

Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area

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



Tidal flats
Photo by Andrea Pickart



Brown pelican and rocky shores
(*Pelecanus occidentalis*)
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.

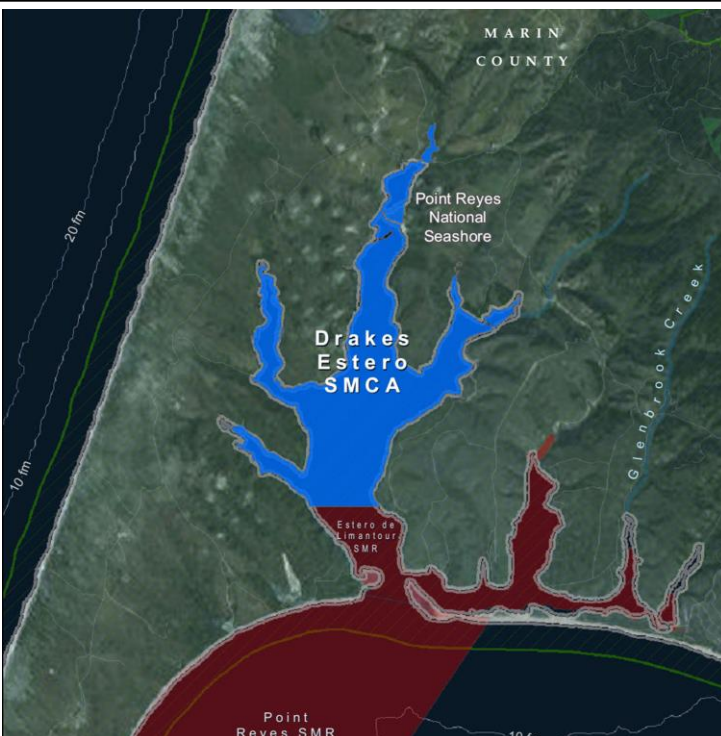
What is an SMCA?

An **SMCA** is a type of MPA that protects resources by allowing for only specific types of recreational and/or commercial take to occur. (Area restrictions are defined in [Title 14, Section 632\(a\)\(1\)\(C\)](#)).

Drakes Estero SMCA Overview

- **MPA size:** 2.5 square miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 10 feet
- **Along-shore span (shoreline):** 5.6 miles

Where is Drakes Estero SMCA?



Drakes Estero SMCA Key Habitats

- **Beaches:** 2.27 miles
- **Rocky shores:** 4.99 miles
- **Tidal flats:** 16.24 miles
- **Coastal marsh:** 11.49 miles
- **Marsh:** 0.32 square miles
- **Eelgrass:** 2.35 square miles
- **Estuary:** 2.51 square miles
- **Sand (all depths):** 2.5 square miles

Boundaries and Regulations

Boundary: This area includes the waters below the mean high tide line within Drakes Estero northward of a line connecting the following two points:

38° 02.660' N. lat. 122° 56.900' W. long.; and
38° 02.660' N. lat. 122° 56.150' W. long.

Only the following take is allowed in Drakes Estero SMCA: the recreational take of clams.

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How and Why Drakes Estero was Chosen for an SMCA

MPAs were 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. Drakes Estero SMCA was adopted by the Commission in 2010.

North Central Coast RSG Specific Objectives for Drakes Estero SMCA:

Protects estuarine habitats while allowing existing aquaculture activities as well as recreational clamming to continue.

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

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

North Central Coast Regional Resources

California MPA Overview:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Overview

North Central Coast Regional Goals and Objectives:

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

Methods Used to Evaluate MPAs in the North Central Coast:

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/nccrsg-dprops/evaluationmethods.pdf

MPA Research and Monitoring Activities:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Research-And-Monitoring

Regional MPA Statistics:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Statistics

Regional Planning History:

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

California Marine Life Protection Act Marine Protected Areas Master Plan:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Master-Plan

Marine Life Protection Act Summary and Network Goals:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Goals



For more information, visit:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs

Email:

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