

In our first installment of the Marine Protected Areas series we discussed the need to preserve ocean wilderness just as we preserve wilderness on land. Why should surfers care about protecting ocean wilderness? We at Surfrider contend that an important part of surfing is interacting with a wild ocean. For example, you don't see many people backpacking in the Wal Mart parking lot. Instead they head for places like the Yellowstone or Yosemite; places that have been protected in their natural state for eternity. Surfers have nothing like that. Our favorite places are exposed to threats everyday. MPAs, like National Parks, are a way for us to preserve and protect surfing areas for future generations.

The oceans were once so vast when compared to human impacts that our influence was insignificant, the wilderness was too great. Unfortunately, human impacts have become so vast that the oceans are no longer invincible. In order for the next generation of surfers to experience a wild ocean, we are going to have to take active steps to protect it. Fortunately, there is a movement a foot to do exactly that. Marine Protected Areas will protect the future of surfing wild places.

-Chad Nelsen, Environmental Director

# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

part two of three

by jeff pollack

The MPA initiative has been gaining momentum in recent years as the result of several pioneering pieces of legislation. On May 26, 2000, President Clinton responded to pressure from scientists and marine conservationists by unveiling an initiative to establish a comprehensive national network of marine protected areas (MPA's) throughout US waters. Executive Order #13158 orders US federal agencies that currently have the authority to establish or manage MPAs to "enhance and expand protection of existing MPAs and to establish and recommend new MPAs." The sentiment of the Bush Administration during its first few months in office left many marine advocates fearful that President Bush would overturn the order, but the overwhelming and timely response generated by concerned citizens, including Surfrider members, convinced Bush that public favor was behind the MPA movement.

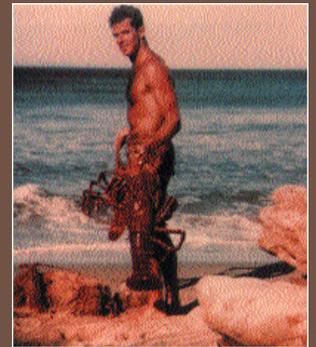
According to Executive Order #13158, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which currently oversees US National Marine Sanctuaries, is charged with developing the management framework for this national system. A coordinating institution, the Center for Marine Protected Area Science was established in Santa Cruz, California as the central headquarters for initiating and overseeing MPA research and policy.

The Executive Order commissions the Department of Commerce to establish an MPA Federal Advisory Committee that incorporates the input of non-federal scientists,

resource managers, and other interested organizations. The order also calls on the US EPA to draft new science-based regulations to bolster protection of the marine environment.

In November of 2000, nine non-governmental organizations, including the Surfrider Foundation, the Center for Marine Conservation, and Environmental Defense, established the Ocean Wilderness Network (OWN) in support of Executive Order #13158. OWN is a formal coalition to further existing state and regional efforts to create a network of marine reserves along the Pacific Coast of the United States. OWN has defined its intent to facilitate the individual initiatives of its member groups by forming strategic partnerships, launching public awareness campaigns, and providing essential scientific background information and advocacy materials. OWN is committed to the idea that a network of sustainable, fully protected areas will safeguard biodiversity, maintain ecosystem integrity, and help to sustain fish populations.

This is a critical and exciting time in the evolution of marine conservation policies, and our input and support are crucial. There are several different avenues for public involvement in the on-going campaign to establish a system of MPAs in US waters. By writing letters to our local senators and representatives expressing our support for the MPA initiative and its associated legislation, we can show that the issue of preserving marine wilderness is a priority. If your chapter is particularly concerned with the protection of a certain coastal of near shore habitat, draft a petition to draw attention to the issue. The Santa Barbara, CA chapter's efforts to protect the Gaviota Coast National Seashore provide a great example. We at Surfrider encourage you to find out more about proposed plans to protect our marine resources: Visit websites, attend meetings, and most importantly, share what you learn with others. We, the keepers of the coast who live with these resources everyday, have the most to gain from actions to rebuild a vibrant and sustainable marine environment.



Don James

## More Than Nostalgia

A book of photographs by Don James called "Surfing San Onofre to Point Dume 1936-1942" was published recently. According to the forward, this book captures "the halcyon inception of California beach culture". Along with incredible photographs of early surfing in California there are photographs of some of the largest lobster and abalone you have ever seen! When you think about it, you realize that surfers are watermen and waterwomen who interact with the sea in many ways beyond surfing: from sailing and paddling to diving and spearfishing. Part of the surfing legacy is that of a recreational fisherman. Unfortunately, it is a legacy that is disappearing. The abalone are essentially gone and the lobster are almost always of barely legal size. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) have the potential to change this. Some people fear the restrictions of MPAs, but the science demonstrates that they are an effective tool in protecting marine ecosystems without closing off the entire ocean to fishing or waiting for the fisheries to collapse—which is the direction many are heading. MPAs offer the hope that a 2023 book on surfing might again include abalone and monster bugs.

-Chad Nelsen