

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 Duxbury Reef 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 Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area is to protect one of the largest shale reefs in North America, as well as the sandy beaches and surfgrass beds found there. During low tide, the fractures and channels of the shale reef form extensive tidepools filled with seaweed, monkeyface pricklebacks, porcelain crabs, and turban snails. California mussels and gooseneck barnacles cling to rock surfaces, sifting bits of food from the water that washes over them with the tides. The conservation area's sandy seafloor and surfgrass beds support perch, flatfish, nudibranchs, crab, and other species.

Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area overlaps portions of [Point Reyes National Seashore](#), [Duxbury Reef Area of Special Biological Significance](#) and the [Greater Farallones 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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followed by the details.



Quick Facts: Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area

- **MPA size:** 0.69 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 2.8 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 10 feet



Non-Consumptive
Activities

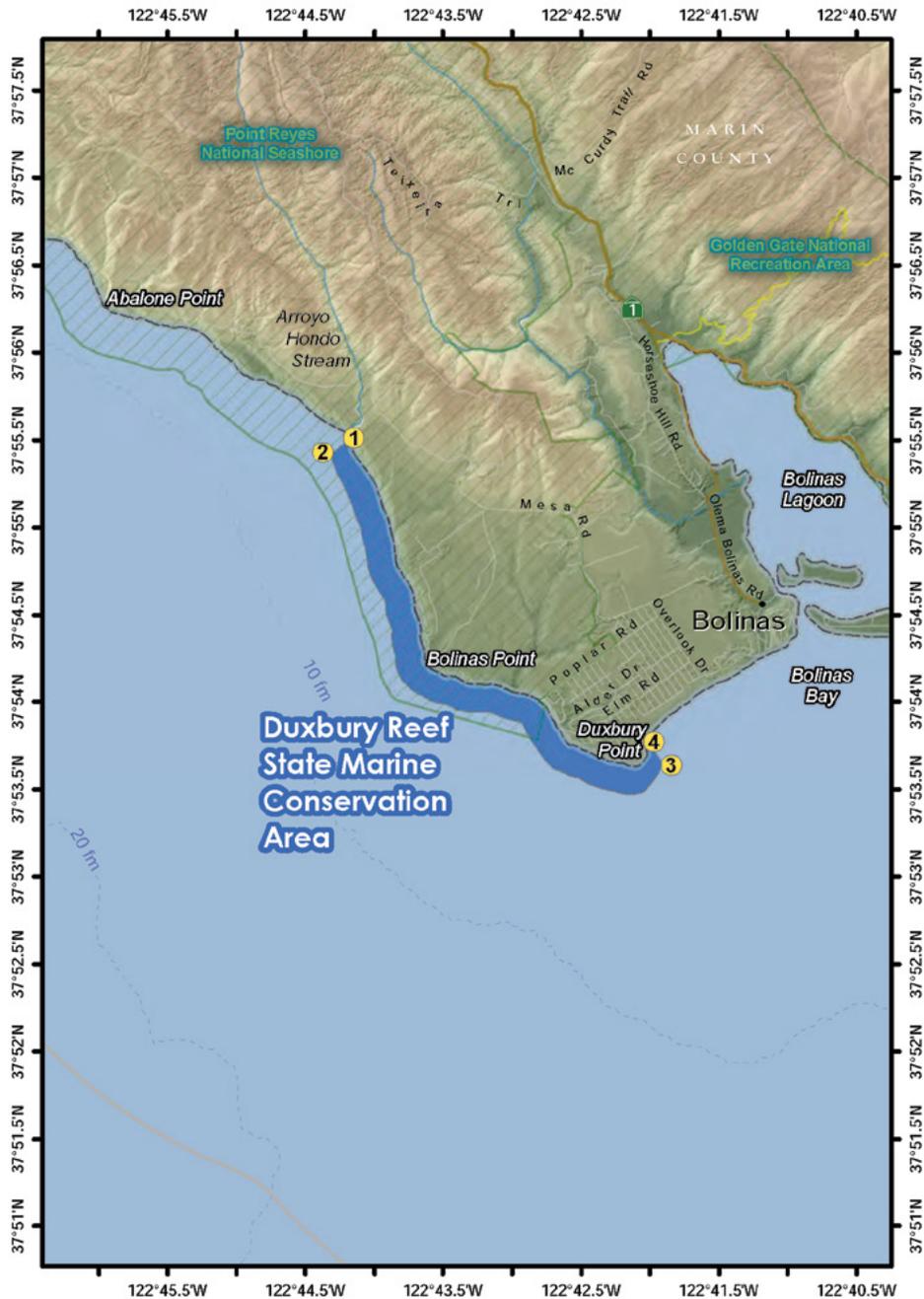
Fishing
See Regulations
On Back

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: Rocky shoreline at Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area. photo © jennconspiracy, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 Lower right: Monkeyface prickleback at Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area. photo © Tamara Schwarz CC BY-NC 2.0 Lower left: Mussel bed at the conservation area. photo © M. Dettling CC BY-NC 2.0



Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

Boundary:

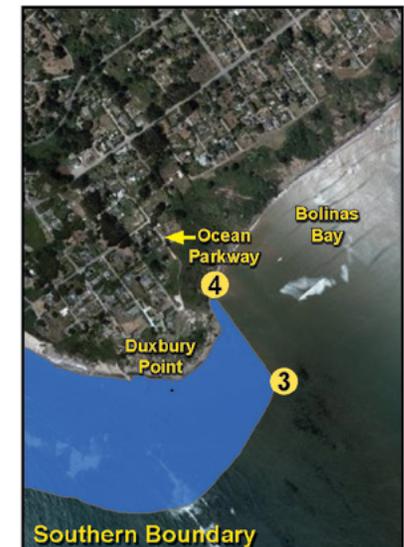
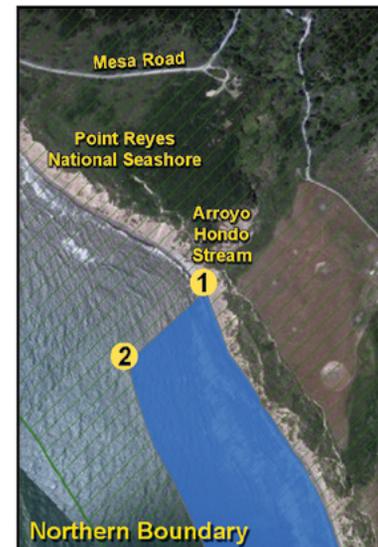
This area is bounded by the mean high tide line, a distance of 1,000 feet seaward of mean lower low water, and the following points:

- 37° 55.514' N. lat. 122° 44.179' W. long. ①;
- 37° 55.420' N. lat. 122° 44.310' W. long. ②;
- 37° 53.650' N. lat. 122° 41.910' W. long. ③; and
- 37° 53.770' N. lat. 122° 42.020' W. long. ④

Permitted/Prohibited Uses:

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

- a. The recreational take of finfish* from shore and abalone** is allowed.



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

**Note: The recreational abalone fishery is closed until April, 2026.

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.