



mpa connections

A publication of the National Marine Protected Areas Center

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The *mission of the National Marine Protected Areas Center* 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. *MPA Connections* was launched to meet continuing calls by agency and external stakeholders for information about MPA Center activities and to feature other actions that address Executive Order 13158 goals.

Message from Joseph Uravitch, National Marine Protected Areas Center Director

Looking back on 2005, I'm happy to report that the National Marine Protected Areas Center has accomplished our main objective for the year. We engaged in dialogue with the public, organizations, associations, and government agencies around the nation to help us develop a draft framework for planning a national system of marine protected areas (MPAs). We also began work on the key supporting science and analysis that will help us understand how to design an effective national system. You can read more about the MPA Center's work to develop the national system in this issue.

I'm also proud of our progress on fundamental aspects of our program. We increased public access to information about federal and state MPA processes through our web-based MPA Regional Information Centers, made improvements to the MPA.gov website—which now receives more than 400,000 hits per month, and released an educational screen saver based on cartoons created by Sherman's Lagoon artist Jim Toomey. Our ongoing partnership with NOAA Fisheries allowed us to engage the scientific community and the public, bring recreational fishermen and scientists together in our recent workshop on benthic-pelagic linkages, and continue the dialogue between fisheries scientists and ecologists. Finally, we are nearly finished with the inventory of marine managed areas, with final federal information posted on our website and state and territorial sites scheduled to be posted in January 2006. To date, we estimate that there are nearly 2,000 marine managed area sites around the nation.

We recognize that 2006 will be a challenging one, and we plan on using our available resources to focus on developing the national system of MPAs. We intend to publish the draft framework for developing the national system in April 2006. We expect that we'll be ready to publish the final national system framework in 2007, and soon thereafter establish the national system of MPAs based on the nation's existing sites.

Throughout this process, we are committed to engaging the public and agencies around the nation, although at a reduced level from 2005. While the scope of our work on these

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MPA Connections was first published by the National Marine Protected Areas Center in October 2002. The newsletter is available electronically and distributed via listserv. Issues are archived on http://mpa.gov/information_tools/newsletters.html. To subscribe, send an email to the editor, Dana.Topousis@noaa.gov.

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is resource dependent, we will continue building the foundation for the national system, which includes science-based characterizations and assessments of natural and cultural resources, the study of human uses and impacts on resources, and the analysis of the adequacy of the existing collection of MPAs to meet regional and national conservation goals.

In order to more accurately understand the needs of a national MPA system, the MPA Center will test the process on the west coast, namely in California, Oregon, and Washington. You will read more about that project in our next issue of MPA Connections.

Throughout 2006, we will be actively seeking your thoughts on the draft national system framework.

We hope you'll continue to share your ideas and comments with us.

MPA Center Creates Education Screen Saver Based on Jim Toomey Cartoons

Thanks to the generosity of artist Jim Toomey, creator of Sherman's Lagoon, the National Marine Protected Areas Center has produced an educational screen saver using cartoons that Toomey designed for an MPA Center poster in 2001. The poster illustrates examples of the many types and purposes of marine protected areas in the United States.

This special screen saver depicts Sherman and his friends humorously interacting in various marine locations. Each colorful screen includes a brief description of the site. The sites represent examples of research reserves, sanctuaries, critical habitats, wildlife refuges, national seashores, fishery management zones, and ecological reserves.

The free screen saver is available for download on www.MPA.gov. It is also available by request on a CD-ROM that features a demonstration of the MPA Center's web-based Regional Information Centers and fact sheets on MPAs. If you would like the CD, please send an email to mpainfo@noaa.gov.

Latest News on U.S. Efforts to Develop the National System of MPAs

In January 2005, the National Marine Protected Areas Center began an intensive public process to develop the framework for the national system of marine protected areas (MPAs), as directed by Executive Order 13158. The formal engagement process kicked off with a federal inter-agency workshop in Washington, D.C. (attended by 70 headquarters and site staff representing national parks, refuges, reserves, and sanctuaries). In partnership with the Coastal States Organization, the MPA Center organized and facilitated state-territory workshops for agency representatives in three regions—west coast, Gulf of Mexico, and Great Lakes/northeast.

Finally, the MPA Center continued its outreach progress by meeting with non-governmental organizations, industry groups, coastal communities, and other members of the public in regions around the country, including New England, the Gulf of Mexico, and the mid Atlantic, to engage as many stakeholders as possible. The MPA Center is wrapping up its public sessions with two meetings for the west coast, scheduled for December 12 and 13 in San Francisco and Seattle, respectively.

In addition, the MPA Federal Advisory Committee met in various regions around the nation over a two-year period, where they heard from a diverse range of panelists and members of the public about MPA-related issues. The committee delivered their national system recommendations to the Departments of Commerce and the Interior in June 2005.

These workshops and sessions have resulted in an array of feedback on the uses and values of MPAs, both regionally and nationally. The MPA Center has also received written comments about developing the national system through the system email address (mpa.comments@noaa.gov). Feedback and recommendations are being incorporated into a framework that will define how to develop and implement the national system.

In April 2006, the MPA Center will publish a draft version of the national system framework, allowing for public comment over an extended period. Some of the key components that will be covered in the draft framework include:

- vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives, and comprehensive themes;
- the definition of "marine protected area" and associated key terms;
- criteria for being included in the national system;
- the process for identifying, nominating, and formally including established MPAs into the national system;
- a process to coordinate national system planning and management; and
- guidance for comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of national system MPAs.

A complete list of national system workshops, participants, and responses is available on www.MPA.gov/national_system. To submit written comments regarding the development of the national system of MPAs, write to mpa.comments@noaa.gov.

www.MPA.gov to be Evaluated; You Can Contribute Ideas and Comments

The U.S. website on marine protected areas, www.MPA.gov, will undergo a facelift, content update, and restructuring in 2006. During this period, the MPA Center plans to improve access to science and analysis efforts, provide the latest information on developing the national system of MPAs, enhance the organization of existing sections, and offer a newspaper-style layout to the home page.

If you would like to participate in a focus group to assist the MPA Center in evaluating priority sections and topics for the website, please send an email to mpainfo@noaa.gov.

Profile: Lelei Peau, Former Subcommittee Chair, MPA Federal Advisory Committee

Even if we do not consciously realize it, taboos guide us through our daily lives. In fact, taboos guide social interactions around the world, although accepted boundaries vary from one country to another. For those that coined the term, however, taboos extend beyond simple social custom and into accepted law.

Translated from the Tongan word 'tabu,' taboos have been used as a formal system of regulating and enforcing behavior within Polynesian cultures for centuries. It was British explorer Captain James Cook who introduced the workings of this tenure system to the English-speaking world over 200 years ago. By imposing bans on common activities, chieftains regulated community activity to protect threatened resources (both on land and under the sea) as needed. For the marine environment specifically, taboos acted like one type of today's marine protected areas, with a chief setting aside temporary closures and designating fishing restrictions.

Over time, national governments replaced a chief's authority and the system of tabu. But many people, like Lelei Peau of American Samoa, believe that embracing traditional means of authority can better serve environmental conservation, economic development, and cultural preservation.

"Samoans protected resources through marine protected areas centuries ago," Lelei says. "With the evolution of the cash economy intensifying fishing efforts, modern management must recognize traditional knowledge and methods to better balance environmental management with economic development. The mixture of the two systems will also enhance our ability to practice traditional customs."

As the deputy director for American Samoa's Department of Commerce, Lelei has spent his career trying to mesh the seemingly disparate elements of traditional management and modern authority, as well as environmental conservation and economic development. But it was the force of the latter two elements that directed him on to his career path.

Growing up on an island, Lelei saw how quickly the health of the surrounding seas declined with the steady clearing of land intended for urban development. While he saw how the island benefited from this development, he also understood how the long-term

impacts on the environment would eventually hinder further growth of the economy.

"You can't compromise on either economic development or environmental health," he says. "On an island, one cannot survive without the other. We must carefully address the needs of both."

In order to find the balance between economic development and environmental health, Lelei has worked with a number of agencies and advisory groups to achieve shared goals, articulate the needs of the islands, and promote tools to assist the needs of decision-makers. These efforts led to Lelei's nomination to the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Federal Advisory Committee, where he was subsequently elected as the chair for the MPA stewardship and effectiveness subcommittee (the subcommittee completed its tasks earlier this year).

When originally joining the Committee, Lelei hoped to clarify the jurisdiction and authority between state and federal governments, find ways to improve MPA management, and foster a cooperative spirit to enhance regional work through shared knowledge and resources. During his first term, which ended

in June 2005, Lelei discussed his objectives in specific reference to the development of a national system of MPAs. Now, having delivered the Federal Advisory Committee's recommendations for establishing a national system of MPAs, Lelei believes that the Committee has produced an effective model that recognizes existing sites and regional authority.

Ultimately, Lelei hopes that the Committee's recommendations will encourage greater support for developing the national system of MPAs and promote efforts by federal partners to assist stakeholders throughout the process. Lelei will continue to serve on the Federal Advisory Committee and would like to see the Committee's next term emphasize strategic ways to bring together partners that support MPA management.

In October, Lelei was re-appointed to another two-year term on the MPA Federal Advisory Committee. The committee will meet in April 2006 in Corpus Christi, Texas. To learn more about the MPA Federal Advisory Committee or to read the Committee's first set of recommendations, go to www.MPA.gov.

Events and Conferences

January

23-28: Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands; UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France; <http://www.globaloceans.org/paris3/index.html>.

February

16 - 20: AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, http://www.aaas.org/meetings/Annual_Meeting/.

26 - March 2: Sharing the Fish International Conference, Fremantle, Western Australia; www.fishallocation.com

March

6-10: World Maritime Technology Conference, London, England; <http://www.wmtc2006.com/>.

7-9: Annual Ocean and Coastal Managers' Meeting, Washington, D.C.; <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/pmm/>.

April

6-9: National Science Teachers Association 54th National Conference on Science Education, Anaheim, California; http://www.nsta.org/conventiondetail&Meeting_Code=2006ANA.

19-21: First International Symposium on Mangroves as Fish Habitat, Miami, Florida; <http://www.rsmas.miami.edu/conference/mangrove-fish-habitat/>.

24-26: MPA Federal Advisory Committee Meeting, Corpus Christi, Texas; http://mpa.gov/fac/fac_meetings.html.

May

1-5: 15th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting, Washington, D.C.; <http://www.coralreef.gov/index.html>.

14-17: The Coastal Society and MPA meeting, St. Petersburg, Florida; <http://www.thecoastalsociety.org/>.

17-20: Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management, San Diego, California; <http://www.trilat.org/>.

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Recent Additions to the MPA Virtual Library

The MPA virtual library, a clearinghouse for pertinent information on MPAs, includes more than 1,500 items. A sampling of some of the most recently added materials follows.

A series of fisheries educational workshops held by Sea Grant Fisheries Extension programs in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Maine in 2003 focused on the use of MPAs for fishery management in New England waters. The workshops included assessments of theoretical impacts to fisheries, an examination of results of the closed areas on the Scotian shelf in Canada, participant questions and comments, and a summary of a facilitated group discussion held at the Maine Fishermen's Forum. "Proceedings of the New England Workshops on Marine Protected Areas" is available at: http://seagrants.gso.uri.edu/ug_reg_fish/edworkshops (scroll to "Marine Protected Areas Workshops").

A new IUCN report provides a synthesis of current scientific knowledge on coral reef resilience and resistance to bleaching, and describes resilience and resistance factors and some knowledge gaps. The report discusses tools and strategies to enhance resilience, including the use of well-designed networks of marine protected areas and integrated coastal management. "Coral Reef Resilience and Resistance to Bleaching" is available at: http://www.iucn.org/themes/marine/pdf/coral_reef_resilience_gg-rs.pdf.

A report by the International Institute for Sustainable Development on the Ocean Policy Summit held in Lisbon, Portugal, in October 2005 includes a brief history of integrated oceans management, and a summary of a special session on achieving networks of marine protected areas within ocean and coastal governance. The Summit's theme was "Integrated Ocean Policy: National and Regional Experiences, Prospects and Emerging Practices". The meeting was organized by the International Ocean Governance Network (supported by Nippon Foundation, Japan), the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, the Portuguese Intersectoral Ocean Commission, Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Port Authority of Lisbon, the International Coastal and Ocean Organization, the Gerald J. Mangone Center for Marine Policy at the University of Delaware, and the Marine and Environmental Law Institute at Dalhousie University. "The Ocean Policy Summit 2005 Bulletin" is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/tops2005/ymbvol117num1e.html>.

A special theme section in a recent issue of "Marine Ecology Progress Series" focuses on the politics and socioeconomics of ecosystem-based management of fisheries and other marine resources. Perspective papers by marine resources experts and managers describe the administrative, socioeconomic and scientific complexities involved with the implementation of a holistic ecosystem approach to management. A paper by Tundi Agardy on global marine conservation policy versus site-level implementation includes extensive discussion of the need for properly sized and strategically networked MPAs for effective broad-scale conservation. "Politics and Socio-Economics of Ecosystem-based Management of Marine Resources" (in Marine Ecology Progress Series v. 300, 2005) is available at: http://www.int-res.com/articles/meps_oa/m300p241.pdf.

Note: the MPA Center does not necessarily endorse the views expressed in the articles listed above.



Events and Conferences, continued

June

3-10: National Fishing and Boating Week; <http://www.takemefishing.org/default.aspx?id=241>.

24 – 28: Society for Conservation Biology: 20th Annual Meeting: "Conservation Without Borders," San Jose, California; <http://www.conbio.org/2006/>.

September

17-20: California and the World Ocean conference, Long Beach, California.

October

10-12: MPA Federal Advisory Committee meeting, location to be determined; http://mpa.gov/fac/fac_meetings.html.

18-20: Annual Sportfishing Summit; San Diego, California; <http://www.asafishing.org/>.

December

9-13: Restore America's Estuaries, Third National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration, "Forging the National Imperative," New Orleans, Louisiana; <http://www.estuaries.org/conference>.