

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Regional Report

Catalina Island, Los Angeles County
January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025

Map of Region's MPAs

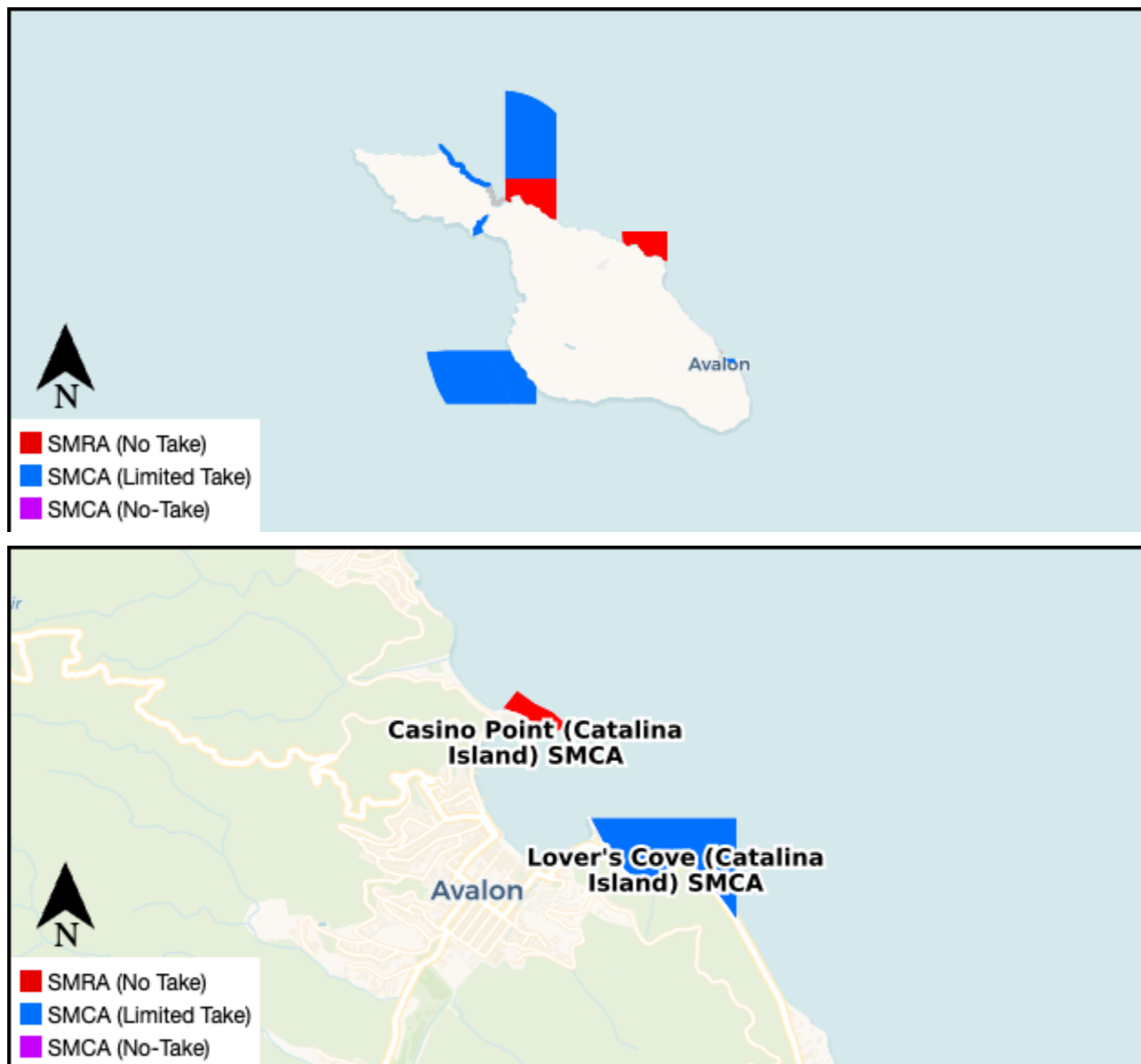


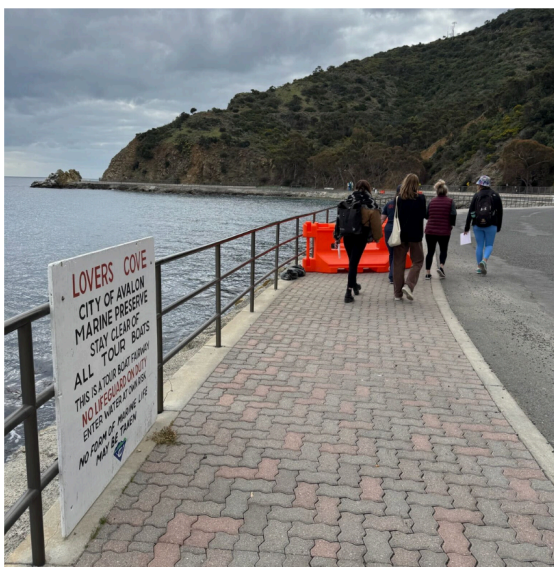
Figure 1. Top map is of all MPAs surrounding Catalina Island. Bottom map is a zoomed in section of Catalina Island showing the two MPAs surveyed by MPA Watch in Avalon; Casino Point SMCA (no take) and Lover's Cove SMCA.



California's network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) was established by the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) of 1999 to safeguard our marine resources and ecosystems. To ensure success and to inform adaptive management, long-term monitoring of these protected areas must be conducted. Developed in 2011, MPA Watch was designed as a community science program to collect data on the human use of MPAs. On Catalina Island, in Los Angeles County, the non-profit organization Bleu World manages MPA Watch shore-based data collection. Bleu World volunteers monitor the two MPAs in Avalon on the island: Lover's Cove State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) and Casino Point SMCA (No-Take).

Executive Summary

- From January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025, 6 Bleu World volunteers have conducted 47 surveys observing 333 activities.
- 79% of activities observed ($n = 262$) were on-shore.
- 60% of activities in both MPAs (Casino Point SMCA and Lover's Cove SMCA) were non-consumptive with beach recreational activities and scuba diving as popular activities.
- Bleu World has hosted two training events resulting in 11 trained MPA Watch volunteers.



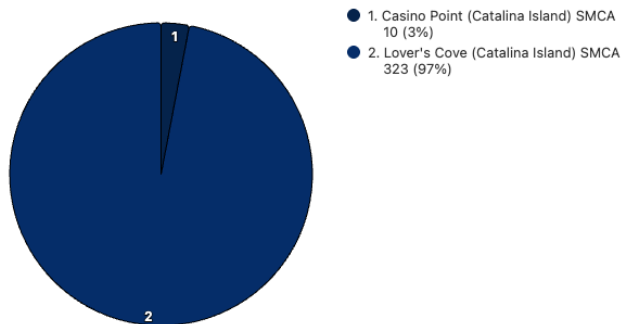
Figures 2 and 3. Photos from MPA Watch training session with new volunteers and WILD Coast in April in the field (photo on the left) and in a classroom setting (photo on the right).

HUMAN USE OF MPAS JANUARY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2025

OVERVIEW

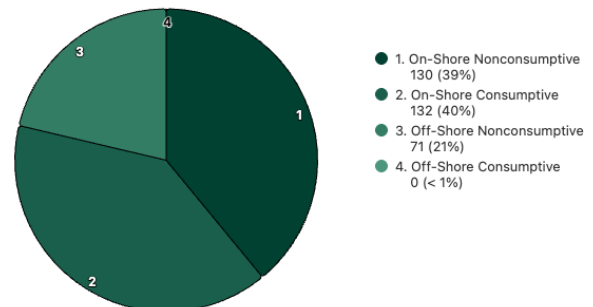
Top 2 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025
333 total activity events



All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025
333 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.

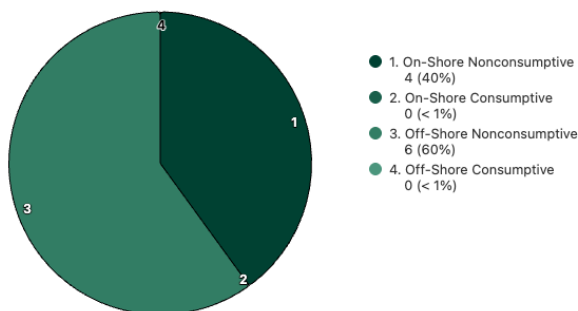
Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

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

ACTIVITY BY MPA

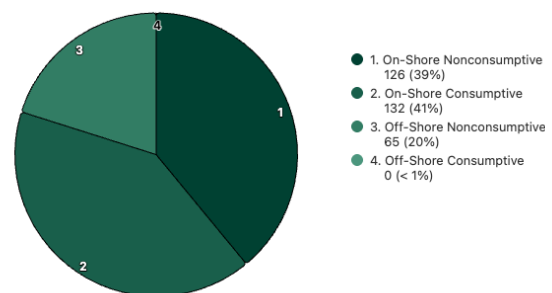
Casino Point (Catalina Island) SMCA

January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025
10 activity events



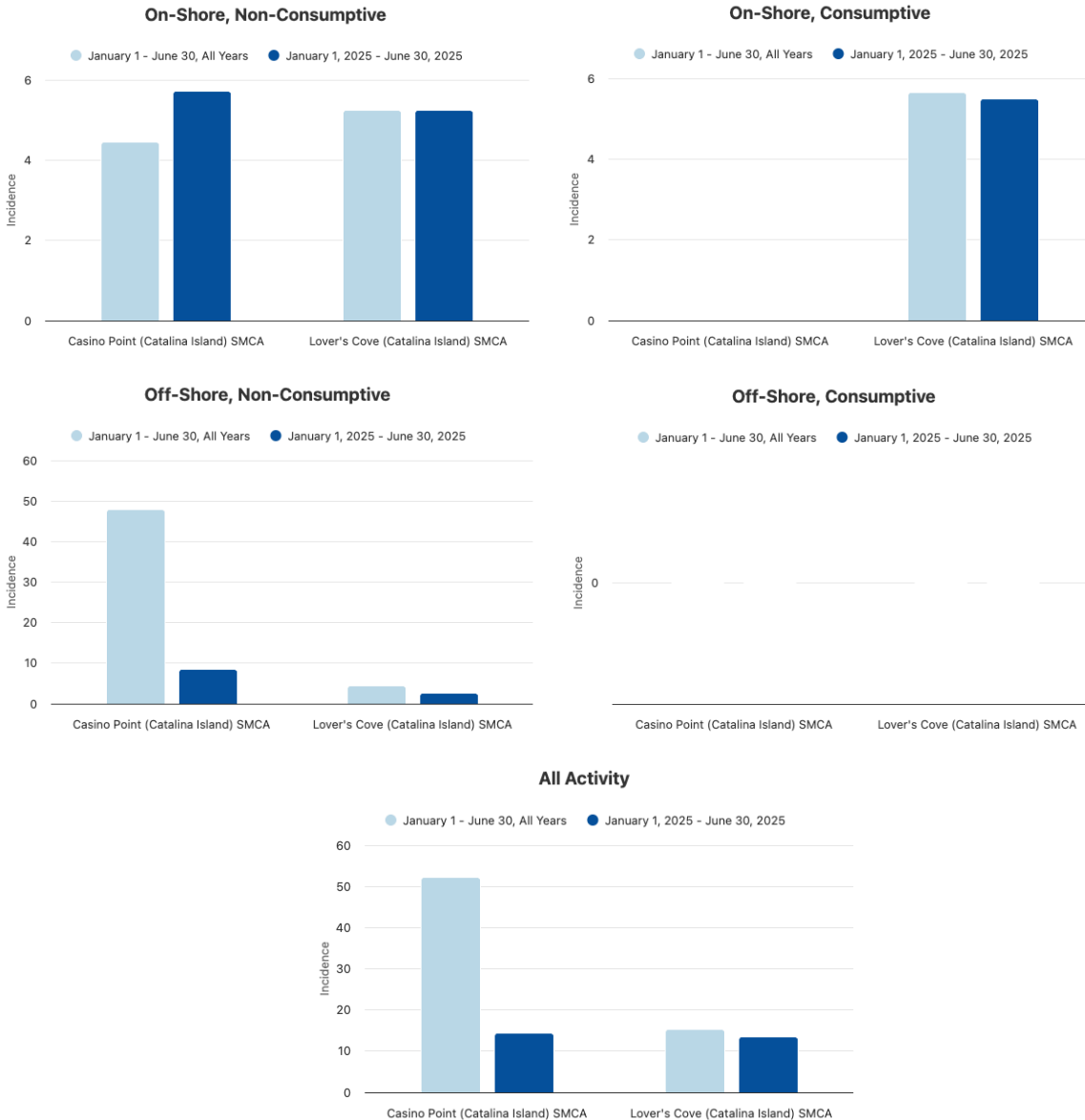
Lover's Cove (Catalina Island) SMCA

January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025
323 activity events



ACTIVITY INCIDENCE BY MPA

Incidence Bar Charts



The above charts show incidence values for each MPA monitored by MPA Watch on Catalina Island in Los Angeles County.

Incidence is calculated as the 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, 2025 through June 30, 2025	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025
Casino Point (Catalina Island) SMCA	4.4	5.7	0.0	0.0
Lover's Cove (Catalina Island) SMCA	5.2	5.3	5.7	5.5
All MPAs Combined	2.3	5.3	2.3	5.3

MPA	Off-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		Consumptive	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025
Casino Point (Catalina Island) SMCA	47.8	8.6	0.0	0.0
Lover's Cove (Catalina Island) SMCA	4.4	2.7	0.0	0.0
All MPAs Combined	3.3	2.9	0.2	0.0

MPA	Total Combined	
	January 1 June 30 All Years	January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025
Casino Point (Catalina Island) SMCA	52.2	14.3
Lover's Cove (Catalina Island) SMCA	15.3	13.5
All MPAs Combined	8.1	13.5

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.

PROGRAM UPDATES

We hosted one training with our partners at Healthy Footprints Adventure Community who curated outdoor experiences with homeschool and charter students from Los Angeles County. This training involved a remote lecture as well as a field day. The second training was hosted for the local Avalon community and we had an in-person lecture followed by a training survey the next day. For both training sessions, volunteers were eager and inspired, asking many questions and making plans to conduct their first real survey. We collected data at Lover's Cove SMCA for both of our survey trainings and we created a Catalina MPA Watch slide deck for use in our lecture training.

In the last six months, we've seen notable seasonal shifts in marine protected area activity. Since May, our heavy summer tourist population has increased activity in Avalon's MPAs, with a clear rise in snorkelers, beachgoers, and boats within the protected areas. Fishing levels have remained steady compared to winter and spring, with only slight increases during the summer months. The predominant activities observed remain consistent—undersea submarines, hook-and-line fishing in Lovers Cove, snorkeling, and scuba diving

This year, Catalina received 78 domoic acid poisoning reports, however Jon Council, our Marine Mammal Care Center Response Coordinator, believes it's likely double that number due to other remote unreported cases on the island. In total, most of these reports were pelicans and cormorants, but around 25 sea lions (pups and adults) and 6 common dolphins.

BREAKDOWN BY MPA

Casino Point SMCA (No Take)

The majority of activities observed at Casino Point SMCA were off-shore non-consumptive (60%) with six scuba activities being observed. Casino Point SMCA includes the Casino Point Dive Park that attracts scuba divers from near and far, so this aligns with what we would expect from this SMCA. With an activity incidence of 14.3, Casino Point SMCA has higher activity incidence than the other MPA in Avalon, Lover's Cove, so far this year.

Lover's Cove SMCA

The activities observed at Lover's Cove were fairly evenly divided between on-shore non-consumptive (39%), on-shore consumptive (41%), and off-shore non-consumptive (20%) from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025. Hook and line fishing was the most common activity (40%, n = 130), followed by beach recreation (rocky = 40%, sandy = 4%), scuba (11%, n = 35), and other boating (5%, n = 17). Hook and line fishing is permitted at the Cabrillo Mole and is a popular activity spotted at the beginning of this transect. With an activity incidence of 13.5, Lover's Cove SMCA has a slightly lower activity incidence so far this year.

POTENTIAL VIOLATIONS

There were no potential violations observed at either MPA so far this year.

NEXT STEPS

Bleu World volunteers will continue to collect MPA Watch data at MPAs in Avalon. As this is a revamp of old MPA Watch transects, Bleu World looks forward to contributing to the MPA Watch statewide data while representing the unique activities and habitats found on Catalina Island.

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.

Bleu World's mission is to grow a community of ocean changemakers with a passion for conservation, exploration, and science. To learn more, visit bleuworld.org and contact the team at team@bleuworld.org.