What is a California marine protected area (or “MPA”)?
An MPA is a type of managed area whose main purpose is to protect or conserve marine life and habitats in ocean 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. Most marine conservation areas such as MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area provide some opportunity for commercial and/or recreational take (species and gear exceptions vary by location - see reverse).

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 conservation area?
One of the goals for MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area is to protect the rocky reef, sandy seafloor, and kelp forest habitat found there. Mussels, barnacles, and anemones cling to the rocky tidepools, while worms, clams, and sand crabs burrow into the sand and shorebirds, like sandpipers and whimbrels, probe the sediments for their meals. The sandy seafloor habitat supports Dungeness crab, sand dollars, and flatfish. Rocky reef areas provide a foothold for bull kelp to create underwater forests. Rockfish, lingcod, and cabezon are common here, while abalone, sea cucumber, and sea urchin navigate amongst the rocky outcroppings. MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area replaced a smaller marine protected area at this location, and provides essentially the same protections as the earlier marine protected area. MacKerricher State Park shares a land-side boundary with this conservation area. Placing a state marine conservation area here provides moderately high levels of protection for marine life and the habitats they use.

Quick Facts: MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area
- **MPA size:** 2.48 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 4.1 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 119 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
  - Sand/mud: 1.13 square miles
  - Rock: 1.32 square miles
  - Other: 0.03 square miles

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

Photos - **Upper:** Shoreline at MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area. photo © Gord Webster, CC BY-SA 2.0  **Lower right:** China rockfish and anemones at the conservation area. photo © Kevin Joe  **Lower left:** Young red abalone at the conservation area. photo © Alison Young, CC BY-NC 2.0

Report poachers and polluters  
Call CalTIP: 1 (888) 334-2258 or text 847411 - begin message with “Caltip” followed by the details.
MacKerricher State Marine Conservation Area
Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Boundary:
This area is bounded by the mean high tide line and straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

39° 30.100' N. lat. 123° 47.327' W. long.;
39° 30.100' N. lat. 123° 49.000' W. long.;
39° 27.120' N. lat. 123° 49.000' W. long.; and
39° 27.120' N. lat. 123° 48.830' W. long.

Permitted/Prohibited Uses:
1. It is unlawful to injure, damage, take, or possess any living, geological, or cultural marine resource for recreational and/or commercial purposes, with the following specified exceptions:
   a. All recreational take is allowed in accordance with current regulations.
   b. All commercial take is allowed in accordance with current regulations, except the commercial take of bull kelp (Nereocystis luetkeana) and giant kelp (Macrocystis pyrifera) is prohibited.

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.