

"I love that as an everyday person I can do science and help save the ocean."

-Alexis, WILD Coast Volunteer

MPA Watch Facts and Figures* (2013-2019)

31,000+
Land-based
surveys completed

68
Number of MPAs
surveyed

400+
Boat-based
surveys completed

59
Number of MPA
Watch control sites

850+
Volunteers actively
engaged

Geographic span:
**All coastal
counties in
California.**


*Statewide

SAN DIEGO COUNTY



Community Science for Stewardship of Ocean Resources




Marine Protected Area (MPA) Watch is a network of programs in California that support healthy oceans through community science by collecting human use data in and around our protected areas.
wildcoast.org/mpawatch

BECOME A COMMUNITY SCIENTIST!



MPA Watch in San Diego County is managed by WILD Coast.

WILD Coast conserves coastal and marine ecosystems and addresses climate change through natural solutions.

WILD Coast:



*Establishes and manages
protected areas*



*Protects and restores blue carbon
ecosystems*



*Partners with local communities,
governments, and the private
sector*



wildcoast.org

What data are collected and how?

Volunteers are trained to walk predetermined routes on the beach and record observations on an MPA Watch datasheet.

Types of activities recorded include:

Onshore Activities

- Beach Recreation
- Tidepooling
- Shore-based Fishing

Offshore Activities

- Surfing
- Stand Up Paddle Boards
- SCUBA/Snorkeling

Boating

- Boat Fishing
- Kayaks
- Party Boats

Other Activities

- Potential Poaching
- Education
- Enforcement

Who uses the data and results?

Potential users of MPA Watch data include:

- Resource managers
- Local communities
- Academia

MPA Watch currently engages with:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California State Parks
- California MPA Collaborative Network

Data reports may be obtained by e-mailing angela@wildcoast.org.



Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Similar to state parks on land, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) protect the diversity and abundance of marine life, the habitats they depend on, and the integrity of marine ecosystems by regulating the types of allowable take.

California is home to a network of 124 MPAs. There are 11 MPAs in San Diego County, which fall into three categories:



State Marine Reserve (SMR)

No take allowed.



No-Take State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)

No take allowed.



State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)

Limited take. Allowable take varies.

For more information on San Diego Co. MPAs view the Educational Materials at wildcoast.org/resources and download the MPA Wildlife and Recreation Guide.



Photo by Brian Skeery

Volunteer Requirements

MPA Watch volunteers must:

- Be at least 15 years old or accompanied by an adult (under age 18 requires parental or guardian consent)
- Commit to completing at least two surveys a month for at least three months
- Be able to walk outside, on the beach, on uneven terrain
- Provide own transportation to/from surveys

New volunteers must complete a 60-90 minute training with a WILDCOAST staff member. To schedule a training e-mail angela@wildcoast.org.

Survey Sites

MPA Watch volunteers monitor 17 sites in:

- Encinitas
- La Jolla
- South La Jolla
- Imperial Beach

Surveys are completed along predetermined routes and range from 0.20 to 1.45 miles one direction. Once trained, volunteers may pick which site(s) they would like to survey.

Most sites are completed on foot; however, two driving sites exist in South La Jolla.

Data sheets, site maps, and volunteer manual may be downloaded from wildcoast.org/mpawatch.