

Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries Accomplishments

Fiscal Year 2022

Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries together conserve an ocean area of 4,581 square miles off the northern and central California coast. The wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources found here comprise an extraordinarily abundant and diverse marine ecosystem of global importance. The surface waters of Cordell Bank are feeding areas for local and migratory seabirds and marine mammals, and the waters of Greater Farallones protect endangered blue whales, white sharks, millions of seabirds, shipwrecks, and numerous threatened and endangered species.

Visit farallones.noaa.gov and cordellbank.noaa.gov for more information.



Kelp Wanted!

The Greater Farallones Association received a generous community project fund to restore bull kelp in Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, where 90-95% kelp loss has occurred in recent years. The restoration efforts will be led in collaboration and guided by the Sonoma-Mendocino Bull Kelp Restoration Plan based on recommendations from the Greater Farallones Sanctuary Advisory Council and the Greater Farallones Association. Restoration will benefit impacted coastal communities that have had income and job loss as a result of the loss of bull kelp. Bull kelp is an ecologically, economically, culturally, and blue carbon important habitat and essential to restore.



Kelp is an ecologically, economically, and blue carbon important habitat and essential to restore. Photo: NOAA

Celebrating 50 years of National Marine Sanctuaries

Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries celebrated the 50-year anniversary of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act with a range of educational workshops, outings, and public celebrations. Future stewards were inspired through hands-on workshops about sanctuary wildlife, wildlife watching at the sanctuary's edge, and learning about seaweed harvesting. Community events brought hundreds together for an outdoor movie night featuring sharks and celebrated the invaluable contributions of volunteers and partners. Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary borders the highly populated urban area of San Francisco and provides recreational opportunities to build appreciation for a healthy ocean.



SharktoberFest Movie night gathered 100's of participants to celebrate the sanctuary's 50th anniversary and raised awareness about the value of sharks. Photo: NOAA

“Beyond the Golden Gate Research Symposium” Convened Leading Marine Scientists

Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries, along with several partners co-hosted a multi-disciplinary virtual research symposium where more than 40 marine scientists reported on their research, conservation challenges, including historic and emerging issues facing our ocean and estuaries. Presentations provided overviews of projects and served as a forum for research collaboration to advance science on the coast and ocean. Findings and data presented will inform the next 10 years of management within the sanctuaries.



The region for the symposium is part of the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1988. Photo: NOAA

Looking Ahead

- Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries will complete a summary of resources in each sanctuary including pressures, current condition and trends, and management responses to the pressures that threaten the integrity of the marine environment. These reports will guide the upcoming joint management plan review, setting an updated course of management priorities for the next 10 years.
- Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary will get a nature-based living shoreline “facelift” through Greater Farallones Association-led restoration on the southern end of the internationally recognized Bolinas Lagoon. By protecting the lagoon’s current resources, restoration strengthens its resilience and adaptability to future sea level rise.
- In partnership with the Greater Farallones Association, the sanctuary will work to quantify the carbon sequestration capacity of large whales, bolstering the need to protect them as a carbon mitigation strategy and advance global emission reduction goals.



The National Marine Sanctuary System is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. The network includes a system of 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.