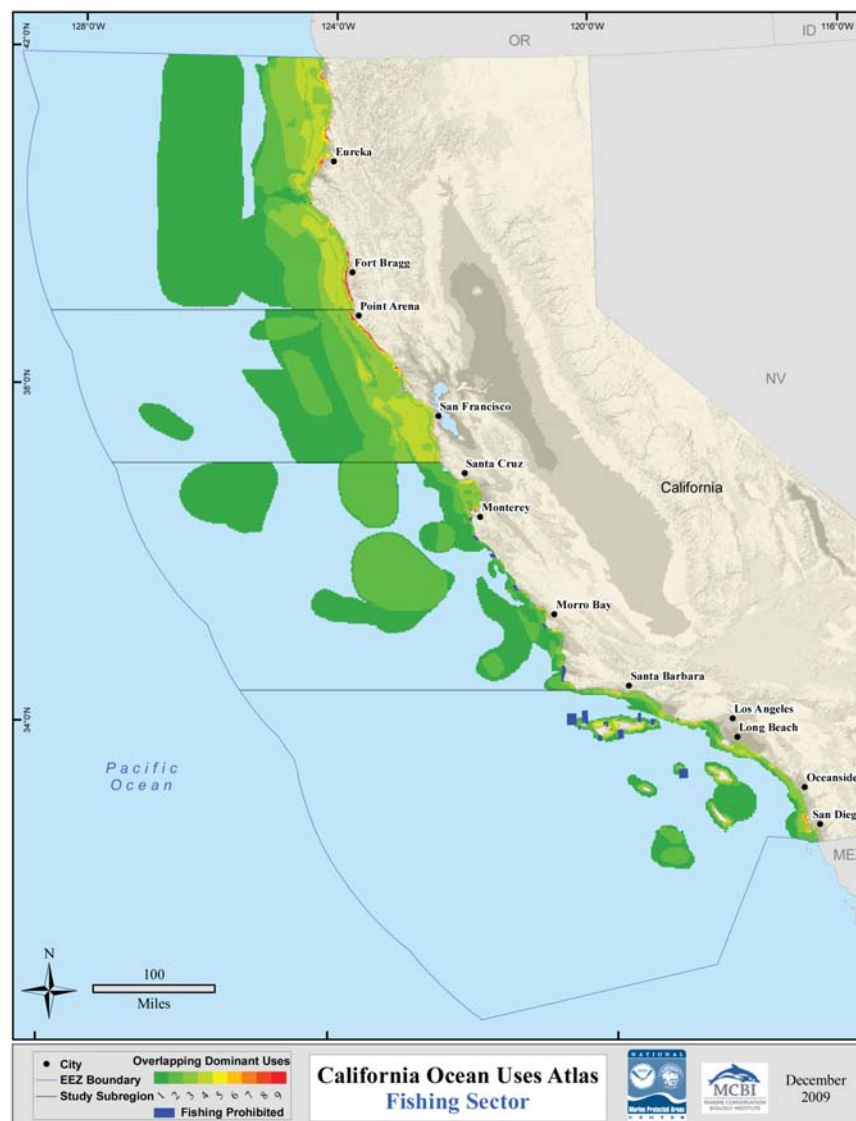


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California Waters



A map of commercial and recreational fishing efforts based on fishing methods in the waters adjacent to California. Commercial fishing methods include benthic fixed gear, benthic mobile gear, dive fishing and pelagic fishing. Recreational methods include kayak fishing, dive fishing, fishing from boats and shore-based fishing. To view interactive maps of California ocean uses, visit the interactive mapping tool at the [National Marine Protected Areas Center California Ocean Uses Atlas](http://www.nmfs.gov/protected_areas_center/california_ocean_uses_atlas). Source: NOAA Marine Protected Areas Center (http://www.mpa.gov/dataanalysis/atlas_ca/).

The California coastline is more than 1,610 km (1,000 mi) long from just north of Crescent City to the U.S.-Mexico border. State waters extend from the mean tide line along the coast to 3

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nautical miles (5.6 km) offshore. Waters around the Farallon Islands off San Francisco and the Channel Islands off southern California are also part of California's coastline and provide important fishing grounds. Due to a diversity of geologic features that help create a diverse array of habitats and oceanographic influences, California's marine waters are some of the most productive waters in the world. Marine habitats within California marine waters include; bays and estuaries, rocky reefs, kelp forests, seamounts, and submarine canyons, as well as open-ocean pelagic and soft sediment benthic habitats. For more information on these and other habitats in which fish live, see [Fishery Science - Biology & Ecology](#). The California coastline can be divided by different criteria, for example by [fisheries](#), by [politics](#), or by [ecology](#).

Bioregions are areas defined by natural ecological communities rather than man-made boundaries. There are three major marine bioregions in California. **Fisheries** in the northern bioregion, the [Southern Oregonian Province](#), include: [Sea Urchin](#), [Dungeness Crab](#) (See California Fisheries), [Pink Shrimp](#), [Salmon](#) (See California Fisheries) and [groundfish](#).

The central bioregion is the largest bioregion in California's marine waters, extending from Cape Mendocino in the north to Point Conception in the south. Along with many **species** from the northern bioregion, the waters in the central ocean support [Swordfish](#), [Market Squid](#), [Spot Prawns](#) and [Albacore Tuna](#) (See California Fisheries for the last three species).

[Point Conception](#), located in the southwestern corner of Santa Barbara County, not only separates the southern bioregion, the [Southern California Bight](#), from the central bioregion, but it also marks a significant transition zone in California marine waters. At this transition there is a significant change in oceanographic conditions like water temperature, current direction, and bottom type, and also a shift in the dominant species of fish and invertebrates communities. Thus certain species-specific fisheries, like the [Dungeness Crab](#) (See California Fisheries) fishery, rarely extend into the waters south of Point Conception. Important fisheries of southern California include: [Pacific Mackerel](#), [California Spiny Lobster](#), [Rock Crab](#), and [California Halibut](#).

The majority of fishing **efforts** occur in the **nearshore** environments of California's marine waters; however, fishing efforts extend far beyond the 3 nautical mile (5.6 km) limit of the state waters into both **federal** and **international waters** (See Where do we Fish?). The [Pacific Fishery Management Council](#), [National Marine Fisheries Service](#), [California Department of Fish and Game](#) and the [California Fish and Game Commission](#) **manage** the fisheries in marine waters adjacent to California.

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Additional Resources

California Seafood Council – [Description of Commercial Fishing Districts](#)

California State University Long Beach – [College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics: Oceanography of the Southern California Bight](#)

MarineMap – [Online Mapping Tool for Southern California](#)