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2005 A BIG YEAR FOR MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY *Monterey Bay Sanctuary Activities Highlighted in* *NOAA State of the Sanctuaries Report*

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has released a report on the research, management and education activities of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and 13 other special underwater areas managed by the agency. Highlighted in the 2005 State of the Sanctuaries report is last May's scientific expedition to the undersea remains of the historic 785-foot *USS Airship Macon* in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

“Through exploration and research, NOAA helps uncover and preserve aspects of the nation’s history that have long been hidden under the sea,” said Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Acting Superintendent Karen Grimmer. “Last year, NOAA and partners discovered a new, uncharted debris field associated with the wreck of the historically significant U.S. Navy dirigible *USS Macon*, which crashed off the Big Sur coast in 1935. This fall, archaeologists will conduct a systematic visual survey of the *Macon* wreck site to document changes since its 1990 discovery.”

In addition to the *USS Macon* expedition, the report highlights other Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary research, education and outreach activities and accomplishments. Last year, the sanctuary initiated a program to remove invasive Asian kelp and received an award from the State of California for an effort to prevent sediment runoff into area waters. Also in 2005, volunteers provided information about sanctuary resources to more than 5,900 kayakers and monitored water quality at 167 sites on streams and creeks flowing into the sanctuary.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of central California coast and encompasses more than 5,300 square 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.

“National marine sanctuaries are America’s ocean and Great Lakes treasures,” said retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “NOAA is proud that national marine sanctuaries continued in 2005 to serve as major scientific research, conservation and education hubs while providing opportunities for Americans to enjoy these special places.”

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The first national marine sanctuary was designated in 1975 to protect the wreck of the famed Civil War ironclad *USS Monitor*, which sank off of North Carolina in 1862. Today, the 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve encompass more than 150,000 square miles of ocean and Great Lakes waters. The NWHI reserve is currently being considered for sanctuary status.

“National marine sanctuaries serve as a major catalyst for ocean science, conservation and literacy,” said Daniel J. Basta, director of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program. “The 2005 State of the Sanctuaries report reflects the leadership, hard work and dedication of the many people who came together to make Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary a jewel in the crown of conservation, science, education and management.”

The 2005 State of the Sanctuaries report, which includes accomplishments and highlights from each sanctuary and the NWHI reserve, is available at [sanctuaries.noaa.gov/report 2005](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/report/2005). Hard copies may be obtained by sending requests to sanctuaries@noaa.gov.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA National Ocean Service: <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov>

NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: www.montereybay.noaa.gov