

National MPA Center Communication and Outreach Initiatives

Presentation to the MPA Federal Advisory Committee

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WWW.MPA.gov



Mark Trail Comic
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Connecting the Dots: The National System of Marine Protected Areas

Most of us are familiar with the U.S. National Parks System. The Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and Yosemite are just a few well-known places in this network of protected natural, recreational, and cultural sites. But did you know there also are protected places in our nation's oceans? These places are called [marine protected areas](#) (MPAs), and, like national parks, they provide lasting protection to important ecosystems as well as natural and cultural resources.







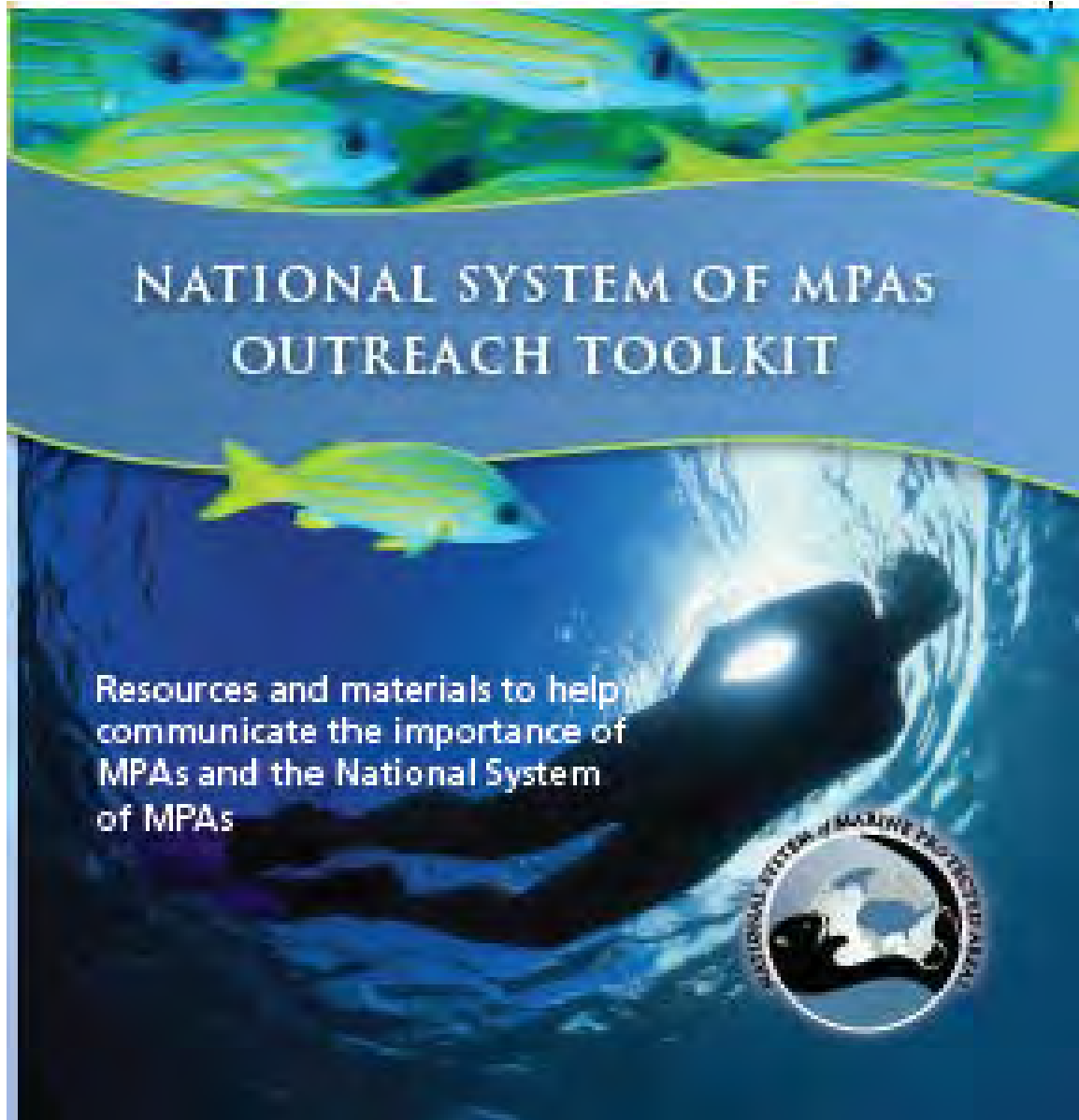
[High resolution](#) (Credit:NOAA)






Existing MPAs Working Together

MPAs are defined ocean and coastal areas where natural and cultural resources are given greater protection than the surrounding waters. In the United States, [more than 1,700 MPAs](#) span a range of marine habitats, including the open ocean, coastal areas, inter-tidal zones, estuaries, and the Great Lakes. All of these MPAs were created for different reasons and each has its own conservation objectives, which range from conserving important habitats and preserving sunken historic vessels to protecting fish spawning grounds important to commercial and recreational fisheries.

These MPAs were created by over 100 different local, state, tribal, or federal authorities. The [level of protection](#)

-  [Restoring Natural Resources Creates "Green Jobs"](#)
-  [The National System of Marine Protected Areas](#)
-  [Restoring Coral Reefs, One Gamete at a Time](#)
-  [Restoring a Critical Urban Watershed](#)



-  Guides and Resources
-  Fact Sheets
-  Graphics
-  Key Messages
-  Multimedia

THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MPAS: SNAPSHOT OF UNITED STATES MPAS

[WWW.NOAA.GOV](http://www.noaa.gov)

The information presented here is from the *National Marine Protected Areas Inventory* (NMPI), developed as a comprehensive geographic database designed to catalog and classify marine protected areas within U.S. waters. The NMPI Inventory was developed from information provided by state, territorial, tribal and federal NMP programs, and other publicly available data.

WHAT IS A MARINE PROTECTED AREA?

DEFINITION: Reserves under U.S. law (see federal orders on MPAs) that are areas of the nation's environment that has been reserved by federal, state, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein. They may include the definition in area, water, reserved, lasting, and protection in one definition. The National System of Marine Protected Areas is the National System of Marine Protected Areas of the United States of America.

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE ORDER ON MPAs

In May 2009, Presidential Executive Order 13526 was signed to enhance the management, protection, and conservation of U.S. waters through more effective collaboration with state, territorial, tribal, and local governments. It directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Department of the Interior to work with federal agencies and states, territories, and the public to develop a nationally comprehensive national system of MPAs. The national system of MPAs shall be necessary to protect marine resources and to provide a framework for the coordination among MPAs across all levels of government to address common concerns, goals and objectives.

NOAA National Marine Protected Areas Inventory

The NMPI is a comprehensive geographic database designed to catalog and classify marine protected areas within U.S. waters. The NMPI Inventory was developed from information provided by state, territorial, tribal and federal NMP programs, and other publicly available data.

TEAMWORK FOR THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NOAA National Marine Protected Areas Inventory

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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS in the GULF of MAINE

Legend:

- Marine National Monument
- Marine Sanctuary
- Marine Reserve
- Marine Conservation Area
- Marine Protected Area
- Marine National Monument
- Marine Sanctuary
- Marine Reserve
- Marine Conservation Area
- Marine Protected Area

| Name | State/Territory | Year | Authority | Designation |
|----------------------|-----------------|------|-----------|-------------------|
| Acadia National Park | Maine | 1916 | Federal | National Monument |
| Acadia National Park | Maine | 1916 | Federal | National Monument |
| Acadia National Park | Maine | 1916 | Federal | National Monument |
| Acadia National Park | Maine | 1916 | Federal | National Monument |
| Acadia National Park | Maine | 1916 | Federal | National Monument |



This site is a member

MPAs working together to protect the nation's marine heritage

MEMBER

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Papahānaumokuākea
Marine National Monument

Is hereby recognized as a charter member of the National System of Marine Protected Areas
April 22, 2009

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans & Atmosphere

DOI

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NOAA'S NATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CENTER AND THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MPAS

What is a marine protected area?

The term "marine protected area" has been used by marine management programs for several decades and has been defined in many ways. The definition provided in the President's Executive Order is "any area of the nation's environment that has been reserved by federal, state, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein."

Are there different kinds of MPAs? Can they have different purposes?

MPAs are created for a wide range of purposes, from local to national, and can have different management goals. Some people think of marine reserves, which are no-take areas as the only type of MPA. Many MPAs are multiple-use areas where a variety of uses are allowed. There are many different kinds of MPAs in U.S. waters including national parks, wildlife refuges, monuments and marine sanctuaries. Marine reserves, critical habitat, habitat areas of particular concern, open-ocean, ocean debris areas, sensitive marine and preservation and protection areas, and numerous others.

What is the authority for designating MPAs?

There are many different kinds of MPAs created by many different local, state, tribal, or federal authorities. Federal authorities include the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Park Service, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, and the National Park Service Organic Act.

How do state and local governments work with NOAA to manage marine areas?

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What determines the size, number, and location of MPAs?

The optimum size, number, and location of MPAs are determined by the management goals of a particular area. There are three basic design types: one small area, a large single area, or a network of areas. A small area may be used to protect a unique habitat, a site-specific life cycle area (such as spawning grounds), or a unique species. A large single area may be used to protect a unique resource, a representative habitat from other fishing pressure or disturbance of habitat, or a large collection of resource needs. A network of MPAs may be used to protect habitats essential for the diversity of life stages common among marine species to ensure that local resources recover throughout an entire region.

Where do most MPAs exist in the United States?

When looking at MPAs in the United States, it's easier to take a regional perspective. Although MPAs are found in every region of the United States, the West Coast (California, Oregon, and Washington) has the highest number of MPAs. However, the region with the largest area of MPAs is the Pacific Islands. This is because of the designation of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, which is one of the largest marine reserves areas in the world as well as the largest designation of three marine national monuments in the western Pacific.



[MPA_revised2.mov](#)

Protecting Our Planet movie

www.mpa.gov

www.youtube.com



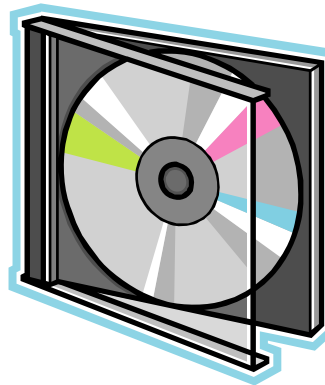
What's Next?



April/May 2010
sponsorship of *Current: the
Journal of Marine
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Ongoing redesign of www.mpa.gov



MPA Federal Advisory
Committee DVD

Our National System of Marine Protected Areas

Working together for...

