

Update

Marine Protected Area Management Program e-news

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) wildlife officers are known by many names: wardens, conservation officers, and others. While the titles used to describe these men and women may be familiar to most, the people behind the names are still largely unknown to their local communities.

In an effort to help bridge the gap between wildlife officers and those they serve, the [California Wildlife Officers Foundation](#) (CalWOF) hosted a [free event](#) in San Diego last October called *Wags and Waves*. According to Meghan Spieker, a board member with CalWOF, “This *Wags and Waves* event provides a venue for both consumptive and non-consumptive users to meet their local wildlife officers. Plus, attendees can learn all about these officers’ commitment to protect their communities and natural resources.”

The purpose of the event as outlined by Spieker, held true. Attendees had the chance to meet and speak with over 20 wildlife officers, meet canine officers, and tour the patrol vessel *Thresher*. Guest speakers emphasized the unique responsibilities these wildlife officers provide, including: protecting California's diverse resources from poaching and misuse; usually working alone, on weekends, and holidays; patrolling on land, air, and ocean; investigating reports of violations; collecting and preserving evidence; and testifying in court.

While the event brought much needed recognition to these dedicated men and women, one local wildlife officer was specifically honored for his work in San Diego County. According to Zachary Plopper, who presented Officer McLennan the Golden Hook award on behalf of the [San Diego Marine Protected Area Community Collaborative](#), “Clark McLennan has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the protection of California’s coastal marine resources and wildlife. It was a near unanimous vote by those in the community to honor Officer McLennan for his work to protect our local marine resources.”

It goes without saying that with about 400 wildlife officers patrolling over 163,000 square miles of land and ocean habitat, [the job is demanding](#). The *Wags and Waves* event brought attention and honored those who protect California’s valuable natural resources, and highlighted the importance of supporting these dedicated public servants. Even if you weren’t able to attend the event you can support the enforcement of California’s natural resources by using [CalTIP](#) when you see a violation occurring, purchasing a [California Warden Stamp](#), and simply getting to know your local wildlife officer.

Story written by CDFW Environmental Scientist, Amanda Van Diggelen.



Sign-up to receive these [MPA Management Program](#) newsletter updates. California’s MPA network is managed collaboratively through the MPA Management Program, which includes four focal areas: outreach and education, enforcement and compliance, research and monitoring, and policy and permitting.

QUESTIONS?

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