

The National Marine Protected Areas Center's Training And Technical Assistance Institute

Who We Are

The National Marine Protected Area (MPA) Center is a joint effort of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Department of the Interior. The mission of the MPA Center is to facilitate the effective use of science, technology, training, and information in the planning, management, and evaluation of the nation's system of marine protected areas.

The MPA Center is supported by two institutes – a Science Institute and a Training and Technical Assistance Institute. NOAA's Coastal Services Center in Charleston, South Carolina, houses the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute. This location capitalizes on the Coastal Services Center's existing technology and training capacity, and provides an opportunity to expand upon existing partnerships with coastal and marine resource managers. Although only a small number of staff are tasked solely to the Training and Technical Assistance Institute, staff from across the Center contribute to MPA-related projects.



Great Egret and Snow Egrets, North Carolina National Estuarine Research Reserve. NOAA Photo Library

Who We Work With

MPA managers and their staffs are the primary customers of the Training and Technical Assistance Institute. Executive Order 13158 defines MPAs as "any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by Federal, State, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein." Under this definition there are many different types of MPAs, such as national marine sanctuaries, national wildlife refuges, national parks with marine components, state marine conservation areas, and local-level marine parks. The Training and Technical Assistance Institute serves as a resource for the wide range of MPAs found in our marine and Great Lakes waters.



Training at the MPA Center's Training and Technical Assistance Institute

Types of Technical Assistance Available

The Training and Technical Assistance Institute can offer technical assistance on a variety of management issues. Assistance might range from reviewing a project for technical feasibility, to helping design a new research or outreach project, to developing a spatial analysis tool to address a particular management issue. The following are examples of the types of projects that an MPA partner may request of the Training and Technical Assistance Institute:

- ▣ Analyzing remotely sensed data to address a specific issue such as invasive species, threats to habitat, or oil-spill response
- ▣ Developing geographic information system (GIS) data and tools so that critical information can be used by management, research, and outreach staff
 - ▣ Providing guidance and support for the creation of digital marine boundaries for more accurate mapping of managed areas
 - ▣ Conducting policy analyses of management tools to address a specific issue such as wetland restoration, permit tracking, or dredging
 - ▣ Mapping benthic habitats
 - ▣ Designing processes to solicit and incorporate public input on management issues
 - ▣ Developing GIS software extensions that make it easier for managers to view, manipulate, and present spatial data
- ▣ Developing extension and training products and services to address MPA issues effectively



Training at the Training and Technical Assistance Institute

Types of Training Available

In addition to connecting managers with the existing training courses offered by the NOAA Coastal Services Center, the Training and Technical Assistance Institute is also working to develop new courses in response to issues raised during the MPA Needs Assessment conducted in 2002. The list below provides an overview of current and planned courses. Additional information about current NOAA Coastal Services Center training courses can be seen online at www.csc.noaa.gov under "training."

Geospatial Technology Courses

- ▣ Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Training
- ▣ Information Technology for Coastal Managers
- ▣ Metadata Training
- ▣ Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts

Process Skills Training

- ▣ Web Content Design and Evaluation
- ▣ Conducting Training Needs Assessments
- ▣ Public Issues and Conflict Management
- ▣ Project Planning and Evaluation

Understanding MPAs

This one-day workshop will provide training to stakeholders on the basic principles and general issues surrounding MPAs. It will be available sometime in 2004.

Coastal Management Training

- ▣ Survival Skills for Managing Coastal Resources (includes segments on the coastal management framework, collaborative processes, and information survival skills)
 - ▣ Hazards Training (focusing on risk and vulnerability assessments)
 - ▣ The Coastal Zone Management Role in Managing Hazards
 - ▣ Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
 - ▣ Negotiating for the Resource

Referral Service

In addition to providing direct training and technical assistance, the Training and Technical Assistance Institute serves as a referral service for managers seeking assistance, information, and training on MPA-related topics. The Training and Technical Assistance Institute is building a database of existing training and technical assistance resources to identify capacity in a range of governmental agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and private entities.

Contact Information

Information about some of the Training and Technical Assistance Institute's projects can be seen online at: www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/cls/mpa_training.html.

For more information, or to inquire about a specific training or technical assistance need, please contact:

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Black-necked stilt, ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve. NOAA Photo Library