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BLM CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT

YOUR COASTAL RICHES

The California Coastal National Monument, which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, is recognized as a unique and biological treasure. A crucial part of a fragile ecosystem, the Monument is comprised of nearly 13,000 islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and pinnacles seen above the high water mark, providing shelter and nutrients for thousands of organisms. The Monument extends out 12 nautical miles and stretches the entire 840-mile length of the California coastline from Oregon to Mexico.

MANAGEMENT

The California coastline has long been recognized as important for protection. In 1930, the President signed an Executive Order restricting mining on the islands, rocks, reefs and pinnacles. In 1983, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) declared the rocks and islands as the "California Island Wildlife Sanctuary" and that it be managed in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game. On January 11, 2000, the president designated the California Coastal National Monument under the jurisdiction of the BLM. The Monument proclamation recognizes the ecological significance of the area and provides permanent protection.

The protection of the Monument is a cooperative effort among federal, state and local governments, universities, and private interests. The day-to-day management of the Monument is done jointly by the BLM, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation through a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding.



NATURAL WONDERS

Waters within the Monument are rich in nutrients supporting a diverse array of habitats and organisms. Factors such as major ocean currents stimulate critical biological productivity and diversity in both near-shore and offshore ocean waters. Wave action exerts a strong influence on habitat distribution within the Monument.

Beaches occur where wave action is light, boulder fields occur in areas of greater wave activity, and rocky outcrops occur

where the wave action is the greatest. The pounding surf within the boulder fields and rocky shores creates tide pools, which support creatures uniquely adapted for survival under such extreme conditions. Although shoreline habitats may appear distinct from those offshore, they are dependent on each other, with vital and dynamic exchanges of nutrients and organisms being essential to maintaining their healthy ecosystems.

MONUMENT FACTS:

- 12,700 Islands, rocks, exposed reefs, pinnacles
- 1,000 acres
- 840-mile California coastline

A BIRD HAVEN

The Monument is part of a narrow and important flight lane in the Pacific Flyway, providing essential habitat for feeding, perching, nesting, and shelter. The geologic formations provide feeding and nesting grounds for thousands of breeding seabirds, including the Western gull, the tufted puffin, and the threatened brown pelican.

Development has forced seabirds that once fed and nested on the shoreline to retreat to the areas now protected by the Monument. Seabird species inhabit salt or brackish water environments for at least a part of the annual cycle and breed on the offshore islands and rocks. Gulls, brown pelicans, puffins, and cormorants, among countless others, all feed on the vegetation and may establish their nests in or near the Monument. Both bald eagles and peregrine falcons are also found in or adjacent to the Monument.

OCEAN MAMMAL RETREAT

Several mammal species depend on the islands, rocks, reefs, and pinnacles and the oceans around them for forage and breeding grounds. Pinnipeds such as harbor seals, seal lions, and elephant seals are abundant and are commonly seen along the coastline. The California sea otter, a threatened species, is seen along the central coast, usually in association with kelp forests and sea urchin colonies. Once numbering less than 100, the sea otter population has risen to over 2,000 individuals along this coast. Whales and dolphins are commonly seen migrating within the 12 mile zone of the Monument, but these species are more common in the deeper waters.

COMMON BIRDS AND MAMMALS WHICH VISIT OR NEST WITHIN OR NEAR THE MONUMENT

BIRDS

- Western gull
- California least tern
- brown pelican
- Leach's storm-petrel
- bald eagle
- peregrine falcon
- Xantus' murrelet
- black oystercatcher
- Brandt's cormorant

MAMMALS

- California sea otter
- harbor seal
- California sea lion
- elephant seal
- whale
- dolphin
- stellar sea lion



