

# Estero Americano State Marine Recreational Management Area

North Central California Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), *Established May 2010*



Kayaker and shorebirds  
Photo by Andrea Pickart



Double crested cormorants and brown pelicans  
(*Phalacrocorax auritus*)  
Photo by A. Lui



Marsh  
Photo by Andrea Pickart

## Site Overview

Photos are representative of the North Central Coast Region and may not be within this MPA.

## What is an MPA?

MPAs are a type of [marine managed area](#) (MMA) where marine or estuarine waters are set aside primarily to protect or conserve marine life and associated habitats. California has a coastal network of 124 protected areas designed to help increase the coherence and effectiveness of protecting the state's marine life, habitats, and ecosystems. The network includes three types of MPA: [state marine reserve](#) (SMR), [state marine conservation area](#) (SMCA), and [state marine park](#) (SMP); one MMA: [state marine recreational management area](#) (SMRMA); and [special closures](#). There are 119 MPAs, 5 MMAs and 15 special closures, each with unique boundaries and regulations in the network. Non-consumptive activities, restoration, and permitted scientific research are allowed.

## What is a SMRMA?

A **SMRMA** is a type of MMA that provides protection equivalent to an MPA. A SMRMA generally prohibits the take of marine resources. (*Area restrictions are defined in [Title 14, Section 632\(a\)\(1\)\(D\)](#)*).

## Estero Americano SMRMA Overview

- **SMRMA size:** 0.13 square miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 10 feet
- **Along-shore span (shoreline):** 1.2 square miles

## Estero Americano SMRMA Key Habitats

- **Beaches:** 0.3 miles
- **Rocky shores:** 0.44 miles
- **Coastal marsh:** 0.08 miles
- **Marsh:** 0.01 square miles
- **Estuary:** 0.12 square miles
- **Eelgrass:** 0.09 square miles

## Where is Estero Americano SMRMA?



## Boundaries and Regulations

**Boundary:** This area includes the waters below the mean high tide line within Estero Americano westward of longitude 122° 59.250' W.

**Only the following take is allowed in Estero Americano SMRMA:** Waterfowl may be taken in accordance with the general waterfowl regulations (Sections 502, 550, 551, and 552).

# Estero Americano State Marine Recreational Management Area

## How and Why Estero Americano Bay was Chosen for a SMRMA

This SMRMA was designed through a collaborative, regional public process by a cross-interest regional stakeholder group (RSG). Using scientific criteria, public input and local resource knowledge the RSG developed MPA proposals. RSG proposals included specific objectives (why the site should be an MPA-*included below*), the classification (type of MPA), boundaries, and regulations. Final MPA proposals were sent to the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) for their adoption process. Estero Americano SMRMA was adopted by the Commission in 2010.

### **North Central Coast RSG Specific Objectives for Estero Americano SMRMA:**

Example of species most likely to benefit: Significant seabird aggregations, striped bass, starry flounder, gobies eelgrass, ghost shrimp, mud shrimp, & brackish water clams. 1) Protect species diversity and abundance, trophic structure & food webs, natural age structure & genetic diversity in representative habitats. Sustain or increase reproduction of species by protecting & retaining large individuals & protecting breeding, foraging, rearing & nursery areas. Enhance scientific validity with similar habitat replicated in close proximity.

## Species Likely to Benefit from the Establishment of MPAs in California

Species likely to benefit from establishing an MPA are those, whose home range, behavior, reproduction, exploitation rate or population status indicates that they may benefit from spatial management. This includes species that are directly targeted by fisheries, those which are caught incidental to fishing for the target species (bycatch) and which cannot be returned to the water with a high rate of survival, and those which may be indirectly impacted through ecological changes within MPAs.

For a list of species likely to benefit from MPAs statewide: [www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/species.asp](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/species.asp)

For a list of species likely to benefit from north central coast MPAs: [www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders/b2dc.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders/b2dc.pdf)

## North Central Coast Regional Resources

California MPA Overview:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Overview](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Overview)

North Central Coast Regional Goals and Objectives:

[www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders/b4da.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders/b4da.pdf)

California MLPA North Central Coast Study Region Description of MPAs:

[www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/ipa\\_description.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/ipa_description.pdf)

Methods Used to Evaluate MPAs in the North Central Coast:

[www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/nccrsg-dprops/evaluationmethods.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/nccrsg-dprops/evaluationmethods.pdf)

MPA Research and Monitoring Activities:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Research-And-Monitoring](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Research-And-Monitoring)

Regional MPA Statistics:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Statistics](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Statistics)

Regional Planning History:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Planning-Process](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Planning-Process)

## California MPA Network Resources

Detailed MPA guidebooks maps and brochures:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network)

California Marine Life Protection Act Marine Protected Areas Master Plan:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Master-Plan](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Master-Plan)

Marine Life Protection Act Summary and Network Goals:

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Goals](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Goals)



**For more information, visit:**

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs)

**Email:**

[AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov)

**MPA Mobile:**



Report poaching and polluting,

Call CalTIP

**1-888-334-2258**

The information in this document does not replace the official regulatory language found in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632 [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network/Title-14-Section-632](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network/Title-14-Section-632)