

San Elijo Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area (No-Take)

Southern California Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), *Established January 2012*



Site Overview

Photos are representative of the South 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 (No-Take)?

An **SMCA (No-Take)** is a type of MPA that protects resources by prohibiting commercial and recreational take while allowing take incidental to the permitted operation and maintenance of artificial structures inside the SMCA.

San Elijo Lagoon SMCA (No Take) Key Habitats & Overview

- **MPA size:** 0.5 square miles
- **Coastal marsh:** 3.78 miles
- **Estuary:** 0.42 square miles
- **Marsh:** 0.27 square miles
- **Unidentified (all depths):** 0.42 square miles

Where is San Elijo Lagoon SMCA (No-Take)?



Boundaries and Regulations

Boundary: This area includes the waters below the mean high tide line within San Elijo Lagoon southeastward of a straight line between the following two points:

33° 00.980' N. lat. 117° 16.857' W. long.; and
33° 00.962' N. lat. 117° 16.850' W. long.

Only the following take is allowed in San Elijo Lagoon SMCA: take incidental to operation and maintenance, maintenance dredging, habitat restoration including sediment deposition, research and education, and maintenance of artificial structures inside the conservation area per any required federal, state and local permits, or activities pursuant to Section 630, or as otherwise authorized by the department.

Boating, swimming, wading, and diving are prohibited within the conservation area.

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How and Why San Elijo Lagoon was Chosen for an SMCA (No-Take)

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 site specific rationale (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. San Elijo Lagoon SMCA (No-Take) was adopted by the Commission in 2012.

South Coast RSG Identified Rationale for San Elijo Lagoon SMCA(No-Take):

Protects important nursery habitat, ecological processes and provides research opportunity. This designation achieves representation and protection of a healthy and permanently tidally influenced lagoon, and links adjacent or nearby marine habitats together as a protected ecological unit. Lagoon is an important resting, stopover and feeding site for an array of migratory birds and waterfowl. Protects important habitat types and ecological processes such as nutrient cycling, larval exchange, and food supply. Protects nursery habitats for marine species. Provides unique research opportunities for study into relationship of estuarine and marine ecosystems.

Species Likely to Benefit from the Establishment of MPAs in California

Species likely to benefit from establishing an MPA are those, whose home range, behavior, reproduction, exploitation rate or population status indicates that they may benefit from spatial management. This includes species that are directly targeted by fisheries, those which are caught incidental to fishing for the target species (bycatch) and which cannot be returned to the water with a high rate of survival, and those which may be indirectly impacted through ecological changes within MPAs.

For a list of species likely to benefit from MPAs statewide: www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/species.asp

For a list of species likely to benefit from south coast MPAs: www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders_sc/b2q.pdf

South Coast Regional Resources

California MPA Overview:

www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs/Network-Overview

South Coast Regional Goals and Objectives:

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders_sc/b1n.pdf

California MLPA South Coast Study Region Description of MPAs:

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders_sc/b1pv.pdf

Methods Used to Evaluate MPAs in the South Coast:

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/binders_sc/b2b.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,
Call CalTIP

1-888-334-2258

The information in this document does not replace the official regulatory language found in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632 www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network/Title-14-Section-632