

MARINEMAP: PARTICIPATORY MARINE PROTECTED AREA DESIGN USING AN WEB-BASED OPEN SOURCE TOOL

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The California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative (MLPAI) is currently working toward establishing a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for the entire state. Since 2005, we have developed several web-based decision support tools for stakeholders to visualize and analyze geospatial information within California state waters. In 2008, we released a new web-based decision support tool for stakeholders to (a) visualize geospatial data layers, (b) draw prospective MPA boundaries with attributed information, (c) assemble prospective MPA boundaries into arrays, (d) share MPA boundaries and arrays with other users, (e) generate graphs and statistics to evaluate MPAs based on science-based guidelines, and (f) share results with users in a place-based discussion forum. Based on Open Source technologies, the MarineMap decision support tool is well documented, freely distributed and modifiable for any area-based planning effort. We will demonstrate the major features of the tool and illustrate how it was used in the MLPAI.