

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 Montara 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 [Montara State Marine Reserve](#) is to protect the sandy seafloor, kelp forest, and surfgrass habitats found there, as well as a massive rocky reef that extends more than a mile out to sea. The reef's caves, walls, boulders, and canyons provide hunting grounds and shelter for rockfish, lingcod, and cabezon, while abalone, urchins, and octopus hide in crevices. Large stretches of rocky coastline host tidepools filled with anemones, barnacles, hermit crabs, and iridescent kelp. Halibut, rays, sanddabs, and Dungeness crab can be found on the extensive sandy seafloor. Fueled by powerful upwelling of nutrient-rich water, this area attracts schools of small fish and krill that in turn support local and migrating whales, seals, sea lions, and seabirds.

The reserve shares a southern boundary with [Pillar Point State Marine Conservation Area](#), and part of its land-side boundary with [Montara State Beach](#). It overlaps [Fitzgerald Marine Reserve](#), [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary](#), and [James V. Fitzgerald Area of Special Biological Significance](#). Placing a state marine reserve here provides very high levels of protection for local marine species and the habitats they use.



Report poachers and polluters
Call CalTIP: 1 (888) 334-2258

or text 847411 - begin message with "Caltip"
followed by the details.



Quick Facts: Montara State Marine Reserve

- **MPA size:** 11.81 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 3.2 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 168 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
 - Rock: 8.65 square miles
 - Sand/mud: 8.26 square miles



Non-Consumptive Activities

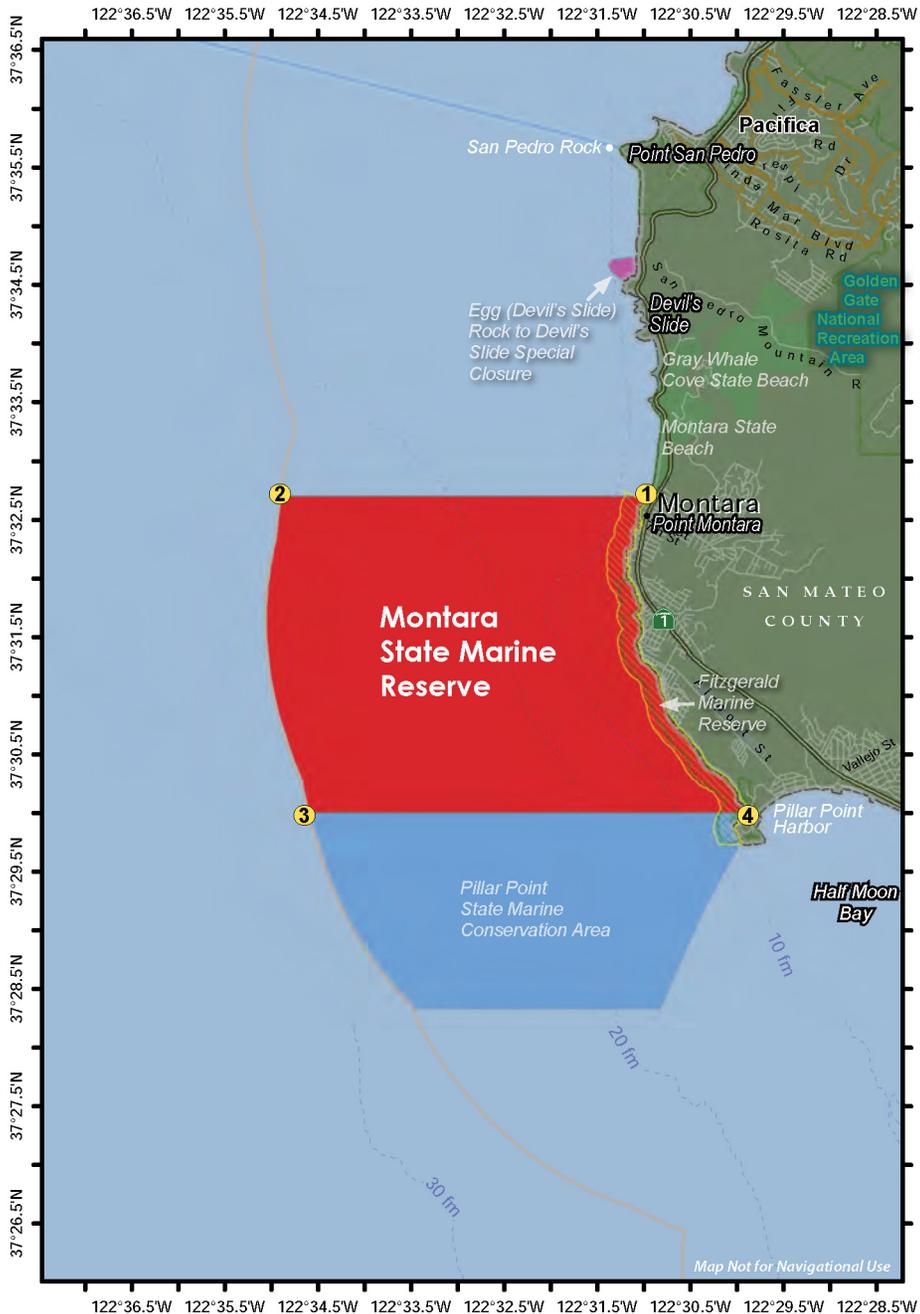
No Fishing

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: Coastline at Montara State Marine Reserve. photo © Dawn Endico, CC BY-SA 2.0
Lower right: Christmas anemone in a reserve tidepool. photo © Donna Pomeroy, CC BY-NC 2.0
Lower left: Lingcod on a colorful rocky reef in the reserve. CDFW/MARE photo



Montara State Marine Reserve Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

This area partially overlaps Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

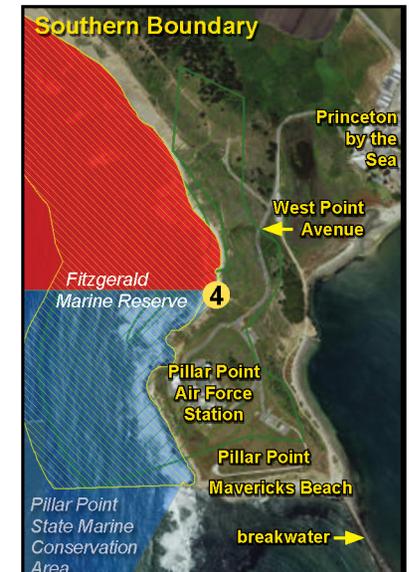
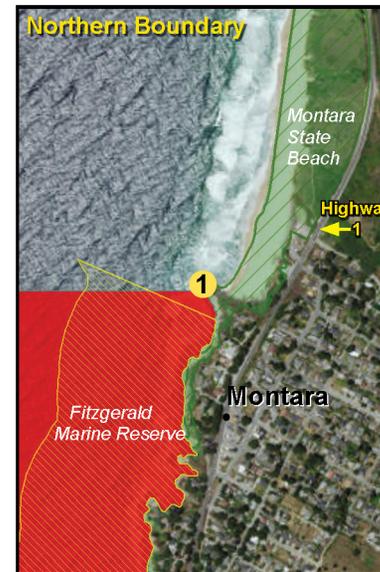
Boundary:

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

- 37° 32.700' N. lat. 122° 31.000' W. long. ①;
- 37° 32.700' N. lat. 122° 34.908' W. long. ②; thence southward along the three nautical mile offshore boundary to
- 37° 30.000' N. lat. 122° 34.608' W. long. ③; and
- 37° 30.000' N. lat. 122° 29.920' W. long. ④

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/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network.