

2012 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



PROTECTING WATERS OFF GOLDEN GATE, NORTH COAST

In August NOAA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct public scoping meetings for the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries to expand Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) by approximately 100 square statute miles beyond the Golden Gate Bridge, or "Exclusion Zone." Gulf of the Farallones NMS, which administers the adjacent waters of Monterey Bay NMS, hosted the meetings. In December, NOAA issued an NOI on northward expansion of the Farallones and Cordell Bank sanctuaries by over 2,700 square miles along the Sonoma and Mendocino county coasts.



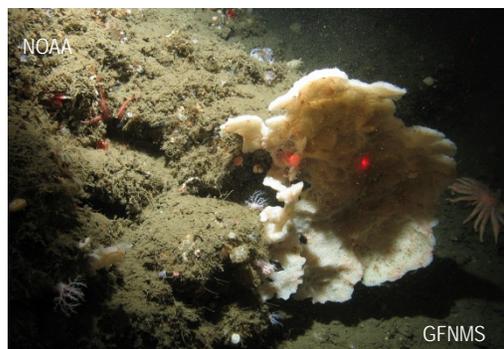
AMERICA'S CUP HEALTHY OCEAN PROJECT

The sanctuary joined the America's Cup (AC-34) advisory board as part of the AC Healthy Ocean Project. The regatta has already attracted thousands with events and exhibits, generating tourism income and boosting public awareness of the adjacent sanctuaries. The AC Global Call to Action embraces the connection between sailing and the ocean, recognizing that millions will be watching the 2013 main event. Sanctuary expansion was a highlight throughout the AC-34 "Dock Out" program. These events are high-profile venues for exposing a broad demographic to marine sanctuaries and ocean conservation.



SHIPPING LANE ADJUSTMENTS TO PROTECT WHALES

The International Maritime Organization, which governs shipping worldwide, announced in November that it ratified proposals from NOAA to adjust vessel traffic lanes in both southern and central California to enhance human safety and reduce the likelihood of collisions with endangered whales. The final rule will be released June 2013. Changes in the Farallones region would include extension of lanes several miles further offshore, and lane adjustment leading through Gulf of the Farallones, Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay national marine sanctuaries.



PREVIOUSLY UNDOCUMENTED SPECIES REVEALED

In October, Gulf of the Farallones NMS joined NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, U.S. Geological Survey, California Academy of Sciences and other partners in exploring some of the deeper, cold-water sanctuary habitats. Using a Remotely Operated Vehicle they documented a rare black coral, a catchers' mitt shaped sponge and other unidentified species. While DNA analysis for identification is still pending, these organisms provide valuable biogenic habitat in the Farallones region. Sites visited included Rittenburg Bank, the Farallon Escarpment, and an area west of Fanny Shoal, informally named Cochrane Bank.



LOOKING AHEAD

- In 2013, Gulf of the Farallones NMS will release a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the roughly 100 square mile Exclusion Zone beyond the Golden Gate Bridge. It will address factors that caused the zone to be excluded when Monterey Bay NMS was originally designated.
- After more than a decade of work and negotiations with more than 10 different agencies, the sanctuary looks forward to publishing a Final Tomales Bay Vessel Management Plan, designed to improve water quality and protect sensitive eelgrass and essential fish habitats while ensuring a quality experience on the water for boaters.
- In February, Gulf of the Farallones NMS and partners will hold its Third Biennial Ocean Climate Summit in San Francisco. A report of proceedings, including an *Our Coast Our Future* sea level decision-support tool and regional climate change indicators will be published.

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary covers nearly 1,300 square miles of coastal and ocean wilderness west of San Francisco. The sanctuary is home to some of the largest concentrations of white sharks and blue whales on Earth, along with one-fifth of California's breeding harbor seals and hundreds of thousands of breeding seabirds. The sanctuary also protects numerous estuaries, bays and beaches for the public to enjoy. Established Jan. 16, 1981.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is committed to supporting lives and livelihoods across the nation and in sanctuary communities through socioeconomic research and monitoring to understand the economic and social drivers of sanctuary resources and improve management practices.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

Olympic Coast
Cordell Bank
Gulf of the Farallones
Papahānaumokuākea
Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale
Monterey Bay
Channel Islands
American Samoa (U.S.)



Thunder Bay
Stellwagen Bank
Monitor
Gray's Reef
Florida Keys
Flower Garden Banks

○ National Marine Sanctuary
△ Marine National Monument
Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a system of 14 marine protected areas encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>