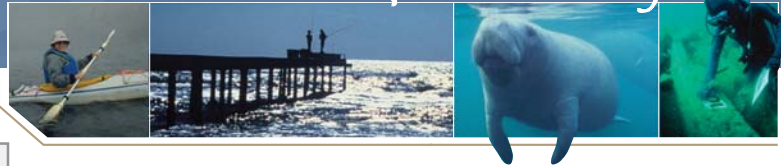


National Marine Protected Areas Center West Coast Pilot: Human Use Patterns and Impacts Project



About the West Coast Pilot

Because the west coast (California, Oregon, and Washington) is currently at the forefront of federal, state, and tribal MPA activity, the National Marine Protected Areas Center is leading a collaborative initiative there to pilot key methods and approaches for designing and managing a regional system of MPAs. This project involves developing, testing, and applying analytical tools, and using the best information, including science-based data and traditional ecological knowledge, to more effectively understand how best to use MPAs to ensure healthy marine environments. The products and lessons offered by this pilot will serve as a foundation for MPA planning in other regions. It will also inform additional ecosystem-based management and planning efforts that require the same level of comprehensive information.

Pilot Partners

NOAA: National Marine Sanctuary Program, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, National Estuarine Research Reserve System (a federal/state partnership), and the National Marine Fisheries Service. *Department of the Interior:* National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *Others:* state and local agencies; the Pacific Fishery Management Council; federally-recognized tribes; and academic and research institutions.

- Develop a participatory method and approach for gathering new data on human activities in the marine environment to fill gaps in existing data.

The results of the project will aid future efforts to identify locations where use patterns pose a potential threat to resources, the categories of user groups that need to be engaged in participatory management, user conflicts and equity issues that may need to be addressed, and the socioeconomic importance of activities to communities.

Products

- Multi-layered atlas of use activities on the west coast based on secondary data.
- Tools for assessing compatibilities among use activities in the west coast region.
- Model for identifying potential threats to marine resources associated with use activities on the west coast.

For More Information

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Background: The Human Use Patterns and Impacts Project

The coasts and oceans provide people with numerous goods and services that meet social, cultural, and economic needs. These include, for example, the fish and shellfish harvested for subsistence, commercial, and recreational use; the waterways for commerce, trade, and navigation; natural resources for energy production, construction, and scientific research; and qualities that bring people to the shore for tourism, leisure, and spiritual and cultural renewal. The way people interact with the physical seascape has important implications for the health and well-being of both the human communities and the resources on which they depend.

Project Description

The human use patterns and impacts project is designed to document the connections between people and the marine environment in order to inform regional, place-based, and ecosystem approaches to management. The project is one component of the West Coast Pilot.

Project Objectives

- Identify and collect secondary data on human uses of the marine environment on the west coast.
- Develop a GIS database for the storage, analysis, and representation of secondary data.
- Assess the intensity and significance of spatial use patterns based on available secondary data.
- Identify key user groups on the west coast, the compatibility of their activities, and the potential sources of conflict among activities.