

What is a California marine protected area (or "MPA")?

An MPA is a type of managed area primarily set aside to protect or conserve marine life and habitats in marine or estuarine waters. California's MPA Network consists of 124 areas with varying levels of protection, and 14 special closures, all designed to help safeguard the state's marine ecosystems. Fishing and collecting are banned at marine reserves such as Reading Rock State Marine Reserve, providing this MPA with the highest level of protection.

One goal for California's MPAs was to strategically place them near each other to form an interconnected network that would help to preserve the flow of life between marine ecosystems. Within that network each MPA has unique goals and regulations, and non-consumptive activities, permitted scientific research, monitoring, and educational pursuits may be allowed.

Why was this location chosen for a state marine reserve?

One of the goals for [Reading Rock State Marine Reserve](#) is to protect the sandy seafloor and rocky reef habitat found there. Reading Rock is a prominent sea stack just to the north of the reserve. The rocky reefs surrounding Reading Rock extend into the reserve and are home to vibrantly colored sea stars, club-tipped anemones, and giant acorn barnacles. White-plumed anemones inhabit the tallest of the submerged rocky features, while lingcod, canary rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and copper rockfish shelter near the rocky rubble. Sandy seafloor habitat, which dominates the reserve, is home to a variety of fish and invertebrates including flatfish, sea cucumbers, and sea pens. Seabirds such as the common murre, Brandt's cormorant, western gull, and pigeon guillemot use Reading Rock for roosting and nesting, while marine mammals such as Steller sea lions and harbor seals use it as a resting place.

This reserve shares an eastern boundary with [Reading Rock State Marine Conservation Area](#). Placing a state marine reserve here provides very high levels of protection for local marine species and the habitats they use.



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Quick Facts: Reading Rock State Marine Reserve

- **MPA size:** 9.60 square miles
- **Depth range:** 145 to 253 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
Rock: 0.24 square miles
Sand/mud: 9.35 square miles



Non-Consumptive
Activities

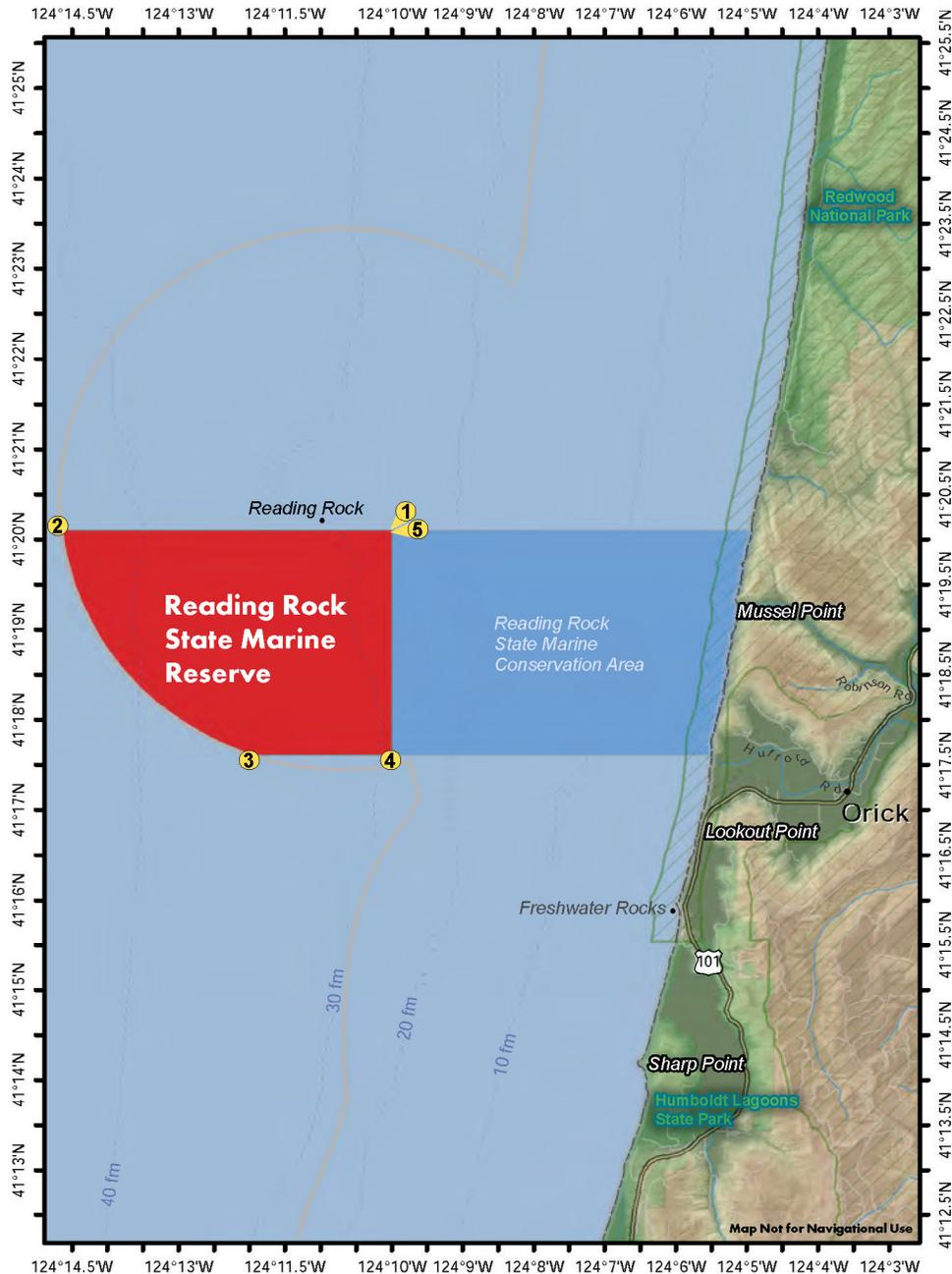
No Fishing

No Collecting

Further Information:

- MPA Website: www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs
- MPA and Sportfishing Interactive Map: www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap
- Email: AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov

Photos - Upper: Reading Rock, near the northern border of the marine reserve, CDFW photo by A. Frimodig. Lower right: Vermilion rockfish in the reserve, CDFW/MARE photo. Lower left: White-plumed anemones and strawberry anemones in the reserve, CDFW/MARE photo.



Reading Rock State Marine Reserve Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Boundary:

This area is bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed except where noted:

- 41° 20.100' N. lat. 124° 10.000' W. long. ①;
- 41° 20.100' N. lat. 124° 14.655' W. long. ②; thence southward along the three nautical mile offshore boundary to
- 41° 17.600' N. lat. 124° 11.963' W. long. ③;
- 41° 17.600' N. lat. 124° 10.000' W. long. ④; and
- 41° 20.100' N. lat. 124° 10.000' W. long. ⑤

Permitted/Prohibited Uses:

It is unlawful to injure, damage, take, or possess any living, geological, or cultural marine resource.

Take may be authorized for research, restoration, and monitoring purposes under a scientific collecting permit. See California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632(a).

The information in this document does not replace the official regulatory language found in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632. View these regulations online at www.wildlife.ca.gov/CCR-T14-MPAs.