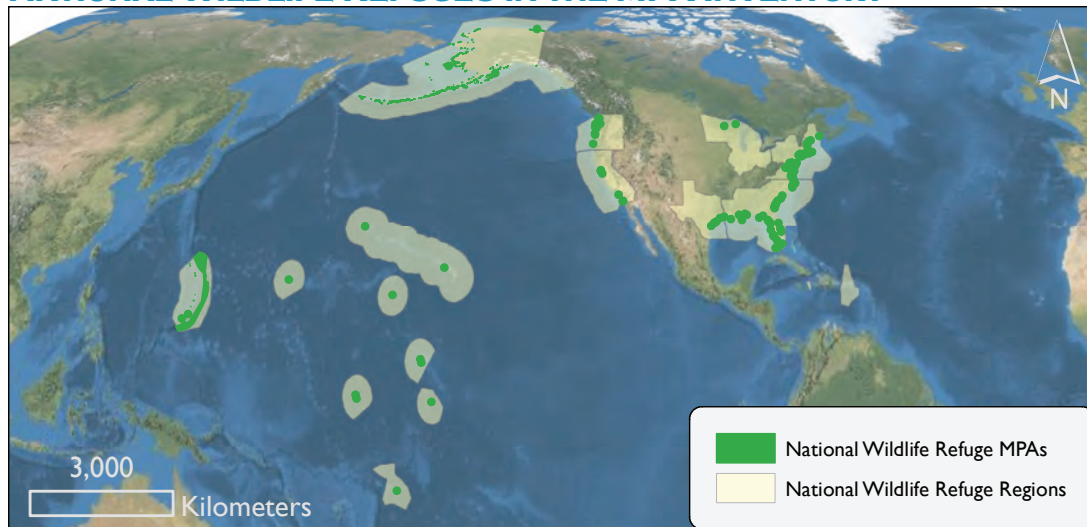


# NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

[www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov)

The information provided here is current as of June 2011 and is from the Marine Protected Areas Inventory (MPA Inventory). The MPA Center used the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) administrative regional boundaries with the federal 200nm exclusive economic zone (E.E.Z.) boundary. NWR MPAs refers to all NWRs listed in the MPA Inventory.

## NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES IN THE MPA INVENTORY



## ROLE OF NWRs IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), is a system of protected areas to conserve America's fish, wildlife and plants. The Refuge System includes 550 refuges, of which 114 meet the definition of a "marine protected area" and are included in the National Marine Protected Area Center's MPA Inventory. Of these, 106 refuges are members of the National System of MPAs. The National System of MPAs coordinates MPAs managed by diverse agencies across all levels of government to work toward common conservation objectives and address issues that are beyond the scope of individual MPAs or MPA programs. NWRs make up 36% of the 297 MPAs in the national system, demonstrating their leadership role in conserving the nation's marine ecosystems and natural and cultural resources.

### NWR MPA FACTS:

- 114 NWR MPAs are in the MPA Inventory
- NWR MPAs cover more than 240,000 square kilometers, or nearly 2%, of U.S. marine waters
- 106 NWR MPAs are members of the National System of MPAs
- All NWR MPAs have a natural heritage conservation focus, and 61% also have a sustainable production conservation focus
- 73% of NWR MPAs are multiple use, which restricts some, but not all extractive uses

### WHAT IS AN MPA?

According to Executive Order 13158 (May 2000), an MPA is "an area of the marine environment that has been reserved by Federal, state, territorial, tribal or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection to part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein." The terms in this definition have been further defined as follows:

**Area:** Legally defined geographic boundaries, may be of any size except that site must be a subset of the U.S. federal, state, local or tribal marine environment in which it is located.

**Marine environment:** Ocean, coastal or estuarine waters, including intertidal areas (between mean low water and mean high water). Includes areas up to 0.5 ppt. Includes Great Lakes and estuarine-like sites in 8-digit watersheds adjacent to Great Lakes.

**Reserved:** established by and currently subject to federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation.

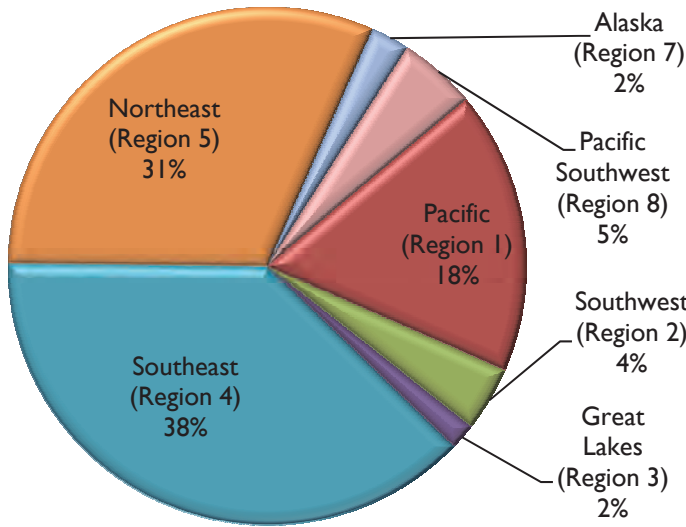
**Lasting:** Established with the intent to provide permanent protection. For sustainable production sites, of a duration to achieve the mandated long term sustainable production objectives of the site.

**Protection:** Existing laws or regulations that afford the site with increased protection for the conservation of part or all of the natural or submerged cultural resources.

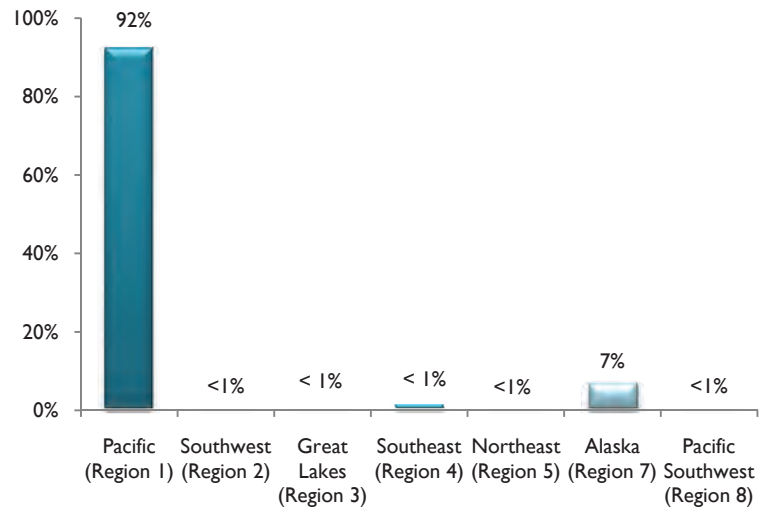
NOAA's National Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Center's mission is to facilitate the effective use of science, technology, training, and information in the planning, management, and evaluation of the nation's system of marine protected areas. The MPA Center works in partnership with federal, state, tribal, and local governments and stakeholders to develop a science-based, comprehensive national system of MPAs. These collaborative efforts will lead to a more efficient, effective use of MPAs now and in the future to conserve and sustain the nation's vital marine resources.



PERCENTAGE OF NWR MPAs BY REGION



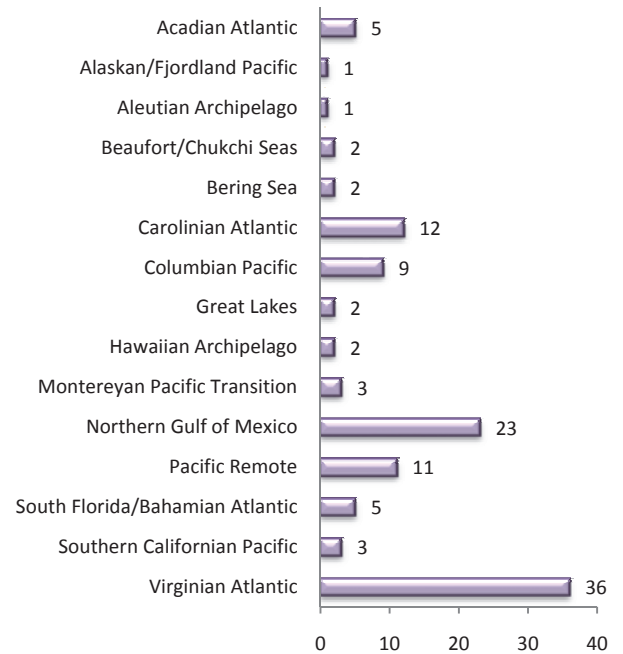
PERCENTAGE OF NWR MPA AREA BY REGION



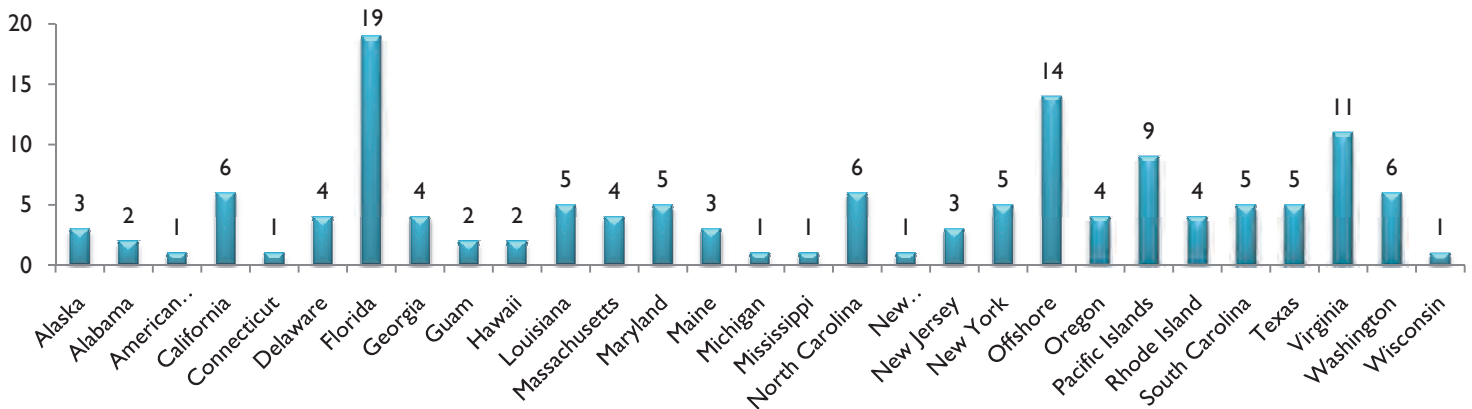
**BASED ON THE RESOURCE ANALYSIS OF THE MPA INVENTORY THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS ILLUSTRATE THE MARINE CONSERVATION ROLE OF THE NWR SYSTEM:**

- Most (85%), of NWR MPAs protect at least one species that is listed on the endangered species act (ESA)
- Over half (65%) of the NWR MPAs are used as resting areas for migrating birds.
- 93% contain wetlands/ marshes, with associated nesting habitat
- 27% of NWR MPAs include “no take” or marine reserve areas
- Most of the marine based NWR (82%) allow multiple uses
- 79% of NWR MPAs are spawning sites for fish
- 47% of NWR MPAs have anadromous fish species, such as salmon present
- 39% have highly migratory species, such as sharks and billfish present
- Over 49% of NWR MPAs have cetaceans, such as dolphins and whales present

NUMBER OF NWR MPAs BY ECOREGION

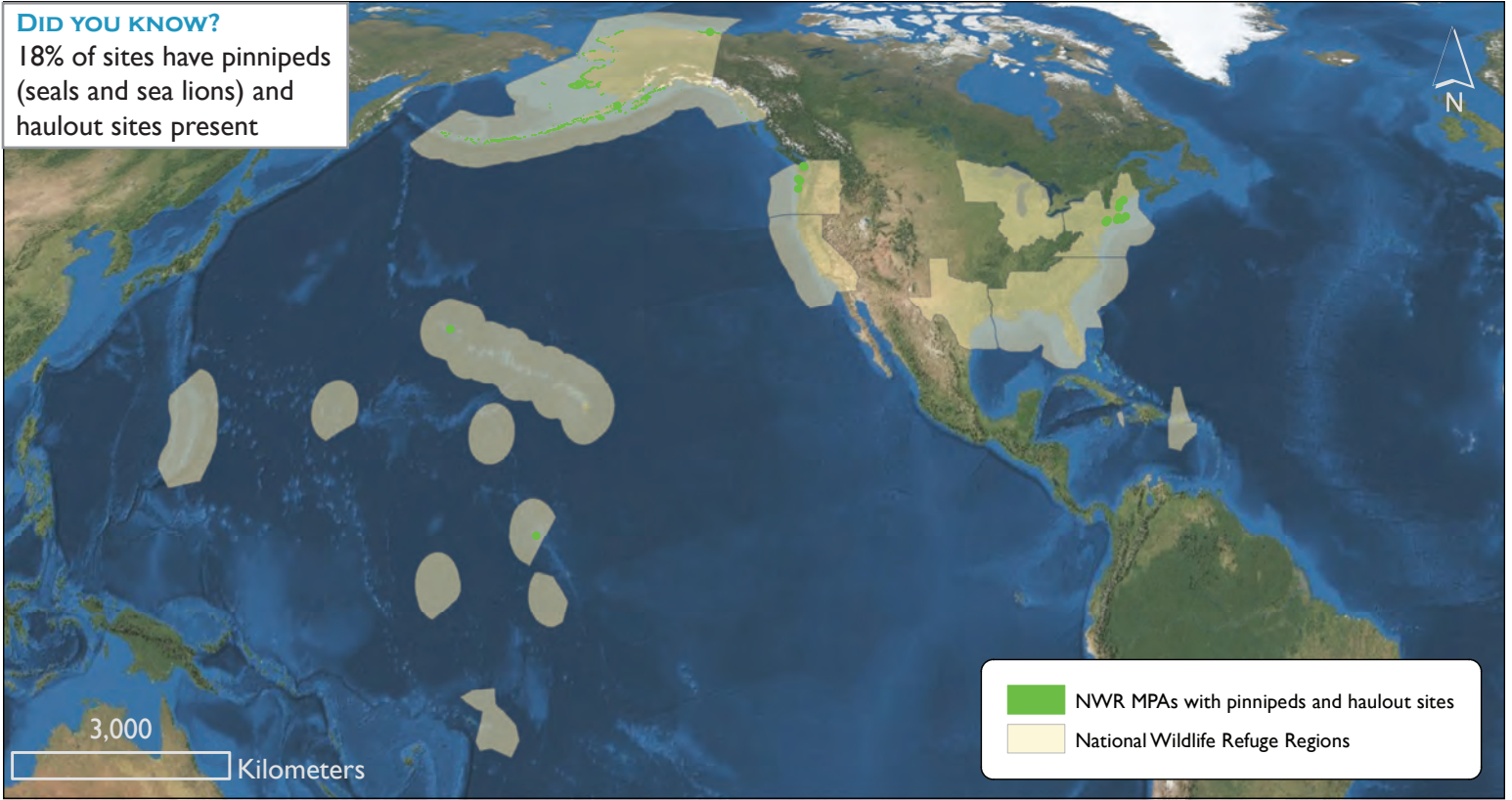


NUMBER OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MPAs PER STATE



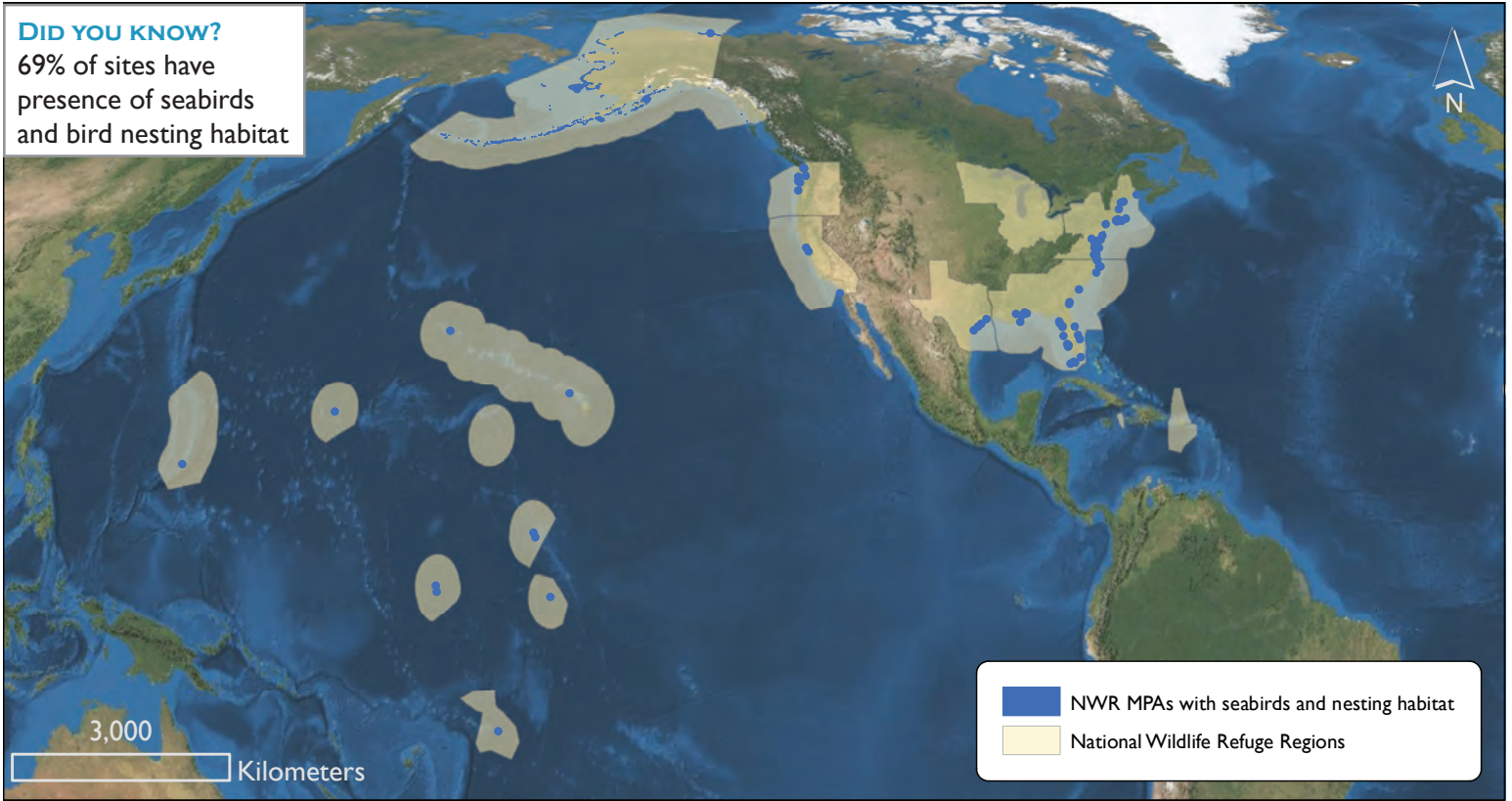
### NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MPAs WITH PINNIPED HAULOUT SITES

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
18% of sites have pinnipeds (seals and sea lions) and haulout sites present



### NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MPAs WITH SEABIRDS AND NESTING HABITAT

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
69% of sites have presence of seabirds and bird nesting habitat



## THE MPA INVENTORY

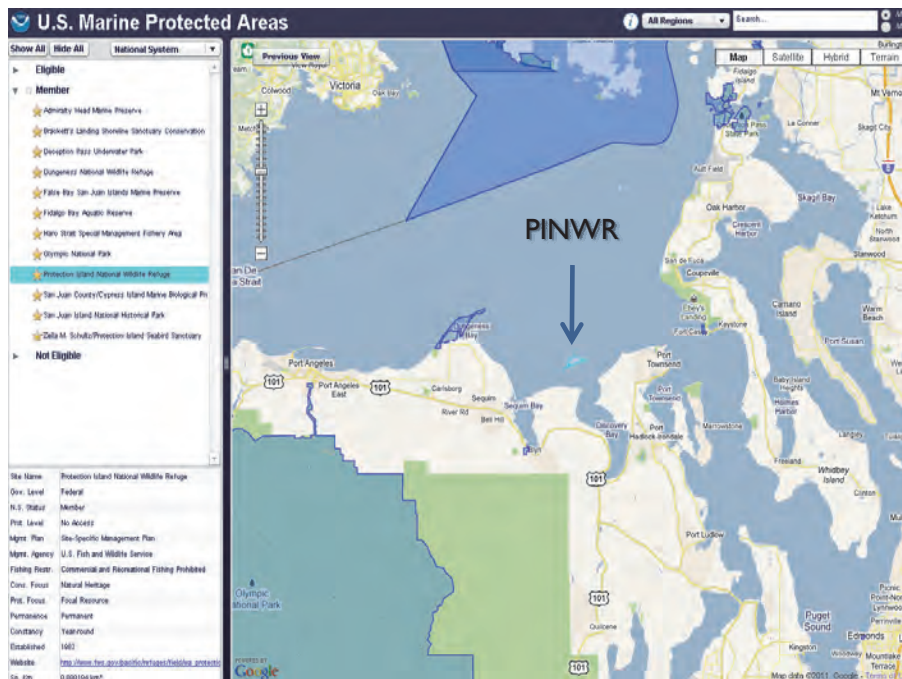
The Marine Protected Areas Inventory (MPA Inventory) is a comprehensive geospatial database designed to catalog and classify MPAs within U.S. waters. The Inventory contains information on over 1,600 sites and is the only such comprehensive dataset in the nation. The Inventory is online and enables users to view boundaries and basic classification information about MPAs, to assist in the development of a National System of MPAs. The MPA Center is expanding the existing MPA Inventory to include critical resource and management information, including physical, cultural and ecological resources, scientific monitoring activities, major management activities, and legal authority data at the site and/ or program level.

The MPA Center has also developed an MPA mapping tool that provides online access to the MPA Inventory data through an interactive map environment. This tool can be used to view the MPA Inventory sites and associated data, query sites by specific conservation attributes or to search and view sites by region.

See <http://www.mpa.gov/dataanalysis/mpainventory/mpaviewer/>

## SAMPLE OF MPA INVENTORY DATA: PROTECTION ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (PINWR)

### SCREEN CAPTURE FROM MPA MAPPING TOOL OF PINWR



Conservation focus	Natural heritage
Fishing restrictions	Com. and rec. fishing prohibited
Protection focus	Focal resource
Protection level	No access
Species present	Fish, (groundfish, anadromous, coastal pelagic, estuarine/ coastal marine)
Biological Uses	Nesting habitat, animal breeding area, mammal haulout, fish nursery ground, shellfish beds, seabird migratory area
Physical Features and Habitat	Estuary, freshwater influenced (classified using CMECS), rivers, wetlands, mudflats
Cultural resources present	None present
Legal authority of MPA	National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act, Protection Island National Wildlife Refuge Act
Program Regulations	U.S. Code - Section 668DD: National Wildlife Refuge System

## NEXT STEPS

The MPA Center and FWS have added information on natural and cultural resources and MPA management and legal authorities for all inventory sites in California and all NWR MPAs. Next steps include expanding the data collection process to include all sites in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) by October 2011. Data for additional regions will then be prioritized and added over the coming year. This information will be used for a range of applications, including assessing the representativeness of the national system of MPAs.

One of the primary challenges with this project is to collect and store a broad diversity of data in a consistent manner, using web-based sources wherever possible. To verify that the data collected are as accurate as possible, the information source is noted for each entry into the database, and consultation from MPA managers will be elicited as a final step to fill any gaps and clarify any inconsistencies.

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