

### 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 Carmel Pinnacles 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 Carmel Pinnacles State Marine Reserve is to protect the complex, unique rocky seafloor habitat, kelp beds, granite pinnacles, and patches of sandy seafloor. Carmel Submarine Canyon funnels cold, nutrient-rich water into the reserve, helping to support an array of life. Strawberry anemones, nudibranchs, and colorful hydrocorals cover the shallower pinnacles, and schools of vermilion rockfish and blue rockfish are abundant in deeper waters. Lingcod, China rockfish, and cabezon traverse the rocky reefs, while wolf-eels peer from rocky crevices. In shallower areas, the kelp canopy serves as refuge for many species, including kelp greenling, black rockfish, and gopher rockfish. Sea lions, sea otters, seals, and the occasional pod of Risso's dolphins can be seen hunting in these waters.

Carmel Pinnacles State Marine Reserve overlaps a small portion of [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary](#). Placing a state marine reserve here provides very high levels of protection for local marine species and the habitats they use.



Report poachers and polluters  
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or text 847411 - begin message with "Caltip"  
followed by the details.



### Quick Facts: Carmel Pinnacles State Marine Reserve

- **MPA size:** 0.53 square miles
- **Depth range:** 69 to 223 feet
- **Habitat composition:**  
Rock: 2.90 square miles  
Sand/mud: 0.13 square miles



Non-Consumptive  
Activities

No Fishing

No Collecting

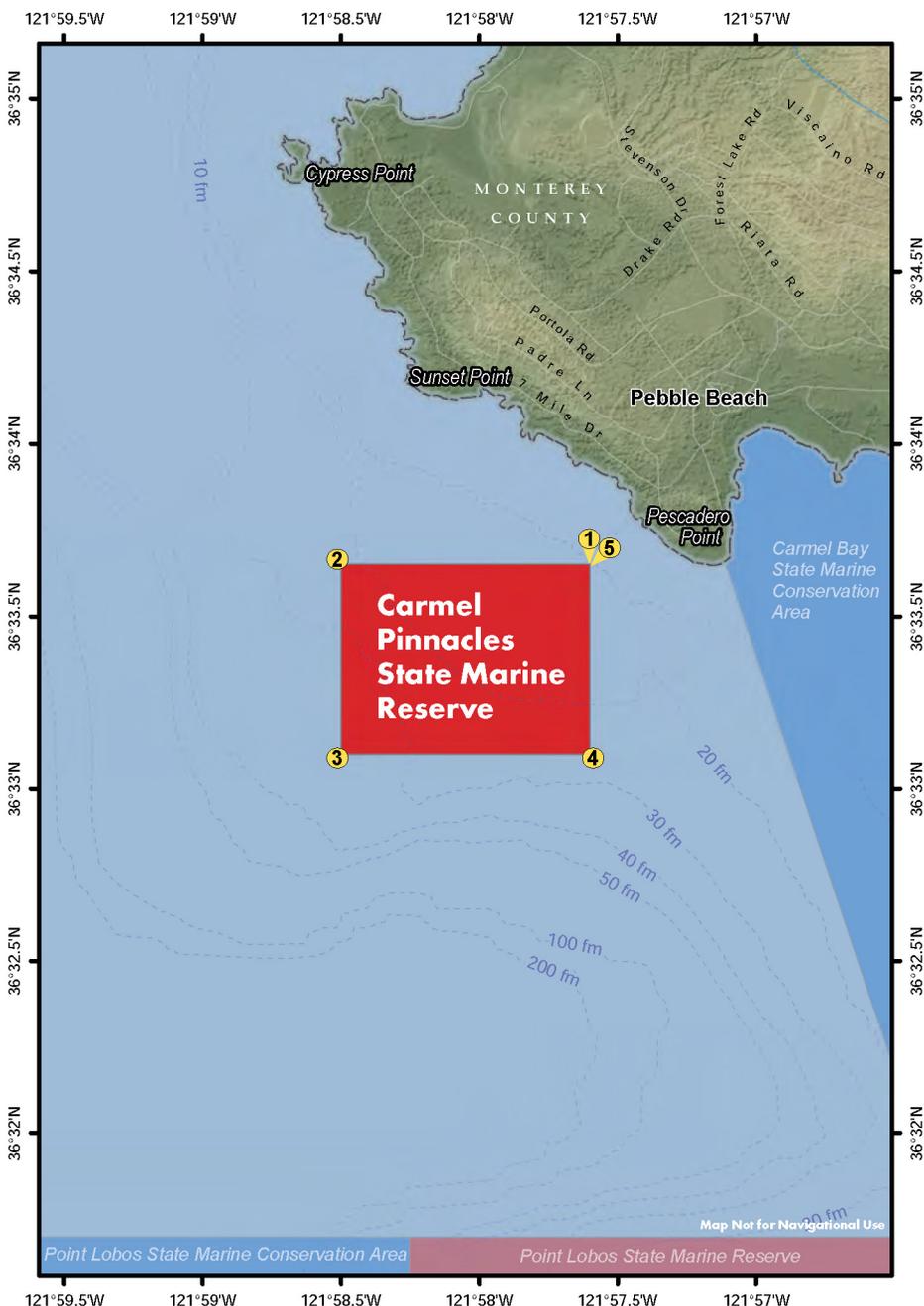
### Further Information:

- MPA Website: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs)
- MPA and Sportfishing Interactive Map: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap)
- Email: [AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov)

Photos - Upper: Kelp forest at Carmel Pinnacles State Marine Reserve, photo © Stefanie CC BY-NC 2.0.  
Lower right: China rockfish at the reserve, photo © Steve Lonhart, NOAA MBNMS CC0. Lower left:  
California hydrocoral, purple sea urchins, and other invertebrates at the reserve, photo © Brenna Green  
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# Carmel Pinnacles State Marine Reserve

Central California - Monterey County



## Carmel Pinnacles 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:

- 36° 33.650' N. lat. 121° 57.600' W. long. ①;
- 36° 33.650' N. lat. 121° 58.500' W. long. ②;
- 36° 33.100' N. lat. 121° 58.500' W. long. ③;
- 36° 33.100' N. lat. 121° 57.600' W. long. ④; and
- 36° 33.650' N. lat. 121° 57.600' 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/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network).