



## Marine Protected Areas

Conserve key marine life and habitats

Preserve natural diversity

Help rebuild depleted populations

Protect geologic features and cultural areas

Support research and education

Offer recreational and economic opportunities

Image above: Bodega Head (Patrick Carney Photography)  
below: gray whale breaching (Jan-Dirk Hansen)



### Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Russian River Area State Parks  
707-869-9177

### California State Parks

Russian River District  
District Office: 707-865-2391  
711, TTY RELAY SERVICE  
[www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

### California Department of Fish and Game

For more information:  
[www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov)

For boundaries and regulations, go to:  
[www.dfg.ca.gov/MLPA](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/MLPA)

Help stop poaching and polluting:  
**1-888-DFG-CALTIP (1-888-334-2258)**

This publication is available in alternate formats by contacting Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation:  
831-647-4209



Cover: harbor seals (Steven Dalleske)

## Russian River to Bodega Head Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Russian River State Marine Conservation Area  
Russian River, Estero Americano and  
Estero de San Antonio SMRMAs  
Bodega Head State Marine Reserve  
Bodega Head State Marine Conservation Area



North Central Coast Marine Protected Areas





# From sandy beaches to deep offshore waters

## California Is Making a Difference

by creating a statewide network of marine protected areas (MPAs). Marine protected areas are underwater places designed to protect key habitats and species by prohibiting or restricting the take of marine life. Just as the nation's parks, forests and wilderness areas protect special places on land, California's MPAs protect unique areas in the ocean and estuaries. The California MPA network includes the many different types of habitats found along our coast, from sheltered estuaries to rocky intertidal areas and lush kelp forests to steep underwater canyons.

Image above left: shorebirds (Gary Strachan)  
above right: kelp (Chad King)

## Spectacular Stretch of Coastline

This beautiful and rugged stretch of coast teems with life. Sonoma Coast State Park extends 17 miles offering hiking trails and access to sandy beaches while the Russian River and Bodega Head MPAs protect diverse offshore habitats such as rocky reefs and kelp forests. Protecting both land and coastal habitats along this coast enhances benefits to marine life.

## Sea Life Abounds

- The Russian River Estuary is an important nursery for salmon and supports diverse habitats such as eel grass beds and mudflats. When a sandbar closes the river seasonally, this habitat also serves as an important harbor seal haul-out and hosts various seabird populations.
- MPAs here are home to more than 300 species of invertebrates, fish, seabirds and marine mammals.
- Whale watching from the Bodega Bay headlands is a popular activity during the annual gray whale migrations.

- MPAs here protect important steelhead as well as Chinook and Coho salmon populations, which aggregate at the mouth of the Russian River.

## Scientific Research

Researchers from the Bodega Bay Marine Lab have studied the marine life here since the 1920's. Projects aim to solve complex environmental problems such as climate change, invasive species, impacted salmon populations and marine pollution. Results of this research are vital to understanding how to better manage these coastal treasures.

## Recognized throughout History

This stretch of Sonoma coastline has long been cherished. For thousands of years, long before European settlers, the Coast Miwok Indians harvested clams, mussels and salmon from its shores. Currently this area hosts a number of industries including lumber mills, fishing and ecotourism opportunities. You can help protect MPAs by knowing and obeying the regulations for the area you are visiting.



abalone (Sarah Lenz)



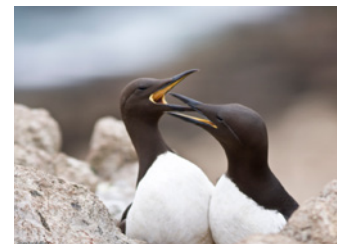
copper rockfish (Steve Lonhart)



dungeness crab (Ken Bondy)



scuba diving (Jerry Loomis)



common murre (Ron LeValley)



brown pelican (Jerry Kirkhart)



California Marine Protected Areas

The California statewide MPA network includes four different designation that vary in their purpose and level of protection, ranging from limited to no take. The MPA designations are:

- State Marine Reserves:** No damage or take of living, geologic, or cultural marine resources is allowed.
- State Marine Parks:** No commercial take of resources is allowed, but some recreational take may be allowed (restrictions vary).
- State Marine Conservation Areas:** Some recreational and/or commercial take of marine resources may be allowed (restrictions vary).
- State Marine Recreational Management Areas:** Restricts the take of living marine resources while allowing for waterfowl hunting to occur (restrictions vary).

Russian River to Bodega Head MPAs

MPA	Allowed Uses
Russian River SMCA	Take of all living marine resources is prohibited except:  1. Recreational take of Dungeness crab by trap and surf smelt using hand-held dip net or beach net is allowed.  2. Commercial take of Dungeness crab by trap is allowed.
Russian River, Estero Americano and Estero de San Antonio SMRMAs	A. Take of all living marine resources is prohibited. B. Waterfowl may be taken in accordance with DFG regulations.
Bodega Head SMR	Take of all living marine resources is prohibited.
Bodega Head SMCA	Take of all living marine resources is prohibited except:  1. Recreational take of pelagic finfish by trolling, Dungeness crab by trap and market squid by hand-held dip net are allowed.  2. Commercial take of pelagic finfish with troll fishing gear or seine, Dungeness crab by trap and market squid by round haul net are allowed.

Russian River to Bodega Head Marine Protected Areas

