

Discover POINT PINOS HERITAGE

One of the most historically significant and beautiful areas in the state, this rocky coast with rolling dunes at the southern entrance to Monterey Bay has long been a source for scientific research and artistic expression.

We acknowledge the special character of this land with thousands of years of Indigenous Peoples' presence and, since the 1600s, waves of Spanish, Mexican, and American footprints.

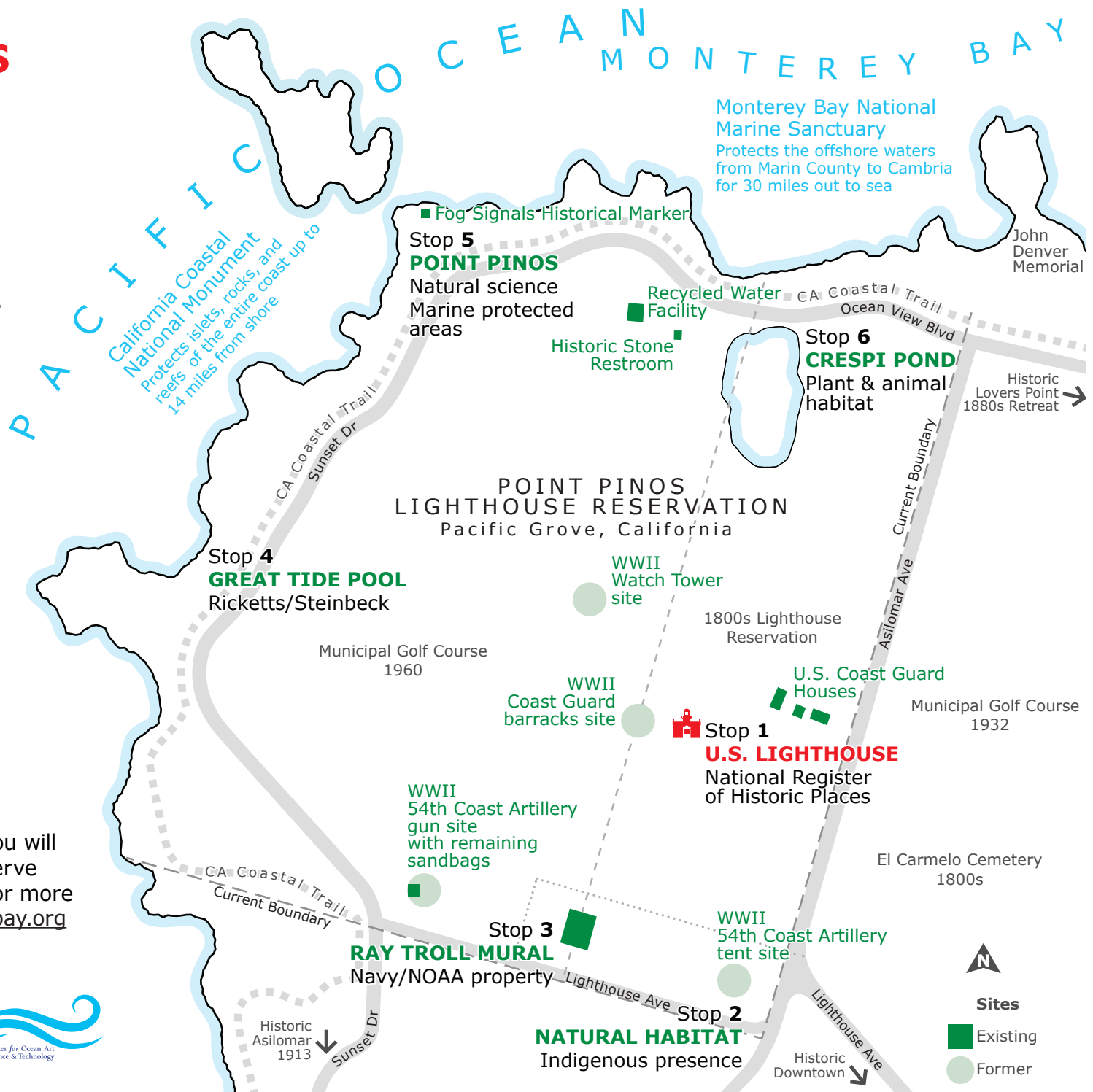
In 1851, the U.S. Federal Government set aside land as the Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation to be forever protected and reserved from sale; reduced to 25 acres in 1880. A 1901 addition made it the current 92 acres.

Experience its magic on this tour starting at the Lighthouse.

Other side describes the stops.

Thank you for visiting. We hope you will want to learn more and help preserve our natural and cultural history. For more information: info@coastmontereybay.org

2024 COAST (Center for Ocean Art, Science & Technology) with Pacific Grove Lighthouse Docents, The Heritage Society, Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History



1. Point Pinos Lighthouse

pointpinoslighthouse.org for hours

- **The Lighthouse** radiates history. A beacon since 1855, it is the oldest continuously operating lighthouse on the West Coast. First operated under a US Navy-led Lighthouse Board, later under the Coast Guard, it was designated in 1977 for the National Register of Historic Places. Lighthouse keepers and their families lived in the Lighthouse and in the nearby houses built by the Coast Guard (1939, 1959).
- During **WWII**, military defense at Point Pinos involved the Navy, Coast Guard, and Army, with a 40-ft watch-tower.
- A 9-hole municipal **Golf Course** was built in 1932 across Asilomar Ave. In 1960, another 9 holes were added on the Reservation itself. Today, even non-golfers enjoy the restaurant, The Grill at Point Pinos.

Leaving the Lighthouse grounds, turn right onto Asilomar Ave, right again onto Lighthouse Ave:

2. Natural Habitat

- Here we acknowledge thousands of years of **Indigenous Peoples'** presence at Point Pinos. Archeologists have documented many sites on the Reservation.
- During WWII, the Army's **54th Coast Artillery Regiment**, 3rd battalion, all African-American, occupied this corner of the Reservation. Assigned to protect the coast and bay, they built gun emplacements using sandbags to support their huge guns. The sandbag remains can be seen at Stop 4.
- This southeast corner includes **natural habitat** undisturbed since 1945. Most of the pines, cypresses, and other trees were cut down in the 1800s to clear the view of the Light for ships at sea. The regrowth of trees on the Reservation dunes is a precious natural refuge. In 2012,

Western Bluebirds nested here, their first local nesting observed in 96 years.

Continue along Lighthouse Ave towards the ocean:

3. Ocean Art, Science, and Technology

- After WWII, during the Cold War, the **U.S. Navy** continued operations at Point Pinos with a massive building, finished in 1952, to house successive **activities** (Navy Air Intercept Training Facility, 1954–1961, with pilot training and radar surveillance; Fleet Numerical Weather Center, 1962-1974, working with NOAA to pioneer computer communication and weather prediction for the military and allies worldwide; Navy Recruit Command Center, 1974–1994)
- **The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA), 1996–2016, continued working with the Navy to understand climate impacts on fisheries locally and throughout the Pacific. They researched the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, irregularly alternating periods of warm and cold water. In Monterey Bay, warm, nutrient-poor, blue water favors sardines; cold, rich, green water favors anchovies. You see this research reflected in Ray Troll's mural.
- An **iconic mural, Green Seas Blue Seas**, encircles the top of the Navy/NOAA building and vividly depicts this science and history. NOAA commissioned the renowned Alaskan artist Ray Troll, a Guggenheim Fellow, to create the mural. It is part of the Pacific Grove Historical Mural Project and of Preserve America, a federal grant program that encourages communities to protect and enjoy their priceless natural and cultural heritage.

Continue on Lighthouse Ave toward the Pacific Ocean. You are

overlooking the federally protected California Coastal National Monument and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. At the corner, turn right.

4. Coast and the Great Tide Pool

- After walking a few feet, look back towards the land. See the remaining **WWII sandbag emplacements**, built by the soldiers of the 54th, to hold their Long Tom 155mm tractor-driven guns installed to protect the coast.
- Across the street, find an entry to the narrow California Coastal Trail, which leads to the **Great Tide Pool**. Ed Ricketts, arriving in 1923, studied and collected intertidal shore life right here. Scientists have been exploring this incredible resource since the 19th century. In his 1945 novel *Cannery Row*, Steinbeck describes it as a "fabulous place when the tide is in, a wave-churned basin, creamy with foam... But when the tide goes out the little water world becomes quiet and lovely."
- Signed into law in 2000, the **California Coastal National Monument** protects rocks, reefs, and islets along the entire coastline of the State out to 14 miles from shore. You are looking at our piece of this protected Pacific coastal area.

Continue along our local section of the 1,200-mile California Coastal Trail

5. Point Pinos and the Foghorn, only an echo now

- A large rocky peninsula, **Point Pinos** marks the southern entrance to Monterey Bay and the border between two State Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that safeguard and enrich our sealife. Asilomar MPA is on the ocean side and Pacific Grove Marine Gardens MPA is on the bay side.
- Monterey Audubon Society (MAS) has identified Point Pinos as among

the most important land-based posts in America to observe migratory and other seabirds. Seawatch (MAS) is based here, as well as community science programs: the Black Oystercatcher Monitoring Project (MAS) and LIMPETS (Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History).

- A few steps east is a plaque with the history of the **Foghorn**, 1925–1993, mounted on a boulder by the trail. Many will remember its haunting sound. It provided an audible warning of dangers to shipping during the frequently foggy conditions. Two blasts sounding every 30 seconds were linked to Point Pinos on nautical charts.

Continuing on the water-side of the road:

- Farther along was the old wastewater treatment plant, now the **Recycled Water Facility**, which provides water for the Lighthouse landscaping, Golf Course, and El Carmelo Cemetery on Asilomar Ave. Thanks to this City water project, no drinking water is diverted to irrigation in these areas.

Heading toward Asilomar Ave, look for the historic stone public restroom, also using recycled water and available for your convenience.

6. Crespi Pond

- Named for Juan Crespi, an early Franciscan missionary and explorer with Gaspar de Portolá and Junipero Serra, the pond is noted on maps as early as the 1700s.
- Crespi Pond was a source of freshwater for local Indigenous Peoples, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans. It continues to provide water for abundant wildlife and for reeds, traditionally used by Indigenous Peoples.