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Examining the Health of Rocky Shores Along the Pacific Coast – Can Local Government  
and Citizens Help?

Scientists from 40 agencies, academic institutions and private organizations coordinated through MARINE, the Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network, have been monitoring rocky shorelines along the Pacific coast for years, and in some cases, decades. Findings from this extensive and unique long term monitoring program indicate that many rocky shores along the coast, particularly those near urban centers, are under stress with some intertidal populations changing significantly over the past several decades. Factors correlated with these changes include: increases in public use of the shoreline, increased fishing pressure, poaching, and pollution. Management solutions need to be informed by scientific data and include close partnership with local agencies, enforcement groups, citizen watch groups, and volunteers. This paper will describe the MARINE partnership and sampling programs that collect the long term monitoring data and describe significant results from these long term studies as related to health of the rocky shores. Case studies of sites in decline will be discussed as well as places where management actions have been invoked and are working.