

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. Most marine conservation areas such as Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area provide some opportunity for commercial and/or recreational take (species and gear exceptions vary by location - see reverse).

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 conservation area?

One of the goals for Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area is to protect the surfgrass, sandy seafloor, rocky reef, and kelp forest habitat found there. The cold, nutrient rich water that rises from the depths of the Monterey Submarine Canyon helps to support a remarkable array of life within these habitats. The conservation area's rocky reefs are covered with sea stars, cup corals, and coralline algae. Black perch hunt for food in the surfgrass beds and flatfish such as thornbacks forage along the sandy seafloor, while schools of northern anchovies put in a seasonal appearance. Southern sea otters are often seen floating on their backs in the kelp, cracking open crabs or clam shells to get to the meat inside.

This conservation area shares a northern boundary with [Lovers Point-Julia Platt State Marine Reserve](#), and overlaps the much larger [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary](#). Placing a state marine conservation area here provides moderately high levels of protection for marine life and the habitats they use.



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Quick Facts: Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area

- **MPA size:** 0.23 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 0.7 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 74 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
 - Sand/mud: 0.16 square miles
 - Rock: 0.17 square miles



Non-Consumptive Activities

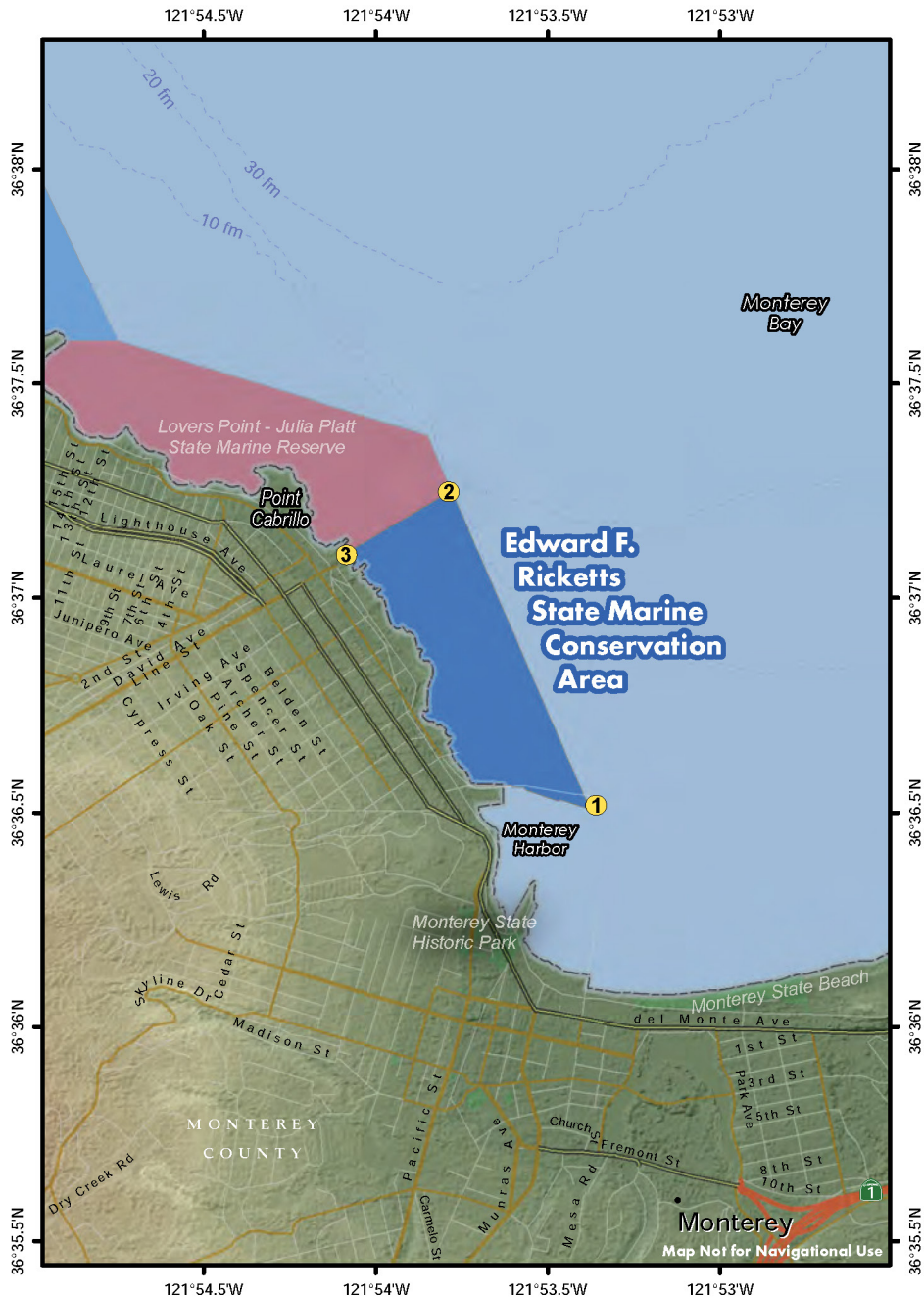
Fishing
See Regulations
On Back

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: A willet stands on the rocky shore at Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area. photo © mustardlypig, CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower right: Thornback at the conservation area. photo © Morton Jonuschat, CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower left: Giant sea star and kelp forest at the conservation area. photo © Stephanie, CC BY-NC 2.0



Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Boundary:

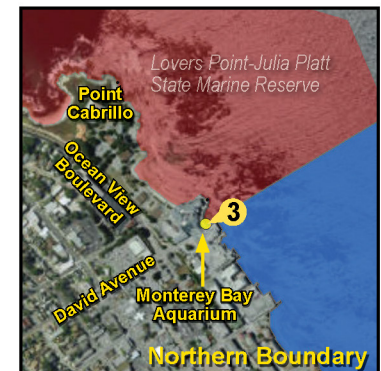
This area is bounded by the mean high tide line and straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

- 36° 36.508' N. lat. 121° 53.379' W. long. ①;
- 36° 37.250' N. lat. 121° 53.780' W. long. ②; and
- 36° 37.100' N. lat. 121° 54.093' W. long. ③

Permitted/Prohibited Uses:

1. It is unlawful to injure, damage, take, or possess any living, geological, or cultural marine resource for commercial and/or recreational purposes, with the following specified exceptions:

- a. The recreational take of finfish* by hook-and-line is allowed.
- b. The commercial take of giant kelp (*Macrocystis pyrifera*) and bull kelp (*Nereocystis* spp.) is allowed by hand in the area defined by subsection 165(c)(4)(D) under the following conditions:
 - A kelp harvester with a valid license issued pursuant to Section 165 may take no more than 12 tons of kelp from the portion of Administrative Kelp Bed 220 within the Edward F. Ricketts State Marine Conservation Area in any calendar month.
 - Duplicate landing records must be kept on board the harvest vessel in accordance with the requirements of Section 165.



* Finfish are defined here as any species of bony fish or cartilaginous fish (sharks, skates and rays).

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.