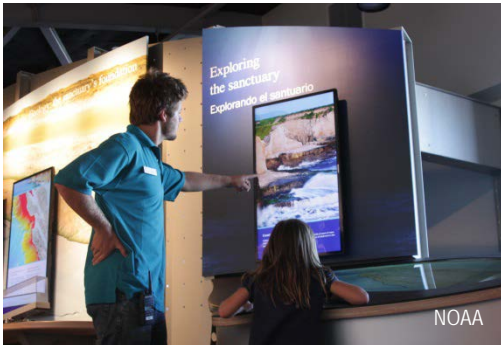


2012 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



SANCTUARY EXPLORATION CENTER OPENED

Twenty years after the designation of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, a grand opening celebration was held in July 2012 for the sanctuary's new, 12,000-square-foot, LEED Gold visitor center. Overlooking the ocean, the Sanctuary Exploration Center is located in the heart of the Santa Cruz's famed beach area. It serves as a premier educational facility for ocean literacy, as well as an information hub for sanctuary eco-tourism and exploration. The state-of-the-art center features engaging interactive and multi-media exhibits to help visitors explore the sanctuary's remarkable marine environment and understand their role in protecting this special underwater treasure.



NEW YOUR SANCTUARY TELEVISION SERIES IS A HIT

In collaboration with Access Monterey Peninsula Public Television, the sanctuary produced a successful television program called *Your Sanctuary*. The show connects people with their national marine sanctuaries by featuring sanctuary communities and businesses dependent upon a healthy ocean, as well as organizations and people involved in ocean activities. Each episode includes a segment on businesses that share sanctuary goals through the promotion of ocean stewardship and the marketing of this national treasure. The program is currently aired by nearly 80 cable stations across the nation. *Your Sanctuary* has won several awards from the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) and can be streamed at ampmedia.org.



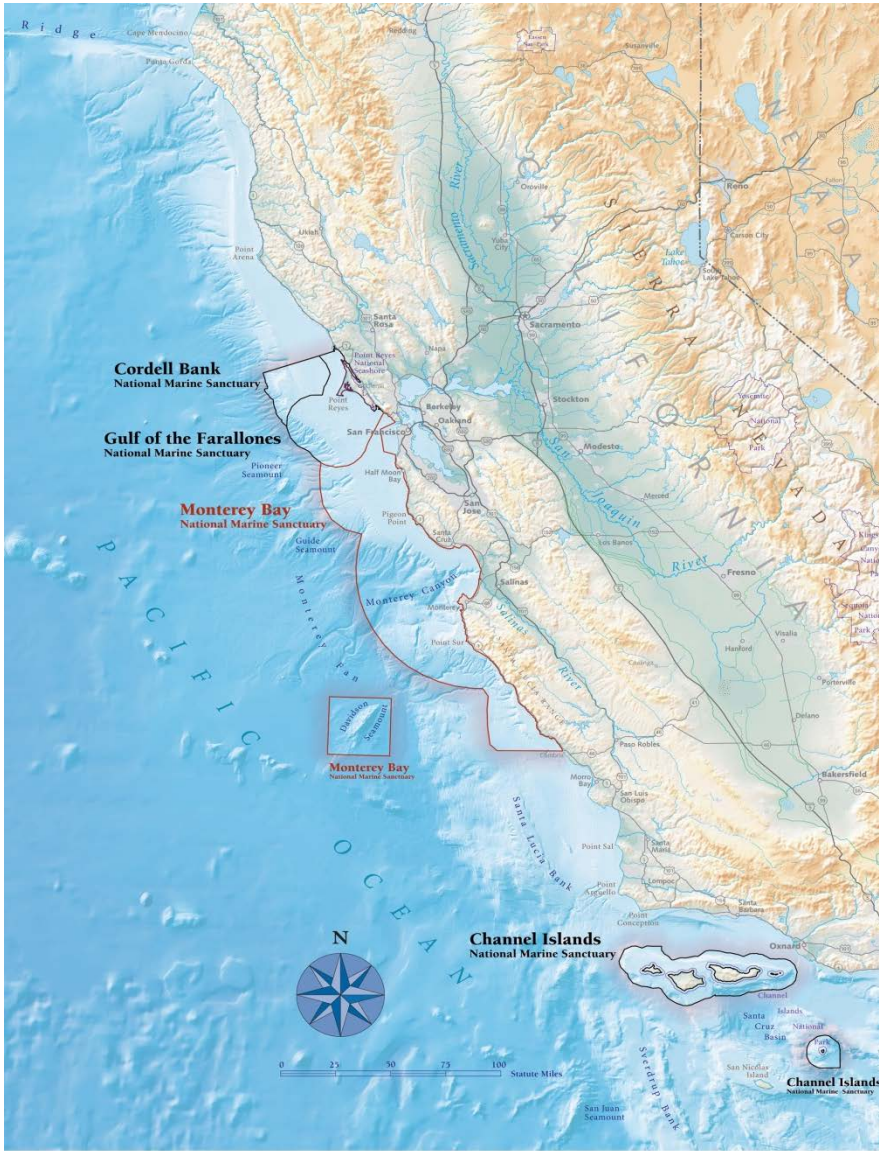
TEN YEARS OF THE SANCTUARY DIVING PROGRAM

Over ten years, the sanctuary diving program has increased from a single diver to six, and has expanded its role in understanding and protecting sanctuary resources. Science diving has focused on the management of an invasive kelp, the biology of an invasive bryozoan, and partnering with local academic institutions to study marine protected areas and characterize the kelp forests of Big Sur. Along the way, divers have documented the spectacular diversity of marine organisms in digital images and video. All of this information is shared on the sanctuary's monitoring website at www.sanctuariesimon.org.



IDENTIFYING ECOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS

Last year, a process was developed to identify and establish Sanctuary Ecologically Significant Areas (SESAs) within offshore federal waters. SESAs will help direct future research, monitoring and management efforts towards special areas containing diverse, biogenic and benthic habitats vulnerable to seafloor disturbance. NOAA is identifying SESAs using the best available scientific information. Research, conservation and fishing groups have been highly engaged in the process and have provided valuable input.



LOOKING AHEAD

- MBNMS will be evaluating the expansion of sanctuary boundaries to include an area, roughly 100 square miles beyond the Golden Gate Bridge, that was originally excluded from designation due to poor water and sediment quality. As these conditions have since improved, the expansion would protect nationally significant seascape, threatened wildlife, shipwrecks and Native American artifacts, in addition to honoring the seafaring community and promoting ecotourism.
- As a sponsor of the ACM annual conference in San Francisco next May, *Your Sanctuary TV* will host a reception where attendees will learn about expanded programming, including specials on safe and clean boating, travel and tourism, the Water Ways show produced in Florida Keys, Thank You Ocean podcasts and other content produced by national marine sanctuaries.
- MBNMS is eager to expand programs at the Sanctuary Exploration Center to include new school programs and field activities. In addition to self-guided tours, school groups will be offered docent-led guided tours. Students can also take part in classroom activities as well as field experiences in the vicinity of the Exploration Center.

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>