

Pillar Point State Marine Conservation Area

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



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.

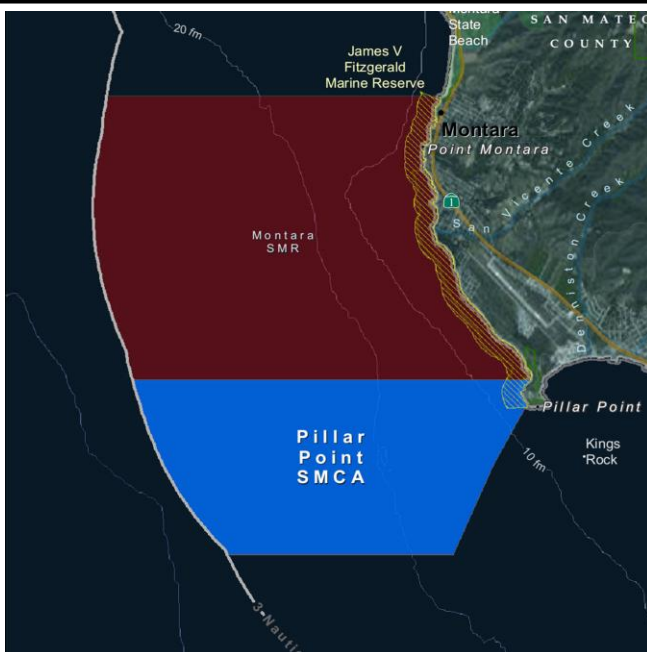
What is an SMCA?

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\(a\)\(1\)\(C\)](#)).

Pillar Point SMCA Key Habitats

- **Beaches:** 0.07 miles
- **Rocky shores:** 0.3 miles
- **Surfgrass:** 0.3 miles
- **Sand (all depths):** 5.55 square miles
- **Rock (all depths):** 1.06 square miles
- **Unidentified (all depths):** 0.12 square miles

Where is Pillar Point SMCA?



Pillar Point SMCA Overview

- **MPA size:** 6.70 square miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 174 feet
- **Along-shore span (shoreline):** 1.9 miles

Boundaries and Regulations

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° 30.000' N. lat. 122° 29.920' W. long.;
37° 30.000' N. lat. 122° 34.608' W. long.; thence southward along the three nautical mile offshore boundary to
37° 28.330' N. lat. 122° 33.489' W. long.;
37° 28.330' N. lat. 122° 30.830' W. long.;
37° 29.180' N. lat. 122° 30.360' W. long.;
37° 29.740' N. lat. 122° 29.970' W. long.; and
37° 29.733' N. lat. 122° 29.950' W. long.

Only the following take is allowed in Pillar Point SMCA:

1. The recreational take of [pelagic finfish](#) by trolling, Dungeness crab by trap, and market squid by hand-held dip net.
2. The commercial take of [pelagic finfish](#) by troll or round haul net, Dungeness crab by trap, and market squid by round haul net. Not more than five percent by weight of any commercial pelagic finfish or market squid catch landed or possessed shall be other incidentally taken species.

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How and Why Pillar Point 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. Pillar Point SMCA was adopted by the Commission in 2010.

North Central Coast RSG Specific Objectives for Pillar Point SMCA:

Example of species most likely to benefit: nearshore, shelf & deeper nearshore rockfishes, lingcod, cabezon, kelp greenling, surfperches, prickleback eel, kelp, red crab, halibut, harbor seals, sharks, abalone, rays, forage fishes, invertebrates (except Dungeness crab) & algae. Protect area of high benthic species diversity & maintain species diversity & abundance characteristic of north central coast region north of Point Reyes. Monitor appropriate indicator species with focus on Nearshore and Deeper Nearshore Fishery Management Plan species. Protect natural trophic structure & food webs, including pelagic finfish that serve as prey for other fish, marine birds & marine mammals. Enhance non-consumptive recreational & educational experiences by protecting intertidal ecosystems by reducing congestion & increasing size & abundance of species most likely to benefit from MPAs. Help restore depleted species, such as near shore & deeper nearshore species. Protect larval sources & enhance reproductive capacity of shelf species including rockfishes. Protect area with diverse habitats & associated species including kelp forest ecosystems. Protect natural heritage location while minimizing socioeconomic impacts to local communities. Protect forage base for colonies of marine mammals as well as protect colonies from disturbance. Provide comparison analysis environment by providing SMR adjacent to SMCA across range of depths. Protect area, when combined with adjacent SMCA, results in MPA "cluster" in preferred size range & functions as an integral part of network/backbone of MPAs and is afforded measures of adaptive management, review & evaluation of management effectiveness.

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/ncrsq-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,
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