

# Del Norte County



## Marine Protected Area (MPA) Community Compliance Forum Report November 12, 2020

With support and funding from:



# About

The **MPA Collaborative Network's Compliance Initiative** is supported by the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), and in partnership with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the California District Attorneys Association, and Resources Legacy Fund. It is a multi-year initiative that aims to improve the compliance and enforcement of California's network of MPAs through community compliance forums, allied agency enforcement trainings, prosecutor training, and MPA violation data collection.

The individual **Community Compliance Forums** held for each coastal county provided space for local stakeholders to voice their MPA, ocean, and coastal compliance concerns and brainstorm ideas to address those concerns. The Collaborative Network hosted two in-person forums (pre-pandemic) and 13 virtual forums. Five hundred community members participated, resulting in over 2,200 compliance concerns and solutions mentioned during 40+ hours of engagement.

This report summarizes the input gathered from stakeholders during the Del Norte County Forum discussion as well the input provided in the post-Forum evaluation forms, Google surveys, and printed surveys.

Refer to the separate **Statewide Compliance Forum Report** for more information about the universal categories used to group mentioned compliance concerns and solutions. Refer to the **Glossary** at the end of this report for definitions of commonly used acronyms.

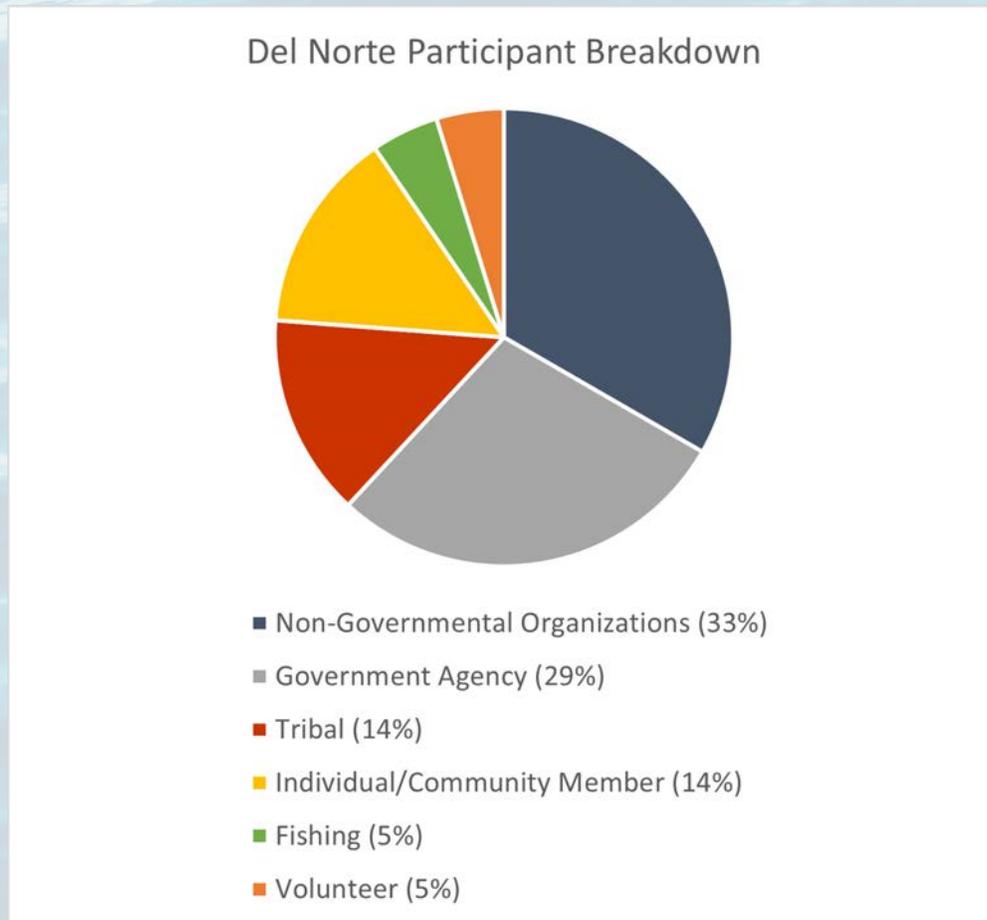
# Key Takeaways

- The top concern was commercial kelp/algae harvest. The differences in regulations in Oregon and California needs to be addressed collaboratively because some commercial Oregon harvesters are taking large amounts of seaweed in California's MPAs (e.g., False Klamath Cove, Point St. George).
- The top solution was targeted education & outreach programs/events. Participants mentioned prioritizing Oregon fishermen and kelp/algae/seaweed harvesters (e.g., pamphlets/brochures at visitor center), targeting CPFVs, and coordinating with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- The most common area for violations is Pyramid Point SMCA. The majority of violations are made by boaters from Brookings Harbor.
- During the pandemic, participants noted a general increase in visitation and other code violations such as beach bonfires, encampment fires, fireworks, and unattended BBQs.
- Researchers/volunteers need to be easily identifiable so observers don't mistake/report them as violators and wrongfully report to CalTIP. Researchers/volunteers could wear vests, display large banners on research boats, and/or post signage at access points during surveys or monitoring.

## Highlighted Compliance Concerns

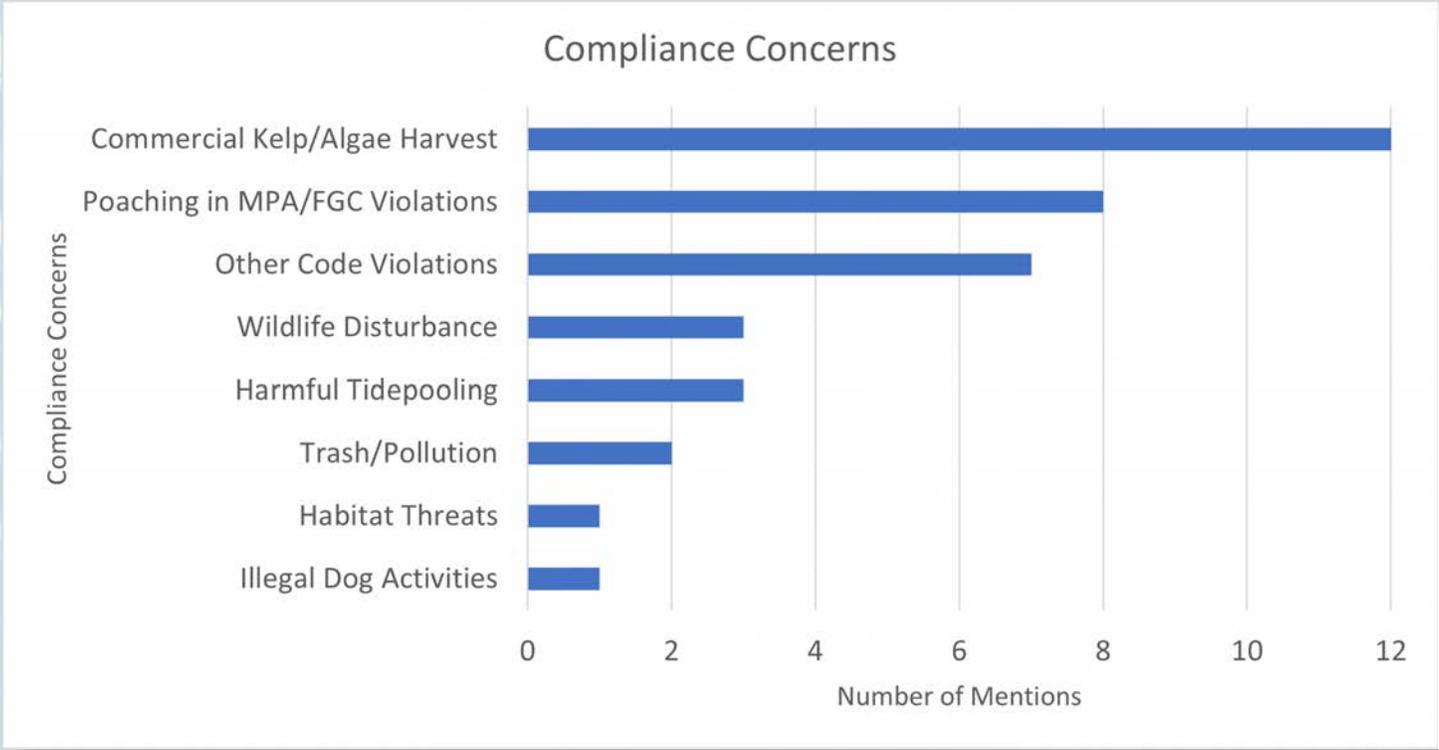
- Commercial kelp/algae harvest by Oregon harvesters and the need for regulatory changes
- Poaching in MPAs/Fish and Game Code (FGC) violations at Pyramid Point SMCA
- Kayak fishers, poke poling at Point St. George
- Impact of Oregon fishers/harvesters
- Other code violations and increase in visitation on weekends and holidays

# Participant Breakdown



- A total of **19 participants attended** the Community Compliance Forum. The majority of attendees identified as non-governmental organizations, government agencies, tribal representatives, and individuals/community members. Fishing representatives and volunteers also attended.
- A total of **27 people registered** for the Forum and received MPA-related information, educational resources, and additional avenues for sharing input in the Forum follow-up email.
- In-meeting Zoom poll results indicated that 92% of respondents were “Very Familiar” or “Somewhat Familiar” with MPAs and 46% identified as current Collaborative members.

# Compliance Concerns



This chart summarizes the number of times each MPA compliance concern was mentioned during the Forum discussions and in the post-Forum evaluation forms, Google surveys, and printed surveys. Concerns are organized into general categories based on the overall input from the community. See the Statewide Compliance Forum Report for more category detail.

# Compliance Concerns

## Compliance Concerns in Detail

### • **Commercial Kelp/Algae Harvest**

- ◇ Garth's Beach at Point Saint George, four people with kayaks harvested 12 big garbage bags of seaweed, potentially rockweed to use as fertilizer.
- ◇ Wilson's Creek just north of False Klamath Cove, additional harvesting of seaweed by a company selling nori.

### • **Poaching in MPA/FGC Violations**

- ◇ The majority of MPA violations occur in the Pyramid Point SMCA
  - Onshore and offshore hook & line fishing
  - Collecting sand crabs as bait
  - Kayak fishers
  - Shore/boat-based fishing violations from boaters registered in both California and Oregon
- ◇ Poke-poling inside Castle Rock Special Closure, at Preston Island, and at Battery Point during extreme low tides

### • **Other Code Violations**

- ◇ Illegal beach bonfires with driftwood, BBQs left unattended, encampment fires, illegal camping, fireworks, and heroin in public restrooms

### • **Wildlife Disturbance**

- ◇ Low flyovers by US Coast Guard helicopter at False Klamath Rock Special Closure
- ◇ Kayaks around False Klamath Rock Special Closure and fishing around Southwest Seal Rock Special Closure could impact rookeries.
- ◇ Dogs off leash at False Klamath Rock

### • **Harmful Tidepooling**

- ◇ Poke poling (fishing) in the intertidal at Castle Rock Special Closure, Hook Finger Point during low tide
- ◇ Increase in tidepooling (with potential poor tidepool etiquette) around Point Saint George and other Crescent City beaches

### • **Trash/Pollution**

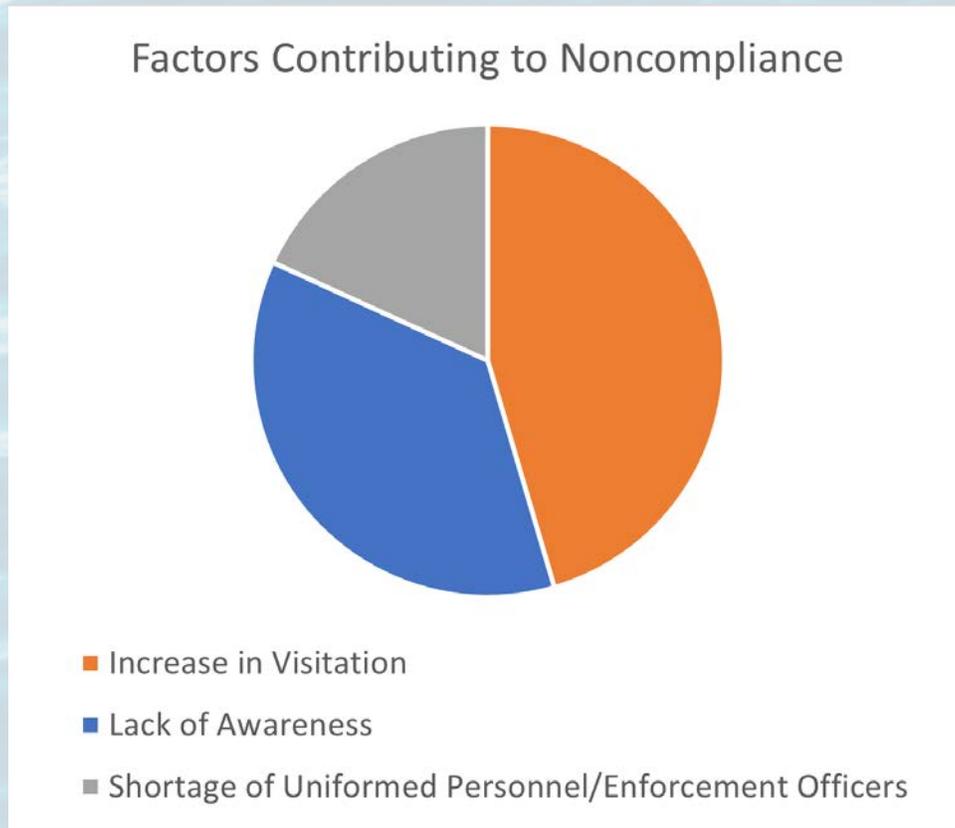
- ◇ There is trash and debris from homeless encampments.

### • **Habitat Threats**

- ◇ A recent increase in the urchin population in the Point St. George intertidal has been observed.

### • **Illegal Dog Activities** - Dogs off leash at False Klamath Rock Special Closure.

# Contributing Factors



This chart summarizes the potential factors contributing to noncompliance in or near MPAs mentioned during the Forum discussions and in the post-Forum evaluation forms, Google surveys, and printed surveys. Factors are organized into general categories based on the overall input from the community. See the next page and Appendix for more detail.

Across all the Forums, participants commonly mentioned an increase in visitation, a lack of awareness, a shortage of both enforcement officers and enforcement action, and confusion regarding regulations, boundaries, or jurisdiction as concerns. Due to their general nature and commonality across the state, these concerns were identified as underlying factors potentially contributing to noncompliance. During 2020, visitation to the coast and MPAs was elevated, especially in the summer months (except during mandated beach closures) in large part due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Contributing Factors

## Potential Factors Contributing to Noncompliance in Detail

- **Increase in Visitation**

- ◇ Crescent City and Pyramid Point SMCA were mentioned as areas with an increase in visitation.
- ◇ People coming down from Brookings Harbor on the weekends.

- **Lack of Awareness**

- ◇ There is a general lack of awareness of marine protected areas among the public.
- ◇ Specifically, participants mentioned the need to do outreach to tourists and fishermen coming from Oregon, and a lack of logbook data for commercial fishers/harvesters.

- **Shortage of Uniformed Personnel/Enforcement Officers**

- ◇ There is a lack of enforcement capacity or presence, especially on big holiday weekends like the July 4th weekend.
- ◇ Enforcement resources are often diverted to other priorities (e.g., public safety/wildfires).

# Recommended Solutions



This chart summarizes the number of times each MPA compliance solution was mentioned during the Forum discussions and in the post-Forum evaluation forms, Google surveys, and printed surveys. Solutions are organized into general categories based on the overall input from the community. See the Statewide Compliance Forum Report for more category detail.

# Recommended Solutions

## Recommended Compliance Solutions in Detail

- **Targeted Education and Outreach Programs/Events**
  - ◇ Targeting Oregon fishermen and kelp/algae/seaweed harvesters (e.g., through visitor center), targeting CPFVs, and coordinating with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- **Research/Volunteer Identification**
  - ◇ Researchers need to be easily identifiable when collecting in MPAs by using research banners, signs, and brightly colored vests to inform the public of their activities.
  - ◇ Especially important to know the difference between kelp researchers and commercial harvesters.
- **Printed Materials**
  - ◇ Have MPA brochures/pamphlets available at the Oregon State Parks visitor center at Crissey Field State Recreation Site.
- **Regulatory Changes**
  - ◇ There is an interest in petitioning regulation changes regarding commercial kelp/algae harvest, especially to address out-of-state harvest, to the Fish and Game Commission
  - ◇ There is a need for more transparent kelp/edible seaweed permit data, so people are aware of how much kelp is being harvested commercially in the area.
- **Signage**
  - ◇ Signage is especially needed at Brookings Harbor, with map coordinates and regulatory information.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - ◇ More people/local groups should get involved in the Del Norte Collaborative, such as through MPA Watch: Eagle Eyes of False Klamath Cove.
  - ◇ Other tribes could be engaged in MPA Watch.

# Recommended Solutions

## Recommended Compliance Solutions in Detail Continued

- **More Enforcement Officers**

- ◇ More patrols and enforcement are needed by CDFW Wardens and State/National Park Rangers.
- ◇ A new CDFW patrol boat has just been purchased for the North Coast!

- **Digital Resources**

- ◇ There should be a web portal (and staff person to maintain it) so the general public can know who has Scientific Collecting Permits (SCP) and commercial permits/licenses to research/harvest in MPAs.

- **More Docents/Volunteers**

- ◇ Tribal partners can assist with patrols on their land (Tribal Marine Stewards)
- ◇ Docents to create a citizen science program to address the salmon bycatch problem. Participants suggested that Trinidad Rancheria might be interested in this effort.

# Wrap-Up Discussion

## 1. What are our high priority needs?

- Address excessive commercial take of kelp/algae/seaweeds
- Address increased visitation and the lack of awareness, especially across state borders

## 2. What programs or projects could be used to increase compliance?

- Targeted outreach, educational programs/events like outreach to visitors from Oregon, engaging tourism companies, and MPA Watch expansion
- A programmatic approach to advertising research and volunteer activities and personnel in the field and making sure they are easily identifiable (e.g., vests, research banners)
- Printed materials, especially to reach those in Oregon before they visit California's North Coast

## 3. What key partners need to be at the table to assist with law enforcement?

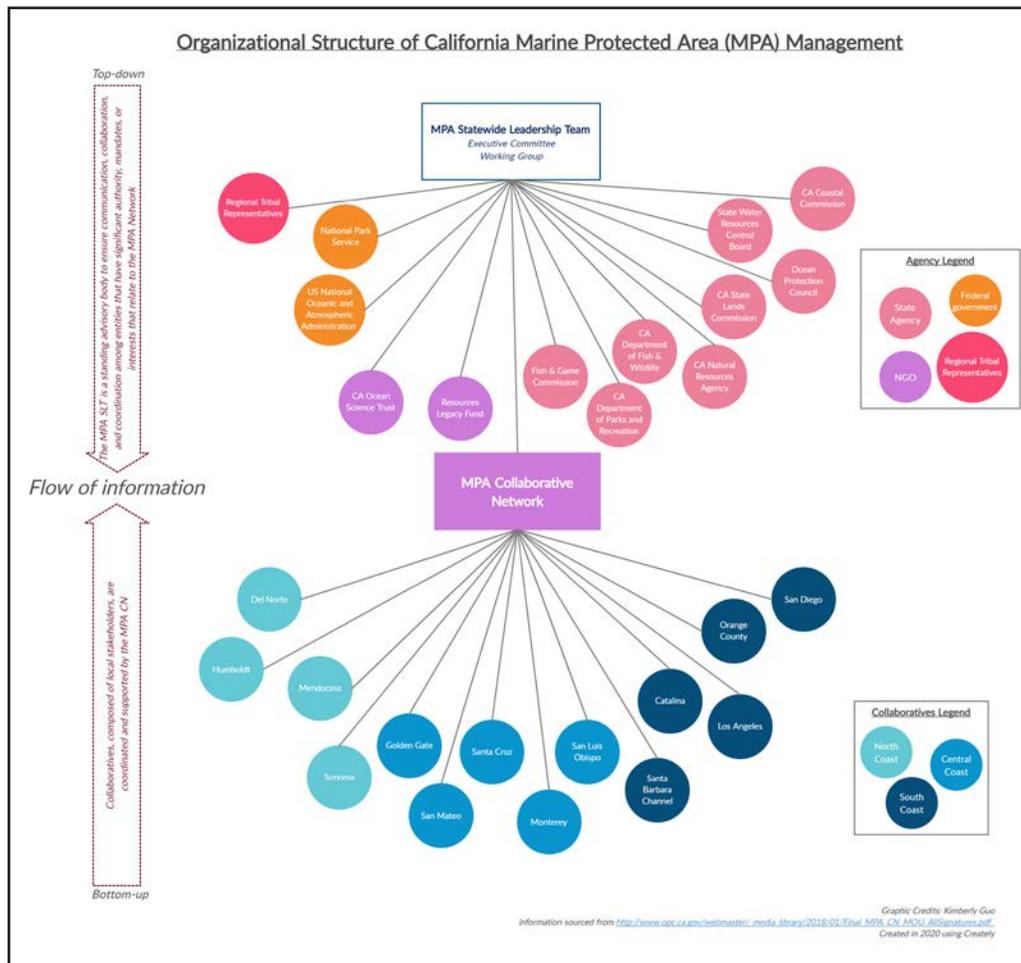
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)
- Oregon State Police (OSP)
- California State Parks
- Oregon State Parks
- Harbormasters (e.g., at Brookings Harbor)
- Cal Fire
- Allied agencies (uniformed personnel)

# Issues for Elevation

As a member of the [MPA Statewide Leadership Team](#) (MSLT), the MPA Collaborative Network can elevate issues, concerns, and ideas shared by stakeholders at the local level to the State managing agencies that have jurisdiction over MPAs in California.

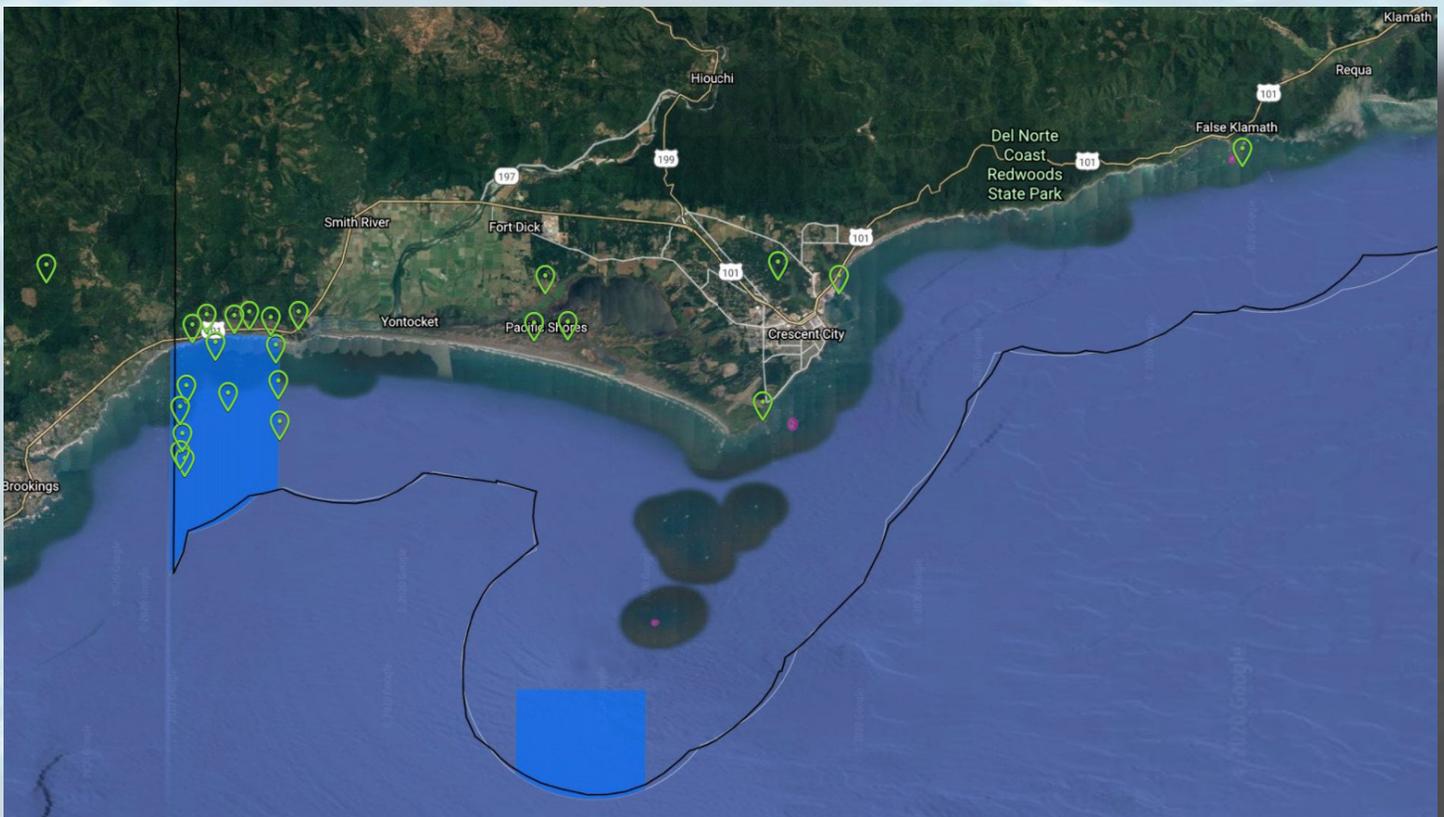
## Issues identified during the Forum that have a potential for elevation and discussion with the MSLT include:

- ◇ Need for an overall re-evaluation of kelp/seaweed management, including
  - Adjustments to commercial kelp/seaweed harvest regulations/leases,
  - Outreach to Oregonian kelp harvesters/managers/ODFW,
  - Improved harvest and permit data transparency,
  - A potential petition to the Fish & Game Commission to consider limiting the commercial take of kelp/seaweed, initiated by Del Norte Collaborative members.
- ◇ Need a web data tool to track and inform the public about SCPs/commercial permits.



# Interactive Map Results

Areas of MPA compliance concern were anonymously identified by Forum participants on interactive maps using the virtual collaboration platform Poll Everywhere. A total of 4 participants put pins on the map with 24 total responses (pins). Green pin shapes indicate the location of a virtual push pin placed by a participant. The pinned areas corresponded with the MPA compliance discussions.



Identified areas of concern in and near all Del Norte County MPAs.

# Glossary

The Glossary defines the acronyms used in any or all the Compliance Forum Reports.

- **ADA:** American Disabilities Act.
- **ASBS:** Area of Special Biological Significance.
- **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, and people of color.
- **CaITIP:** Californian's Turn in Poachers and Polluters.
- **CDFW:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- **CHP:** California Highway Patrol.
- **COVID-19:** Coronavirus Disease 2019 (also referred to as COVID and the pandemic).
- **CPFV:** Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel (also referred to as a party boat).
- **DA:** District Attorney.
- **FGC:** Fish and Game Code.
- **GPS:** Global Positioning System.
- **HOA:** Homeowner's Association.
- **M2:** Marine Monitor (M2) Radar System.
- **MPA:** Marine Protected Area.
- **MSLT:** MPA Statewide Leadership Team.
- **NMS:** National Marine Sanctuary.
- **NOAA:** National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.
- **NPS:** National Park Service.
- **OLE:** Office of Law Enforcement (within NOAA).
- **QR:** Quick Response [code].
- **SCP:** Scientific Collecting Permit.
- **SCUBA:** Self-contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus.
- **SMCA:** State Marine Conservation Area.
- **SMR:** State Marine Reserve.
- **SMRMA:** State Marine Recreational Management Area.
- **SUP:** Stand Up Paddle Board.
- **ROV:** Remotely Operated Vehicle.
- **UC:** University of California.
- **USFWS:** United States Fish and Wildlife Service.
- **USCG:** United States Coast Guard.



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These materials and MPA Community Compliance Forums made possible by a grant from the California Ocean Protection Council's Once-Through Cooling (OTC) Interim Mitigation Fund.

**Learn more about the MPA Collaborative Network at  
[www.mpacollaborative.org](http://www.mpacollaborative.org)**

**Join your local MPA Collaborative to get involved in bottom-up resource management.**

**Visit the California MPA website at  
[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs)**