SMRMA	45.1	45.0
Bodega Head SMR	18.7	19.9
Estero de Limantour SMR	3.3	2.1
Point Reyes SMR	10.3	2.0
Montara SMR	37.4	19.6
Año Nuevo SMR	7.4	4.9
All MPAs Combined	15.2	12.1

Breakdown by MPA

Sea Lion Cove State Marine Conservation Area
Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 8.1 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (n=21 surveys). This is a slight (7.9%) increase from the 10-year annual baseline rate. People observed in the MPA were primarily taking part in non-consumptive activities on-shore, such as beach recreation, wildlife viewing, on leash animal use, and offshore recreation kayaking. Onshore recreation accounted for 98% of the activities logged in the MPA Watch surveys. Onshore consumptive activities accounted for 1% of human use, comparable to 2024.

Del Mar Landing State Marine Reserve
Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 19.0 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (n=23 surveys). This is an 40% increase from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 100% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in non-consumptive activities onshore, such as beach recreation, wildlife watching, and dogs on leash. No consumptive activities were observed.

Stewarts Point State Marine Reserve
Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 4.7 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (6 surveys completed). 94% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in shore-based non-consumptive activities such as wildlife watching. 6% of activities were offshore line fishing recreational.

Russian River State Marine Conservation Area

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's and CA State Parks MPA Watch reports a rate of 24.3.0 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (37 surveys completed). This is in line with the 10-year annual baseline rate. 94% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in non-consumptive activities on-shore, such as beach recreation and wildlife viewing and 5% of activities were offshore non-consumptive, surfing. Offshore consumptive activities accounted for <1% of activities observed hand collection of biota on sandy and rocky beaches, and hook and line fishing sandy.

Russian River State Marine Recreational Management Area

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 51.0 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (16 surveys completed). This is in line with the 10-year annual baseline rate. 79% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in shore-based non-consumptive activities such as beach recreation, wildlife watching, and 21% offshore recreation kayaking and paddle boarding. No consumptive activities were observed.

Bodega Head State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 23.0 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (23 surveys completed). This is a 31% increase from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 99% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in non-consumptive activities onshore recreation, such as beach recreation and wildlife watching. One jet ski was observed offshore nonconsumptive. Offshore consumptive activities accounted for 1% of activities observed.

Estero de Limantour State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 2.7 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (17 surveys completed). This is a 27% decrease from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 95% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in onshore non-consumptive activities such as beach recreation, wildlife watching, dog off leash, and 4% offshore recreation surfing. 2% of human use was comprised of commercial boat line fishing offshore.

Point Reyes State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 2.4 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (20 surveys completed). This is a 77% decrease from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 94% of people observed in the MPA

taking part in non-consumptive shore-based activities such as beach recreation, and 6% in offshore non-consumptive recreation such as surfing. No consumptive activities were observed.

Montara State Marine Reserve

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 17.2 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (76 surveys completed). This is a 44% decrease from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 99% of people observed in the MPA taking part in non-consumptive shore-based activities such as beach recreation, wildlife watching and tide-pooling (35%), and offshore non-consumptive surfing. No consumptive activities were observed.

Año Nuevo State Marine Conservation Area

Between the months of January and December 2024, GFA's MPA Watch reports a rate of 4.9 total uses per mile surveyed in this MPA (31 surveys completed). This is a 38% decrease from the 10-year annual baseline rate. 89% of people observed in the MPA were taking part in non-consumptive activities onshore and offshore recreation such as wildlife watching and beach recreation, off leash dogs, and surfing (11%). No consumptive activities were observed.

Next Steps

GF/CBNMS and GFA continue to maintain its roughly 150 volunteers through training new volunteers and continuing education for experienced volunteers. 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. 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 maintains publicly accessible data on our website to make it accessible to partners, resource agencies, municipalities, and other interested parties. One of the goals 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.

For more information about the work the Greater Farallones Association does to conserve California's Federal and California MPAs and other conservation projects please visit farallones.org.