

LESSONS LEARNED

Marine Protected Area (MPA) Compliance Tourism Outreach Campaign 2022



An MPA Compliance Small Grant Project Deliverable

MPA Collaborative Network:

www.mpacollaborative.org/

Santa Cruz MPA Collaborative:

www.mpacollaborative.org/santacruz/

Monterey MPA Collaborative:


www.mpacollaborative.org/monterey/


ABOUT THE PROJECT

A joint MPA Compliance Small Grant project between the Monterey and Santa Cruz MPA Collaboratives resulted in the [Explore Monterey Bay and Beyond Brochure and supporting landing-style webpage](#) (linked via QR code on the brochure). The resources are designed to help visitors protect, explore, and experience the unique and delicate coastal ecosystems in the greater Monterey Bay area. Encouraging a self-guided tour from North Santa Cruz County to South Monterey County and Big Sur, the brochure leads visitors through ten family and budget friendly stops within California's MPAs and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. This report shares the lessons learned throughout the project to assist other collaboratives, members, and partners in implementing similar efforts. While originally drafted in October, 2022, the report may receive updates throughout 2023 as the project continues to unfold.

This project is part of the MPA Collaborative Networks' multi-year MPA Compliance Initiative and was entirely driven by local input through the Community Compliance Forums held in 2020 and subsequent collaborative meetings. It was made possible by a grant made through the Sustaining California's Ocean program of Resources Legacy Fund.

Brochure and Supporting Webpage

**WILDLIFE VIEWING GUIDELINES**



1 Give Wildlife Space

2 Hang Back and Enjoy the View

3 NOA Enforcement Hotline (800) 853-3964

4 Hands to Yourself Keep wildlife safe and healthy.

5 Keep Pets Home or on a Leash Wildlife and pets can harm each other.

6 Report Wildlife that seems Abandoned or Sick Leave it to the experts.

7 Land a Hand with Trash Removal Keep their home clean.

8 Snacks to Yourself Wildlife can find their own food.

9 Lead by Example Help others become responsible wildlife watchers.

Things to Know Before You Go:

- Marine protected areas (MPAs) are great places to enjoy recreational activities such as wildlife watching, swimming, wading, boating, kayaking, diving, surfing, and more!
- A sport fishing license is required for any resident or nonresident to years of age or older for all fishing and collecting, except for taking from some public piers or jetties in ocean waters. Fishing report cards may be required for some species.
- It is illegal to fly a drone in many coastal areas of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, including Big Sur.
- Harrassing, disturbing, or feeding wildlife is harmful to the animals, and often illegal.
- Tidepools are sensitive habitats. Collecting, trampling, or even handling tidepool animals and plants can cause damage. Make sure to practice good tidepool etiquette.
- The ocean is powerful and can be dangerous even for strong swimmers. Know your limits and practice ocean safety by always checking local surf conditions before activities near or on the water, and never turn your back to the ocean.
- If traveling along the beautiful Big Sur coast, remember that there are very few restroom stops, so please don't leave your trash and keep the picturesque Big Sur coastline beautiful.

Help Protect Monterey Bay's Wildlife

Call The Marine Mammal Center at 415-269-SEAL (7352) if you see a marine mammal in distress. If you observe illegal activities affecting wildlife, call 1-800-354-CaliTIP (2256) or text TIP411.

EXPLORE MONTEREY BAY

EXPLORE MONTEREY BAY AND BEYOND


WHAT ARE MPAs?

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO MARINE PROTECTED AREAS OF THE CENTRAL COAST

Monterey Bay is home to one of the most productive coastal ecosystems in the world. State and federal marine protected areas, or MPAs, are areas set aside along the coast to help protect special places underwater, just as our national parks and wilderness areas protect special places on land. The Central Coast of California is home to many state MPAs and the federally protected Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS). Together with the Bureau of Land Management's California Coastal National Monument, which includes all offshore rock outcroppings, these MPAs protect wildlife and restore ecosystems, ensuring the ocean's bounty and beauty remain for future generations to enjoy.


10 Low-Cost Activities and Insider Tips to Help You Explore and Protect the Coast

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION




10 Low-Cost Activities and Insider Tips

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HELP PROTECT THE COAST WHILE YOU EXPLORE MONTEREY BAY AND BEYOND



MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPAs)

- State Marine Reserve (SMR)**
To take, damage, injury or possession of any living, geological, or cultural marine resource is unlawful.
- State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)**
Some recreational and/or commercial take of marine resources may be allowed (restrictions vary).
- For MPA boundaries, maps, coordinates, and allowed uses go to www.califish.ca.gov/MPAs

10 Low-Cost Activities and Insider Tips to Help You Explore and Protect the Coast

- Miles Naves State Park**
Observe massive elephant seals from a safe distance. Call 800-444-4443 for guided elephant seal walks.
- Natural Bridges State Beach**
Get tidepools swimming with marine life. Call 650-423-4609 for information on tidepool explorations, including docent led tours.
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Exploration Center**
Located at the base of the Santa Cruz Wharf. Take advantage of free admission and enjoy lots of activities for the whole family!
- Santa Cruz Wharf**
Take the family fishing at the longest wharf in California. Remember to pack out your fishing line and tackle to keep wildlife safe.
- Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve**
Hike the nature trails to observe rare birds and endangered sea otters from a respectful distance. Call 650-728-2622 for information on guided tours of Elkhorn Slough.
- Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail**
Hike your dog on leash or ride a bike along historic Canary Row. The trail stretches 14 miles from Cannery Row to Pacific Grove and is a great way to see the coast.
- Lovers Point Park**
Have a picnic on the beach or dig your toes in the chilly Pacific Ocean. Don't forget to pack out your trash when you leave the beach!
- Point Lobos State Natural Reserve**
Hike the many trails and see diverse bird and plant life along the rugged coastline. Call 650-424-4009 for information on docent led tours.
- Point Sur State Historic Park**
Step into the past on a walking tour of a historic lighthouse. Tours are available Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday in June, July, and August. Call 650-419 for information on guided tours.
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www.mpacollaborative.org/explore-monterey-bay-and-beyond/



LESSONS LEARNED

Utilize Marketing Services and Distribution Companies like Certified Folder

Certified Folder has an already established network of thousands of distribution locations where tourists frequent including airports, hotels/motels, campgrounds/RV resorts, military bases, sporting good stores, restaurants, visitors centers, Amtrak, car rentals, and more. They also manage the printing, distribution, replenishment, and tracking of the brochures.


The cost for services was very affordable compared to the reach. For example, printing of the brochures through their partner Mossberg & Company, Inc. resulted in 40,000 brochures for only \$3,157, that's less than 8 cents a piece!

The in-house layout/design process allowed for unlimited edits and the graphic designer was experienced with designing brochures that attract tourists' eyes in a brochure rack. Their expertise was especially helpful throughout the planning and design process, as our brochure was not the typical resource a visitor might find on a brochure rack. It was not advertising a particular business or place, but instead was delivering MPA and environmental compliance messaging disguised as a useful resource for tourists.

Partner with County Convention and Visitors Bureaus

The Monterey and Santa Cruz County Visitors Bureaus have shown a great deal of enthusiasm for this project. Representatives from both counties have shown interest in facilitating safer and more responsible wildlife interactions between tourists and the marine environment. Being on the front lines of the tourism industry, they have first hand knowledge of the issues that arise when visitors have very little experience with coastal environmental issues. Newsworthy incidents of unfortunate interactions between tourists and wildlife are bad for their business. Therefore, they are motivated to partner with environmental agencies who can help them with public environmental education.

This project engaged their digital marketing departments to create a guest blog and social media posts to promote responsible tourism and address the MPA and other environmental compliance concerns. This will greatly help increase the reach of the project's resources.





Allow for Generous and Flexible Project Timelines for Collaborative Projects

When creating original materials with a diverse assortment of collaborators, it is prudent to have a generous and flexible timeline for editing and approval. Some agencies have specific requirements for approval within the hierarchy of the agency, which can take a great deal of time to fulfill. Additionally, organizations are stretched thin with many concurrent efforts and may need extra time and reminders to stay involved with the project. The design process also has many more revisions than projects led by one entity. Beginning original projects early and anticipating long wait times for approval is key to meeting deadlines when working with numerous organizations/agencies. The various partners involved allowed for a diversity of resources and ideas to be contributed to the brochure design which ultimately resulted in a more comprehensive brochure with messaging across sectors, jurisdictions, and topics.

Hire a Project Coordinator

Collaborative projects such as this take significant time, thorough communication, and detailed project tracking to ensure all interested voices are heard, valued, and implemented. Writing in funding for a Project Coordinator dedicated to facilitating this project from start to finish was incredibly helpful and future collaborative projects may want to utilize this method as a way of limiting the burden on volunteer members and staff. It is also important to scope out grant budgets and Coordinator contracts for more time and money that you might initially expect to allow for flexibility in the project as it evolves over time.

Coming soon... Distribution Lessons Learned

This year-long project planned to have distribution of brochures begin within the grant period, but the creation of the brochure and webpage took the full year. Distribution and tracking by Certified Folder will run from November 1, 2022 - October 31, 2023 and may result in additional lessons learned. For example, what locations are seeing the most/least brochures picked up? Is the supporting website being accessed via the QR code on the brochure? What links are the most/least clicked upon? These statistics and more will inform any updates to the lessons learned report.

