

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 Point Arena 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 Point Arena State Marine Reserve is to protect the kelp forests, tidepools, rock walls, cobbled reefs, pinnacles, caverns, and large swaths of deep sandy seafloor habitat found there. Point Arena's strong upwelling brings cold, nutrient-rich water from the depths to the surface, making these waters highly productive. Seabirds dive beneath the surface to feast on small fish such as anchovies and sardines. Rocky reefs offer vital habitat for kelp, scallops, and anemones. Within kelp forests, schools of blue rockfish and black rockfish search for food while lingcod lie in wait among the rocks to ambush their prey. Away from rocks and boulders, Dungeness crab scurry past the more stationary sea stars, and flatfish blend in with the sandy sediments.

[Point Arena State Marine Reserve](#) shares a southern border with [Sea Lion Cove State Marine Conservation Area](#), a western border with [Point Arena State Marine Conservation Area](#), and overlaps a portion of the [Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary](#). 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: Point Arena State Marine Reserve

- **MPA size:** 4.38 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 2.3 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 173 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
Rock: 3.61 square miles
Sand/mud: 2.49 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: Point Arena State Marine Reserve, photo © Frank Schulenburg, CC BY-SA 3.0.
Lower right: Yelloweye rockfish at the reserve, photo © Chris Grossman, diver.net.
Lower left: Sea strawberry soft coral at the reserve, photo © Chris Grossman, diver.net.



Point Arena State Marine Reserve Boundaries and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

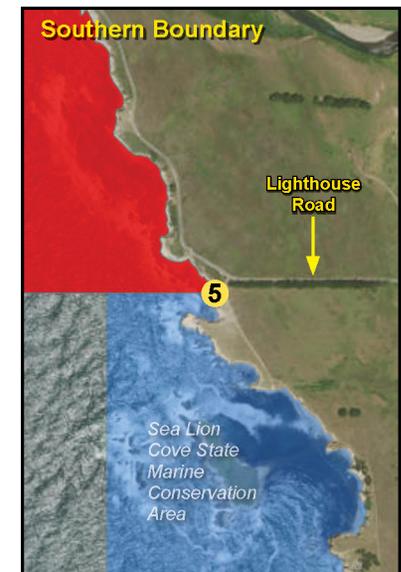
Boundary:

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

- 38° 57.350' N. lat. 123° 44.500' W. long. ①;
- 38° 59.000' N. lat. 123° 44.500' W. long. ②;
- 38° 59.000' N. lat. 123° 46.000' W. long. ③;
- 38° 56.400' N. lat. 123° 46.000' W. long. ④; and
- 38° 56.400' N. lat. 123° 43.820' 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