

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch Regional Report

Santa Barbara County - Chumash Lands

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025



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

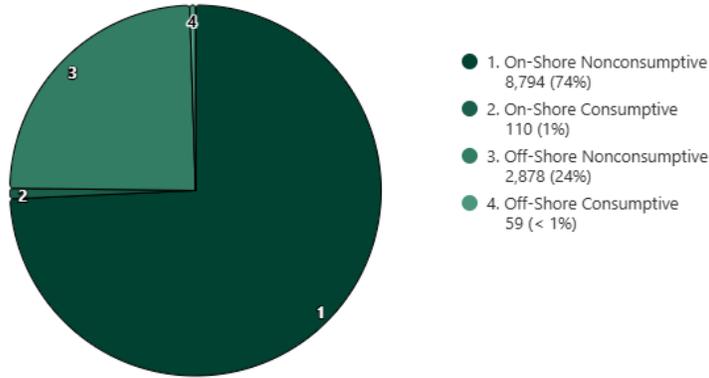
- In 2025, non-consumptive activities (onshore and offshore) accounted for 98.57% of observations in the Campus Point, Naples, and Kashtayit MPAs.
- There were no potential violations observed during shore-based MPA Watch surveys at Campus Point, Naples, and Kashtayit MPAs in 2025. There were also no potential violations observed during boat-based surveys at Campus Point and Naples MPAs during this time period.
- Channelkeeper trained 43 community members about MPAs and MPA Watch during the January to December 2025 period. MPA Watch participants conducted 602 surveys, equal to 296 survey miles, and observed 11,841 activities.



HUMAN USE OF MPAS January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

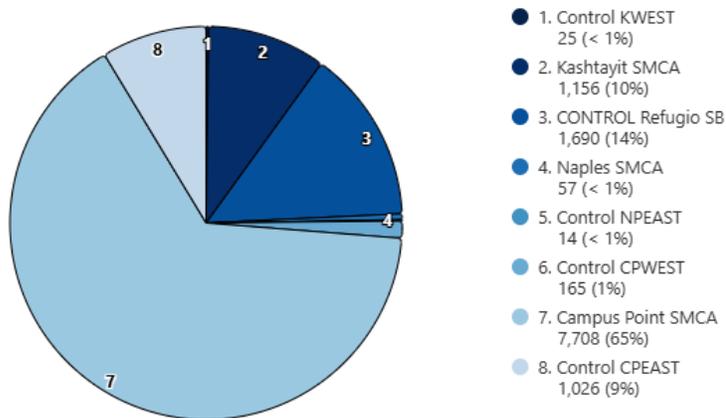
All MPAs Combined

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025
11,841 activity events



Top 8 MPAs by All Activity

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025
11,841 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.

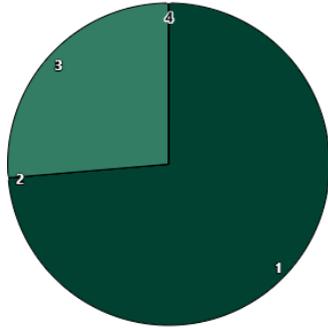
Consumptive - An activity in which a natural resource (i.e. fish, kelp, shells) is being collected.

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

ACTIVITY BY MPA

Campus Point SMCA

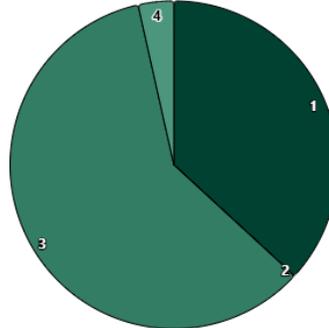
January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025
7,708 activity events



- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
5,677 (74%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
2,031 (26%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)

Naples SMCA

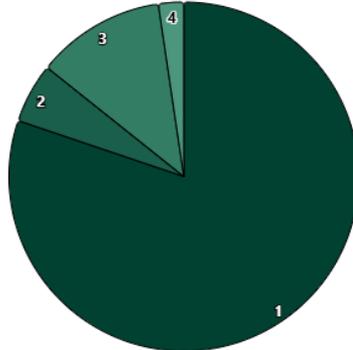
January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025
57 activity events



- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
21 (37%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
0 (< 1%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
34 (60%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
2 (4%)

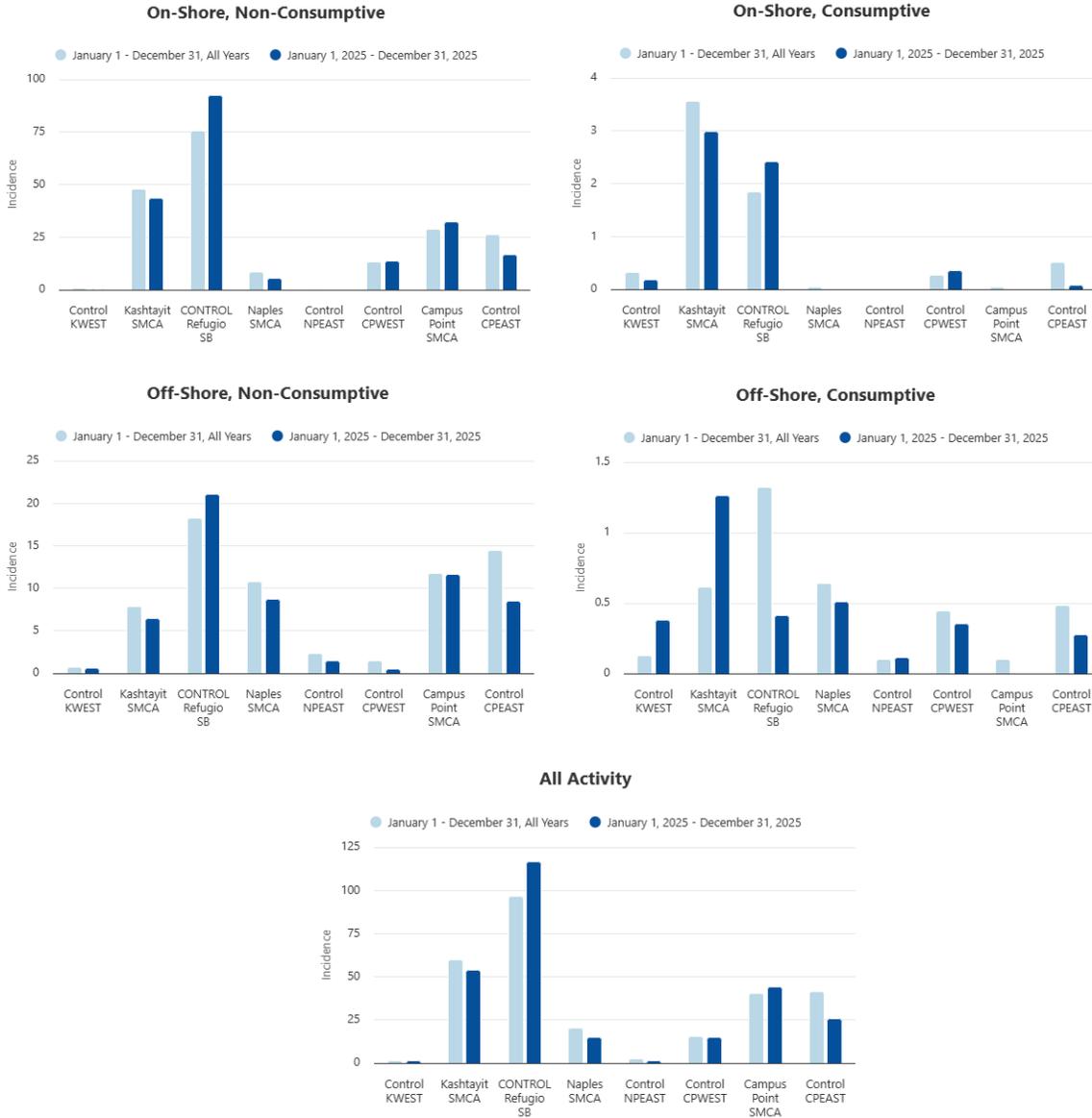
Kashtayit SMCA

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025
1,156 activity events



- 1. On-Shore Nonconsumptive
927 (80%)
- 2. On-Shore Consumptive
64 (6%)
- 3. Off-Shore Nonconsumptive
138 (12%)
- 4. Off-Shore Consumptive
27 (2%)

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 the number of activities recorded divided by total survey-miles.

ACTIVITY INCIDENCE BY MPA

MPA	On-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		Consumptive	
	January 1 December 31 All Years	January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025	January 1 December 31 All Years	January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
Control KWEST	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.2
Kashtayit SMCA	47.8	43.3	3.6	3.0
CONTROL Refugio SB	75.3	92.6	1.8	2.4
Naples SMCA	8.6	5.4	0.0	0.0
Control NPEAST	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Control CPWEST	13.0	13.6	0.3	0.4
Campus Point SMCA	28.6	32.5	0.0	0.0
Control CPEAST	26.1	16.8	0.5	0.1
All MPAs Combined	30.5	29.7	0.4	0.4

MPA	Off-Shore			
	Non-Consumptive		Consumptive	
	January 1 December 31 All Years	January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025	January 1 December 31 All Years	January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
Control KWEST	0.7	0.6	0.1	0.4
Kashtayit SMCA	7.9	6.4	0.6	1.3
CONTROL Refugio SB	18.2	21.1	1.3	0.4
Naples SMCA	10.8	8.7	0.6	0.5
Control NPEAST	2.4	1.5	0.1	0.1
Control CPWEST	1.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
Campus Point SMCA	11.8	11.6	0.1	0.0
Control CPEAST	14.4	8.5	0.5	0.3
All MPAs Combined	10.9	9.7	0.2	0.2

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.

MPA	Total Combined	
	January 1 December 31 All Years	January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
Control KWEST	1.6	1.2
Kashtayit SMCA	59.8	54.0
CONTROL Refugio SB	96.7	116.6
Naples SMCA	20.0	14.6
Control NPEAST	2.7	1.6
Control CPWEST	15.3	14.7
Campus Point SMCA	40.6	44.1
Control CPEAST	41.6	25.7
All MPAs Combined	42.0	40.0

BREAKDOWN BY MPA

CAMPUS POINT SMCA

In January-December 2025, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Marine Protected Area (SB MPA) Watch volunteers conducted 285 land-based surveys within the Campus Point State No-take Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) and 78 surveys outside of the MPA along the eastern and western borders.

During this time period, Santa Barbara MPA Watch data shows a rate of 44.1 total use count per total miles surveyed in the Campus Point SMCA. This rate of total use is slightly higher than the average over all years (average 40.6 total users per miles surveyed). Nonconsumptive onshore activities (primarily beach recreation on sandy substrate) accounted for 74% of all observations in 2025. Offshore nonconsumptive activities accounted for 26% of all observations with surfing making up 20% of all observations. There were also 101 observations of tidepooling (1% of all observations).

NAPLES SMCA

In January- December 2025, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper MPA Watch volunteers conducted 39 surveys within the Naples SMCA and 22 surveys outside of the MPA on the eastern border.

In 2025, the total use count per mile was 14.6, which shows a drop in the average total use count over all years and a decline from the peak total use count of 38.2 that was observed in 2022. The total use average for all years is 20.0. Sandy beach recreation accounted for 33% of all observations followed by surfing, 30% of observations. There were also several observations of boating activity in the Naples MPA over the past year including private power boats (4 observations), kayak (3 observations), and dive boats (3 observations). The dive boat is often one of the University of California Santa Barbara research vessels with divers conducting surveys on the high point/reef at Naples.

KASHTAYIT SMCA

During the January- December 2025 time period, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper MPA Watch volunteers and State Park volunteers conducted 107 surveys within the Kashtayit SMCA and 42 surveys outside of the MPA on the western border. In the first part of the year, there were 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 winter storms.

Overall, the total use rate at Kashtayit SMCA was 54.0 total use per mile surveyed for 2025, which is slightly lower than the average of previous years (59.8). Part of this may be due to the closure of the State Beach during winter months. Sandy beach recreation accounted for 79% of all observations, followed by offshore recreation at 6% of observations and then onshore hook and line fishing at 5% of observations. Kashtayit SMCA allows for the recreational take of most species except for mussels and scallops.

Santa Barbara County MPAs Boat-based Surveys

January – December 2025

In addition to the shore-based MPA Watch surveys, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper staff conduct 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.

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.

Channelkeeper completed 19 coastal boat MPA Watch surveys of Campus Point and Naples SMCAs during this past year. Winter storms and typical windy and foggy conditions in the spring and fall resulted in numerous small craft advisories and gale warnings causing many scheduled survey boat days to be cancelled during this time period.

There were no potential violations observed during the coastal boat-based surveys conducted during the January to December 2025 time period. Recreational hook and line fishing from the Goleta Pier and in the area to the south and east of the pier in the control survey is the most observed activity. There were also several observations of shore-based hook and line fishing this past year east of Goleta Pier.

The following heat maps reflect all fishing activity observed during Santa Barbara County coastal boat-based surveys for January to June and July to December 2025 as well as commercial fishing activity and recreation fishing activity observed for July – December 2025.

Jan - Jun 2025 All Fishing Activity Santa Barbara



Jul - Dec 2025 All Fishing Activity Santa Barbara



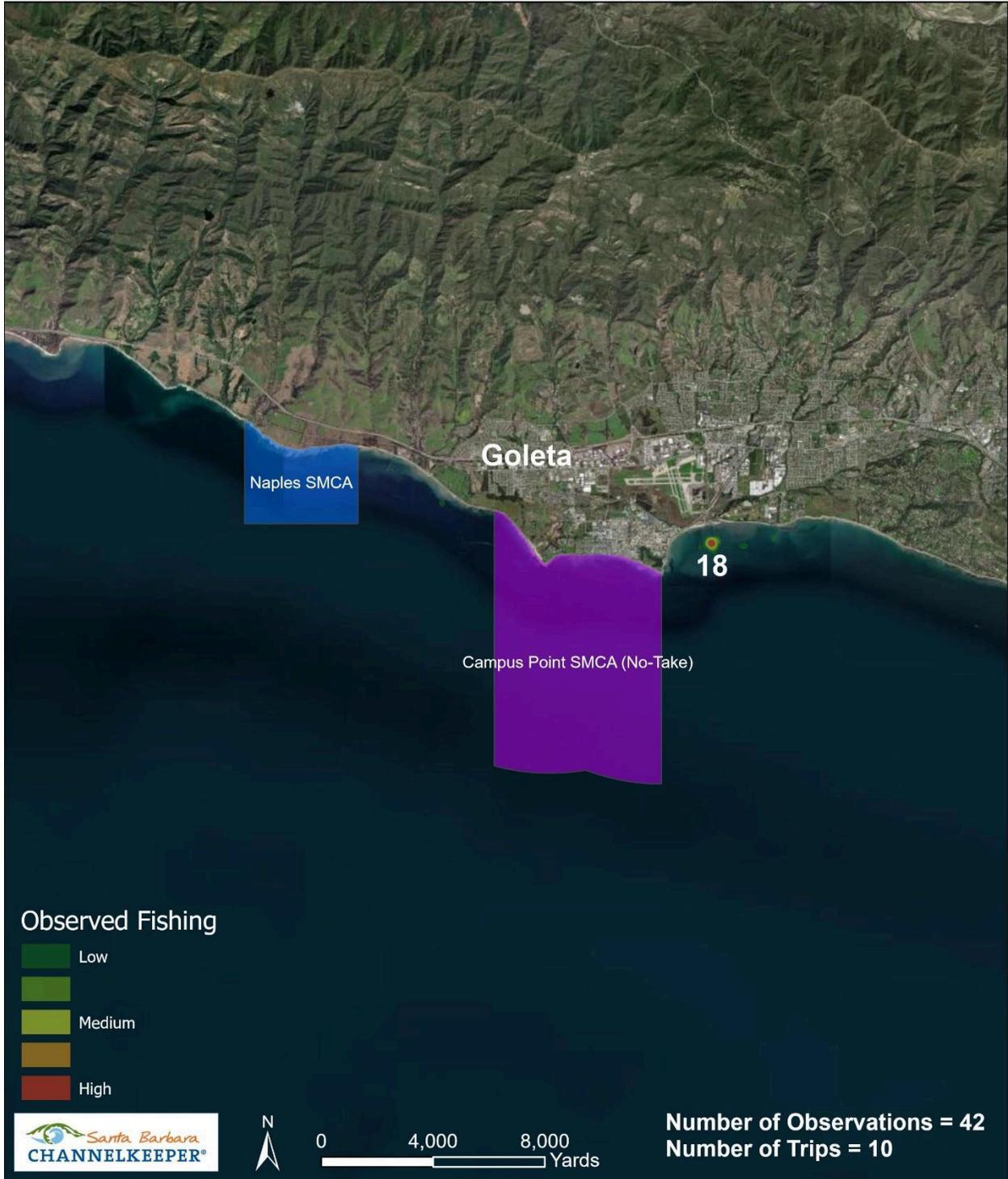
Jul - Dec 2025 Commercial Fishing Activity Santa Barbara



Jul - Dec 2025 Onshore Fishing Activity Santa Barbara



Jul - Dec 2025 Recreational Fishing Activity Santa Barbara



POTENTIAL VIOLATIONS

In 2025, the rate of consumptive activities observed in Kashtayit, Naples, and Campus Point MPAs remained relatively low accounting for 1.43% of all observations recorded by shore-based surveys, with all consumptive activity observed in the Kashtayit MPA where recreational fishing is allowed. Historically, MPA Watch surveys have observed potential violations of shore-based hook and line fishing activity in the western part of the Campus Point MPA; however no potential violations were observed in that area this past year.

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.

State Parks plans to continue to train interested hosts to conduct MPA Watch surveys at the Kashtayit 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. 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 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.