

Initial Marine Managed Areas Data Collection Wrapping Up

Information for the MMA Inventory has been collected over the past five years from a variety of publicly available and internal government data sources. Many hardworking state and federal staff and very capable data collection specialists and interns have invested in this effort. Since mid-summer 2005, the MPA Center has taken steps to complete the initial collection and posting of state data through a series of letters and other material to state and territorial representatives. In early December 2005, the MPA Center sent a letter to each state in the process of reviewing its MMA data requesting that managers determine and inform NOAA which sections of their in-



A view of the Dameron Marsh Natural Area Preserve, Virginia.

ventory should be posted. These states were asked to complete and return a checklist approval form divided into individual data sections. The approval form gave state managers two options for data posting:

- Final state verified data, or
- Draft state verified data.

Another column on this form, filled out by NOAA prior to sending it to each state, represented NOAA's determination about the status of each section's data, to compare federal and state data posting decisions.

Additional attachments included the state's QA/QC report, an explanatory note to help with completion of the form, and information about the GIS data. Those states that have not yet submitted any data to NOAA, or are not participating in the MMA Inventory, did not receive an individual state form but were sent a letter describing the process and another invitation to participate in the Inventory.



Divers enjoy the waters of the Fort Casey Underwater Park, Washington.

Although response to these efforts has been limited, many states continue to work on their data to make it suitable for posting. The MPA Center expected to post data beginning on January 3, 2006, however, due to changes to the database structure, the MPA Center will begin posting data on January 31, 2006. Even after posting, the MMA inventory team will continue to work with state representatives to fill any remaining data gaps, correct inaccuracies, and provide further opportunities for updates and improvements. For additional information or questions, please contact Paul Ticco, MPA Project Coordinator, at (301) 563-1162 or at paul.ticco@noaa.gov.

Quick Status Update

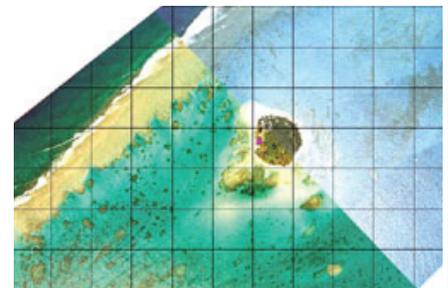
Number of States/Territories Posted as Final: 3

Number of States Posted as Draft: 2

Number of States Reviewing Data (Not Posted as Draft): 17

Number of States Entering Data: 2

Number of States Without Data/Not Participating: 8



Aerial photograph with grid of the Managaha Marine Conservation Area, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

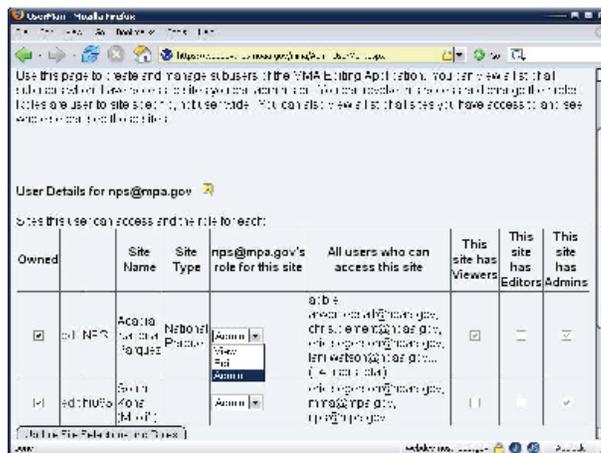
Big Changes on the Horizon for the MMA Editing Application

The MMA edit and review website application is changing. For the most part, the functionality will remain the same: users will log in, select a site and section, and edit/add data. The vast majority of the improvements are “under the hood” and not readily visible to the end user. These “under the hood” improvements were made to better maintain data quality and to facilitate easier and more rapid publication of data to www.mpa.gov. There are some front-end improvements that users will notice, including a friendlier overall look and feel; edit buttons with a consistent editing interface; and pull-down menus for every category to improve data accuracy.

As a result of these improvements, there are some exciting new features. There are now quick-reference notices detailing the status of the data as users are working, and designated users will be able to directly approve and publish their sites to the MMA Inventory website. Additionally, there is a new user interface designed to provide rapid visual quality assurance.

Designated data managers can now quickly see what data is published on the public website, what changes have been made, and make a decision to approve the changes.

Another brand-new feature is the User MMA Manager, which allows state managers to assign sub-users to specific sites and give them specific user rights depending on their role. Sub-users can include data collection interns, interested parties, or partners. The dramatically-improved system allows each state manager to create new users, assign them passwords, and change their privileges on a site-to-site basis. If the sub-user forgets their password, the state designated MMA lead can reset it for them, and when that user logs in, they will change it to a private one. Also new to

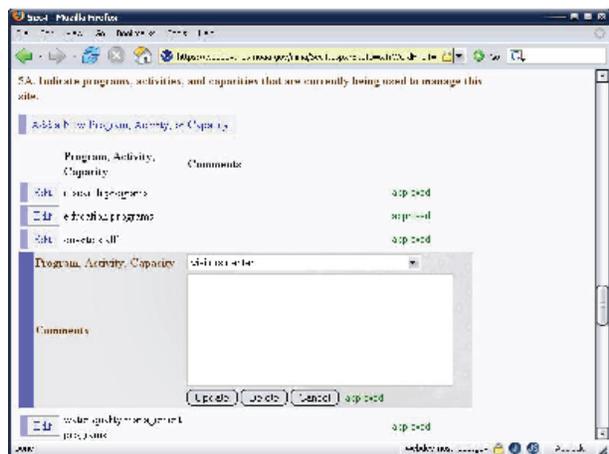


Screen shot example of how the details of sub-users can be modified using the new interface.

will now also be able to delete their own sites when necessary.

Finally, along with the changes to the MMA edit and review website's user management system, it has been enhanced to be more secure. The site uses 128-bit encryption and will now have strict enforcement of “strong” passwords to protect each state's data. Each user will need a private password, unlike in the past where there was a single password for each state.

The MMA Inventory team is pleased to offer these new functionalities and hopes that state users find them easy and efficient. For questions or comments about the MMA edit and review website, please contact Paul Ticco at 301-563-1162 or at paul.ticco@noaa.gov.



Screen shot of the new pull-down menus for every category that help enhance and improve data consistency and accuracy.

the application is the long-awaited ability for designated users to add new sites directly to the inventory. This eliminates the old system where users had to contact NOAA's MMA team to add and approve site names before entering data. Designated users



GIS Data Collection Continues



GIS boundary for South Essex Ocean Sanctuary, Massachusetts.

As the MMA Inventory data collection process continues, GIS data are rolling in on a continuing

basis. Nineteen states have submitted some GIS data, with fifteen of these states having submitted over 75% of their boundaries. The MMA Team is working hard to create comprehensive metadata for each state's dataset (metadata is information about the data that may include sources, dates, format, resolution, scale, and reliability).

With the initial data collection deadline at hand, the MMA Team sent each state a report of its

current GIS status, along with the letter from the MPA Center in December, to help in obtaining the rest of the boundaries. This report included a list indicating whether or not a digital boundary has been submitted for each site.

Please submit all boundary data to the GIS Specialist, Joel Murray at joel.murray@noaa.gov. To view the currently posted boundaries, please visit the MMA Atlas in the Explore the Inventory Section of www.mpa.gov.

MMA Status Website Updated

At the end of October, the status of the MMA Inventory portion of the www.mpa.gov website was given a new design. The new version features a status table that represents those agencies and states that have given approval to post data on the website. This table offers links to program information, maps, and a list of the sites currently available for each state or agency. The table also shows the date that the data was

approved to post online and the date the data was last changed on the public website.

This improved page also has a link to the latest illustration representing all states and agencies involved in the Marine Managed Areas Inventory, and the most recent issue of the state status newsletter. We hope that the improved status page will provide more up-to-date information in

a comprehensive, easy to access manner.



Elephant seals lounging at Año Nuevo ASBS State Water Quality Protection Area, California.

For Questions, Please Contact:

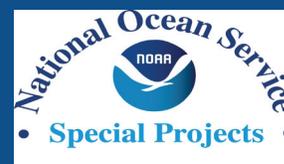
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For more information about the MMA Inventory, please visit us online at www.mpa.gov



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<http://specialprojects.nos.noaa.gov>