



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 Piedras Blancas 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 Piedras Blancas State Marine Conservation Area is to protect unique rocky reef and sandy seafloor habitat populated by kelp greenling, cabezon, sponges, soft corals, and many other species. Two active geologic faults running along the seafloor in this area produced the conservation area's unique, rugged submarine hills and valleys. The resulting large area of deepwater rocky reef habitat attracts bait fish such as Pacific sardines, northern anchovies, Pacific herring, and market squid, and provides shelter for rockfish species including canary rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and blue rockfish.

Piedras Blancas State Marine Conservation Area shares an eastern border with [Piedras Blancas State Marine Reserve](#), and overlaps a portion of [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.



Report poachers and polluters
Call CalTIP: 1 (888) 334-2258

or text 847411 - begin message with "Caltip" followed by the details.



Quick Facts: Piedras Blancas State Marine Conservation Area

- **MPA size:** 8.84 square miles
- **Depth range:** 94 to 337 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
 - Sand/mud: 6.45 square miles
 - Rock: 2.48 square miles



Non-Consumptive Activities

Fishing
See Regulations On Back

No Collecting

Further Information:

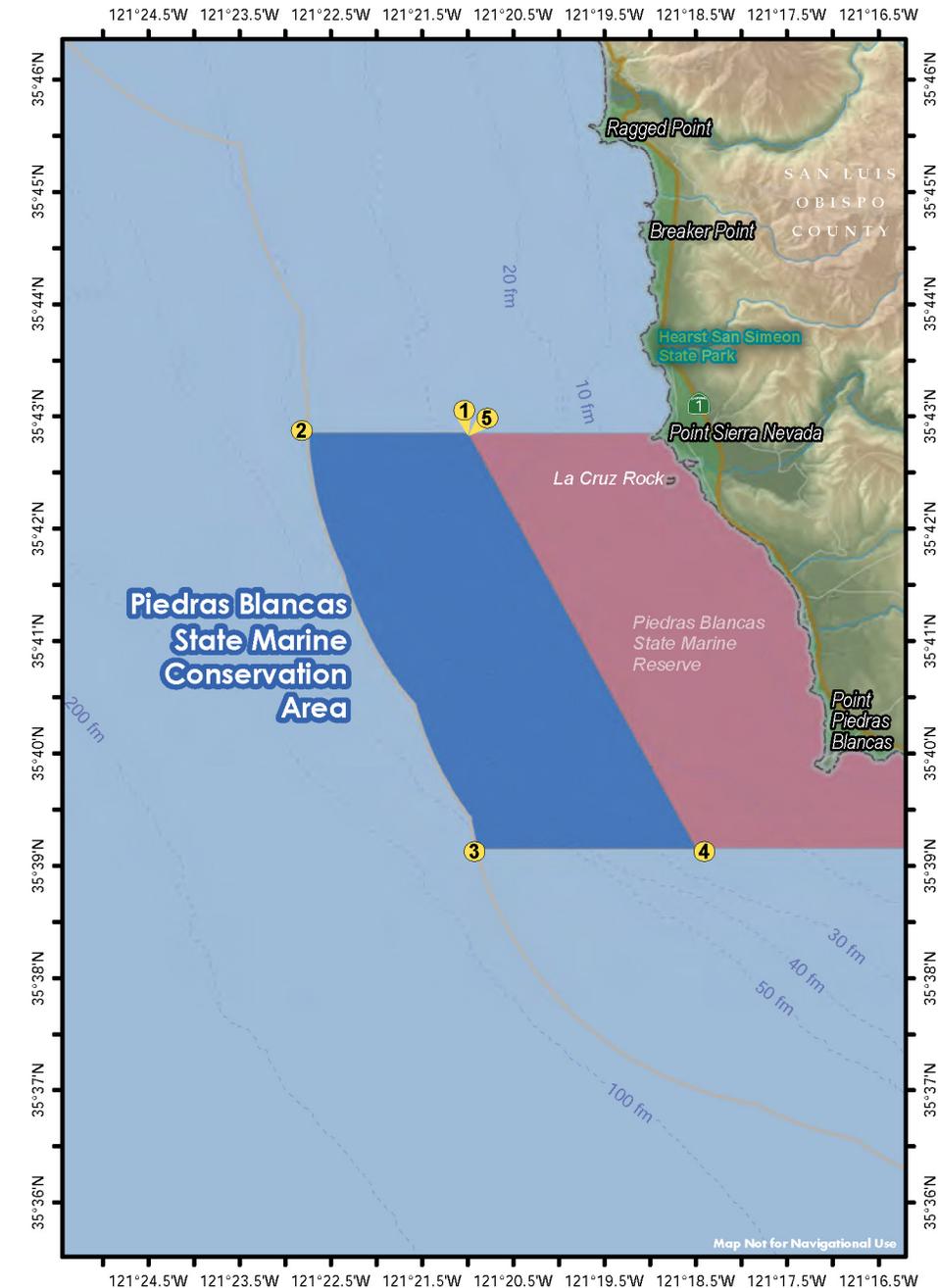
- MPA Website: www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs
- MPA and Sportfishing Interactive Map: www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap
- Email: AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov

Photos - Upper: Yelloweye rockfish and reef covered with colorful marine life at Piedras Blancas State Marine Conservation Area. Lower right: Blue rockfish at the conservation area. Lower left: Canary rockfish and deep rocky ledges at the conservation area.

CDFW/MARE photos

Piedras Blancas State Marine Conservation Area

Central California - San Luis Obispo County



Version 2, September 2022

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

Boundary:

This area is bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed except where noted:

- 35° 42.850' N. lat. 121° 21.000' W. long. ①;
- 35° 42.850' N. lat. 121° 22.763' W. long. ②; thence southward along the three nautical mile offshore boundary to
- 35° 39.150' N. lat. 121° 20.913' W. long. ③;
- 35° 39.150' N. lat. 121° 18.500' W. long. ④; and
- 35° 42.850' N. lat. 121° 21.000' W. long. ⑤

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 commercial and recreational take of salmon and albacore is allowed.

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.