

CONNECTIONS

Newsletter of the National
Marine Protected Areas Center

May 2003

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. Connections was launched to meet continuing calls by agency and external stakeholders for information about MPA Center activities.

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Clarifying Misconceptions about Marine Protected Areas **(Fourth Part in a Series)**

Misconception: The Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Initiative, outlined in Executive Order 13158, replaces existing federal and state laws or regulations regarding MPAs.

Reality: The MPA Initiative, which established the MPA Center and detailed the call for a national network of MPAs, does not include any mandate to override existing federal or state laws, regulations, or procedures.

It does not order the creation of new authorities or supersede existing regulatory or statutory authorities to protect marine resources. It merely establishes a framework through which federal and state agencies can better coordinate their resource protection

initiatives. In fact, the Executive Order specifically states that work of the MPA Center is intended to support, not interfere with, agencies' independent exercise of their own authorities.

Both the Departments of Commerce and the Interior, along with other federal agencies, are working with states, territories, commonwealths, tribes, and other entities towards the effective design and management of marine protected areas. Part of this coordination involves collecting data for an inventory of marine protected areas and marine managed areas across the country. This inter-agency collaboration enhances existing protections and creates a national system of marine protected areas.

Some examples of existing federal MPA legislation includes: the Coastal Zone Management Act, Endangered Species Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, National Marine Sanctuaries Act, National Historic Preservation Act, National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, and the Wilderness Act, among others.

States use a wide variety of site designation authorities. General resource laws are used to provide protections for natural and cultural marine resources. These are supplemented by special area designations that take into account the resources, socio-economic benefits, and ecosystem services provided within distinct coastal areas, while tailoring regulations and policies to local or regional circumstances.

State regulations fall under categories of coastal management, environmental policy, land use governance, parks and recreation codes, fish and game provisions, and historic preservation laws. In some cases, states simply institute policies or goals for a special area, or type of species, such as shellfish, for protection through MPAs.

To learn more about the Marine Protected Areas Initiative, visit <http://mpa.gov/mpadescriptive/natinitiative.html>

Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee Scheduled to Meet in June

The first meeting of the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee will take place from June 24-25, 2003 in Washington, D.C. The meeting will be open to the public and will be held at:

The Department of Commerce's Auditorium
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
(please use the entrance on 14th Street)
Washington, D.C. 20230

During the first day of the meeting, the Advisory Committee will hear presentations and have the opportunity to discuss various issues, including the history and context of

Executive Order 13158, the MPA Center's goals and activities, and areas of focus for the Committee. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Sam Bodman and Deputy Secretary of the Interior Steven Griles will provide opening remarks.

On the second day of the meeting, the Committee will begin to get organized and continue to develop the foundation to conduct its work.

A public comment period will be included on the second day of the meeting. The complete agenda will be posted on this web page by early June. For more information, write to mpainfo@noaa.gov.

For more information about the MPA Federal Advisory Committee, visit <http://mpa.gov/mpabusiness/fac.html>.

Lessons Learned: Case Studies of MPA Processes Can Reveal Effective Tools and Techniques

MPAs have been established through a variety of programs and establishment processes both internationally and in the United States. Hence, there is no single formula for creating an MPA. Fully understanding how to design an MPA planning process that results in effective protection while actively engaging all stakeholders in meaningful, productive, and equitable dialogue and decision-making remains uncertain and subject to the specific legal requirements of each MPA program. Clearly, there is much to be learned from existing MPAs and from past MPA planning processes.

An MPA Needs Assessment conducted last year revealed that both MPA managers and stakeholders want to use lessons learned from past MPA processes. Although any MPA process must be tailored to local issues, stakeholders, and environmental conditions, case studies can demonstrate effective tools and techniques and allow a comparison across MPA efforts.

As a first step in addressing this need, the National MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute, housed within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center, researched and documented five MPA processes from the United States. These five case studies will be published in a report due later this month.

The purpose of the report is not to suggest that following the documented approaches will always lead to a successfully established and managed MPA. Rather, the report summarizes the process and issues of each case study. It culminates in a number of findings about the research itself and about commonalities across the documented processes.

The following five case studies were selected to demonstrate processes in a range of geographic locations that were established for a variety of purposes, and which had varying amounts of involvement by different levels of government:

- Carl N. Schuster Horseshoe Crab Reserve (Delaware Bay)
- Channel Islands Marine Reserves (California)
- Gulf of Mexico Grouper Closures (Gulf of Mexico)
- San Juan County Bottomfish Recovery Zones (Washington)
- Tortugas Ecological Reserve (Florida)

The final report will be available on the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute website later this month:
http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/cls/mpa_training.html. It will also be available on www.mpa.gov. For more information, contact Brie Kessler at Brianne.Kessler@noaa.gov.

NOAA's Monterey Bay Sanctuary "First Flush" Report
Shows Stormwater Not Clean When Reaches Bay

NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the Coastal Watershed Council released a report earlier this month that shows high concentrations of pollutants were detected in Pacific Grove, Monterey, Capitola and Santa Cruz, Calif., storm drains following last fall's first major rain storm event. Monterey Bay is one in a network of Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) national marine sanctuaries.

The report, titled "First Flush," showed that accumulated oil, chemicals, and litter runoff flushed from streets and other impermeable surfaces were found in the rainwater samples going into NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The water quality sampling was conducted at 19 sites by an extensive network of volunteers with the sanctuary's Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network and Coastal Watershed Council.

Samples were analyzed in the laboratory and compared to the findings of previous "First Flush" events. Metal concentrations, such as copper, lead and zinc, have increased every year at the majority of sites. Bacteria and total suspended solids were also higher than previous years. Sources of these metals may include brake pads, copper piping, building materials and pressure treated wood.

Some examples of impaired water flows include:

- The site located at Soquel Creek at Capitola Village in Santa Cruz had the highest reported lead concentration of 92 micrograms/liter. This level is three times higher than the state water quality objective of 30 micrograms/liter.

--The Asilomar site in Pacific Grove, and the outfall site at Merced Avenue and West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz reported copper concentrations of 340 micrograms/liter. This is 11 times higher than the state water quality objective of 30 micrograms/liter.

--The Steinbeck Plaza site in Monterey, and the Lover's Point site in Pacific Grove had the highest average orthophosphate (a form of phosphorus commonly found in detergents) concentrations for all three years. This year, Steinbeck Plaza's concentration of 3.15 parts per million was 20 times higher than the state action level of 0.16 parts per million. Lover's Point initial sample reported 2.64 parts per million.

"While these results are not conclusive as to a certain contamination problem, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn that require further investigation," said Sanctuary Superintendent William J. Douros. "Additionally, these results have occurred over three years, and are not a one time, single phenomenon. In all cases the sanctuary is working very closely with local agencies to further investigate the causes of the contamination events."

Storm water runoff in coastal urban areas has been known to produce significant toxicity to early life stages of aquatic organisms due to the presence of trace metals. Effects include reduced reproduction, developmental deformities and mortality. Toxicity analysis of three different test marine organisms indicated that the water from the 2002 "First Flush" was toxic to the test organisms resulting in impaired reproduction or mortality. Preliminary findings identify copper and zinc concentrations as possibly contributing to the toxicity.

"An important next step will be additional testing by the state of California's Marine Pollution Studies Laboratory to help us better pin down the causes of the toxicity," said Bridget Hoover, Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network Coordinator. "Each city also had at least one site that warrants upstream monitoring to locate the source of contamination. It is important that we work together to solve these problems, as well as educate the general population that all of our actions contribute to the quality of water flowing off our streets."

This was third annual "First Flush" monitoring event in Monterey and Pacific Grove and the second annual event in Capitola and Santa Cruz. Unlike household sewage, storm drain pollution is not cleansed by sewage treatment plants and is one of the largest sources of pollution throughout the country.

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network is a consortium of approximately 20 citizen-monitoring groups that monitor the health of the Sanctuary. The network was established in 1997 and has since provided support, training, and a central forum and database for citizen monitoring programs. "First Flush" is a collaborative effort involving the network and the Coastal Watershed Council. Funding is provided by the sanctuary, and the cities of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Capitola and Santa Cruz.

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of central California coast and encompasses over 5,300 miles of ocean area. Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary supports one of the world's most diverse marine ecosystems, including 33 species of marine mammals, 94 species of seabirds, 345 species of fishes and thousands of marine invertebrates and plants.

For more information, visit the Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network or see "First Flush 2002": <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov/monitoringnetwork/events.html>, or the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov>.

Question of the Month:

Who can attend the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee meeting?

The MPA Federal Advisory Committee meeting is open to the public. The Committee will meet over a two-day period, and there will be time set aside for members of the public to address comments or questions to the Committee. The Committee will meet in the Department of Commerce's auditorium, which is located on the first floor of the Department's headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C. There is plenty of seating in the auditorium for members of the public. A detailed agenda of the Committee meeting is being finalized; it will be posted on the MPA website in early June.

Check <http://mpa.gov> for more details.

Upcoming Events and Conferences

MAY

11 - 16: Fifth Annual Science and Management of Protected Areas Association (SAMPAA) Conference, Victoria, British Columbia;
http://www.sampaa.org/sampaa_conference.htm

13-15: Department of the Interior Conference on the Environment, Phoenix, Arizona. Theme is "Partnering for Environmental Stewardship – Resource Conservation for the Future." <http://www.doi.gov/conference/environment/index.html>

19-22: Native American Fish and Wildlife Society 2003 National Conference, Traverse City, Michigan; <http://www.nafws.org/NationalConference.htm>

JUNE

4-6: Oceanology International 2003, New Orleans, LA: <http://www.oiamericas.com>

8: Oceans Day

13-14: International Coastal Management: Tools for Successful Regional Partnerships and Initiatives, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia;
<http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/SGLC/conference.htm>

24-25: MPA Federal Advisory Committee, Washington, D.C.

JULY

13-17: Coastal Zone '03, Baltimore, Maryland. Theme is coastal zone management through time; <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz2003>

20-22: Second Annual Public Participation GIS Conference, Portland, Oregon;
<http://www.ursia.org/ppgis.htm>

20-24: National Marine Educators Association, Wilmington, North Carolina;
<http://www.marine-ed.org/nmea2003>

AUGUST

10-14: American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, Quebec City, Canada. Theme is aquatic protected areas as fishery management tools;
http://www.fisheries.org/apa_symposium/homepage.htm

SEPTEMBER

4-6: Centre for Maritime Research (MARE) announces its second international conference entitled "People and the Sea II – Conflicts, Threats and Opportunities," Amsterdam, the Netherlands;
http://www.marecentre.nl/people_and_the_sea_2/index.html

8-17: World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa; <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/>

14-18: Estuarine Research Federation's 17th Biennial Conference: "Estuaries on the Edge: Convergence of Ocean, Land and Culture," Seattle, Washington;
<http://fish.washington.edu/news/erf>

OCTOBER

7-11: North American Association for Environmental Education, Anchorage, Alaska;
<http://naaee.org/>

26-29: Hawaii Coastal Zone Management Program's Hawaii Summit-to-Sea 2003, Honolulu. Themes include Traditional and Cultural Wisdom, Ecosystem & Resource Management, Research & Education, and Ocean Industry. Abstracts due May 18, 2003;
<http://www.hawaiiormp.com/main.htm>

25-30: National Estuarine Research Reserves Association (NERRA) Annual Meeting, Charleston, South Carolina

NOVEMBER

2-5: Eighth Estuarine and Coastal Modeling Conference, Monterey Hyatt, Monterey, California; <http://www.oce.uri.edu/ecm8/>.

8-12: National Association of Interpretation, Reno, Nevada:
<http://www.interpnet.com/niw2003/>

17-20: Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship, Los Angeles, California;
<http://www.partnerships2003.org/home.html>

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