



# NEWS FROM NOAA

## NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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### **MARINE ZONES NOW IN FEDERAL WATERS OF NOAA'S CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY Marine Zoning Network Largest in the Continental United States**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has completed a network of marine zones in the federal waters of Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. The federal water marine zones, which will protect marine habitats and sensitive species, went into effect on July 29, 2007. NOAA's action complements an existing network of marine zones established in the waters of the sanctuary by the state of California in 2003.

"The Channel Islands marine zoning network is now the largest in the continental United States," said Daniel J. Basta, director of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program. "This action was developed through an eight-year public process, coordinated closely with the state of California, the Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service. The countless community members who helped NOAA by providing scientific information, input and advice can be proud of this important conservation accomplishment."

The federal action adds nine new marine zones, eight of which are no-take marine reserves and one limited take marine conservation area. NOAA's action affects a total of 110.5 square nautical miles as marine reserves and 1.7 square nautical miles as marine conservation areas in the federal waters (three to six nautical miles offshore) of the sanctuary. The area of the network, including the existing state marine zones, is 214.1 square nautical miles.

The two types of marine zones include marine reserves, where all extractive activities and injury to sanctuary resources are prohibited, and a marine conservation area that allows commercial and recreational lobster fishing and recreational fishing for pelagic species — all other resource extraction and injury is prohibited.

In October 2002, the California Fish and Game Commission approved a comprehensive marine zoning network in state waters of the sanctuary. The state of California implemented part of the state marine zones in 2003, under the California Fish and Game regulations. In 2006, to provide protection to the seafloor and groundfish, NOAA Fisheries Service designated the federal water portions offshore of the state marine zones as habitat areas of particular concern and prohibited bottom fishing under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

NOAA's action prohibits any other take within the offshore marine zones under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and is a key step towards completing the marine zoning network supported by the California Fish and Game Commission, the Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service.

Some small gaps remain between the state and federal marine zones that are an artifact of squaring off the state marine zones in 2003 for enforcement and ease of recognition by boaters until the federal zones were established. The California Fish and Game Commission began the process to fill these small gaps to complete the Channel Islands marine zoning network in May 2007, with an anticipated decision in October 2007.

When the gaps are closed, the total network size will be 240.4 square nautical miles that encompasses 22 percent of the sanctuary waters through 11 marine reserves and 2 marine conservation areas. Fishing in accordance with normal state and federal fishing regulations will be allowed in the remaining 78 percent of the sanctuary.

The eight-year process to consider and designate the network included extensive input from the Channel Islands Sanctuary Advisory Council, relevant federal agencies, Pacific Fishery Management Council, resource departments of the state of California, and representatives of the public and stakeholder groups.

Copies of the Final Rule and Regulations are available from the Channel Islands sanctuary office, attn: Sean Hastings, 113 Harbor Way, Suite 150, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93109, or by calling (805) 884-1472. The document is also available at the sanctuary's Web site, <http://channelislands.noaa.gov>, or by e-mail to [cinmsreserves.feis@noaa.gov](mailto:cinmsreserves.feis@noaa.gov).

NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1980 to protect marine resources surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa and Santa Barbara islands. The sanctuary spans 1,658 square miles extending from island shorelines to six miles offshore, encompassing a rich diversity of marine life and habitats, as well as rich historic and cultural resources.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's marine resources and maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, the sanctuary program manages 13 national marine sanctuaries and one marine national monument that together encompass more than 150,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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On the Internet:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

National Ocean Service: <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov>

National Marine Sanctuary Program: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov>