

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. Special closures such as Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure are specifically designed to minimize human disturbance at significant marine mammal haulout sites and seabird rookeries by restricting boating and access, seasonally or year-round.

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 special closure?

One of the goals for Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure is to shield the region's largest and most diverse nesting seabird colony on the mainland coast from human disturbance. Species found here include common murre, cormorants, western gull, pigeon guillemot, rhinoceros auklet, ash storm-petrel, and brown pelican. The special closure creates ideal nesting habitat. The survival rates of both parents and young are enhanced by the nearby abundant food sources. The special closure also protects the sandy seafloor, rocky reefs, and extensive surfgrass beds found here. California sea lions, harbor seals, and northern elephant seals are often seen resting on offshore rocks or on the special closure's sandy beaches.

Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure overlaps a portion of [Point Reyes National Seashore](#), [Point Reyes Headlands Area of Special Biological Significance](#), and the [Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary](#). Placing a special closure here provides very high levels of protection for seabirds, marine mammals, and the habitats they use.



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Quick Facts: Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure

- **Size:** 0.67 square miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 40 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
Sand/mud: 0.17 square miles
Rock: 1.21 square miles



**NO
ENTRY**

See Regulations On Back

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 Reyes Headlands Special Closure. photo © King of Hearts, CC BY-SA 4.0 Lower right: California sea lions and harbor seals at the special closure. photo © sea kangaroo, CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower left: Brandt's cormorants at the special closure. photo © David Renoult, CC BY-NC 2.0

Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure

North Central California - Marin County



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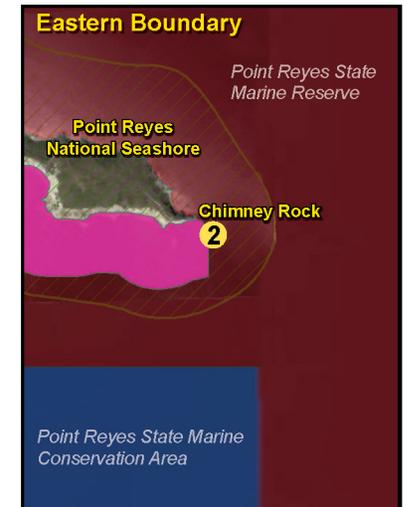
Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Special restrictions on boating and access apply to the Point Reyes headlands as follows.

1. A special closure is designated on the south side of the Point Reyes headlands from the mean high tide line to a distance of 1,000 feet seaward of the mean lower low tide line of any shoreline between lines extending due south from each of the following two points:

- 37° 59.650' N. lat. 123° 01.000' W. long. ① and
- 37° 59.390' N. lat. 122° 57.800' W. long. ②

2. No person except Department employees or employees of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, or United States Coast Guard, in performing their official duties, or unless permission is granted by the Department, shall enter this area at any time.



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.