

## 2013 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### SANCTUARY ECOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS

Through a collaborative stakeholder process, 15 areas in offshore federal waters were identified as Sanctuary Ecologically Significant Areas (SESAs). SESAs served as the basis for a proposal submitted to the Pacific Fishery Management Council to modify bottom trawling fishing boundaries off the Central Coast. The proposal, a result of a year-long effort involving commercial fisherman and environmental groups, closes new areas to protect sensitive coral and sponge habitats, designates "Habitat Areas of Particular Concern," re-opens some closed areas, and includes "Voluntary Management Areas," adopted by fishermen as no bottom trawl zones.



### PARTNERS INCREASE SANCTUARY AWARENESS

In 2013, two programs were launched to educate visitors and inspire sanctuary stewardship. The Coastal Discovery Center teamed up with California State Parks to offer summer programs that included beach exploration and plankton discovery for more than 300 visitors from nearby campgrounds. The San Luis Obispo County Tourism Business Improvement District created a new stewardship travel program encouraging visitors to learn, connect and contribute during their vacation. Visitors were directed to hands-on learning and volunteer activities related to the area's natural and cultural resources; the Coastal Discovery Center and sanctuary were featured prominently as stellar stewardship opportunities.



### EXPLORATION CENTER MARKS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The Exploration Center celebrated its one-year anniversary in July 2013. Since opening, more than 110,000 visitors have enjoyed its state-of-the-art exhibits, immersive films and interactive tools promoting ocean awareness. The center operates with the support of 70 dedicated volunteers who donated an incredible 8,000 hours in 2013. The center has also hosted numerous events, including the successful "Beneath the Waves" film festival that will become an annual event in celebration of World Oceans Day. In addition, the center began offering guided tours and piloted learning activities for a variety of different age levels.



### VESSEL TRAFFIC COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS COMPLETED

In 2000, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted recommended shipping tracks to route ships far enough from the sanctuary's coastline to allow for an effective response in the event of an oil spill. For the past three years a study was undertaken to understand vessel compliance with the recommended tracks. The Naval Postgraduate School, National Marine Fisheries Service and sanctuary staff analyzed ship traffic data using an Automated Information System. The analysis indicated that a great majority of the vessels transiting through the sanctuary are complying with the IMO recommended tracks.



## LOOKING AHEAD

- The sanctuary will develop and implement a \$1.25M regional irrigation and nutrient management program in the Salinas Valley. Along with key partners, the sanctuary will conduct assessments of growing operations to improve efficiency of irrigation and fertilizer use while ensuring successful crop yields. Best management practices will be implemented and infrastructure installed as appropriate.
- Building on the success of the partnership with Access Monterey Peninsula (AMP) and *Your Sanctuary TV*, MBNMS will continue to provide ocean conservation programming on cable access stations, YouTube and AMP. As part of this effort, the sanctuary will produce an episode on maritime heritage and the shipwrecks of Golden Gate, as well as a new travel and tourism series.
- The sanctuary will convene a new “Recreation and Tourism Working Group” under the auspices of the Sanctuary Advisory Council. The sanctuary plans to partner with hospitality and recreation-based businesses in the region in order to strengthen sanctuary brand recognition, broaden public awareness and engagement with the coastal environment, and promote the value-added benefits of the sanctuary to local economies.

**Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary**, the nation's largest, spans more than 6,000 square miles of coastal waters off central California. Within its boundaries, a rich variety of habitats teem with an amazing array of life. Rugged rocky shores, lush kelp forests, a towering offshore seamount, steep underwater canyons and other coastal environments host 34 species of marine mammals, more than 180 species of seabirds and shorebirds, 345 species of fish and a wealth of invertebrates and algae. Established September 18, 1992.

*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>