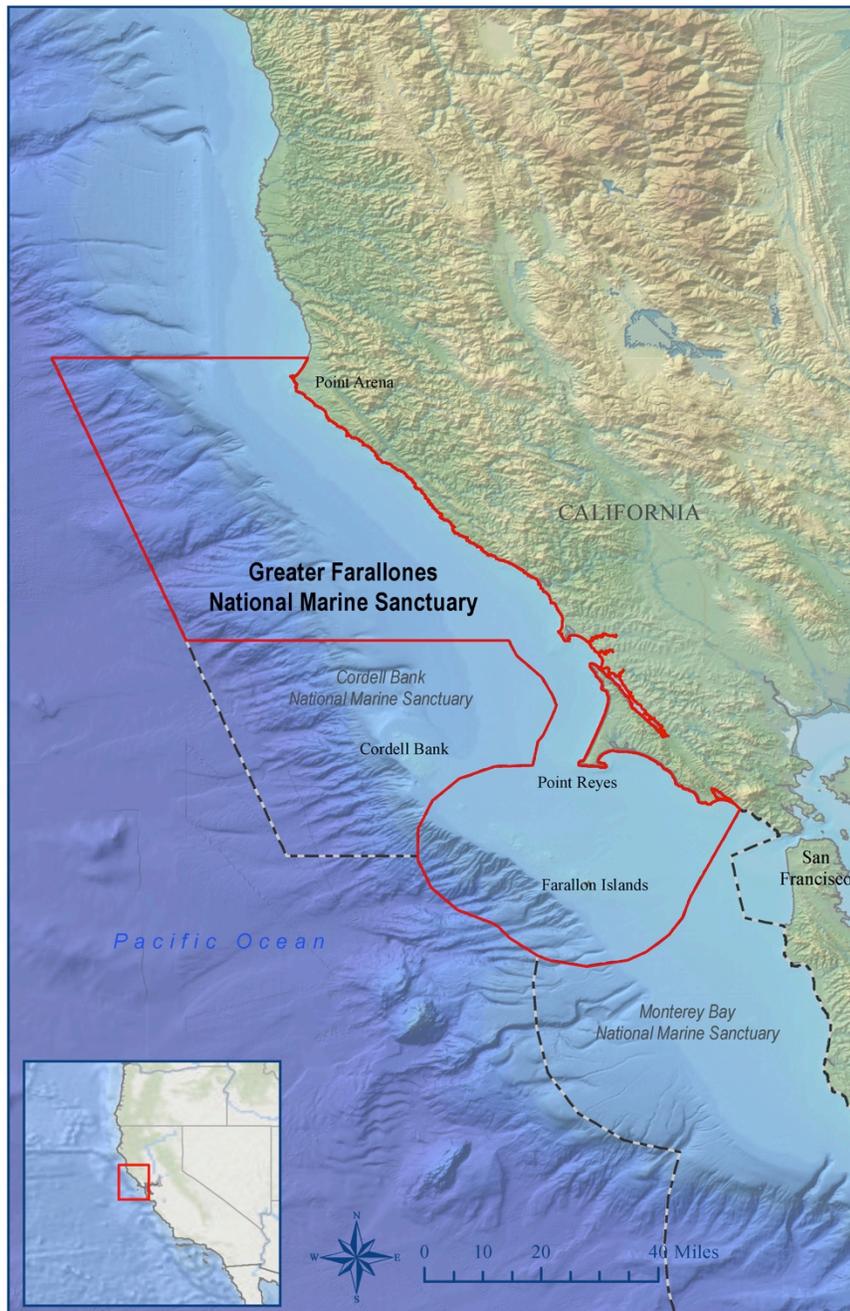


FY19 Accomplishments



BACKGROUND

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary was established in 1989 and is an area of 3,295 square miles off the northern and central California coast. Its wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources comprise an extraordinarily abundant and diverse marine ecosystem of international significance. It provides sustenance for blue whales, white sharks, millions of seabirds, and numerous threatened and endangered species.

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is part of the National Marine Sanctuary System, which is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. National marine sanctuaries are managed for the conservation of their natural and cultural resources, while supporting sustainable recreation, tourism and compatible commercial activities. The network includes a system of 14 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.



Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary



Photo: NOAA

A new training course launched by the sanctuary teaches volunteers a curriculum of marine biology and oceanography.

Building program capacity through volunteer training

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary launched a new, 22-hour Sanctuary Naturalist Training Course to increase ocean and climate literacy and develop the sanctuary's capacity through community volunteer training. The course incorporated curricula on oceanography, food webs, habitats, marine mammals, sharks and other fish, invertebrates, seabirds, shorebirds, and offered multiple field explorations. Sanctuary Naturalist Course certificates were awarded to those who completed all sessions and volunteered at least 15 hours for the sanctuary.

Beach Watch celebrates 25th anniversary of coastal monitoring

2019 marked a quarter-century of scientific study using citizen scientists for Beach Watch, a long-term shoreline monitoring program of Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, in partnership with the Greater Farallones Association. Trained and supervised by biologists, volunteer surveyors document marine life and human use activities on more than 50 north-central California beaches. They also note shoreline conditions and evidence of disturbances such as oil spills. Data from these baseline surveys inform resource managers of changes in ocean conditions and enhance conservation efforts.



Photo: NOAA

Beach Watch data collected by volunteers helps Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary track condition changes.

Enhancing shoreline resilience in a changing ecosystem

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary completed its Coastal Resilience Sedimentation Plan, which includes strategies and recommendations to help shorelines recover from hazards such as severe storm surge, sea level rise, erosion, flooding, and human impacts. The plan includes 29 study sites in Sonoma and Marin counties, and incorporates partnerships, research, monitoring, and education. A multi-agency coordinating committee will help integrate regional efforts and priorities.



Photo: Max Delaney

Constructed breakwaters can provide protection from storm surge and slow the process of coastline erosion.

Looking Ahead to FY20

- Greater Farallones' "Fisherman in the Classroom" program will pilot a new bull kelp ecology curriculum for schools in coastal Sonoma-Mendocino counties, an area impacted ecologically, culturally, and economically by a catastrophic kelp die-off.
- The sanctuary will work with state, research, and non-governmental groups to restore devastated kelp forest ecosystems along the north-central California coast.
- The sanctuary will support the Marin County Tomales Bay Oyster Restoration and Living Shorelines Demonstration Project by participating on a team that will scope the scientific feasibility of demonstrating an oyster restoration project adjacent to sensitive habitat and human infrastructure.