

MARIN MPA WATCH VOLUNTEER TEAM

Volunteer Program Description



ESTABLISHED 1971

The MPA Watch program:

- is a citizen science program
- trains volunteers to collect scientific data on consumptive and non-consumptive coastal and marine resource use by ocean users using specific protocols and a survey. Surveys are observational only, and collect human activities in and outside of MPAs, such as surfing, kayaking, fishing, boating, running, etc., with the intention of improving our understanding of how people are using our statewide MPAs.
- informs MPA management and supports the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

The California MPA Watch program is implemented by ten different organizations throughout the state. The Marin MPA Watch Volunteer Program is managed by the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (EAC), and in collaboration with the California Academy of Sciences, and Point Reyes National Seashore. The Marin MPA Watch focuses their efforts at Agate County Beach, Corte Madera Marsh, Drakes Beach, Drakes Estero, Point Resistance, and the Point Reyes Headlands. Not only do local volunteers learn about their coastal environment and become citizen scientists and stewards of the area, but they generate quantities of monitoring data that would not be possible under the current state budget.

Once trained, the volunteer will choose 1-2 days a month to conduct a survey on a specific beach for up to three months. Surveys are only observational. No public interaction necessary or required. Great volunteer opportunity for individuals, friends or families with children 10 and older.

Requirements

- Must be 18 year of age or older, or accompanied by a guardian
- Ability to attend an Marin MPA Watch training at each MPA site they are interested in helping to survey
- Love walking on the beach and being outside
- Physically able to walk two-five miles on the beach
- Able to complete 1-2 surveys per month over the course of three months, and mail back your surveys for the official register
- (Optional) Use iNaturalist App to record what you see on the beach, take pictures and share them for our media team, collect beach trash and make art to create awareness!

Benefits

- A free, MPA reusable water bottle!
- Healthy recreation that gets you outside exercising your mind and muscles!
- Collection of long-term citizen science data for our MPAs.
- Invitation to the annual Point Reyes National Seashore volunteer appreciation event at Point Reyes typically held the third Friday in July across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center.
- Invitations to EAC special events.

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VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT LIABILITY WAIVER AND PHOTO RELEASE

As a volunteer participant Marin MPA Watch Volunteer Team, which the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (EAC) manages, I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge EAC as follows:

I acknowledge that my participation in volunteer events organized produced by EAC as part of the Marin MPA Watch Program potentially entails known and unanticipated risks from being outdoors in a wild environment, and walking on public beaches, trails or in other federal, state, or county parks that could result in varying degrees of physical injury and/or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties.

I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in these events and acknowledge that my participation in these activities is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the known potential risks. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless EAC from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in these events.

By signing below, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in the Marin MPA Watch Program, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against EAC on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein. I agree that I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.

I also acknowledge my picture may be taken for marketing purposes and used for training, recruitment, or other marketing purposes online or in print.

I am 18 years or older: YES OR NO (If no, a parent must sign for you below)

Participant Full Name _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Emergency Contact Name _____

Emergency Contact Phone _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

In consideration of (print minor's name) _____ ("Minor") being permitted by EAC to participate in its activities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless EAC from any and all Claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor, and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: ____/____/____

How Did You Hear About Our Program? _____

Please list your next three survey dates:

January _____ February _____ March _____ April _____ May _____

June _____ July _____ August _____ September _____ October _____

November _____ December _____

Marine Protected Areas, MPA Watch & Marin MPA Watch Volunteer Program



Marine Protected Areas

California's coast and ocean are among our most treasured resources. The productivity, wildness, and beauty found here is central to California's identity, heritage, and economy. The need to safeguard the long-term health of California's marine life was recognized by the California Legislature in 1999 with the passage of the [Marine Life Protection Act](#). This Act aims to protect California's marine natural heritage through establishing a statewide network of [marine protected areas](#) (MPAs) designed, created, and managed using sound science and stakeholder input.

MPAs protect the diversity and abundance of marine life, the habitats they depend on, and the integrity of marine ecosystems. The Marine Life Protection Act recognizes that a combination of MPAs (marine reserves, conservation areas, and parks) with varied amounts of allowed activities and protections can help conserve biological diversity, provide a sanctuary for marine life, and enhance recreational and educational opportunities. MPAs can also provide scientific reference points to assist with resource management decisions, and protect a variety of marine habitats, communities, and ecosystems for their economic and intrinsic value, for generations to come.

[A 2017 poll by the Public Policy Institute of California \(PPIC\) on Californians and the Environment](#) found:

- 95% say condition of coast is important to the economy and quality of life in CA
- 93% say condition of the coast personally important to them
- Support for oil drilling at record low (only 25% support) and has fallen by 11 percentage points since July 2016.
- In contrast, 73% of Californians are in favor of wind power and wave energy projects off the state's coast, while 19% are opposed.
- 78% support going to 100% renewables by 2045.

The PPIC poll includes a specific MPA question for the first time since 2006 poll. *Note that 2006 was prior to adoption of new MPAs under the MLPA Initiative.* In 2006, total support for MPAs was already very high at 75%.

The poll released last night asked the following question:

'Next, Marine Protected Areas, or MPAs, are managed by the California State Fish and Game Commission to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat in coastal waters. Do you think it is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all that California has Marine Protected Areas?'

- **77% very important**
- 18% somewhat important
- 2% not too important
- 1% not important at all

A total of **95% of those polled responded that MPAs are important to California** – a full 20 point increase over 2006. And a testament to all the great work being done by you and your organizations to promote and steward California's MPA network.