

Yosemites of the Sea

What are Marine Protected Areas?

Over 100 years ago, the United States protected our most special places on land by setting up the first National Park. Today, California is doing the same for our ocean. California's new marine protected areas are underwater state parks where ocean life can recover and thrive.

How do marine protected areas work?

Rather than protecting only individual species, marine protected areas restore entire habitats. By protecting important ecosystems, we can ensure that ocean life will be here for future generations to enjoy.

Where can I find California's marine protected areas?

California's statewide marine protected areas network was completed in 2012, includes over 120 underwater refuges along the coast and extends from Oregon to Mexico.

Who decided where to put marine protected areas?

Areas were carefully chosen based on scientific guidance to protect a wide range of habitats. The proposed locations for marine protected areas were recommended by a diverse group of stakeholders including divers, fishermen, conservationists and coastal residents. MPA proposals were then evaluated and finally adopted by California's Fish and Game Commission.

Sanctuaries and protected areas: What's the difference?

Our national marine sanctuaries protect very large areas from a few important threats like oil and gas drilling. California's marine protected areas cover much smaller key places, but with much stronger protections.



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