

Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area

Central California - Established September, 2007



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. California marine recreational management areas focus on the protection, restriction, or enhancement of an area's recreational opportunities while preserving basic natural resources.

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 recreational management area?

One of the goals for Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area is to protect part of one of the largest wetland ecosystems on California's central coast, while allowing traditional waterfowl hunting to continue. The shallow tidal flats, eelgrass beds, and coastal marsh found here provide critical habitat for waterbirds. A long sandspit shelters the bay from the open ocean, providing a protected nursery area for fish and invertebrates, and hunting grounds for fish such as round stingrays. Pacific oysters, Washington and gaper clams, and crabs thrive in the estuary's calm waters. Southern sea otters also use the estuary to hunt for clams and raise their young.

Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area shares an eastern border with [Morro Bay State Marine Reserve](#), and shares a western border with [Montaña de Oro State Park](#). Placing a state marine recreational management area here provides moderate 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: Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area

- **Size:** 3.07 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 5.7 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 18 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
 - Estuary: 3.02 square miles
 - Eelgrass: 0.99 square miles
 - Coastal marsh: 2.41 square miles



Non-Consumptive Activities



Waterfowl Hunting
See Hunting Regulations



Fishing
See Regulations On Back



No Collecting

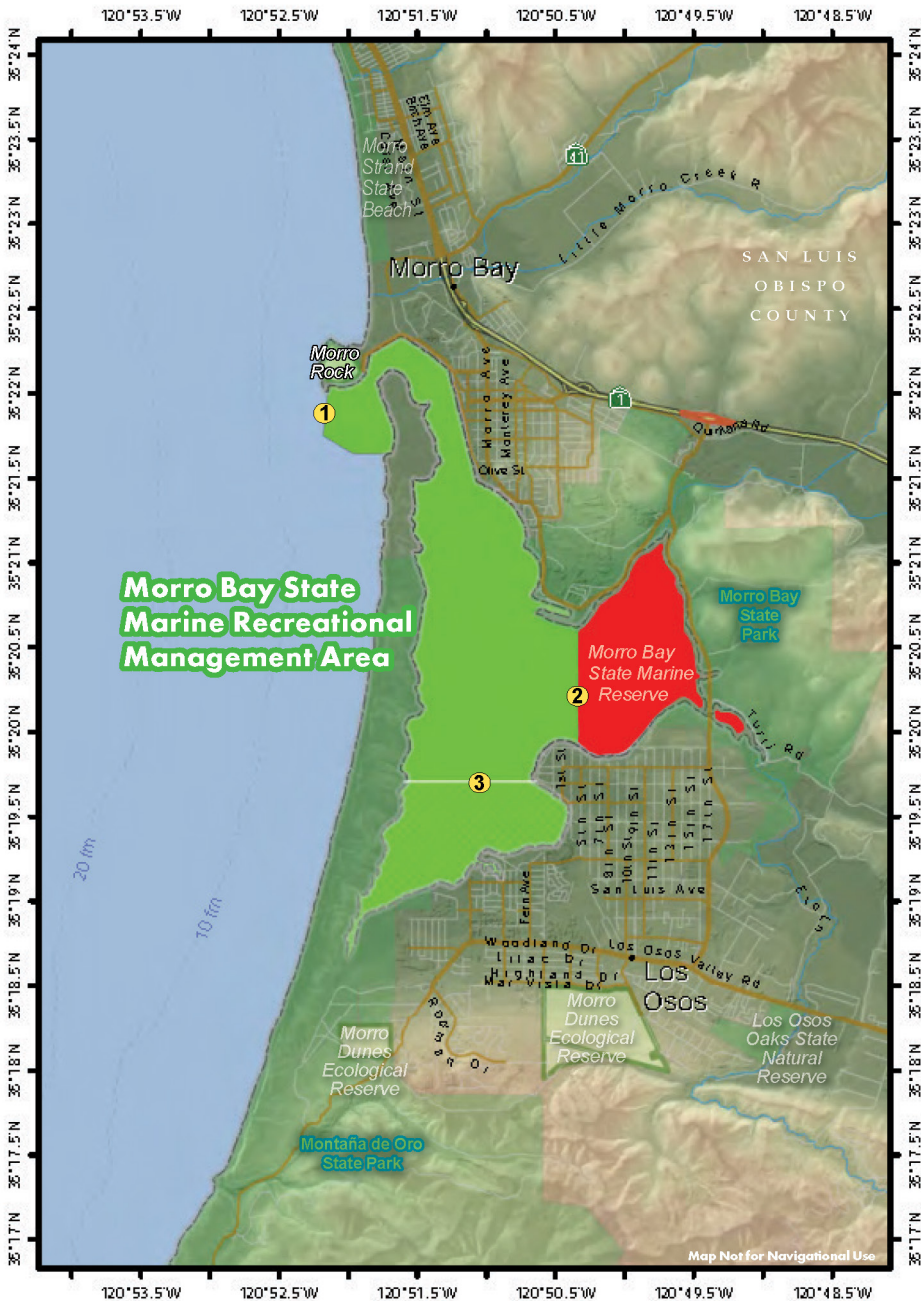
Further Information:

- MPA Website: www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs
- MPA and Sportfishing Interactive Map: www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap
- Email: AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov

Photos - Upper: Northern Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area, Morro Rock in the background, photo © Fred Moore CC BY 2.0 Lower right: Round stingray in the recreational management area, photo © wssailor CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower left: Sea otter eating a gaper clam in the recreational management area, photo © Gena Bentall CC BY-NC 2.0

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Central California - San Luis Obispo County



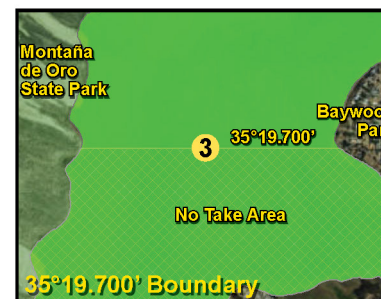
Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Boundary:

This area includes the area below mean high tide within Morro Bay east of the Morro Bay entrance breakwater ① and west of longitude 120° 50.340' W. ②

Permitted/Prohibited Uses:

1. Recreational hunting of waterfowl is allowed unless otherwise restricted by hunting regulations (sections 502, 550, 551, and 552).
2. Waterfowl may be taken in accordance with the general waterfowl regulations (Sections 502, 550, 551, and 552).
3. Take of all living, geological, or cultural marine resources is prohibited except the following specified activities are allowed north of latitude 35°19.700' N: ③
 - The recreational take of finfish*.
 - Aquaculture pursuant to a valid state water bottom lease and permit.
 - Storing finfish taken outside the Morro Bay State Marine Recreational Management Area in a receiver for bait purposes.
 - Dredging for the purpose of harbor and channel operations and pursuant to required and valid permits and approvals.
 - Harbor operations and maintenance and cleaning of vessel hulls and other man-made structures, including removal of living marine resources for these purposes.



* 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/CCR-T14-MPAs.