

# LESSONS LEARNED

**Marine Protected Area (MPA)  
Compliance Campaign  
2022**



Catalina Island MPA  
**Collaborative**

**An MPA Compliance Small  
Grant Project Deliverable**

MPA Collaborative Network:

[www.mpacollaborative.org/](http://www.mpacollaborative.org/)

Catalina MPA Collaborative:

[www.mpacollaborative.org/catalina](http://www.mpacollaborative.org/catalina)

# ABOUT THE PROJECT

In response to the Catalina Compliance Forum held in 2020, community members requested a compliance campaign be developed and led by a local Compliance Coordinator to improve compliance and awareness of Catalina Island MPAs. The Coordinator and partners set off to engaging with, training, and participating in events for residents and visitors. The position has proved invaluable to set in motion a trend toward heightened awareness of locals and visitors to Catalina alike. Ultimately, this process will help inform state and Collaborative partners in methods to engage coastal communities in natural resource management and stewardship.

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. This work was made possible by a grant made through the Once-Through Cooling program of Resources Legacy Fund, on behalf of the Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program of the Ocean Protection Council.



Coordinator Brady Gunther (left) and Catalina Co-chair Burton Miller (right) at the Catalina Island Conservancy Trailhead Center during the Catalina MPA Speakers Training.

# LESSONS LEARNED



## **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 as partnerships are crucial in completing projects. Additionally, capacity for all is limited thus individuals may need extra time and reminders to stay involved with the project. The editing, design, and re-development process takes time. Tribal input is also very time intensive, even with existing relationships and materials. The various partners were involved in the printed MPA Speakers Guide revisions and presentation of Speakers Training, which allowed for a diversity and wealth of historical context, expertise, and ideas to be contributed to the design for this new audience (e.g., ocean businesses, camp naturalists, students, anglers).

## **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 Compliance Campaign Coordinator dedicated to facilitating this project and local outreach on the island 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.

The small group that comprises the Catalina MPA Collaborative had an original co-chair (collaborative leadership) on leave due to health reasons at the start of the grant period, so the remainder of the team, including a newly on-boarded co-chair, worked to identify a local Coordinator. Catalina Island has a variety of full-time, seasonal, and dual-residence community members. The Coordinator selected was employed on Catalina Island as a Director at a local youth camp, and therefore naturally brought a skillset of marketing, outreach, and education. Once onboarded, he was able to carry projects forward by assisting co-chairs and the South Coast Specialist at the MPA Collaborative Network (CN). One challenge presented is that being primarily in a camp, it was not always feasible to be in Avalon where the majority of the tasks needed to be carried out. However, with advanced planning, the Coordinator was able to come to Avalon often.

## **Outline and Reassess the Coordinator's Scope of Work**

The scope of work for the Coordinator included: assist in getting O and K range markers installed for the Lover's Cove State Marine Conservation Area boundary and surveying to evaluate effectiveness, assist in getting regulatory and interpretive signage installed, surveying the public about MPA knowledge and the range markers, reaching out to local businesses (ocean businesses, harbors, marinas, yacht clubs, restaurants), and hosting an MPA outreach event. It would have been helpful to check back to the scope of work frequently. The other project managers and Coordinator held working groups to get direction and input, and regular leadership calls to plan events, which were invaluable.

# LESSONS LEARNED

(cont.)

## **Partner with Existing Events and Reach New Communities**

Having an existing event to build off of was a great way to partner and expand the audience of the collaborative and heighten MPA awareness. However, the original plan to partner with the Catalina Outrigger Crossing was stymied by Hurricane Kay,

Outrigger paddlers were (surprisingly) an audience that have not yet been engaged in the MPA Collaborative Network. One way the Collaborative still reached this group was through a short slideshow at Newport Dunes when the Catalina Crossing organizers decided to host a short mainland paddle event in Dana Point and reception. These Collaborative and how to get involved slides are included in the Grant Deliverables folder.

## **Flexibility in How to Achieve the Same Goal is Key**

Due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., weather due to Hurricane Kay), the originally scheduled Catalina Crossing outrigger paddle event in September 2022 was canceled. The original plan was to host a table and conduct outreach to hundreds to thousands of locals and visitors in Avalon for the crossing, while providing Catalina MPA Collaborative branded swag giveaways in return for surveys about MPA awareness and engagement in the event.

Since the goal was still to heighten awareness to improve compliance, the Catalina Collaborative quickly pivoted after the Hurricane cancellation to provide printed Catalina MPA Speakers Guides and co-host a MPA Speakers Training in person in Avalon with Los Angeles Collaborative leadership from USC Sea Grant and LA Waterkeeper. This successful event brought in 40 attendees including camp naturalists, City of Avalon Harbor Department, Catalina Island Conservancy educators, and other organizations. Following the event, there were at least eight new members added to the Catalina Collaborative mailing list. This train-the-trainer style of event will be replicated going forward to train more locals in their nine island MPAs.

**It was crucial to have local support of the Coordinator who is on island the majority of the time and running a camp. The Coordinator was pivotal in helping move the project forward and for building relationships on Catalina Island to heighten MPA awareness and compliance.**



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