

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 Southeast Farallon Island 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?

The Farallon Islands archipelago is a highly productive area filled with all manner of marine life, from plankton to whales. One of the goals for Southeast Farallon Island Special Closure is to shield seabird and marine mammal rookeries and haulout areas from human disturbance. The special closure protects part of the largest colony of nesting seabirds in the contiguous United States. Thirteen species of seabirds regularly nest on the [Farallon Islands](#), including the pigeon guillemot, Brandt's cormorant, rhinoceros auklet, and ashy storm-petrel. Steller and California sea lions, northern fur seals, and northern elephant seals also use the island as a haulout and rookery site.

Southeast Farallon Island Special Closure overlaps [Southeast Farallon Island State Marine Reserve](#), and a portion of the [Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary](#) and [Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge](#). Placing a special closure here provides very high levels of protection for seabirds, marine mammals, and the habitats they use.



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



Quick Facts: Southeast Farallon Island Special Closure

- **Size:** 0.18 square miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 19 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
 - Rock: 0.46 square miles
 - Sand/mud: < 0.01 square miles



ENTRY

Restrictions on Entry, Anchoring, and
Non-Consumptive Activities
See Regulations On Back

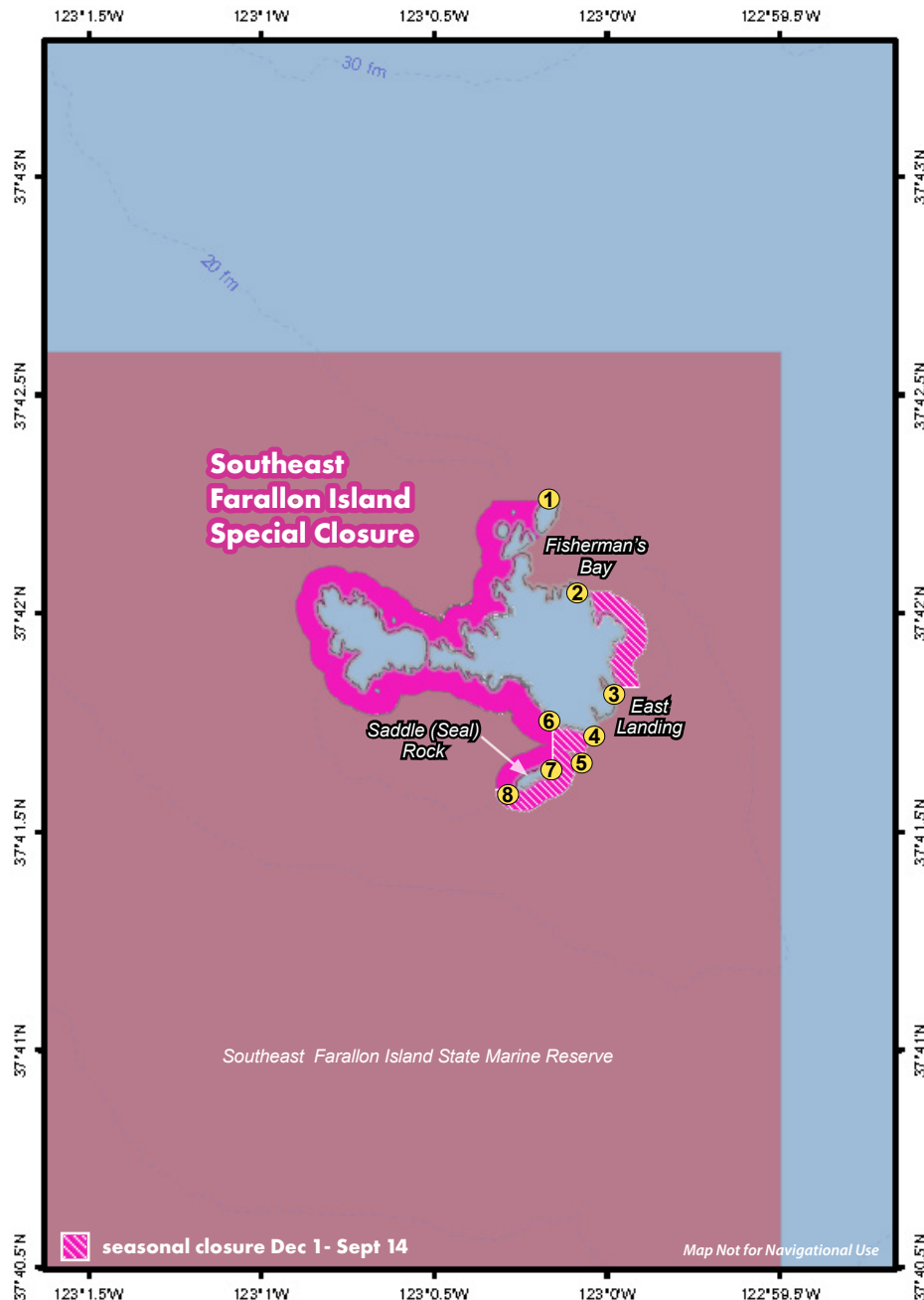
No Fishing

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: Aerial view of Southeast Farallon Island. photo © Jan Roletto Lower right: Northern fur seal pup at Southeast Farallon Island. photo © John Garrett CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower left: Pigeon guillemot with a longfin gunnel in its beak at Southeast Farallon Island. photo © John Garrett CC BY-NC 2.0



Southeast Farallon Island Special Closure Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Special regulations on boating and access apply to the island and islets comprising the Southeast Farallon Island as follows.

1. A special closure is established at the Southeast Farallon Island.
2. Except as permitted by federal law or emergency caused by hazardous weather, or as authorized by [4., below], no vessel shall be operated or anchored at any time from the mean high tide line to a distance of 300 feet seaward of the mean lower low tide line of any shoreline of the Southeast Farallon Island year-round, EXCEPT:
 - a. The area north of Fisherman's Bay, from a line extending due west from 37° 42.260' N. lat. 123° 00.160' W. long. ①, following clockwise around the island (including Fisherman's Bay), to a line extending due east from 37° 42.050' N. lat. 123° 00.070' W. long. ②
 - b. At East Landing, from a line extending due east from 37° 41.830' N. lat. 122° 59.980' W. long. ③ following clockwise around the island, to a straight line connecting the following two points: 37° 41.720' N. lat. 123° 00.050' W. long. ④; and 37° 41.680' N. lat. 123° 00.070' W. long. ⑤
3. This closure as defined in [2., above] exists year round, except for the following areas, which are closed only from December 1 through September 14 of each year:
 - a. From Fisherman's Bay to East Landing, from a line extending due east from 37° 42.050' N. lat. 123° 00.070' W. long. ②, following clockwise around the island to a line extending due east from 37° 41.830' N. lat. 122° 59.980' W. long. ③
 - b. The area southwest of East Landing, from a straight line connecting the following two points: 37° 41.720' N. lat. 123° 00.050' W. long. ④; and 37° 41.680' N. lat. 123° 00.070' W. long. ⑤ following clockwise around the main island to a straight line extending due south from 37° 41.760' N. lat. 123° 00.160' W. long. ⑥ to 37° 41.640' N. lat. 123° 00.160' W. long. ⑦, and on the southeast side of Saddle (Seal) Rock, from a straight line extending due south from 37° 41.760' N. lat. 123° 00.160' W. long. ⑥, following clockwise around Saddle (Seal) Rock, to a line extending due west from 37° 41.600' N. lat. 123° 00.260' W. long. ⑧
4. No person except Department employees or employees of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or United States Coast Guard, in performing their official duties, or unless permission is granted by the Department, shall enter the area defined in [2. or 3., above] during the closure period.
5. All vessels shall observe a five (5) nautical mile per hour speed limit 1,000 feet seaward of the mean lower low tide line of any shoreline of the Southeast Farallon Island.
6. In an area bounded by the mean high tide line and a distance of one nautical mile seaward of the mean lower low tide line of any of the islands and islets comprising the Southeast Farallon Island, the following restrictions apply:
 - a. All commercial diving vessels operating in the defined area shall have their vessel engine exhaust system terminate either through a muffler for dry exhaust systems, or below the vessel waterline for wet exhaust systems.
 - b. All commercial diving vessels equipped with an open, deck-mounted air compressor system, while operating in the defined area, shall have their air compressor's engine exhaust system terminate below the vessel waterline.

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.