

FISCAL YEAR

04

# NOAA PROGRESS REPORT

Status of MPA Executive Order

13158 and National Marine

Protected Areas Center

Fiscal Year 2004



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Protected Areas Center, Silver Spring, Maryland

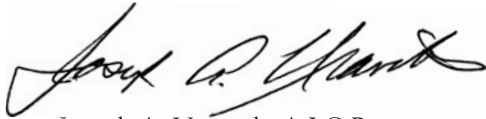
## Message from the Director of the National Marine Protected Areas Center

Fiscal year 2004 was another strong one for the National Marine Protected Areas Center. With an increased level of funding from Congress—\$4 million (increased from fiscal year 2003 appropriation of \$3 million)—the MPA Center was able to hire key staff and focus on priority projects, including concentrating on MPA cultural resources, collecting an inventory of de facto MPA sites, working closely with states and territories, completing the marine managed areas inventory, having a presence in several regions around the country, increasing training opportunities, revamping the website on U.S. MPAs, supporting three MPA Federal Advisory Committee meetings, and developing a series of online regional information centers.

One main priority was to begin planning for a significant level of outreach to stakeholders and government agencies in 2005 to develop the framework for a national system of marine protected areas, which is called for in MPA Executive Order 13158. Seeking and incorporating continuous stakeholder input was identified as essential to succeeding in developing the framework, as was a need for sound science as a basis for the national system.

The National MPA Center continued to build on existing partnerships and form new ones in fiscal year 2004. Working closely with the Department of the Interior, the MPA Center has become a stronger resource for information about the nation's MPAs.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Uravitch, A.I.C.P.  
Director, National Marine Protected Areas Center

## Background

### The MPA Initiative and National MPA Center

In early 2000, the President's Council on Environmental Quality convened a team of representatives from federal management agencies to craft a mechanism that would bring some order to the numerous and uncounted nationwide efforts to manage marine areas to conserve biodiversity, preserve submerged cultural resources, manage fisheries, and enhance the longevity of species and habitats within the nation's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes. Based on the team's work, Presidential Executive Order 13158 on marine protected areas (MPAs) was signed in May 2000.

The Executive Order directs federal agencies to work closely with states, territories, commonwealths, regional fishery management councils, tribes, local trustees, and other stakeholders to develop a scientifically based, comprehensive national system of MPAs. It also states that the national MPA system should represent diverse U.S. marine ecosystems and the nation's natural and cultural resources. The Executive Order also required the establishment of the National Marine Protected Areas Center within the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in collaboration with the Department of the Interior.

### National MPA Center Organizational Structure

The National MPA Center is headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, and implements the Executive Order; coordinates with federal agencies, states, territories, and tribes; supports the MPA Federal Advisory Committee; coordinates marine managed area inventory efforts; and conducts outreach and education. The MPA Center's Science Institute, based in Santa Cruz and Monterey, California, provides a bridge between the science and policy of MPAs by fostering targeted research, hosting workshops, assessing threats to vital habitats and resources, measuring the effectiveness of existing management approaches, and analyzing socioeconomic factors that may impact MPAs. The MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute, integrated with the NOAA Coastal Services Center in Charleston, South

Carolina, provides training, needs assessments, and technical support for resource managers, resource users, and others involved with MPAs. The National MPA Center also hosts regional representatives in the New England, Pacific Coast, and Pacific Islands regions that serve as on-the-ground links to the MPA Center for regional entities involved in MPA-related activities.

### Coordination with NOAA Programs

The National MPA Center works cooperatively with other NOAA oceans and coasts offices, such as the Special Projects Office, the Coastal Services Center, International Programs Office, Estuarine Reserves Division, and National Marine Sanctuary Program. The Center also works closely with NOAA Fisheries at both the headquarters and regional levels and with the NOAA Library, part of the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service.

### Coordination with the Department of the Interior

To carry out the Executive Order tasks, the National MPA Center coordinates with many federal offices including the Department of the Interior's National Park Service, Minerals Management Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Joint efforts include managing the MPA Federal Advisory Committee, creating the MPA.gov website, collecting the marine managed areas inventory, and other projects.

### National Marine Protected Areas Center Mission

The National Marine Protected Areas 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.

## **National Marine Protected Areas Center Vision Statement**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center's vision is: an effective, science-based, and collaborative national system of marine protected areas conserving marine ecosystems and cultural resources throughout the U.S.

## **National Marine Protected Areas Center Goals**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has three goals, which stem from the MPA Executive Order:

- Develop the framework for a national system of MPAs
- Improve MPA stewardship and effectiveness
- Facilitate international, national, and regional coordination of MPA activities

## **National Marine Protected Areas Center Planning**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center focused on long-term planning and managing its operations in 2004. In July, the MPA Center gathered key staff from NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, and National Marine Fisheries Service, as well as staff from the Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service and National Park Service to discuss implementation of the Center's goals. Among the results of the meeting were decisions to move forward with multi-year research, analysis and an outreach plan for developing the national system; provide temporary support to the Department of the Interior and NOAA Fisheries to complete the federal portion of the marine managed areas inventory; strengthen field presence on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts; improve tribal and archeological and scientific support capabilities; strengthen

coordination with NOAA Fisheries, Federal Fishery Management Councils, the Department of the Interior, other federal agencies, and stakeholders; improve the transfer of "lessons learned" from MPA processes and management; and enhance effectiveness evaluation and improvement capabilities.

In addition, the MPA Center met with its State Advisory Group, an informal group of state and commonwealth representatives, to discuss a variety of topics, including recommendations on inventory related issues. A key topic was the quality assurance/quality control of backlogged state level data for the marine managed areas inventory. Other topics included agreeing to the collection of information needed to support the MPA classification system, which was developed by the MPA Center, and to organize at least two regional state and territory MPA workshops in 2005 to gather recommendations for a national system.

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

The Department of Commerce/NOAA and the Department of the Interior signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a formal agreement to jointly implement Executive Order 13158 on marine protected areas. The MOU was approved by Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, NOAA Administrator, and Rebecca Watson, the Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management. The agreement was the result of two years of discussion. It provides the umbrella framework for operational sub-agreements within the two departments.

## **Report Overview**

This report highlights the accomplishments and milestones of the National Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Center for the fiscal year 2004. Accomplishments and milestones are organized by the goal they support. In addition, the MPA Center's outreach and education accomplishments, which support all MPA Center goals, are highlighted in a separate section.

## GOAL: DEVELOP THE FRAMEWORK FOR A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MPAS

Marine protected areas (MPAs) in the United States are created by a myriad of agencies with diverse conservation objectives. Establishing and managing MPAs continues to rest in the hands of federal, state, territorial, commonwealth, tribal, and local governments. As directed by the Executive Order, the National Marine Protected Areas Center initiated the process to develop a framework for an effective, science-based national system of MPAs. The system will be comprehensive, representing diverse U.S. marine ecosystems and the nation's natural and cultural resources. Several efforts were completed in 2004 to support this goal.

### Developing the National System of Marine Protected Areas

The Executive Order requires that the National Marine Protected Areas Center develop a science-based, national system of marine protected areas that effectively conserves the nation's natural and cultural marine heritage and the ecologically and economically sustainable use of the marine environment for future generations. Such a national system is needed to coordinate ecosystem-based management activities among the hundreds of federal, state, territory, and tribal MPA authorities with thousands of sites in U.S. waters and their countless MPA types, purposes, and terms.

In 2004, the MPA Center began to plan the process to engage the nation in a participatory dialogue to develop the framework for the national system, of which the expected recommendations made by the MPA Federal Advisory Committee will be a cornerstone. The framework will describe the rationale, goals and components of the national system, and the processes for designing and implementing it based on sound science and broad stakeholder input.

### Marine Managed Areas Inventory

The marine managed areas (MMA) inventory is an ambitious, multi-agency effort to gather information from around the U.S. about the wide range of place-based marine management efforts, including MPAs, in order to develop a complete picture of the nation's MMAs. The MMA inventory will:

- help regional, local, state and federal managers, scientists, non-governmental organizations, and others

to better analyze and understand what sites exist and the management capabilities of those sites;

- compile data to assist in the analysis and assessments defined in the MPA Executive Order on issues such as threats to MPAs and effectiveness of MPAs in protecting natural and cultural resources; and
- provide a comprehensive information base to assist in the development of a national system of MPAs.

Examples of MMAs included in the inventory are national parks, national wildlife refuges, national marine sanctuaries, national estuarine research reserves, fisheries management areas, state beaches, and state parks. The data collected in the inventory contains a general description and site characteristics such as location, purpose, and type of site, as well as detailed information on natural and cultural resources, legal authorities, site management, and regulations and restrictions.

The inter-agency MMA inventory team, made up of staff from NOAA and the Department of the Interior, held regular status meetings throughout 2004. The team is working with six federal programs and 32 of the 35 coastal and Great Lake states, territories and commonwealths in the data collection and review process. A data entry and editing website was completed in 2004 to provide a secure, password-protected, accessible, and user-friendly format for entering and reviewing data. The Coastal States Organization has continued their role as liaison to state and territory agencies to gather, collect, and review data.

Since data collection for the MMA inventory began, federal programs have submitted nearly 300 sites and GIS (geographic information system) data is 97 percent complete for those sites. The National Marine Sanctuary Program completed their data review and update in 2004, and nine states completed data collection and entry. Other federal programs continue to update their sites and the MMA inventory team continues to work with the remaining coastal and Great Lakes states to gather, review, approve, and ultimately post data on the MPA.gov website. The National Marine Protected Areas Center estimates that when complete, the Inventory will contain information on 1,500 to 2,000 MMA sites nationwide.

### Cultural and Historical Resources

The National Marine Protected Areas Center hired a maritime archaeologist in 2004, who serves as a liaison to cultural and historical programs within NOAA and other federal and state agencies.

As part of this work, the National Marine Protected Areas Center engaged in several planning meetings with the National Marine Sanctuary Program, the National Park Service, and other federal and state agency cultural resource personnel to discuss development of the submerged cultural resource component of the National System of MPAs, strengthening of cultural resource programs through collaboration, and increasing public awareness of the nation's maritime heritage, historic shipwrecks, and prehistoric submerged sites. Some examples of these planning meetings included the National Marine Sanctuary Program's Maritime Heritage Program Managers annual meeting, discussions with the Department of the Interior's National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel, and participation in a maritime archaeology working group meeting for the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary management plan review.

The National MPA Center participated in NOAA's involvement in the Preserve America Initiative, which states that federal agencies should inventory, preserve, and showcase federally-managed historic and cultural, or "heritage,"

resources; and foster tourism in partnership with local communities.

The MPA Center's maritime archaeologist plans to launch an MPA cultural and historic resources newsletter in fiscal year 2005, and add content about cultural resources to the MPA.gov website.

### Coordination with the Coastal States Organization

The National Marine Protected Areas Center and the Coastal States Organization continued their strong relationship in 2004. The two groups discussed a variety of topics including the need for recommendations from coastal and Great Lakes states about their interests and ideas related to their involvement in a national system of MPAs, as well as the benefits to sites and programs that should be associated with participating in the system. Plans were developed to organize up to three state and territory workshops in regions across the country to gather ideas and feedback on developing the national system of MPAs. In addition, the Coastal States Organization maintained their role as liaison between the marine managed areas inventory team and state and territory agencies on the effort to collect, review, and finalize their MMA data.

### Publication: State Policies and Programs Related to Marine Managed Areas: Issues and Recommendations for a National System

The policy analysis, *State Policies and Programs Related to Marine Managed Areas: Issues and Recommendations for a National System*, was published in February 2004, and in May 2004, a supplement of case studies was published as an addendum. The analysis was the first of its kind to characterize existing MMA policies and programs at the state level while presenting the potential implications of the proposed national system of marine protected areas on state agencies. The paper presented a series of recommendations, given by state-level coastal and ocean resource managers, toward an effective national MPA system for consideration by both state and federal officials. The analysis is a living document that will provide invaluable insight into the recommendations and needs of state managers. The recommendations of the analysis will provide guidance to NOAA staff when shaping policy and in further examining state-level marine managed areas.

## Visiting Scientists

In 2004, the National MPA Center hosted several visiting professionals in an effort to share ideas and strengthen collaboration on developing the national system of MPAs.

- Brian Keller, science coordinator for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, visited the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute in Charleston, South Carolina, where he gave a presentation on ecosystem monitoring, specifically of no-take zones, in the Florida Keys. To date, both spiny lobster and yellowtail snappers appear to be benefiting from the no-take zones.
- Mark Calamia, visiting from Colorado, provided expert review on the MPA social science tool website that was developed in 2004. In addition to discussions with staff at the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute, Mark gave a presentation on his work in Fiji, where he studied a locally managed MPA.
- Kevin Buch of the Caribbean Marine Research Center gave a presentation on "Geographic Data and Marine Reserve Site Selection in the Bahamas," a part of the Bahamas Biocomplexity Project. The aim of this project is to develop an integrated approach to analyzing the function of marine reserve networks. The results of oceanographic, biological, and socioeconomic field studies will be integrated using various computer models to explore reserve design and adaptive management options in the Bahamas. Kevin's presentation was delivered at the NOAA Coastal Services Center in Charleston, South Carolina.



## GOAL: IMPROVE MPA STEWARDSHIP AND EFFECTIVENESS

The National Marine Protected Areas Center aims to improve MPA stewardship and effectiveness by strengthening capacity for planning, management, and evaluation within the MPA community. Creating and implementing effective management strategies requires the awareness, understanding, and application of best practices by management and affected stakeholder groups. The National Marine Protected Areas Center targets MPA management staff at the local, state, regional, tribal, and national levels, and reaches out to those affected by management decisions to provide opportunities for substantive involvement in decision-making.

### Science and Analysis

#### Social Science Research Priorities for MPAs

The National Marine Protected Areas Center continued to take the national Social Science Research Strategy to regional partners in 2004. The national strategy, which the MPA Center created with experts from agency and academic affiliates, aims to inform and evaluate MPA processes by identifying six priority social science research themes: governance, institutions, and processes; use patterns; attitudes, perception and beliefs; economics of MPAs; communities; and submerged cultural resources.

Regional workshops have been carried out in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands (for southern Florida and the Caribbean region), Savannah, Georgia (for the south Atlantic region), and in Hawaii (for the Pacific Islands region). The regional workshops serve to gather local managers and experts to review the national strategy and then develop regional social science research plans to address local and regional MPA-related research priorities and information needs. Additional regional workshops are planned for 2005.

#### National Natural Science Research Strategy

A draft outline of the National Natural Science Research Strategy was created through a partnered effort from the National Marine Protected Areas Center and the National Park Service. A workshop is planned in 2005 to collect input feedback on the outline needed to complete the strategy.

### De Facto MPA Inventory

Not all closed areas are MPAs and some areas are closed for non-conservation purposes. To understand this critical part of the ocean governance picture, the MPA Center's Science Institute is creating an inventory of de facto MPAs throughout the United States. The initial phase focuses on California waters. When completed, this inventory will allow a comprehensive and objective assessment of the nature and extent of ocean areas closed because of security zones, safety areas, navigation lanes, etc. This comprehensive inventory will then be evaluated to determine the impacts of de facto MPA on human users, and their potential contribution to conservation and management of the nation's marine ecosystems.

Beginning in early 2005, the project will apply these methods to fully document and assess all federal, state and territorial de facto MPAs in coral reef areas in the Pacific, Caribbean, Florida and the Gulf of Mexico. This comprehensive inventory will then be evaluated to determine the extent to which these restricted areas may contribute to the ocean conservation and management goals of NOAA and its island partners.

### MPA Classification System

The MPA Center's Science Institute has developed a new MPA Classification System that uses objective and functional terms to describe the purpose and likely impacts of all types of MPAs in the United States. Using this system, an MPA is classified by six fundamental characteristics: primary conservation goal, level of protection, permanence of protection, constancy of protection, ecological scale of protection, and restrictions on extractive activities. This approach avoids the often confusing MPA terminology



in use now (e.g. reserves, parks, sanctuaries), and thus allows a more objective understanding of the rationale for any MPA, and of its potential role in managing and conserving important places in the ocean.

## **Training**

### **Program Design and Evaluation Workshop**

The MPA Center’s Training and Technical Assistance Institute staff, in cooperation with the NOAA Coastal Services Center, offered workshops on program design and evaluation at the Ocean and Coastal Program Managers Meeting in Washington, D.C. The workshops included training on logic models, performance management, and evaluation, as well as presentations by different NOAA programs on current performance measurement efforts.

### **GIS Training**

Staff from marine protected area sites and supporting institutions participated in a week-long technical training session on the use and application of geographic information systems and global positioning systems in relation to coastal management issues. The skills gained by participants, who represented regions from the Bahamas to Maryland, will enhance the capabilities of the Lowcountry Open Land Trust, Florida’s coastal and aquatic managed areas, Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and several NOAA groups that support effectively managing MPAs.

### **Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas**

The National MPA Center taught visitor use management workshops for coastal and marine protected area resource managers and associated environmental professionals at different locations around the United States in 2004, including the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve in Watsonville, California; the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Cape Cod, Massachusetts; and the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve in Miami, Florida. These sessions offered training on visitor use management planning and presented tools for problem identification and impact monitoring, as well as strategies and tactics for balancing visitor experiences and resource protection.

### **MPA Management Effectiveness Initiative**

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center jointly hosted a workshop with the Coastal States

Organization at the Coastal Society’s 19th International Conference (held in Newport, Rhode Island). The focus of the workshop was *How is your MPA Doing?*, a guidebook on MPA management effectiveness produced through a joint effort of NOAA, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the World Commission on Protected Areas, and the World Wildlife Fund. The workshop featured two phases. One phase was an overview of the guidebook that walked stakeholders through the first steps of applying it to their programs. The second phase was a focus group conducted with stakeholders to characterize managers’ needs for training and technical assistance on effectiveness, evaluation, and performance measures. Based on input received, the MPA Center developed a new training on evaluating MPA effectiveness. This training was successfully piloted with the Florida Aquatic Preserves in 2004.

### **“Understanding MPAs” Workshop**

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center partnered with Coastal America to bring the full-day workshop “Understanding Marine Protected Areas” to a number of aquariums designated as Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers. These workshops provided training to stakeholders, including the general public, on the basic principles and issues surrounding MPAs. Workshop topics included MPA types and uses, history, the role of science, and information on how to get involved.

Based on the success of the day-long “Understanding Marine Protected Areas” workshop, the MPA Center has also created a condensed, one-hour presentation on U.S. MPAs.

### **Course on Negotiating for Coastal Resources:**

This course teaches when to negotiate, what to negotiate, and how to negotiate interagency relationships and coastal issues. It helps managers distinguish the roles of advocacy, negotiation, facilitation, education, and outreach.

## **Technical Assistance**

### **Developing Digital Marine Boundaries**

A draft of the Marine Boundaries Best Practices Handbook has been completed and work towards

a final version is in progress. The handbook will provide best practices for crafting legal descriptions and digital boundaries for marine managed areas. The handbook is a joint project between the Federal Geographic Data Committee Marine Boundary Working Group, the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute, and NOAA's Coastal Services Center.

### **Stakeholder Involvement in MPA Processes**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center completed its evaluation of six recent MPA planning processes. The goal of the project was to identify "lessons learned" that could improve ongoing and future MPA planning processes. In 2003, a report containing detailed case studies for five planning processes was published. In 2004, planning process participants were interviewed to get their subjective perception of what worked and what did not for each process. In addition to resource managers from involved agencies, a wide range of stakeholder groups, including commercial and recreational interests, environmental groups, and scientists were interviewed. A final report was published that summarizes strengths and weaknesses, and provides recommendations for ongoing and future MPA planning efforts.

In addition, a report titled "Stakeholder Participation: A Synthesis of Current Literature" was published in 2004. This literature review was conducted to extract lessons from participatory processes within both the national and international communities and to develop a synthesis of recommendations for stakeholder participation. It highlighted regulatory requirements for participation, participatory processes currently being applied, and factors leading to successful participation. It was intended to help MPA managers to determine what type of stakeholder participation process may be most appropriate, based on their individual needs and local context.

### **BeachData Tool**

The MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute completed development of a BeachData online database tool for the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. BeachData is a database tool that permits volun-

teers to access web-based forms that allow them to enter detailed data collected via field surveys of assigned beach segments. The information is automatically saved to a database to support future analyses. The tool is expected to increase the efficiency with which these data are collected, managed, and analyzed.

### **Website on Social Science Methods for Marine Protected Areas**

A Social Science Methods for Marine Protected Areas website was developed by the National Marine Protected Areas Center in cooperation with the NOAA Coastal Services Center. This website profiles social science tools and methods and provides examples on how these are used by MPA managers. The website contains sections on social science themes, tools (including surveys, demographic analysis, non-market valuation, and social assessment), and case studies.

### **Inventory of GIS-Based Decision-Support Tools**

Many decision-support tools have been created over the past few years to address a variety of issues both within and around MPAs. Because these tools are often site-specific or designed for a particular audience, secondary user groups may not be aware of their existence. In 2004, the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute published a report titled "An Inventory of GIS-Based Decision-Support Tools for MPAs." This report documents existing decision-support tools in order to raise their visibility within the MPA community and minimize duplicative efforts.

### **Navigating MPAs**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has been working with the Office of Coast Survey on a project designed to use MPA data to provide key information to mariners and other users about the location, purpose and allowable activities in existing MPAs through NOAA's Coast Pilot and other navigation products. The California coast is being used as the demonstration model for this nation-wide project. In 2004, the MPA Center's Science Institute Director presented two briefings for senior staff in NOAA's Office of Coast Survey about the progress and next steps in the joint project, which is entitled "Navigating MPAs." Further, staff from the MPA Center's Science Institute and the Office of Coast Survey met to finalize the timeline for developing a demonstration for the navigating MPAs project.

## **Enforcement Report**

A draft of the MPA enforcement synthesis report was completed in 2004. The report examines current enforcement methodology and describes the main enforcement-related issues and priorities for MPAs. It outlines the numerous enforcement entities involved with MPAs and their respective jurisdictions. The final report, expected to be published in 2005, will incorporate information gathered from existing literature, discussions with MPA managers and stakeholders, as well as an analysis of a number of case studies.

## **National Conservation Training Center**

The MPA Center met with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center to discuss partnering to provide training to conservation professionals. The National Conservation Training Center trains and educates natural resource managers to accomplish our common goal of conserving fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.

## GOAL: Facilitate International, National, and Regional Coordination of MPA Activities

The National Marine Protected Areas Center works to facilitate the integration of local MPA sites, foster meaningful stakeholder participation in regional activities, and improve national and international linkages across MPA programs.

### Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee

The Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee provides expert advice to the Departments of Commerce and the Interior on the implementation of MPA Executive Order 13158. The 30 Committee members are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce and, with their diverse backgrounds and experience, represent parties interested in the use and impact of MPAs as a management tool. The members represent a broad stakeholder community, including scientists, academia, commercial and recreational fishermen, other resource users, state and tribal resource managers, and environmentalists. In addition, nine federal agencies are represented by non-voting ex-officio members of the Committee. The Committee is supported by the National Marine Protected Areas Center.

The MPA Federal Advisory Committee held three meetings in 2004. Key accomplishments included:

- Elected Dr. Daniel Bromley, a professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin, as their chair, and Dr. Bonnie McCay, a professor in the Department of Human Ecology at Rutgers University, as their vice-chair.
- Established three subcommittees to focus on: developing a national system of marine protected areas; stewardship and effectiveness of marine protected areas; and national and regional coordination of marine protected area efforts.
- Incorporated input from a variety of panels and speakers, including experts on Pacific Island MPA management, the cultural context

for marine management, and spatial management by regional fishery management councils.

- Established an ad-hoc Cultural Resources Working Group to define cultural resources within the context of the national system of MPAs, and to discuss the ways in which cultural practices and beliefs should be addressed in MPA management.
- Generated reports from each subcommittee submitted to the full Committee for consideration.

The Committee expects to make its first set of recommendations to the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior by June 2005.

### International Coordination

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has coordinated with various international parties on global MPA issues.

#### North American MPA Network

The National Marine Protected Areas Center works with the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation and the NOAA's International Programs Office on marine projects under the Conservation of Biodiversity program. In its effort to design an integrated North American MPA Network (NAMPAN), part of an environmental side agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation has focused on coordinating, mapping, and inventorying federal MPAs on the Pacific coast of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. In 2004, the National MPA Center became the NOAA lead for the NAMPAN project.

NOAA participated in a meeting in San Francisco, California with Canadian and Mexican government agencies and scientists and non-governmental organizations from all three nations on the possible design and

functions of a NAMPAN. The participants proposed revisions to the draft action plan framework, confirmed the decision to use the gray whale as an iconic figure for a pilot “Baja to Bering” MPA network project on the west coast, and discussed possible cooperative research, education, training and information exchange projects for the pilot. Since the San Francisco meeting, the National Marine Protected Areas Center helped develop a five-year plan for NAMPAN and completed the Baja-to-Bering Sea MPA Atlas.

### **Information Exchanges with Delegates**

In an effort to share ideas and strengthen collaboration, the National Marine Protected Areas Center participated in information exchanges with delegates from Australia, China, and Korea, including with:

- Bruce Kingston, the director of communications and education for the Australia Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, to share information on the Executive Order and implementing outreach strategies
- Dr. Jon Day of the Australia Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to bring lessons learned from Australia’s experience in developing systems of MPAs to bear on the U.S. effort
- Dr. Chang-Hee Lee and Dr. Paikho Rho, scientists from the Korea Environment Institute to share how the U.S. has used MPAs to protect estuarine habitats and about the roles of MPA establishment, management, and coordination
- A Chinese delegation of marine and fisheries officials to share information on respective MPA efforts

### **Gulf of Maine**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center’s northeast regional coordinator continued to work closely with the Gulf of Maine Council programs. The Council consists of representatives from U.S. and Canadian state, provincial, and federal governmental agencies that seek to maintain and enhance environmental quality in the Gulf of Maine for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations.

The MPA Center supported the Gulf of Maine Council on a two-year project to describe Gulf of Maine offshore habitats and identify regional conservation strategies. In 2004, the Gulf of Maine Council Habitat Conservation Subcommittee, which leads the project, completed the

Gulf of Maine Marine Habitat Primer. The Primer provides an overview of habitat characteristics, ecological functions, economic and recreational values, human impacts, and management considerations. In addition, funding has been secured and communications are underway for developing a human impact assessment in the Gulf of Maine.

### **National Coordination**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center’s key responsibilities include consulting with stakeholders on the design of a national system of MPAs and working with federal agencies to ensure that no MPAs are harmed by federal actions. The MPA Center has a variety of communication methods to keep federal agencies, site managers, and other partners apprised of the latest MPA-related activities and news. These communication methods include an inter-agency weekly email update and a monthly newsletter (MPA Connections).

### **Federal Briefings**

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center briefed several federal agencies on the status of the MPA Center activities as they relate to implementing the MPA Executive Order, including developing the framework for a national system of MPAs and supporting the MPA Federal Advisory Committee. Such briefings took place with participants of the annual meeting of the U.S. Navy’s natural resource managers, members of the President’s Council on Environmental Quality, members of the Federal Geographic Data Committee Marine Boundary Working Group, participants in the Chairs and Executive Directors of the Federal Regional Fishery Management Councils meeting, and participants in the NOAA Fisheries constituent meeting led by NOAA Administrator Lautenbacher and NOAA Fisheries Deputy Director Rebecca Lent.

In addition, the MPA Center continued to assemble its Federal Inter-Agency Working Group to discuss progress on the Executive Order and possible recommendations that the MPA Federal Advisory Committee might make in 2005.

### **Stakeholder Coordination**

Among other outreach activities in 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center engaged

coordination



stakeholders at the national level to answer questions and encourage stakeholders to participate in the public process to develop the framework for the national MPA system. One example of such outreach includes the Center Director's address to the National Association of Charterboat Operators at their annual meeting in Virginia.

In addition, the National Marine Protected Areas Center worked with the Recreational Fisheries Working Group, a newly formed NOAA group to coordinate the development of a NOAA Recreational Fisheries Strategic Plan. The MPA Center participated in a stakeholder meeting organized by the Working Group to solicit feedback on a draft recreational fisheries strategic plan.

### **Regional Coordination**

Although protected areas management is place-based ecosystem management, regional coordination offers an opportunity to link management efforts at individual sites into larger, more effective networks, and to address issues of regional importance. The National Marine Protected Areas Center has supported regional coordination in several ways including the formation of a regional coordination team, development of an operational framework, the placement of regionally located staff members, and the implementation of regionally focused projects.

#### **Regional Coordination Team**

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center continued to build regional coordination capacity with the formation of the regional coordination team. This team helped to link MPAs at the regional level, identify opportunities for collaboration, strengthen natural and social science to support regional MPA natural and cultural resource management efforts, and support the development of the national system of MPAs. To guide the MPA Center's regional coordination efforts, the team developed a framework which outlines its goals, staff roles, and communication protocols. The regional coordination team focused on implementing the following three core functions, which cut across the MPA Center's goals: 1) monitoring regional landscapes; 2) building and coordinating partnerships; and 3)

supporting and informing MPA science and technical training and assistance.

#### **Regional Staff Members**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center has furthered regional coordination in 2004 through the placement of regionally-focused staff members. The MPA Center's northeast regional coordinator in Boston, Massachusetts was based in the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program office. The Center's Pacific regional coordinator for the Coast and the U.S. Pacific Islands resided in the MPA Center's offices in Monterey, California. And the Pacific Islands local liaison (who was added to the MPA Center in 2004) serves the MPA Center part-time from Hawaii at the NOAA Pacific Services Center. These regional staff members serve as the on-the-ground links to the MPA Center for regional entities involved in MPA-related activities.

#### **Regional Projects**

Many projects and activities were supported through the National Marine Protected Areas Center's regional presence. Some regional project examples from 2004 include:

- Socioeconomic Profile and Spatial Analysis of Fisheries in two central California National Marine Sanctuaries

The National MPA Center Science Institute entered a partnership with the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries and EcoTrust to profile both the historic fisheries and the evolution of fishing activities occurring in the sanctuary. The profile will include information on actual numbers of boats actively engaged in each fishery; areas where the fishery is taking place; gear types; catch levels; a socio-economic profile of the harbors and marinas accessing the sanctuary; and an understanding of markets, changing gear types, and changing fisheries management regulations that influence this profile and the community. Information exchange with mariners will provide important input to the profile.

- **Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center's northeast regional coordinator participated in a maritime archeology working group meeting for the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary management plan review.

- **New England Fishery Management Council**

The National Marine Protected Areas Center's northeast regional coordinator participated in the New England Fishery Management Council Habitat/MPA Committee and Advisory Panel meeting. The committee and advisory panel discussed the integration of essential fish habitat for all managed species through the Omnibus Amendment, designating habitat research areas, and ecosystem management. The committee also reviewed a draft proposal to the MPA Center on holding public workshops to develop the Council's MPA policy.

- **Gulf of Maine**

The MPA Center continued to attend quarterly NOAA Gulf of Maine MPA coordination meetings, with discussion focused on updates of program activity in the region. The group meets quarterly and attempts to improve coordination within NOAA on MPA-related issues on a regional basis.

- **PacificMPA.org and Online Regional Information Centers**

In 2004, the MPA Center continued to maintain PacificMPA.org, while developing a plan to expand the pilot effort to a national database of online Regional Information Centers to provide "one-stop-shopping" for comprehensive information on ongoing federal, state, and tribal MPA planning

processes in all regions of the U.S. The MPA Center created a draft of the database with functioning query capabilities, clear navigation, and organized appearance. Data from the Pacific coast pilot website, which was launched in 2002, will be incorporated into the new national online Regional Information Centers. The regional information centers database was designed with the assistance of the NOAA Special Project Office. Initial data collection on processes in select regions of the U.S. has begun and will continue into 2005.

### Tribal Coordination

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center continued to work towards building tribal coordination capacity. For example, staff attended a workshop on "Government to Government Consultation" with tribal governments. The workshop emphasized the requirement to consult with tribes under a wide range of federal laws, and provided legal background and process advice to federal agencies.

In addition, the MPA Center made plans to hire a tribal coordinator who will help complete the marine managed areas inventory database as well as serve as a liaison for the MPA Center as it develops the national system of MPAs.



## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The education and outreach activities of the National Marine Protected Areas Center increase understanding and awareness of MPAs among government agencies, coastal and marine educators, managers, and stakeholders. The National Marine Protected Areas Center education and outreach activities support the development of programming that incorporates MPA themes and messages across all MPA Center goals.

### MPA.gov

The U.S. website on marine protected areas, <http://mpa.gov>, was overhauled, updated, and expanded in 2004. New sections on MPA information and tools and MPA programs were added and navigation was improved. Later in 2004, the site underwent a second phase of restructuring in which several sections were added or enhanced. Pages were added on training and GIS/remote sensing in the information and tools section, and several items were added to the MPA Federal Advisory Committee pages, including meeting agendas and supporting documents; a Committee Structure page, which lists members of each of the subcommittees; and presentations given at past meetings. In addition to daily or weekly enhancements, an international page was added to the MPA Programs section and the MPA Center's monthly newsletter MPA Connections, was archived on the site.

Web pages on marine managed area systems (MMA) and programs for some coastal and Great Lakes, states, territories, and commonwealths were added to the site, in collaboration with state partner agencies. Each state or territory page includes a list of the relevant agencies that manage living and non-living coastal and ocean resources (including cultural) in the respective state. Legal citations, taken from analyzing states' administrative codes and statutes, accompany the listing of the states' MMA systems. In addition, an MMA site unique to that state is showcased. The information provides federal, state, and local program managers and decision-makers with insight into how state agencies address area-based management.

### MPA Virtual Library

The MPA Virtual Library grew considerably in 2004. More than 100 items (including books, reports, conference proceedings, journal articles, conferences, and website) were added to its MPA collection. The virtual library now includes more than 1,100 resources, which are searchable on [MPA.gov](http://MPA.gov).

### Community Events/Booths

The National Marine Protected Areas Center participated in a number of outreach and education events aimed at reaching students, teachers, and community members at the local and national level. Examples of events where the MPA Center participated included:

- Monterey Institute of International Studies Earth Day event
- Navy's Earth Day Celebration called "Celebrating Successful Partnerships"
- National Marine Sanctuary Program's "Dive into Education" workshop at its annual education conference in Hawaii
- Monterey Bay Aquarium's "Cooking for Solutions" event
- National Fishing and Boating Week in Washington, D.C.
- Maryland and Delaware Ocean Awareness Days
- Annual Lewes, Delaware Coast Day Celebration
- National Student Summit on Ocean Issues (Coastal America)
- College of Charleston (Marine Biology and Environmental Studies Graduate Programs)

## Outreach Materials

The MPA Center produced several educational materials, including six additional pop-up displays that represent the MPA Center, biodiversity, education, many types/many purposes, recreational activities, and submerged cultural resources; a two-sided poster that describes the lead agencies at the federal, state, commonwealth, territory, and tribal levels and the major laws, regulations, and acts that provide the authority to establish and manage marine protected areas; and more than 200 photographs from two MPAs in South Carolina and about 500 photographic images of MPAs on the west coast.

## MPA Connections

The National Marine Protected Areas Center's monthly newsletter, MPA Connections, celebrated its two-year anniversary in November 2004. The newsletter provides updates on the MPA Center's resources, training, research, management tools, publications, websites, public meetings, and the work of the MPA Federal Advisory Committee. MPA Connections is distributed via listserv to more than 3,000 recipients worldwide and is archived on MPA.gov.

A special edition of MPA Connections was distributed in April 2004. The special edition was a request from the MPA Federal Advisory Committee to provide MPA stakeholders with an update of MPA Executive Order 13158 and MPA Center activities. The newsletter included a letter from the MPA Center Director and highlights of the MPA Center's work in three goal categories.

## Information Exchange for Marine Educators

In 2004, the National Marine Protected Areas Center continued distributing the monthly email newsletter for coastal and marine educators, titled Information Exchange for Marine Educators. The newsletter features a list of MPA educational programs, new opportunities, calls for abstracts, funding and professional development opportunities, and websites of general interest to marine educators. The Information Exchange is available on MPA.gov and through the Department of the Interior's National Park Service's Research Learning Centers Clearinghouse educational website.

## Current: the Journal of Marine Education

The National Marine Protected Areas Center sponsored the July/August 2004 edition of Current: the Journal of Marine Education, dedicated to MPA issues. The journal is published by the National Marine Educators Association. The MPA Center worked with more than 50 authors, reviewers, editors, illustrators, and others to publish the edition. The articles covered a wide range of MPA-related topics, including migrating birds and whales, dunes and marshes in national parks, shipwrecks in the Great Lakes, and traditional Hawaiian fisheries management. The edition also featured illustrations by Jim Toomey, the creator of "Sherman's Lagoon" cartoons. A Spanish language edition was also made available.

## CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

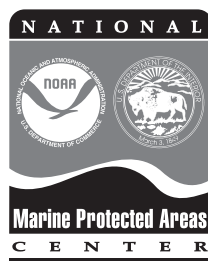
As part of its mission, the National Marine Protected Areas Center participated in and/or sponsored numerous conferences and workshops in 2004. In some cases, National Marine Protected Areas Center staff members were presenters and facilitators. Many of the following conferences and workshops allowed the National Marine Protected Areas Center to display its latest educational exhibits, outreach materials, and reports.

- American Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Conference
- Chesapeake Bay Program's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Workshop
- Coastal America's National Student Summit on Ocean Issues
- Coastal and Marine Resources and Property Workshop
- Coastal Program Managers' Meetings
- Coastal States Organization 33rd Annual Meeting
- Coastal Zone '04
- First International Marine Protected Areas Congress
- Gulf of Maine Council Meetings
- Gulf of Maine Summit
- Heritage Areas: Forum on Partnership Strategies and Heritage Development, USGS
- International Association of Marine Science Libraries
- Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship
- Maine Fisherman's Forum
- Managing Our Nation's Fisheries: Past, Present and Future
- Managing Visitor Use Impacts in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas Training Workshops
- Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee Meetings
- Meeting of the Southeast Affiliate of the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers
- MPA Federal Advisory Committee's Subcommittee Meetings
- MPA Social Science Research Strategy Regional Workshop
- National Association of Charter Boat Operators Annual Meeting

- National Estuarine Research Reserves System and the National Estuarine Research Reserves Association Annual Meeting
- National Interpreters Workshop
- National Marine Educators Association Annual Conference
- National Marine Sanctuary Program's Annual Education Conference
- National Marine Sanctuary Program's Annual Marine Heritage Program Meeting
- Navy Natural Resources Management Conference
- New England Fishery Management Council Meetings
- NOAA All Islands Coastal Zone Conference
- NOAA Fisheries Recreational Fisheries Working Group
- NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region Constituent Meetings
- NOAA WebShop Annual Conference
- North American Association of Environmental Educators Annual Conference
- Northwest Atlantic Coastal Indicators Workshop
- Ocean Zoning: Can it Work in the Northwest Atlantic?
- Our Ocean Future: Implications of the Ocean Commission's Recommendations for Governance of the Gulf of Maine, University of Maine School of Law
- Seventh Maritime Heritage Conference
- Society for Conservation Biology Conference
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meetings
- Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Interagency Cooperation Working Group meeting
- Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Maritime Archeology Working Group Meeting
- Tenth International Coral Reef Symposium
- The Coastal Society's Nineteenth International Conference
- US Environmental Protection Agency Pacific Islands Environment Conference
- US Man and the Biosphere at the Missouri Botanical Gardens

### **For More Information**

For more information on the National Marine Protected Area Center, please visit <http://mpa.gov>, or contact [mpainfo@noaa.gov](mailto:mpainfo@noaa.gov).



Published: June 2005