

# San Jose Mercury News

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## **Federal wildlife officials protect black abalone**

The Associated Press - October 26, 2011

LOS ANGELES—Federal wildlife officials have designated 140 square miles of California's coastline a critical habitat for the endangered black abalone.

The Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/sPAQ7p>) says the final ruling came Wednesday from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries Service.

Federal officials say the population of the hard-shelled, edible ocean snails was hard hit in the 1980s by a bacterial disease called withering syndrome.

The decline may have been worsened by warming coastal waters, power plant discharges, overfishing and poaching.

Black abalone was put on the endangered species list in 2009.

An area of Orange County's coastline, from Corona Del Mar to Dana Point, is excluded from the designation because federal officials say "the economic benefits of exclusion outweigh the benefits of inclusion."