

CONNECTIONS

Newsletter of the National Marine Protected Areas Center

Premiere Issue October 2002

The mission of the National MPA Center is to provide information, tools, and strategies for the effective design and management of the nation's system of marine protected areas.

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Welcome

From Joseph Uravitch, Acting Director

Welcome to the first issue of *Connections*, the newsletter of the National Marine Protected Areas Center (<http://www.mpa.gov>), provided in response to requests for current information about the work of the Center. The MPA Center was established by Presidential decree in May 2000, and was charged with developing a framework for a national system of MPAs. The Center was also directed to provide federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local governments with the information, technologies, and strategies to support a national MPA system.

This is a challenging endeavor, but one we are eager to face. Our headquarters staff in Silver Spring, Maryland, is collaborating with states, territories, and tribes to create a comprehensive, national inventory of marine managed areas, including the Great Lakes. This growing inventory, with detailed information about hundreds of protected areas, will be shared and maintained on the website, and will be the basis for developing the list of MPAs called for in the Executive Order.

Our education program (<http://www.mpa.gov/mpabusiness/mpacenter/education/education.html>) is sponsoring workshops around the country, bringing together site-based marine and coastal educators who regularly provide

programming for students, teachers, and the general public. Recent workshops connected educators regionally in Morro Bay, California, and Duluth, Minnesota.

Our Science Institute (<http://www.mpa.gov/mpabusiness/mpacenter/science.html>) in Santa Cruz, California, is creating a bridge between MPA science and policy by fostering targeted research, sponsoring workshops and stakeholder forums, assessing threats to vital habitats and resources, and analyzing socio-economic factors that may impact MPAs. Our Technical and Training Assistance Institute (<http://www.mpa.gov/mpabusiness/mpacenter/training.html>) in Charleston, South Carolina, is hosting regular training, needs assessments, and technical support sessions for managers, citizens, and others involved in MPAs.

In this month's issue of *Connections*, you'll find a feature on Oregon's Ocean Policy Advisory Council and its statewide discussions on whether to recommend to the Governor that marine reserves be established off Oregon's coast. You'll also read about our library and the vast resources it contains, a definition of MPAs as management tools, and updates on our work at the MPA Center.

We think you'll enjoy this first issue, and we hope you'll keep it on file as a valuable resource. Please pass this on to others with whom you work so that they might become familiar with all the National MPA Center offers.

We encourage your comments.

Get to Know the National Marine Protected Areas Center Library

Have you browsed through the MPA Center's Virtual Library (http://www.mpa.gov/mpaservices/mpa_library.html)? It's an extensive, ever growing collection of MPA-related information, broken down into the following resources:

Reference List: Find citations to articles, books, manuals, research papers, reports, and proceedings on MPAs here.

Institutions and Organizations: Scroll through a comprehensive list of governmental and nongovernmental entities involved in research, analysis, and management of MPAs.

MPA Websites: Explore a list of websites describing MPA programs, policy, and research.

Conferences and Workshops: Locate meetings that focus on the management and science of MPAs.

In the next few months, look for a new search engine that will allow you to search through all of above resources simultaneously or by individual category. Check upcoming editions of this newsletter for more information.

DID YOU KNOW? The MPA Library welcomes contributions from MPA managers, researchers, and policymakers. If you would like to share information and resources with others in the field, send an email to mpalibrary@noaa.gov. Be sure to include details about the material you would like to have added. All contributions will be reviewed by professional library staff. Go to <http://www.mpa.gov/mpaservices/library/contribution.html> for further information about contributing.

Oregon Residents Participate in Decision about Marine Reserves

Groundbreaking news came from Oregon recently. The state completed a challenging process to determine whether or not a system of marine reserves would further protect Oregon's ocean resources. The Governor's Ocean Policy Advisory Council reviewed Oregon's objectives for marine conservation, and determined that it

needed to initiate debate with the public. It proposed a series of open meetings with all stakeholders to plan and evaluate a system of reserves along the Oregon coast.

The Council, supported by the Department of Land Conservation and Development's Bob Bailey, established a working group comprised of representatives from the state's Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Sea Grant program, south coast and north coast commercial fisheries, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and a coastal environmental organization.

The working group listened to fishermen, environmentalists, scientists, and coastal communities at 11 open public meetings across the state, and accepted public comments through emails and letters. More than 450 people attended the meetings; about 200 sent in written comments.

In late August, following overwhelming public support, the working group and the council recommended to Governor John Kitzhaber that a system of marine reserves be established along Oregon's 360-mile coastline.

The Council's recommendations to the Governor were compared with the Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association's six main policies on marine reserves. These include:

1. Requiring clear goals for each marine reserve
2. Conducting an impact analysis
3. Involving the fishing community
4. Setting achievable enforcement
5. Monitoring baseline information
6. Obtaining adequate funding

After carefully reviewing each requirement of the Coastal Zone Management Association, it was agreed that the Council's recommendations to establish marine reserves are in line with each of the six themes.

The Council will next decide how large the marine reserve system will be and where the reserves will be located.

The thorough nature of the Council's determination that marine reserves would benefit the state should go a long way to protect, enhance, and restore Oregon's marine species and habitats.

For more information about the Ocean Policy Advisory Council's work and progress, or to review the report to Governor Kitzhaber, go to <http://www.oregonocean.org/>.

Training with Experts in Charleston

Housed within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Services Center in Charleston, South Carolina, is the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute (<http://www.mpa.gov/mpabusiness/mpacenter/training.html>). The Institute was established to improve the skills and effectiveness of federal, state, local, tribal, and non-governmental coastal and marine resource managers, strengthening their ability to protect and enhance the nation's MPAs.

The Institute offers training and technical support in MPA management tools and techniques and in technologies such as GIS, metadata, and remote sensing. It also offers process training including facilitation, collaborative processes, public issues and conflict management, and project design and evaluation.

In addition to providing direct technical assistance, the Training and Technical Assistance Institute works to build a strong network of service providers that the MPA community can access for support. This past summer, the Institute held a two-day workshop, co-hosted by the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, which brought together staff and partners representing 22 reserves from 19 states. Attendees discussed ongoing educational training efforts targeting local and regional coastal decision makers, and received technical assistance on how to implement market analyses and needs assessments tools. The workshop also highlighted

reserves' vital role as training and technical assistance providers at the local level, and attendees were encouraged to consider the results of the recent MPA needs assessment when identifying training topics and audiences.

For more information about the Training and Technical Assistance Institute, contact Ginger.Hinchcliff@noaa.gov or Heidi.Recksiek@noaa.gov.

California MPA Inventory Progresses Steadily

Marnie Meyer has a seemingly overwhelming task. Based in the National MPA Center's Science Institute in California, Marnie has steadily been collecting complete data for each of California's 100-150 marine managed areas. She approaches this enormous task with eagerness, and has gathered information on nearly 60 locations so far. As she completes each data set, she feeds that information into a database. She hopes to finish cataloging all the California sites by the end of November. Once completed and validated, this information will be posted on the <http://mpa.gov> website, where federal, state and local officials and others involved with MPA work can easily access data on management, species, habitats, locations, resources, human activities and restrictions.

Marnie, a recent graduate of California State University at Monterey Bay, is grateful to the California officials and resource agencies that are participating in the inventory. She expects that the data collected in California and across the U.S. will help the MPA Center as it works toward providing successful MPA management tools for our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

To learn more about the MPA Center's developing inventory of marine managed and protected areas, go to http://mpa.gov/mpaservices/inv_status/status_inv.html#federal.

The federal inventory, which is nearly complete, contains information on 317 sites, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and sanctuaries. The 15-page questionnaire for use in establishing the inventory of federal MPAs is available in pdf format at http://mpa.gov/mpaservices/query/MPA_Inv_Dataform.pdf.

Putting the Human Element Back Into Marine Protected Areas

As the health of the world's oceans continues to decline, policy makers, resource management agencies, conservation organizations and other stakeholders are increasingly turning to marine protected areas (MPAs) to sustain our most critical marine ecosystems. Experiences of the past decade have shown that the way in which the human dimension is incorporated into MPA planning can profoundly affect whether sites are established effectively and equitably, and whether they achieve their conservation, social, and economic goals. Presently, however, MPA practitioners and planners lack sufficient information, resources and institutional capacity in the social sciences to meet this formidable challenge.

To help address the challenge, the National Marine Protected Areas Center's Science Institute (<http://www.mpa.gov/mpabusiness/mpacenter/science.html>) has been developing a comprehensive research strategy detailing the high priority information needs in social sciences as they related to the design, management, and evaluation of MPAs. The strategy outline came together following a workshop held earlier this year, hosted by the National MPA Center, comprised of social scientists and practitioners. The completed strategy they outlined will identify and prioritize key social science issues and information needs, and recommend practical methods to meet those needs through research, assessment, capacity building, and leveraged funding.

The national strategy for social science research will be finalized and available on the <http://mpa.gov> website in December 2002. Regional workshops to develop more specific local strategies will be conducted in 2003 and

2004, in partnership with regional organizations. For more information, contact the Science Institute's Charles.Wahle@noaa.gov or Sarah.Lyons@noaa.gov.

Check out the Center's Education Poster, Created by Jim Toomey

The MPA Center has created an education poster, with generous support from Sherman's Lagoon cartoonist Jim Toomey. The poster is eye-catching and colorful, featuring Toomey's unique style and characters. It depicts a few marine protected areas around the country, representing the diversity of the resources being protected and various MPA types (reserves, sanctuaries, etc.). The poster is available in canvas or paper. The MPA Center developed a companion sheet that provides more information about each site, along with web links for more information. For younger audiences, the MPA Center also put together a poster handout that is helpful for guiding discussion. For more information, write to mpaedproject@noaa.gov.

What's the Difference Between a Marine Protected Area and a Marine Reserve?

Many people use the terms "marine reserve" and "marine protected area" interchangeably, although they have different meanings.

A marine protected area (MPA) is a broad term for special places in oceans and estuaries that have been set aside by federal, state, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources within them. Most MPAs are established for several conservation purposes and most permit a variety of human activities and uses.

Thus, MPAs encompass a wide variety of place-based management approaches, including marine reserves, marine sanctuaries, national seashores, estuaries, national parks, critical habitats, national wildlife refuges, national monuments, submerged cultural resources, or fishery management zones, depending on their specific legal authorities, purposes, and mandates.

A marine reserve is a type of MPA in which most, if not all, extractive uses are prohibited. Marine reserves have been established for many years in most coastal states and territories. Because they conserve biodiversity, marine reserves provide invaluable opportunities for research, education, and monitoring of the oceans.

MPAs have been used effectively as management tools both nationally and internationally to conserve biodiversity, manage natural resources, protect endangered species, reduce user conflicts, provide educational and research opportunities, and enhance commercial and recreational activities

For more about the definition of marine protected areas, or to review case studies on various MPAs, go to <http://mpa.gov/mpadescriptive/whatis.html>.

Write to Us

Is there general MPA information or topics that you would like to see included on the MPA Center website, <http://www.mpa.gov/>? How user-friendly is the site? Are you able to easily find what you are looking for? Do you want to have specific information added to the website? Are there topics you would like to see addressed in this newsletter? Because we want the website to be useful to the MPA community, your comments are strongly encouraged. Send your comments to Dana.Topousis@noaa.gov

Upcoming Events and Conferences

October 2002

3 - 5: Fish Expo and Workboat, Atlantic 2002, Providence, RI: <http://www.fishexpoboston.com/>

9-13: Society of Environmental Journalists, Baltimore, Maryland: <http://www.sej.org>

14-18: Twenty-first Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference, Biloxi, Mississippi

20-24: Annual meeting of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System managers, Waquoit Bay, Massachusetts

27 - 30: California and the World Ocean, 2002, Santa Barbara, CA:
http://resources.ca.gov/ocean/CWO_02/Call_index.html

28: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council MPA workshop for fishermen, Charleston, SC

30: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council MPA workshop for fishermen, Wrightsville Beach, NC

30-Nov. 1: World Watershed Summit, Washington, D.C.: (<http://www.yearofcleanwater.org>)

November 2002

11 - 15: 55th Annual Meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, Xel Ha, Mexico:
http://www.gcfi.org/55th_gcfi.htm

14 - 16: Fish Expo and Workboat, Northwest 2002, Seattle, WA: <http://www.fishexposeattle.com/>

January 2003

TBD: World Wildlife Fund conference on MPAs

6-9: Coastal Geotools Conference, Charleston, SC. The goal is to promote understanding and applied uses of geospatial data and tools for studying and effectively managing the coast: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/GeoTools>

February 2003

23 - 26: RecFish II, St. Pete Beach, FL

April 2003

14 - 18: George Wright Society Biennial Conference, Protecting Our Diverse Heritage: The Role of Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites, San Diego, CA: <http://www.georgewright.org/2003.html>

May 2003

11 - 16: The Fifth Annual Science and Management of Protected Areas Association (SAMPAA) Conference, Victoria, British Columbia: http://www.sampaa.org/sampaa_conference.htm

July 2003

13-17: Coastal Zone '03, held in Baltimore, Maryland. Theme is coastal zone management through time: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz2003>