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## Ocean Acoustic Observatory at Point Sur (archived)

Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School

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## Ocean Acoustic Observatory at Point Sur

Located just south of the Pt. Sur lightstation, along the Big Sur coastline, the Pt. Sur Naval Facility was a part of the Navy's underwater monitoring network of sound powered hydrophones between 1958-1986.

Though some of the information on the facility remains classified, we are able to use the undersea hydrophone array to monitor both ship and mammal traffic passing through the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and are able to provide unclassified data (a single hydrophone time series) for scientific and educational studies.

The Naval Postgraduate School established the Ocean Acoustic Observatory (OAO) in 1993 for the purpose of undersea research. The continual development of the Pt. Sur OAO is a project of the [Ocean Acoustics Laboratory](#), at the Naval Postgraduate School. The Postgraduate School will continue to work with Navy officials in an attempt to make available as much information as possible for the scientific community.



**The Ocean Acoustic Observatory at Point Sur was established in 1993**



**January 27th, 2001 the array cable suffered a catastrophic failure.** The cable fault, first noted in 1991, is located ~0.86 nmi from the terminal building and a progressive failure was noted over the years. An ROV dive by the [Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute \(MBARI\)](#) was performed in 1993, which located the cable suspended over a large rock, with the tidal surge causing the cable to wear. [real video movie](#) (14.2 MBytes).

The US Navy's Underwater Construction Team Two (UCT-2) conducted a hydrographic survey 16-20 July, 2001. The team returned from 4-13 August to execute the cable repair. The divers conducted an extensive near shore cable survey, located the seaward cable fault in ~1000+ ft. depth. The M/V INDEPENDENCE was used as a cable recovery platform, where the seaward end of the cable was recovered, cut back and tested for connectivity to the hydrophones. An additional fault were seen approximately 0.5 nmi seaward of the break point. Cable repair efforts were stopped 13 August, due to the lack of sufficient replacement cable and additional funding.

The Naval Postgraduate School is currently pursuing funding to reactivate the Ocean Acoustic Observatory with a cabled junction box. A junction box design would provide both power and a high speed data connection to the sea floor for a multitude of scientific equipment and research projects. In addition to acoustic receivers, additional oceanographic sensors as well as docking stations for autonomous vehicles, etc. would further expand the scientific opportunities and understanding of this area.

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