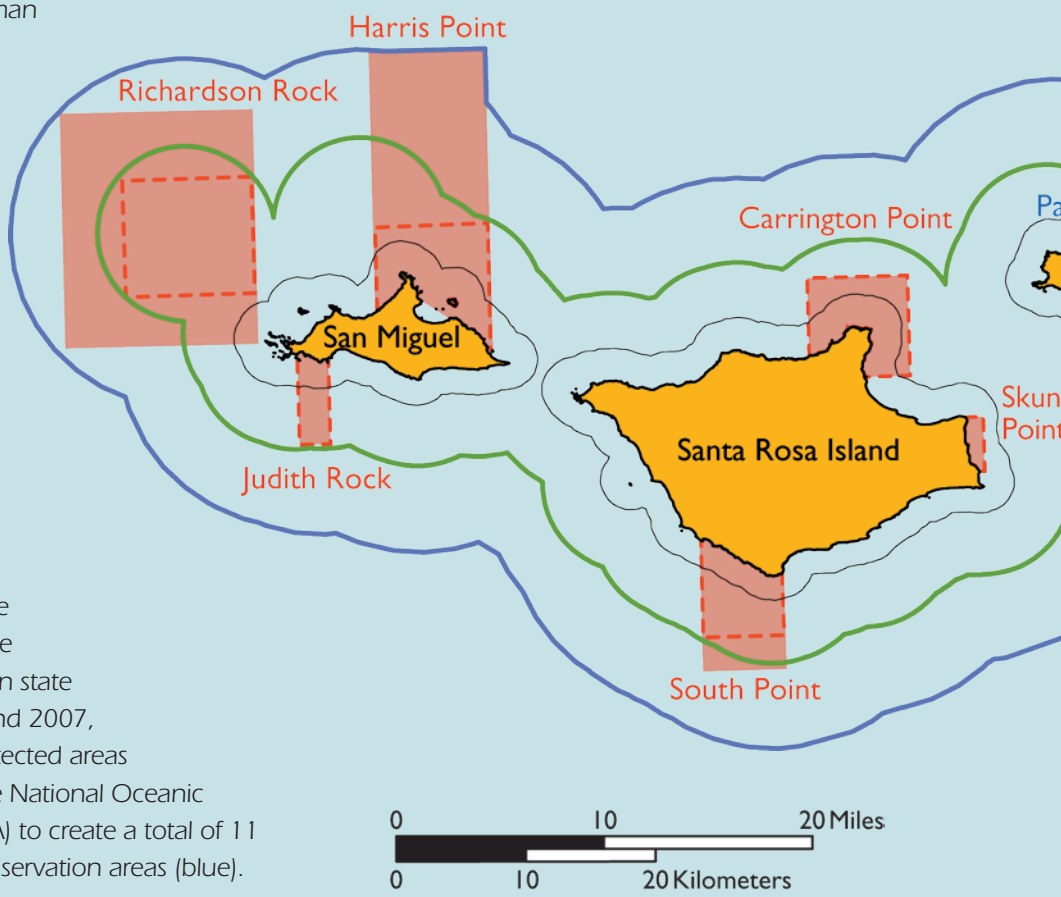
Calls for Protection

In 1998, a group of concerned recreational anglers urged the State of California to provide greater protection for marine resources at the Channel Islands. Recognizing an increase in human impacts, government agencies and a public working group came to consensus that one important strategy was to establish marine protected areas (MPAs) that prohibit or restrict taking of marine life. At the same time, the California State Legislature passed the Marine Life Protection Act, requiring the Department of Fish and Game to improve the state's MPAs to protect habitats and preserve ecosystem integrity. In 2003, based on public input, scientific guidance, and socioeconomic considerations, the State of California designated 10 marine reserves (red dashed lines) and 2 marine conservation areas (blue dashed lines) in state waters within the sanctuary. In 2006 and 2007, the originally proposed network of protected areas was completed in federal waters by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to create a total of 11 marine reserves (red) and 2 marine conservation areas (blue).



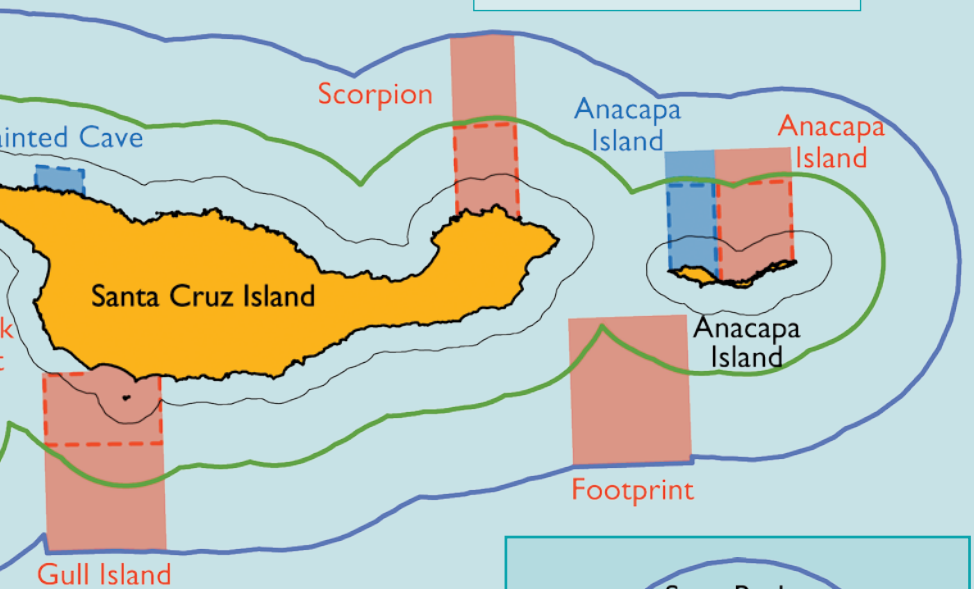
Definitions

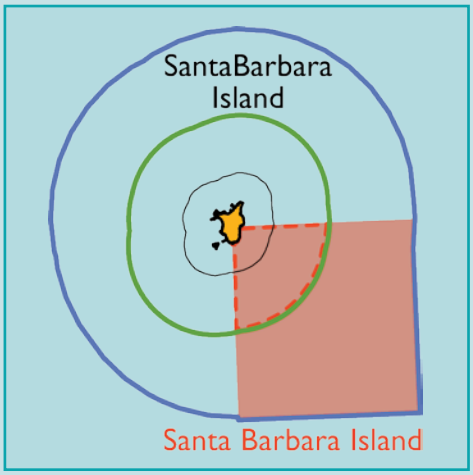
A **marine protected area (MPA)** is an area of the ocean where human activities such as fishing are limited or restricted in order to protect or conserve marine life or habitats.

A **marine reserve** is a type of MPA that prohibits all extractive uses. Marine reserves do not allow any human activity that alters habitats or removes animals, plants, or seaweeds, except as needed for scientific monitoring and research.

A **marine conservation area** is a less restrictive type of MPA. Commercial and/or recreational fishing may be allowed in these areas with restrictions that provide some protection for animals, plants, and habitats.

channel islands marine protected areas





This map shows the Channel Islands marine protected areas (MPAs). No-take marine reserves are shown in red. Marine conservation areas, which allow limited commercial and/or recreational take, are shown in blue.

Effective MPA Management

Conducting long-term monitoring, outreach, and enforcement is important for effective management of MPAs. Monitoring reveals changes that occur inside and outside MPAs. The Channel Islands Marine Protected Area Monitoring Plan was released in 2004 and incorporates recommendations from scientists, recreational and commercial fishermen, conservationists, government agencies, and the public. The monitoring plan is designed to detect changes in biology, economic factors, and people's activities in areas that are within, nearby, and distant from the MPAs. During the last several years, scientists from many different institutions, organizations, and agencies have conducted surveys of the marine habitats, animals, and plants of the Channel Islands using scuba, traps, remotely operated vehicles, submersibles, and other tools. To keep track of human activities, scientists interviewed fishermen, analyzed fishery logbooks and landings, and conducted aerial surveys of vessels. This booklet summarizes results from monitoring, outreach, and enforcement of the Channel Islands MPAs, conducted during the past 5 years

Facts About Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas

- **In 1978, a small, no-take marine reserve was established by the State of California on the north side of Anacapa Island in an area protected by National Park regulations since 1968.**
- **A network of MPAs, encompassing the historical reserve, was established in state waters in 2003. The MPAs were expanded into federal waters in 2006 and 2007.**
- **There are 11 marine reserves and 2 marine conservation areas in state and federal waters around the 4 northern Channel Islands and Santa Barbara Island.**
- **MPAs encompass approximately 21% of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, leaving 79% open to consumptive recreational and commercial activities regulated by state and federal agencies.**