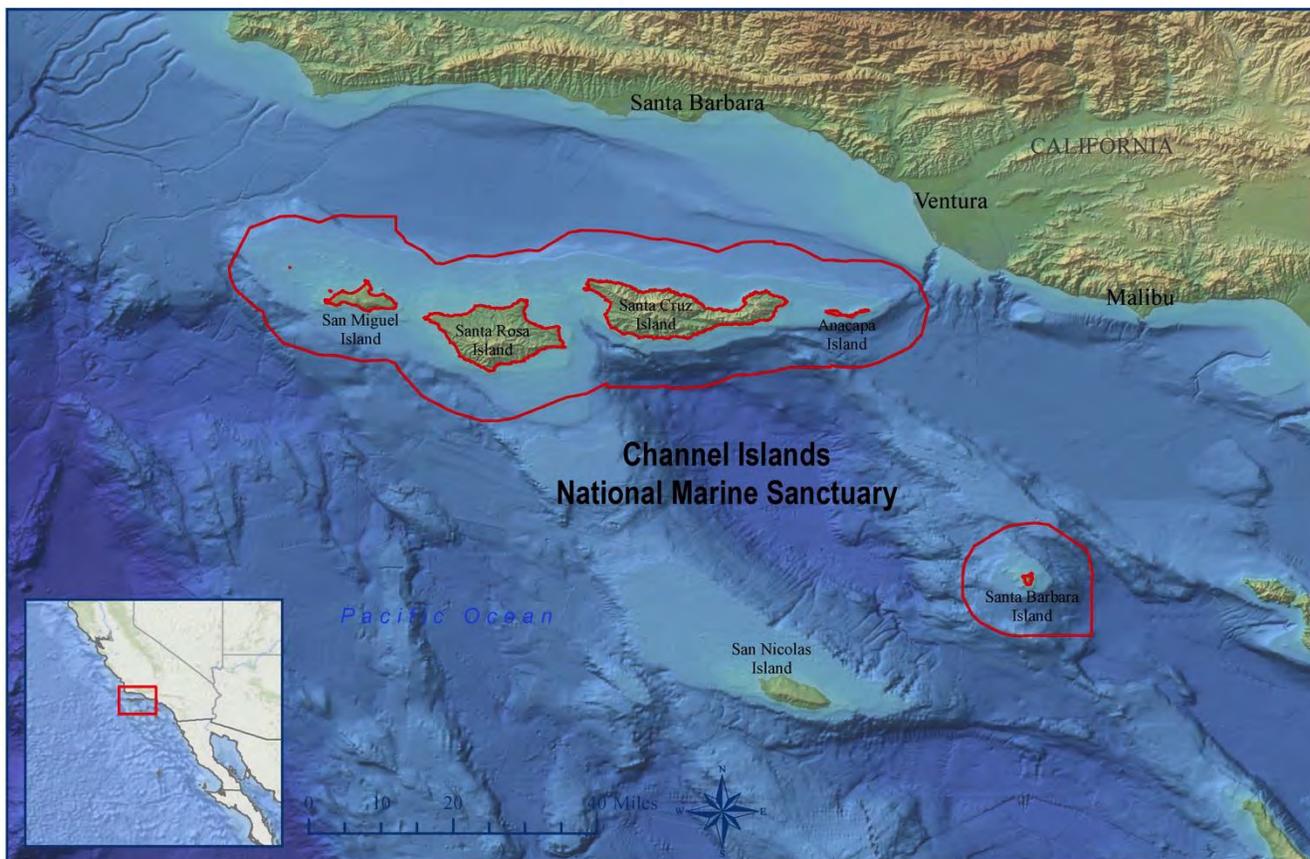


FY17 Accomplishments



BACKGROUND

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary was established in 1980 and contains remarkable biodiversity, productive ecosystems, sensitive species and habitats. It also boasts shipwrecks and other maritime heritage artifacts. The sanctuary spans 1,470 square miles surrounding five of the Channel Islands: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa and Santa Barbara.

Channel Islands 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 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.



Photo: Jess Morten/NOAA

Blue whales can be found in the Santa Barbara Channel.



Photo: Brian Kakuk

Cave targets identified through high resolution mapping were ground truthed and explored by expert technical cave divers.



Photo: Jess Morten/NOAA

The eFINS mobile enforcement app allows collection and reference of data on enforcement encounters in offline marine environments.

Vessel Speed Reduction Program for blue whales and blue skies

Ten commercial shipping lines participated in a voluntary incentivized 2017 Vessel Speed Reduction program around Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, slowing ships to 12 knots or less to curb air pollution and provide endangered whales greater protection from potentially fatal collisions. For slowing their vessels, participating shipping lines receive nominal incentive payments and positive public relations. The program expanded to include waters near San Francisco Bay. Contributing partners include Santa Barbara, Ventura County and Bay Area air pollution control districts, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and Volegenau Foundation.

Exploring Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary sunken ancient shorelines aboard *Nautilus*

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary partnered with Ocean Exploration Trust, **National Geographic Society**, and **NOAA's Office of Exploration and Research** to explore and characterize ancient shoreline features around the Channel Islands. High resolution sonar mapping using an autonomous surface vehicle characterized marine terrace features. Cave divers and remotely operated vehicles then ground truthed and mapped potential terraces and cave targets. Discoveries included locating and describing several sunken caves along ancient shorelines surrounding Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, and Santa Barbara islands. These cave targets represent potential new habitat types for sanctuary management.

Technology Development Advances Vessel Tracking and Enforcement

Engineering students from the University of California, Santa Barbara built and installed an innovative shore-based radar system that began tracking local vessel movements and providing web-based analysis tools. To expand the pilot system toward installation at the Channel Islands, staff will work with interested agency partners, the Anthropocene Institute, and a 2018 team of students. Meanwhile, law enforcement officers continued to successfully test the mobile enforcement app (eFINS). Supported by the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the tool is now used statewide by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Looking Ahead to FY18

- In 2018, a sanctuary condition report will describe the status and trends of sanctuary resources, potential impacts that may affect them, and address an updated sanctuary management plan.
- The exploration vessel *Nautilus* will return to sanctuary waters to continue testing innovative technologies that explore flooded, deep ancient shoreline environments and continue mapping seafloor areas in 2018.
- Sanctuary staff expect to continue working with local lobster fishermen interested in reducing lost traps along the coast, producing outreach products, and conducting sanctuary shoreline cleanup events.