

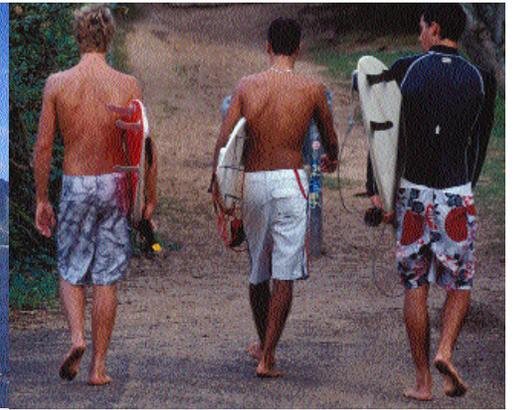
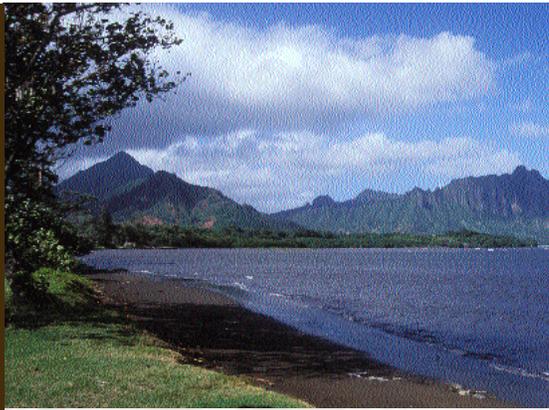
# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Part three of three

## Preface

Many of us who regularly spend time at the coast or in the ocean have special places that we treasure. Whether it is a favorite surf spot, that secret rock where you always find a lobster or the last place you dove and saw an octopus, we go to these places regularly and watch them change season by season and year by year. Some have mental records that you can measure in decades. These insights make Surfrider activists special; in many ways we are natural historians—"surfer scientists". It is critical that we put this local knowledge to work so that marine protect areas are created reasonably and they are used as another tool to conserve, protect and restore our favorite coastal ecosystems. At the same time, we must balance the need for conservation with the needs of those who make their living from the sea. Here are some ways to use your local knowledge to protect those special places.

-Chad Nelsen,  
Environmental Director



The first two in our series of articles on marine protected areas addressed the importance of ocean wilderness and some of the recent action on the marine protection areas front on the federal level, including Clinton's executive order (#13158) to improve marine protection in U.S. waters. As Baba Dioum, an African ecologist once wrote: "In the end we will preserve only what we love, love only what we understand, understand only what we are taught." Take a moment to learn about the marine treasures that you surf over everyday.

### Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

The Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS), which encompasses the waters that surround Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, San Miguel and Santa Barbara Islands, extending from mean high tide to six nautical miles offshore around each of the five islands, was established in 1980. The CINMS was designed to protect the intrinsic natural, cultural and historical value of the oceanic and coastal waters, while also supporting fishing, boating and tourism. Unfortunately, many species have declined within the Sanctuary boundaries due to heavy fishing pressure. For the last two years Ventura Surfrider Chapter has participated on the Marine Resources Work Group to identify areas for marine reserves—areas closed to all extractive use, including fishing—that will balance conservation needs with fishing interests. We are supporting the "preferred alternative" as recommended by the Department of Fish and Game staff that protects 25 percent of the Sanctuary's waters as a no take zone.

The Channel Islands are a national treasure on par with the Grand Canyon and the ecosystem should be protected for all Americans. There are two ways you can help protect the Channel Islands. Contact or attend a California Fish and Game hearing and voice your support for the "preferred alternative". The schedule of meetings can be found at:

[http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fg\\_comm/2002mtgs.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fg_comm/2002mtgs.html)

Or visit our Action Alert website and send a fax to Governor Gray Davis:

[http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/channel\\_islands](http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/channel_islands)

### California Marine Life Protection Act

Another important marine protection effort that is underway in California is the Marine Life Protection Act. This law was passed in 1999 in order to improve the array of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) existing in California waters through the adoption of a Marine Life Protection Program and a comprehensive master plan. Over the past several decades a "mish mash" of coastal protected areas have been created without any statewide consistency or plan. This Act intends improve the scientific basis for marine reserves and create a coordinated system of protected areas that are easy to understand and will effectively protect coastal ecosystems.

*(continued next page)*

One exciting element of this act is that coastal areas can be designated as recreational areas and water quality protection areas, which has the potential to protect our favorite surf breaks.

Every chapter in California can check out the maps and make recommendations to protect their special coastal places. Contact Mark Rauscher at the Surfrider national office to learn more about the maps and how you can get involved: [mrauscher@surfrider.org](mailto:mrauscher@surfrider.org)

For more information of the Marine Life Protection Act visit:  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa/>

### Pacific Northwest

Those of us who live, work on, and enjoy Oregon's coast have an unprecedented opportunity to protect and conserve our special coastal and ocean places. Governor Kitzhaber has asked the Ocean Policy Advisory Council to assess the need for greater marine protection in Oregon. Write to Governor Kitzhaber and tell him you support the protection of Oregon's special coastal and ocean places. Urge the Governor to create marine parks in order to enhance, protect and restore Oregon's coast and ocean.

Put your local knowledge to work. This is a proactive way for us to protect ocean wilderness so that the next time we go surfing, fishing or diving at our favorite spot, we will be able to enjoy its wild beauty.

Send your comments to the Governor using our Action Alert Website: [www.actionnetwork.org/campaign/or\\_special](http://www.actionnetwork.org/campaign/or_special)

Or mail your comments to:

Surfrider Foundation  
Special Places Campaign  
PO Box 1046  
Newport, OR 97365

### Northeast

In New England there are MPA efforts in progress.

Off Massachusetts, there is spectacular underwater remnant of the last glacial age called Stellwagen Bank. This massive

sand and gravel plateau is one of the finest whale watching venues in the world. Humpbacks, among many other marine mammals make the Banks there home. The Sanctuary also encompasses about 20% of the Gulf of Maine groundfish closure area – an area where groundfisheries collapsed from overfishing.

The Stellwagen Banks National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan is currently under review. Learn how you can get involved by visiting:

<http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov/management/mpreview.html>

To learn specifically about marine protection at Stellwagen check out:

<http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov/management/mpas/listserve.html>

During our December Environmental Issue Team (EIT) conference call, EIT member Michelle Duval called in from a conference that was taking place in New York City. At the conference, numerous state, local, and national experts on marine protection met to discuss a strategy for protecting marine wilderness in New York's state waters (3 miles offshore). Keep your eyes open for more on this one.

### Puerto Rico

Board member and surf vagabond Leon Richter has galvanized the local community in Rincón, Puerto Rico to "Salvas Tres Palmas". With the help of the Surfrider Puerto Rico Chapter, Surfer's Environmental Alliance, Environmental Defense, we have been working of the last year to save Tres Palmas, the premier big wave spot in the Caribbean. We're working to stop the development of several "mega resorts" while establishing a coastal park and marine reserve ("reserva natural marítima").

Learn more about this campaign at:

[www.surfrider.org/rincon](http://www.surfrider.org/rincon)

You can help support this effort by signing our e-petition at:

[http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/surf\\_rincon](http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/surf_rincon)

### Southeast

In the Southeast there is a key marine protection effort that chapter activists can learn about and get involved with. As Ken Lindeman, marine scientist for Environmental Defense, described at the 2001 Florida Chapter Conference, the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council ([www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)) is proposing a series of marine protected areas off the coasts of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. This effort is referred to as "Amendment 14". This is an important and historic opportunity to protect marine ecosystems in the Southeast. The process to define the protected area has been intensive and inclusive; involving scientists, divers, fishers and the public.

Look for public input workshop this Spring or Summer. To learn more check out:

<http://www.safmc.net/safmcweb/library/mpa-scoping.pdf>

### Conclusion

The Surfrider Foundation encourages local public input on all coastal issues and marine protected areas are no different. Every individual can make a difference and your comments are critical to make sure that marine protection plans are designed with the local interests in mind. Use your power and get involved with these cutting edge marine protection issues.

Look for the new Surfrider special places website this Spring at:

[www.surfrider.org/specialplaces](http://www.surfrider.org/specialplaces)

