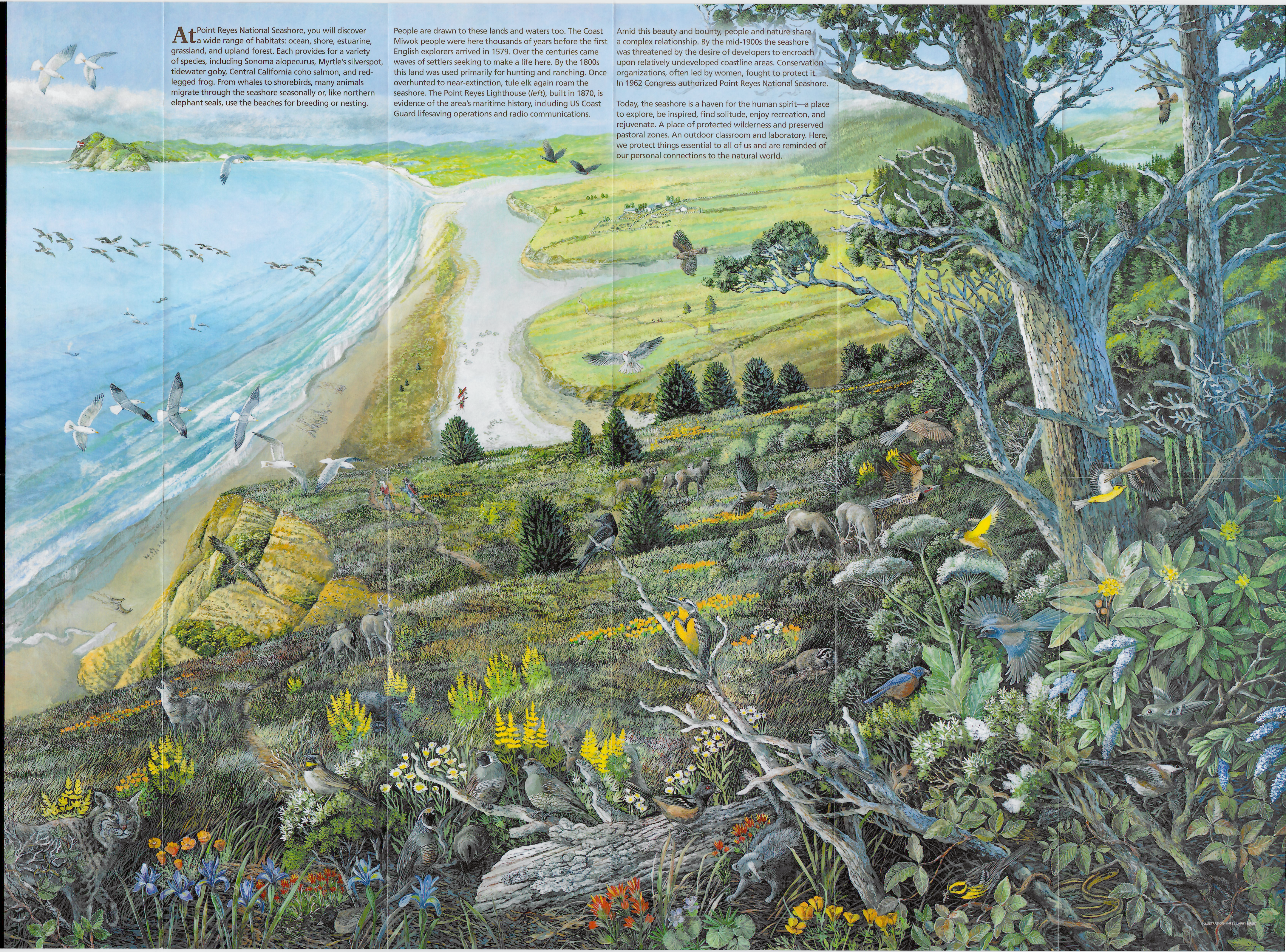


At Point Reyes National Seashore, you will discover a wide range of habitats: ocean, shore, estuarine, grassland, and upland forest. Each provides for a variety of species, including Sonoma alpecurus, Myrtle's silverspot, tidewater goby, Central California coho salmon, and red-legged frog. From whales to shorebirds, many animals migrate through the seashore seasonally or, like northern elephant seals, use the beaches for breeding or nesting.

People are drawn to these lands and waters too. The Coast Miwok people were here thousands of years before the first English explorers arrived in 1579. Over the centuries came waves of settlers seeking to make a life here. By the 1800s this land was used primarily for hunting and ranching. Once overhunted to near-extinction, tule elk again roam the seashore. The Point Reyes Lighthouse (left), built in 1870, is evidence of the area's maritime history, including US Coast Guard lifesaving operations and radio communications.

Amid this beauty and bounty, people and nature share a complex relationship. By the mid-1900s the seashore was threatened by the desire of developers to encroach upon relatively undeveloped coastline areas. Conservation organizations, often led by women, fought to protect it. In 1962 Congress authorized Point Reyes National Seashore.

Today, the seashore is a haven for the human spirit—a place to explore, be inspired, find solitude, enjoy recreation, and rejuvenate. A place of protected wilderness and preserved pastoral zones. An outdoor classroom and laboratory. Here, we protect things essential to all of us and are reminded of our personal connections to the natural world.





Shifting Ground

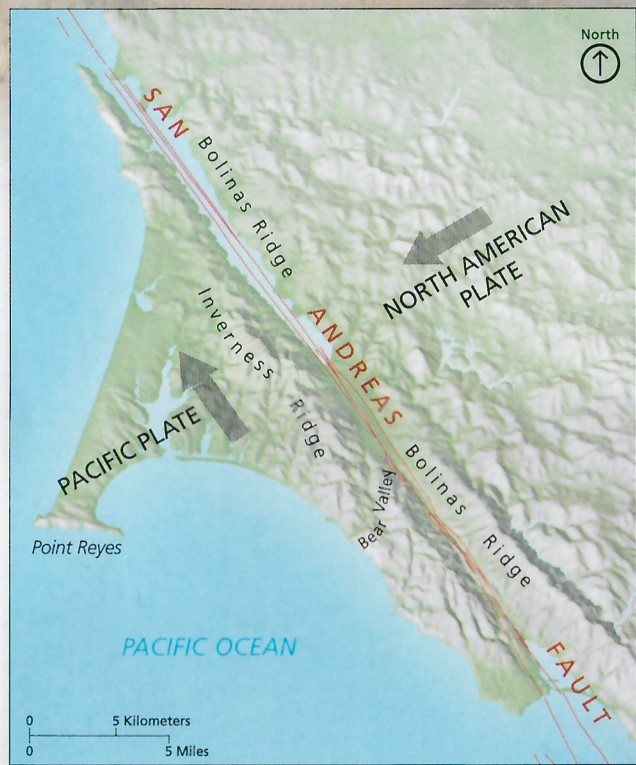


Plate tectonics affects the rocks along the seashore. Plates are sections of Earth's crust that "float" on molten rock. The Point Reyes peninsula rides on the eastern edge of the Pacific Plate, which slides northwestward at a rate of one or two inches per year.

Separating the Point Reyes peninsula from the mainland is a long, narrow valley that lies directly over an important geological zone: the San Andreas Fault. A fault is a fracture or zone of fractures between two blocks of rock. Faults allow the blocks to move relative to each other. In the Point Reyes area, many large and small faults run parallel, and sometimes at odd angles, to one another.

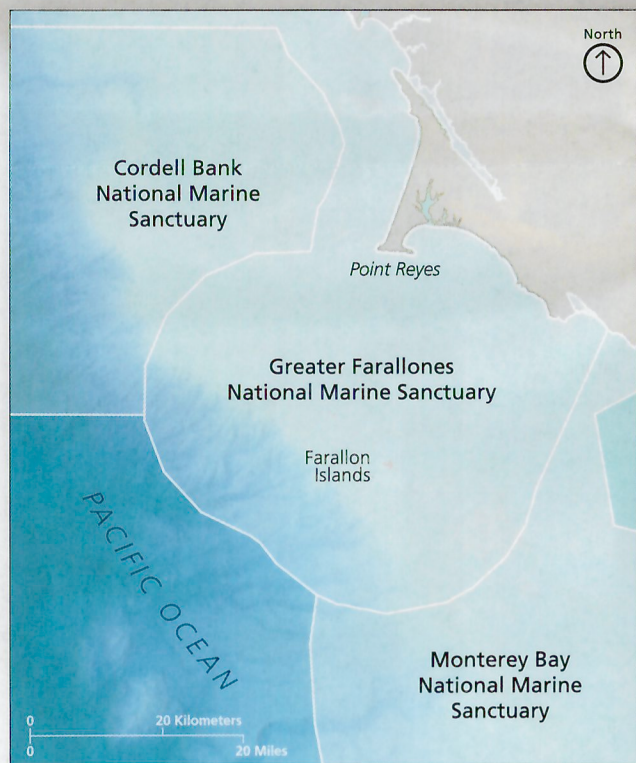
Plates do not move freely. They "catch" on each other and, over many years, the pressure builds up.



Eventually, the underlying rock breaks loose in a sudden jolt. This happened to the peninsula during the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake: It shifted northwestward 20 feet in less than a minute. This could happen again—in 30 minutes or 300 years.

Because of plate tectonics, Point Reyes' rocks match those hundreds of miles southeast of here! To learn more, visit the Earthquake Trail.

Protecting Ocean Habitat



This portion of the California coast is one of Earth's most biologically rich areas. Like land, the ocean has varied habitats—influenced by temperature, sunlight, currents, and topography—that support an abundance of life.

Spring and summer upwellings from the California Current carry nutrients to surface waters. These nutrients are the foundation of a food web that includes everything from tiny plankton to huge whales. Migrating whales feast at the edge of the continental shelf. Gray whales often swim quite close to the Point Reyes shore to feed in winter and spring.

State and federal laws help protect Point Reyes and surrounding waters due to their global significance. National Marine Sanctuaries (NMS), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,

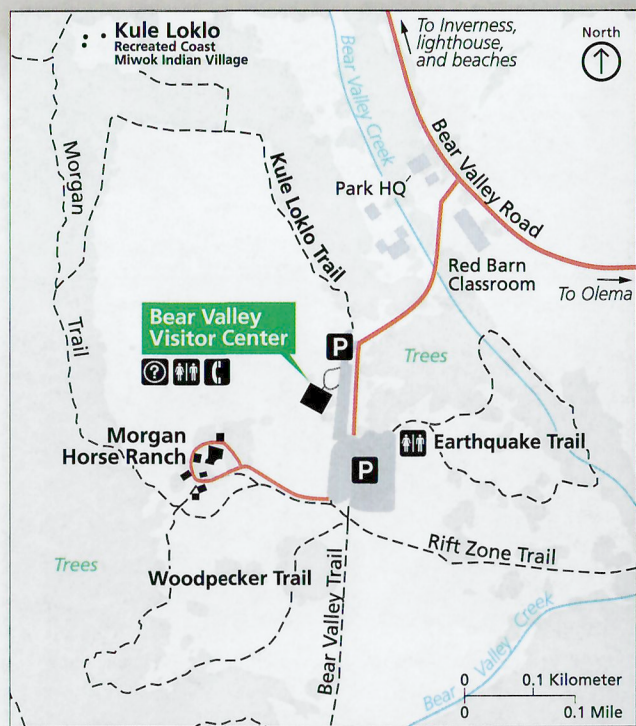
conserve habitats and species while allowing for compatible human use.

Cordell Bank NMS protects a rocky reef perched on the edge of the continental shelf. Surrounded by soft mud and sand, the hard-surfaced bank is a haven for colorful fish and invertebrates.

Greater Farallones NMS protects rocky reefs, estuarine wetlands, and open ocean. Endangered and threatened species, including blue and humpback whales, seasonally feed in this rich environment.

The state of California administers a network of Marine Protected Areas along the Point Reyes coast. Some of these areas allow limited sport fishing and commercial harvest; others do not. For detailed information and regulations, visit the park website.

Explore Point Reyes



Places To Go
Bear Valley Visitor Center Stop here first for exhibits and information to help you plan your visit.

Point Reyes Beach (Great Beach) Explore an 11-mile expanse of the Pacific shoreline. *Be careful along the water's edge!* High surf, rip currents, and "sneaker" waves can be deadly. Area is subject to severe undertow.

Point Reyes Lighthouse Enjoy views of Point Reyes Beach and the Pacific Ocean. Go down 313 steps to the lighthouse. Watch for migrating gray whales from the observation platform in winter and spring.

Giacomini Wetlands Enjoy birding along the 1.7-mile trail to the restored wetlands. Find native wildflowers in spring. Part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Drakes Beach Enjoy a sheltered beach by sandstone cliffs. Explore visitor center exhibits about marine life, fossils, and maritime history. The adjacent store has books, postcards, and convenience foods for sale.

Limantour Beach Take a beachside stroll or fly a kite. Try birding nearby at Estero de Limantour.

Mount Vision Overlook View most of the Point Reyes peninsula from Mount Vision (1,282 feet).

Tule Elk Reserve Hunted to near-extinction in the 1800s, tule elk were reintroduced to this designated wilderness in 1978.

Historic Pierce Point Ranch Established in the 1860s, this dairy ranch operated until 1973. Take the short trail down to McClures Beach.



Chimney Rock Watch elephant seals breed and molt on the beach. Find native wildflowers in spring.

Abbotts Lagoon Hike the 1½-mile trail to diverse bird habitat. Nesting area for threatened snowy plover.

Tomas Bay State Park Enjoy a swimming beach, kayaking, trails, and a picnic area.

Hiking The park's 150 miles of trails pass through grasslands, forest-covered ridges, and valleys filled with California bay laurel. Check trail conditions and get detailed trail maps at park visitor centers.

Camping Camp at four hike-in campgrounds: Coast, Glen, Sky, and Wildcat. Note: Permits are required. Make your advance reservations at

www.recreation.gov. Get your permit before you go to the campground.

Protect Your Park; Keep It Safe Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the park. Do not approach or collect injured or oiled marine mammals or birds; report these to park staff. • Sneaker waves and treacherous currents make beaches dangerous. • There are no lifeguards on beaches at the national seashore. • Many ranches within the park are in a pastoral zone and operate under agreements with the National Park Service. Please respect their privacy and that of residential housing units within the park. • Practice Leave No Trace principles. • Visit the park website for a full list of regulations, including firearms.

Emergencies call 911

Accessibility We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, or check the park website.

More Information Point Reyes National Seashore, which administers the northernmost land of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. Learn more about national parks at www.nps.gov.

Point Reyes National Seashore
1 Bear Valley Rd.
Point Reyes Station, CA 94956
415-464-5100
www.nps.gov/pore
Follow us on social media.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

Wilderness Established in 1976, the Phillip Burton Wilderness ensures the highest level of protection for over 32,000 acres of land and water in Point Reyes National Seashore. It offers an unparalleled experience to over 7 million San Francisco Bay Area residents. Designation under the 1964 Wilderness Act protects forever the land's wilderness character, natural conditions, opportunities for solitude, and scientific, educational, and historical values.

Legend
Ranger station
Trailhead
Kayaking
Restrooms
Picnic area
Primitive campground
Emergency telephone
Telephone
Pets on leash
Horse stables
Bottle filling station
Unpaved road
Hiking only trail
Hiking/biking trail (no e-bikes)
Hiking/biking trail
Phillip Burton Wilderness (land)
Phillip Burton Wilderness (water)

0 1.5 3 Kilometers
0 1.5 3 Miles