

mpa connections

A publication of the
National Marine Protected Areas Center

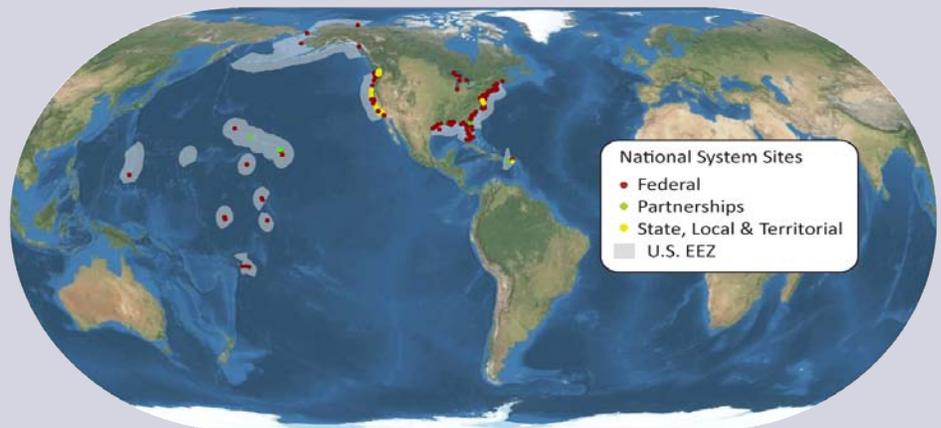


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In July 2009 we told you about how the MPA Center welcomed 225 existing MPAs as charter members of the National System of MPAs. Since then, we have undergone two additional nomination periods, and have welcomed an additional 29 sites. Four sites have just undergone public review, and are expected to become members of the national system later this year (see page 2). The national system is a partnership of federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local MA programs. It consists of existing MPAs and does not change the management of new sites, entail restrictions on access or create new MPAs. Some additional statistics on the national system are listed below.

National System Sites at a Glance:

- The national system contains 254 sites and covers an area of 175,000 sq mi
- 4% of U.S. waters (0-200 nautical miles) is covered by the national system sites
- About 27% of the total area of all national system sites is considered “no-take”, due to the large, highly protected Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
- All 21 of the national system’s priority conservation objectives are addressed by national system members
- Every major ecoregion in the U.S. is represented in the national system.

MPA Connections was first published by the National Marine Protected Areas Center in October 2002. The newsletter is available electronically and distributed via listserve. Issues are archived on http://mpa.gov/information_tools/newsletters.html. To subscribe, send an email to the editor, Kara.Schwenke@noaa.gov.

MORE NATIONAL SYSTEM NEWS:

Four Sites Recently Nominated to National System Complete Public Review

The National Marine Protected Areas Center received the third round of nominations for existing MPAs to join the national system of MPAs, based on a call for nominations from March 2010 through May 2010. This list of nominated sites was published in the Federal Register for a 45-day public review period that ended August 5, 2010. The group of four sites includes Tilefish Gear Restricted Areas nominated by NOAA, in consultation with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. A list providing more detail for each site is available at www.mpa.gov. Following review of public comments, the final nominations will be formally accepted as members of the national system in Fall 2010.

National System Training

The MPA Center partnered with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' MPA Capacity Building Program, the National Ocean Service's International Programs Office, and the Coral Reef Conservation Program to hold a 2-day training session on the development of MPA networks for member programs in the National System of MPAs. The training, the first to target a domestic audience with information and tools on MPA networks, was held in Tiburon, California, and was provided at the request of the National System Partners at their 2009 planning retreat (see article on page 5). The course addressed design and operations of ecological, social and institutional MPA networks, and featured speakers on California's Marine Life Protection Act initiative. Ten federal, state and territorial MPA programs participated in the training. Materials are posted on www.mpa.gov.



Interactive Online MPA Mapping Tool

The MPA Center has created a new interactive online mapping tool that, for the first time, allows users to view boundaries and access data for over a thousand marine protected areas (MPAs) in the United States.

The new MPA mapping tool provides a user friendly online interface to explore MPA information that was previously limited to expert GIS users. The tool provides simple functions to visualize MPA boundaries, review MPA classification information (e.g. level of protection, managing agency, fishing restrictions, etc) and explore all MPAs in a given location. Additional functions allow users to filter sites by certain attributes (e.g. show only sites that prohibit commercial

fishing or that are managed by a certain agency). The mapping tool can be accessed at www.mpa.gov/mpaviewer.

Data for the mapping tool is from the newly updated MPA Inventory, a comprehensive database on existing U.S. MPAs. Originally launched in June 2008, the inventory contains a range of information on each of the 1,619 protected areas established or managed by federal, state, or territorial agencies or programs. Data was collected from most management agencies and programs and is current as of January 2010. The updated MPA Inventory can be accessed at www.mpa.gov/dataanalysis/mpainventory/.

Upcoming Events and Conferences*

September 2010

7-10: California and the World Ocean 2010; San Francisco, CA; <http://www.cce.csus.edu/conferences/cnra/cwo2010/index.htm>

11-16: Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Annual Conference; Houston, TX; <http://www.aza.org/annualconference/>

15-19: 9th Maritime Heritage Conference; Baltimore, MD; <http://www.seahistory.org/html/9mhc.htm>

20-24: ICES Annual Science Conference 2010; Nantes, France; <http://www.ices.dk/iceswork/asc/2010/index.asp>

October 2010

19-22: Linking Science to Management: A Conference and Workshop on the Florida Keys Marine Ecosystem; Duck Key, FL; <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/floridakeys/index.html>

*Events and conferences listed above are not necessarily events that NOAA or the MPA Center will be sponsoring and/or participating in.

MPA Center Releases Special Edition of *Current: The Journal of Marine Education*



The MPA Center is excited to announce the release of a special edition of *Current: The Journal of Marine Education* focusing on networks and systems of MPAs. The Current issue includes articles written by authors who have had extensive experience in MPA network management and research, as well as activities and additional resources to help educators bring the concept of MPAs and networks of MPAs directly into their classroom.

Contents Include:

Welcome Letter from Dr. Jane Lubchenco

Networks of Marine Protected Areas: What Are They and Why Are They Needed?

by Kara Schwenke, Lauren Wenzel, and Katya Wovk

Activity: Working Together with Sherman and the National System of Marine Protected Areas

Institutional Networks of Marine Protected Areas – Connecting People to Protect Places

by Georgina Bustamante, Meghan Gombos, Hans Herrmann, Karen Schmidt, and Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury

Why are Ecological Networks of Marine Protected Areas Important?

by Steven Gaines and Satie Airamè

Graphic: How Marine Reserves and Networks Protect Ocean Resources

Activity: Biodiversity

Pelagic Reserves for Marine Top Predators: How Big and How Many?

by David Hyrenbach

Activity: Origami Whale and Turtle

New Stresses, New Strategies: Managing Marine Protected Areas in an Age of Global Environmental Change

by Daniel Gleason

Activity: Architects of Seamounts

Current: The Journal of Marine Education is published by the National Marine Educators Association. This special edition is posted on www.mpa.gov. If you'd like a hard copy, please contact Kara.Schwenke@noaa.gov.

New Improved www.MPA.gov



If you've recently visited www.mpa.gov, you probably noticed something a little different. That's because the MPA Center has recently undergone a significant redesign of its website, www.mpa.gov.

The website has a new look, and more accurately reflects the work of the MPA Center, and the establishment and management of the national system. Additionally, the website contains educational and multi-media resources, and is easier to navigate. Take a look and see for yourself! www.mpa.gov

MPAs in Proximity to the Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill



As the nation's leading scientific resource for oil spills, NOAA has been on the scene of the BP spill from the start, providing coordinated scientific weather and biological response services to federal, state and local organizations. Specifically, the MPA Center has assisted NOAA in its response efforts by providing on-site GIS assistance in the Mobile, AL field office, and through the production of data maps on MPAs in proximity to the Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill.

The most recent map, available at www.mpa.gov, shows the boundaries of the 234 U.S. MPAs that could potentially be affected by the oil spill. It includes some sites that are primarily terrestrial but have a marine component. Data used for the map are taken from the MPA Inventory. For more information on NOAA's response to the Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill, visit http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/dwh.php?entry_id=809.

11 New Members Join MPA Federal Advisory Committee



Sally Yozell, NOAA Policy Director, gives remarks at the MPA FAC reception in Charleston, S.C.

The Department of Commerce, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, has appointed 11 new members to the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee (MPA FAC). The 30-member committee, which meets twice yearly, is made up of representatives of diverse interests who advise the Departments of Commerce and the Interior on the development and implementation of a national system of MPAs. The new members join the 16 continuing members appointed in March 2008. An additional three new members will be appointed later this year. To see a list of members newly appointed to the MPA Federal Advisory Committee, along with a full FAC member list, visit www.mpa.gov.

April 2010 MPA FAC Meeting and Formation of Subcommittees

New FAC members were invited to attend the most recent meeting of the MPA FAC, held from April 20-22 in Charleston, South Carolina. At the meeting, the Committee adopted recommendations on how the National System of MPAs and MPAs generally can contribute to more resilient ecosystems in light of expected climate change impacts in the ocean. The MPA FAC also adopted a vision statement for the cultural heritage goal of the National System and heard from two panels of MPA experts and stakeholders on South Atlantic regional issues and the value and diversity of cultural heritage resources. In addition to the new members in attendance, members of the newly formed Cultural Heritage Resources Working Group attended, providing additional expertise on archaeological and tribal issues.

The Committee formed three Subcommittees to address the new charge, which was presented to them at the April meeting. The Subcommittees include: Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning; Communities and Land/Sea Interactions; and the Cultural Heritage Resources Working Group. Members of the public provided oral comments to the Committee. Please visit www.mpa.gov for all meeting products, including panel presentations.

Transmittal of FAC Recommendations to NOAA and DOI Leadership

On May 3, the MPA FAC formally transmitted a set of recommendations to Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco, and Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Thomas Strickland. The recommendations were developed by the MPA FAC during their meeting in Charleston, S.C. Recommendations focused on climate change in the ocean and how the national system can help foster resilience to climate change impacts. Specifically, they focus on: 1) designing MPA sites, MPA networks and the national system of MPAs to be ecologically resilient to the impacts of climate change; and 2) evaluating and adaptively managing MPA sites, MPA networks and the national system in response to climate change. The Committee also transmitted a set of recommendations on a "Vision for the Cultural Heritage Resources Goal of the National System of MPAs." The vision represents the Committee's conception of how the national system can benefit cultural heritage resources.

On May 13, the MPA FAC formally transmitted a letter on coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) to Dr. Jane Lubchenco, and Assistant Secretary Thomas Strickland. The letter was developed by the MPA FAC during the April meeting, and describes how the work of the MPA FAC broadly overlaps with the objectives laid out in the Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning. The MPA FAC was recently charged with providing recommendations on three issues that directly link the National System of MPAs and CMSP efforts. These include: 1) the role the national system plays within the broader CMSP initiative; 2) steps needed to ensure that conservation is sufficiently addressed within regional coastal and marine spatial plans; and 3) how DOC and DOI can build on the spatial data decision support tools and conservation planning processes used to develop the national system to inform CMSP. The letter, along with the recommendations that were developed at the April 2010 FAC meeting, is available on www.mpa.gov.

The next meeting of the MPA FAC is scheduled from November 2- 4 in Santa Barbara, CA. For additional information on the MPA FAC, visit www.mpa.gov, or contact Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov.



Members of the MPA Federal Advisory Committee on Boneyard Beach, located on Bulls Island, S.C., and part of the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge.

MPA Center and NFWF Announce MPA Fund Recipients

On June 8, the MPA Center announced the recipients of the MPA Fund grants, a partnership between the MPA Center and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The five grant recipients were announced at a ceremony held in conjunction with Capitol Hill Ocean Week. The MPA Fund was established to support coordination and stewardship for members of the National System of MPAs. Five grants were funded this year. They include:

Developing a Regional MPA Plan for the Southeast

Recipient: Friends of Rookery Bay, Inc.

Amount: \$35,000

Activities: Workshop and follow up to create a Regional MPA Plan for the Southeast

Strengthening Marine Protections in Puako, Hawaii Island

Recipient: The Nature Conservancy

Amount: \$44,280

Activities: Community-based MPA management plan to reduce threats to Puako's coral reef, and model a planning process for other protected areas in Hawaii

Application of LiDAR Data to Support MPA Management

Recipient: Rutgers University

Amount: \$38,373

Activities: Create digital elevation model to analyze sea level rise impacts on salt marsh and barrier islands; workshop to share tool with other MPA managers

MPA Management Plan Development: Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument

Recipient: Marine Conservation Biology Institute

Amount: \$50,000

Activities: Workshop to support development of Monument Management Plan; develop management model for other remote MPAs

California MPA Interpretive Panel Design and Installation

Recipient: California Department of Parks & Recreation

Amount: \$20,347

Activities: Signs, maps and interpretive panels at newly designated MPAs to enhance public understanding



Speakers at the MPA Fund Announcement Ceremony and grant recipients are shown above. Pictured (from left to right) are: Eileen Sobeck, DOI; Bill Chandler, MCBI; Anthony Chatwin, NFWF; Lauren Wenzel, MPA Center; Holly Bamford, NOAA; Scott Haag, Jacques Cousteau NERR; and Erica Seidon (representing Rookery Bay NERR).

MPA Center Holds Second Annual National System Partners Retreat

On June 23 and 24, the MPA Center held the second National System of MPAs Partners Retreat in Tiburon, CA. Representatives from federal, state, territorial, and tribal MPA programs met to



Cliff McCreedy, National Park Service, presents a case study on evaluating the Dry Tortugas Ecological Reserve to national system partners

share information about their capabilities and needs. This year, based on information received at last year's retreat, the MPA Center hosted a special training on developing MPA networks (see page 2 for additional information) before the partners retreat. Many national system partners were able to attend the training before the retreat, which provided an opportunity for partners to learn about the design and operation of ecological, social and institutional MPA networks.

With the first year of implementation of the national system of MPAs underway, and the second round of site nominations completed in June, the focus of this meeting was to think about priorities and initial strategies for addressing some of the issue areas of highest interest to national system partners and the MPA Center. These include: 1) MPA effectiveness and evaluation; and 2) community-based MPAs and stakeholder engagement.

The objective of the retreat was to identify priorities and strategies for these issues, with a view toward strengthening the national system of MPAs, including opportunities



Participants of the National System Partners Retreat participate in a session to identify priorities for MPA effectiveness and evaluation

for partnerships. Other retreat objectives focused on sharing information about capabilities and needs of national system partners, discussing thematic and regional priorities for near-term focus of the national system, identifying key opportunities for collaboration with other coastal and ocean initiatives, and identifying ways to improve national system coordination and communication.

MPA Center Welcomes Dr. Robert Brock, Senior Marine Biologist



The MPA Center would like to welcome Dr. Robert Brock, the new Senior Marine Biologist for the MPA Center's office in Silver Spring, Maryland, who will oversee the Center's marine natural science programs. Robert comes to us from the NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Science and Technology, where he represented them in matters dealing with corals, deep-sea corals, marine protected areas, international science issues (he Chairs the ICES-NAFO Working Group on Deepwater Ecology), and science quality assurance. Robert previously led the Marine Science Program of Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks. Robert has a BS in Environmental Science/Marine Ecology from Florida International University, an MS in Marine Biology from the Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center, and a PhD in Environmental Engineering Sciences/Aquatic Ecology from the University of Florida.

Update on Ocean Uses Atlas Projects

In July 2009, the MPA Center, in partnership with Marine Conservation Biology Institute, held the fourth and final Ocean Uses Atlas Workshop in Seaside, CA. While this particular series of workshops was specific to the California coast, the MPA Center has since conducted an ocean uses atlas workshop in New Hampshire (January 2010), with plans to conduct another workshop in Hawaii in September 2010.

More About the New Hampshire Ocean Uses Atlas Workshop

The New Hampshire and Southern Maine Ocean Uses Atlas Project is an innovative partnership between NOAA's Marine Protected Areas Center and UNH's Coastal Response Resource Center. Inspired by and used in the March 2010 Spill of National Significance drill (SONS 2010), the Atlas project fills a critical information gap in response efforts and ocean management by mapping, for the first time, the full range of significant human uses of the ocean in state and federal waters off of the coast of New Hampshire and southern Maine. Spatial data for nearly 30 ocean uses were gathered during a participatory mapping workshop convened with regional ocean use experts. The resulting atlas data provides baseline information regarding the location and extent to which the ocean environment is used for non-consumptive, fishing, and industrial and military activities. Additional details on workshop logistics and attendees can be found at http://www.crrc.unh.edu/workshops/ocean_uses/index.html.



Where can I find additional data about the Ocean Uses Atlas Workshops?

Individual use maps, sector aggregate use maps, and downloadable GIS data are available for the California Ocean Uses Atlas at <http://mpa.gov/dataanalysis/atlas/>. You can view static map products for each use mapped at the state and regional scales at <http://mpa.gov/dataanalysis/atlas/atlasmap/>. These maps can be used to inform ocean management decisions and identify hot spots and potential conflict zones for various combinations of ocean uses in California.

Maps and comprehensive information for the New Hampshire/Southern Maine Ocean Uses Atlas will soon be available on www.mpa.gov.

What's Next?

The MPA Center has plans to conduct an Ocean Uses Atlas Workshop on Hawaii's Big Island in late September. Additional information and products will be forthcoming.

For More Information

Contact charles.wahle@noaa.gov or mimi.diorio@noaa.gov

Recent Additions to the MPA Virtual Library

The United Kingdom has released a strategy setting out its proposed vision and framework for MPAs in territorial waters adjacent to England and UK offshore waters over the next ten years; the strategy describes how existing obligations for MPAs under European directives, together with marine conservation zones under the Marine and Coastal Access Act and other designated sites, will provide an ecologically coherent network by 2012.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), "The Government's Strategy for Contributing to the Delivery of a UK Network of Marine Protected Areas". London, United Kingdom: DEFRA, 2010.
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/documents/mpa-strategy100330.pdf>

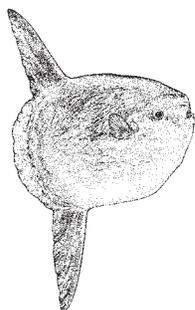
A new report from the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN-WCPA) and partners discusses the role of protected areas in mitigating and adapting to climate change, including how marine and freshwater protected areas can help rebuild fish stocks and replenish stocks beyond their borders.

Dudley, N. et al., "Natural Solutions: Protected Areas Helping People Cope with Climate Change". Gland, Switzerland: IUCN-WCPA, 2010.
http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/natural_solutions.pdf

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has released an update of a 2007 strategic plan, to reflect the Center's evolving structure and priorities, with a greater emphasis on further developing the national system of MPAs and its operational capabilities.

National Marine Protected Areas Center, "National Marine Protected Areas Center Strategic Plan 2010-2015". Silver Spring, MD: NOAA National Marine Protected Areas Center, 2009.
http://mpa.gov/pdf/mpa-center/MPA_Strategic_Plan_2010-1015.pdf

The **mission of the National Marine Protected Areas Center** is to facilitate the effective use of science, technology, training, and information in the planning, management, and evaluation of the nation's system of marine protected areas.



MPA Connections was launched to meet continuing calls by agency and external stakeholders for information about MPA Center activities and to feature other actions that address Executive Order 13158 goals.

The next issue of **MPA Connections** will be published in Winter 2010/2011. Comments, suggestions and news items can be sent to the editor, Kara. Schwenke@noaa.gov.

MPA Center Science and Stewardship *(A continuing series from the MPA Center)*

MPA Center Staff Attends 5th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands: On May 3, Katya Wowk, Policy Specialist at NOAA's MPA Center, presented at the 5th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands: Ensuring Survival, Preserving Life, and Improving Governance on "Fostering Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation and Adaptation to Climate Change: The U.S. National System of MPAs." The conference convened on May 3-7, 2010 at UNESCO in Paris, and brought together over 800 experts representing 80 countries from all sectors of the global oceans community to address the major policy issues affecting the oceans at global, regional, national and sub-national levels, and to make progress in advancing the global oceans agenda. The event also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. For more information, visit www.globaloceans.org. (Katya.Wowk@noaa.gov)

www.mpa.gov

