

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



Information on Artificial Structures in the MLPA South Coast Study Region

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Artificial Structures

- Artificial structures are common in the south coast
 - oil platforms (3)
 - breakwalls and jetties
 - outfall pipes
 - shipwrecks
 - artificial reefs (25)
- Vary by intent, material, purpose, size and location
- Document primarily focuses on artificial reefs
- Goal
 - information to the regional stakeholder group on the function of artificial structures
 - how artificial structures are dealt with in science evaluations



Artificial Structures

- 25 artificial reefs in the south coast study region
 - developmental and recreational fishing reefs
 - small (average size 3.3 acres)
 - mature (median age 24 years)
 - account for less than 1.8% of hard bottom habitat
- Research on artificial structures
 - similar or higher fish abundance and densities
 - relatively fewer studies fish production
 - attraction versus production



Artificial Structures

Management Areas

- Influence of artificial structure(s) is related to
 - size of the structure relative to the MPA
 - amount and spatial arrangement of rocky habitat
- Habitat evaluation (0-30 meter hard bottom representation)
 - Linear measure not based on area and is a proxy for nearshore habitats



Artificial Structures

Conclusions

- Influence artificial structures have on MPA function are not likely to be substantial
- Larger structures
 - Wheeler North Reef (174 acre)
 - recently constructed (September 2008)
 - Breakwalls (e.g. Los Angeles Federal breakwater)
 - occur near major harbors