

Santa Barbara Channel



Marine Protected Area (MPA) Community Compliance Forum Report

October 8, 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 Santa Barbara Channel 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

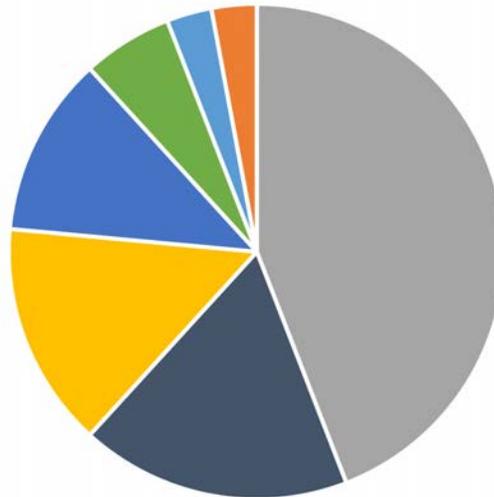
- Poaching and Fish & Game Code (FGC) violations are regular occurrences, especially in the Channel Island MPAs that are easier to access.
- There is a need more enforcement officers and actions.
- MPA maps and regulations and links/QR codes for FishLegal should be included in all Santa Barbara and Channel Island print materials (handouts/brochures) or with fishing license materials.
- Participants suggested building on existing marine debris removal efforts and developing a Channel Island Lobster Trap Removal Project through CDFW/NPS, using SCUBA/mini-ROVs.

Highlighted Compliance Concerns

- Violations occur regularly in the Channel Island MPAs, with the most fishing in MPAs and FGC violations being observed in the Footprint SMR and Anacapa MPAs.
- Lobster traps are drifting into MPAs at Campus Point and Santa Rosa Island.
- There is hook and line fishing at Campus Point and Naples.
- Lost lobster traps need to be removed from both mainland and island MPAs.

Participant Breakdown

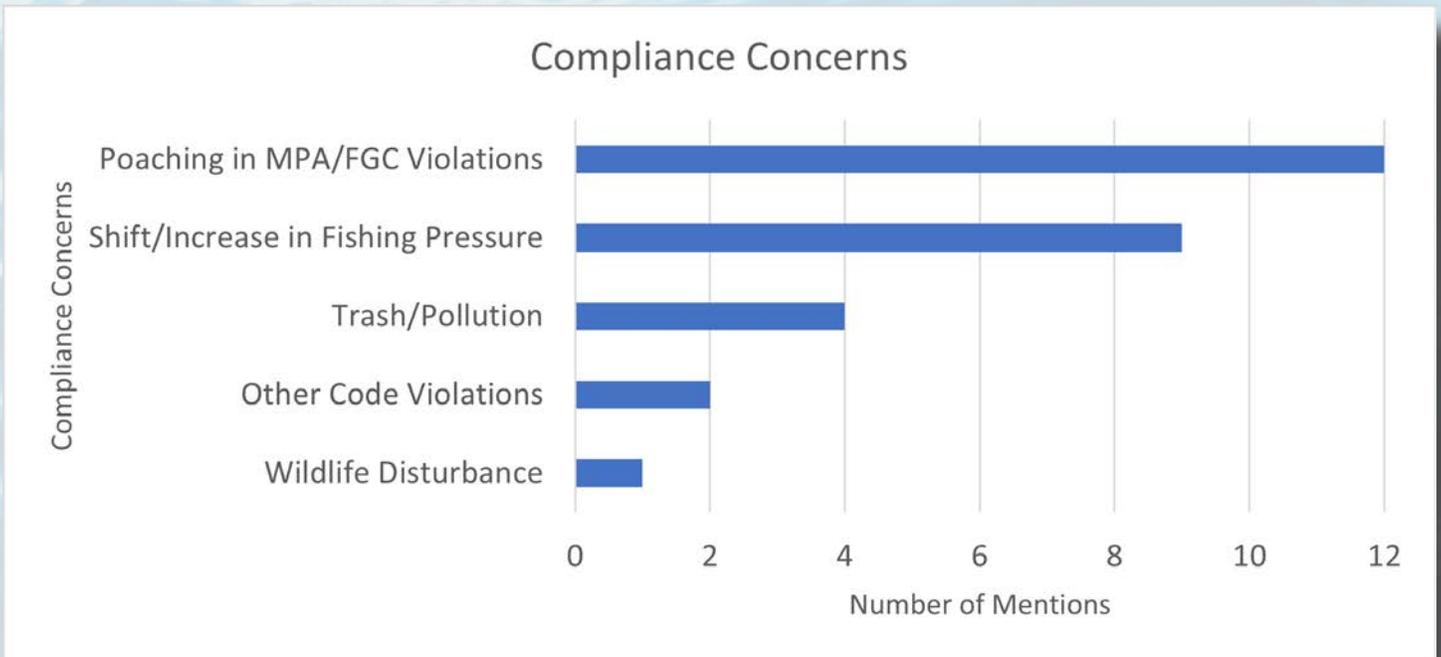
Santa Barbara Channel Participant Breakdown



- Government Agency (44%)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (17%)
- Individual/Community Member (15%)
- Science and Academia (12%)
- Fishing (6%)
- Ocean Business (3%)
- Volunteer (3%)

- A total of **33 participants attended** the Community Compliance Forum. The majority of attendees identified as government agencies, non-governmental organizations, individual/community members, and science and academia. Fishing and ocean business representatives also attended along with volunteers.
- A total of **49 people registered** for the Forum and received MPA-related information, educational resources, and additional avenues for sharing input in the Forum follow-up email.
- It is estimated that the Forum resulted in at least **3 new Collaborative sign-ups**.
- In-meeting Zoom poll results indicated that 94% of respondents were “Very Familiar” or “Somewhat Familiar” with MPAs.

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

• **Poaching in MPA/FGC Violations**

- ◇ There is generally a high level of impact and violations in all Channel Island MPAs.
- ◇ Onshore and offshore hook & line fishing continues to be observed at Campus Point No-Take SMCA and Naples Reef SMCA.
- ◇ The majority of MPA citations are for unlawful take from Footprint SMR and Anacapa SMR.
- ◇ Fishing occurs in Scorpion SMR and as well as Painted Cave SMCA on Santa Cruz Island.
- ◇ Confusion exists regarding what “pelagic” means leading to unlawful take in Anacapa SMCA.
- ◇ Over limit take, and common Fish & Game Code (FGC) violations such as fishing without a license or take of undersize fish occurs outside MPAs.
- ◇ Most citations are for cow cod violations off Santa Barbara Island, outside of the MPA.

• **Shift/Increase in Fishing Pressure**

- ◇ Lobster traps that are set on the line are drifting inside the MPA (e.g., at Campus Point and Santa Rosa Island MPAs).
- ◇ Boats drift into the Footprint SMR while fishing because they cannot anchor.

• **Trash/Pollution**

- ◇ There has been a general increase of littering, dog waste, and illegal camping waste along the mainland coast.
- ◇ There are many lost lobster traps, particularly in the Channel Islands MPAs, creating a marine debris and ghost fishing issue.

• **Other Code Violations**

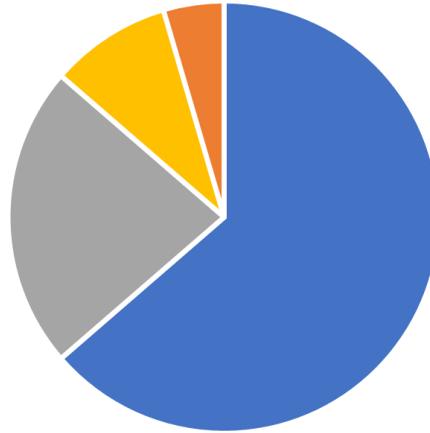
- ◇ Trespassing occurs in Goleta Slough (No Take) SMCA .

• **Wildlife Disturbance**

- ◇ Seabird (e.g., Brown pelican) disturbance was mentioned for the Anacapa Island Special Closure.

Contributing Factors

Factors Contributing to Noncompliance



- Lack of Awareness
- Shortage of Uniformed Personnel/Enforcement Officers
- Confusion Regarding Regulations, Boundaries, or Jurisdiction
- Increase in Visitation

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 Statewide Compliance Forum Report for more category 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

- **Lack of Awareness**

- ◇ There is a general lack of awareness of marine protected areas among the public.
- ◇ Concerns included knowing which species are permitted to take, knowing the MPA boundaries/regulations.

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

- ◇ NPS rangers and CDFW wardens reported difficulty and length of time required to access western island MPAs.
- ◇ There is no NPS ranger stationed at Santa Barbara Island.
- ◇ Air Force allows active-duty officers and their families to fish off Vandenberg.

- **Confusion Regarding Regulations, Boundaries, and Jurisdiction**

- ◇ The MPA boundary at the Santa Rosa Island pier (Carrington Point) extends at a confusing angle.
- ◇ It can be difficult to ascertain how far offshore the boundary extends when not perpendicular to land.

- **Increase in Visitation**

- ◇ There has been an increase in visitors (locals and tourists) and the associated impact to the area, such as trash, wildlife disturbance, trampling, illegal camping, etc.

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

• **Printed Materials**

- ◇ There is a need for printed materials/resources including literature/handouts/flyers.
- ◇ Participants suggested that fishing licenses come with a pamphlet on MPAs and fishing regulations in the mail (related to turning in your lobster cards to CDFW, and analogous to voter brochures).
- ◇ One NPS Ranger printed and laminated an MPA outreach card with app information (e.g., FishLegal, WhaleAlert) for people to photograph with their phone.

• **Digital Resources**

- ◇ More information should be included on Recreation.gov to address the public's lack of awareness of MPA boundaries in National Park System.
- ◇ There needs to be an app with a notification element that pings you when you cross over into a MPA and links to the associated regulations.

• **Signage**

- ◇ There is a general need for more, updated, or new signage and sign translations.
- ◇ More signs are needed at Ventura and Santa Barbara harbors.
- ◇ Carrington Point/Santa Rosa pier sign needs to be fixed.

• **More Docents/Volunteers**

- ◇ More volunteer docents (e.g., MPA Watch) are needed county wide.
- ◇ Kayak guides should be educating at popular locations/access points (e.g., Scorpion on Santa Cruz Island) to support enforcement efforts to gain compliance.

• **More Enforcement Officers**

- ◇ There is a general need for more officers and enforcement actions, especially on the western Channel Islands which take longer to get to.
- ◇ There is a need for a small NPS patrol boat at Santa Cruz Island when pier and lift is complete at Scorpion anchorage.
- ◇ US Coast Guard needs regular trainings due to their three-year shift rotation.

Recommended Solutions

Recommended Compliance Solutions in Detail Continued

- **Targeted Education & Outreach Programs/Events**

- ◇ Fishing license education is needed.
- ◇ The mini-ROV Program could be used to educate the public about marine debris/lost fishing gear.
- ◇ A publicized programmatic approach to SCUBA lobster trap removal in the Channel Islands National Park was suggested.

- **Stakeholder Engagement**

- ◇ More people/local groups need to be involved in the Santa Barbara Channel Collaborative.

Wrap-Up Discussion

1. What are our high priority needs?

- Address poaching in MPAs/Fish and Game Code (FGC) violations and shift/increase in fishing pressure including boats fishing in Anacapa and Santa Cruz Island MPAs and mainland (Campus Point, Naples Reef) MPAs (e.g., hook & line anglers, recreational lobster fishermen)
- Improve awareness around MPAs and regulations

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

- Printed materials to hand out to potentially unaware fishermen
- A programmatic approach to SCUBA lobster trap removal in the Channel Islands National Park, and publicize these efforts, potentially use mini-ROVs to assist divers

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

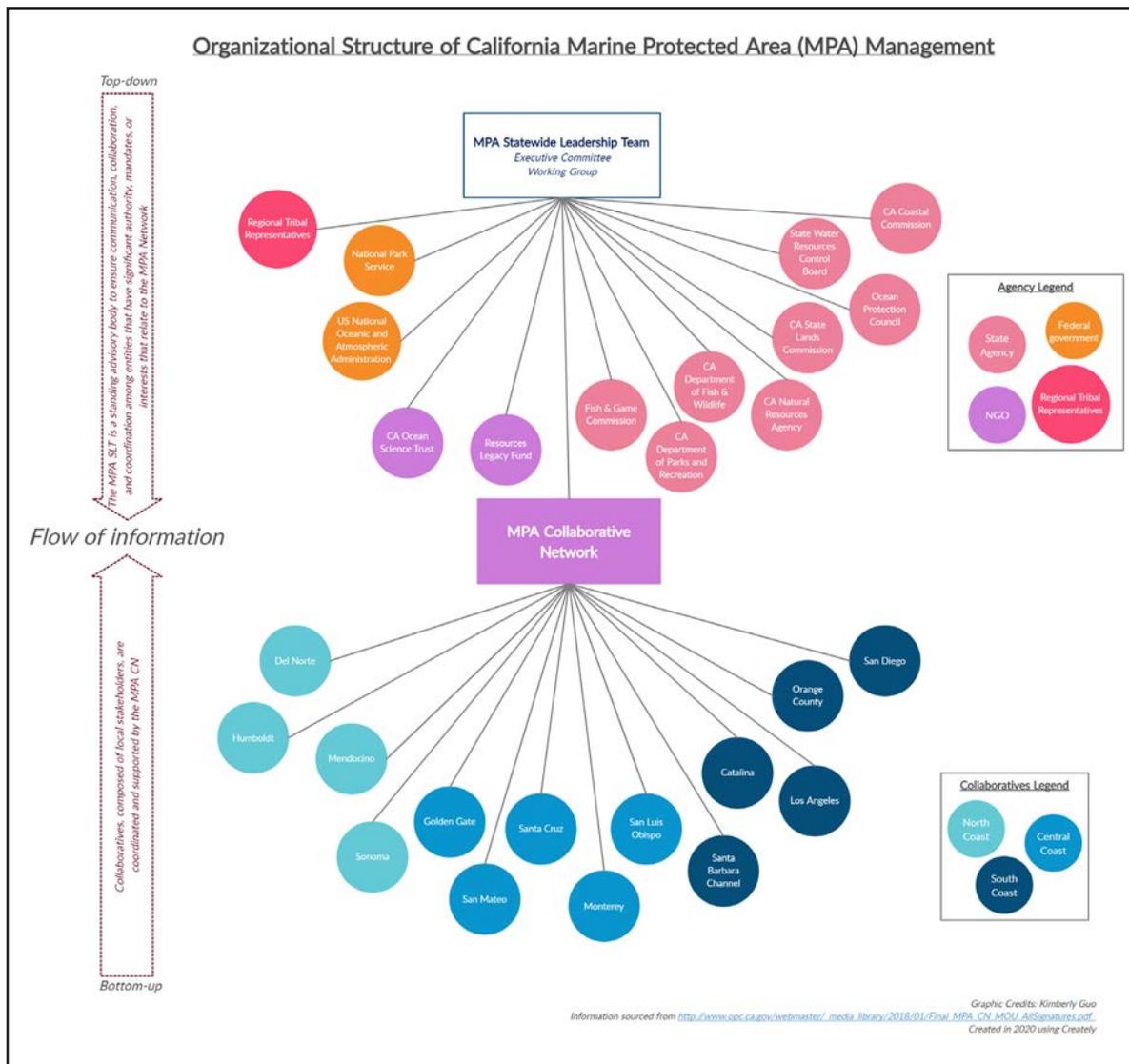
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)
- Channel Islands National Park
- NOAA Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary/NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)
- California State Parks
- US Coast Guard
- Other allied agencies (uniformed personnel)

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.

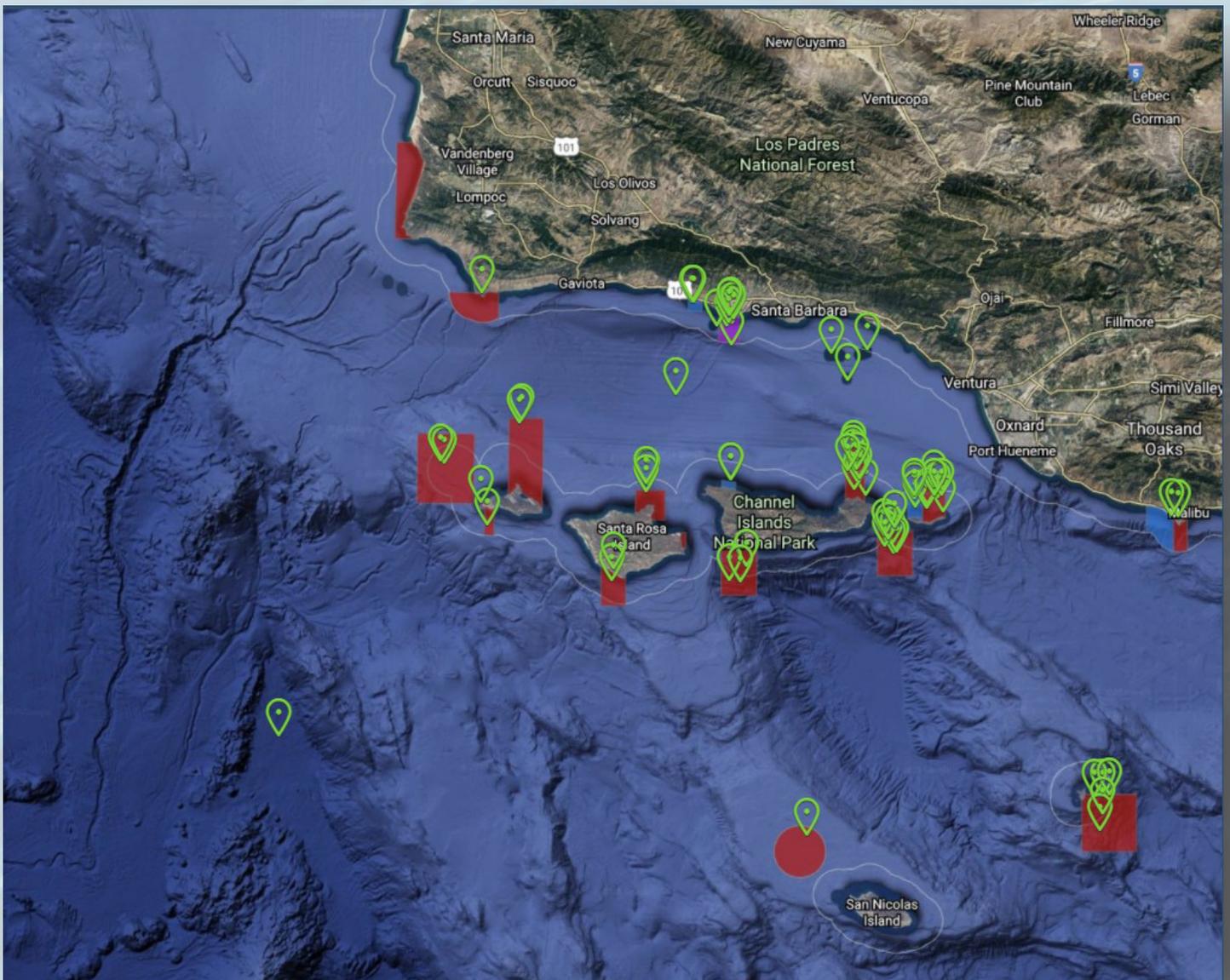
Issues identified during the Forum that have a potential for elevation and discussion with the MSLT include:

- ◇ Need to revisit how to get MPA outreach materials into fishing license materials, starting in the Santa Barbara Channel region.
- ◇ Need to address poaching in MPAs/FGC violations around the Channel Islands. The islands need more enforcement attention including frequent boat patrols.



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 15 participants put pins on the map with 68 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 Santa Barbara Channel 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**

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

**Visit the California MPA website at
www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs**