

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, including Pillar Point Bluff

200 Nevada Avenue, Moss Beach, CA 94038
Park Headquarters 650-728-3584
Police, Fire, or Medical Emergency 911

San Mateo County Parks

Reservations 650-363-4021
General information 650-363-4020
www.SMCoParks.org

The Department manages parks, trails, and historic sites to preserve public lands and provide opportunities for education and recreation. The system's properties, located throughout the County, encompass more than 16,000 acres.

The parks represent our region's wondrously diverse natural settings, from rugged tidepools, lush mountain forests, and remote campsites to Bayfront shoreline, sunny picnic areas, and popular playgrounds.

The Department sells annual passes offering unlimited entrances to all County Parks for a year.

Support your parks

You can volunteer to help rangers protect and improve parklands and serve park visitors.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation raises funds to improve the quality of County Parks for our community. For information, visit www.SupportParks.org.

Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve promotes protection and enjoyment of the Reserve. For information, visit www.FitzgeraldReserve.org.

San Mateo County Parks
Wild places & friendly spaces

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Pillar Point Bluff

A San Mateo County Park



Mary DeLong



Wild places & friendly spaces

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve was established in 1969 to protect hundreds of marine species. Since then scientists studying this rich and complex habitat have discovered 25 new invertebrate and plant species here.

The Reserve, which includes Pillar Point Bluff and Marsh, has been designated by the State of California as a Marine Protected Area and is within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Fitzgerald is managed by San Mateo County and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Reserve is easily accessible from Highway 1 in Moss Beach, north of Half Moon Bay.



Natural features

The rich coastal upwelling and dynamic geological features of the San Mateo County coast combine to favor the abundant and diverse marine life found at the rocky coast and the intertidal area at Fitzgerald. Best seen at low tide, a variety of seaweed, crabs, sponges, anemones, sea stars, mollusks, and fish live here.

The Reserve is also home to many shorebirds, harbor seals, and the occasional whales migrating offshore. Marine life in the Reserve is protected, and collecting is prohibited.

The scenic bluffs at Fitzgerald, including Pillar Point, include Monterey cypress trees, coastal scrub, arroyo willow riparian corridors, and freshwater marsh. The erosion-prone coastal bluffs are always changing.



Activities and facilities

Activities in the tidepool portion of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve focus on education and interpretation of natural resources, including the ecosystems of the intertidal reef, beach, upland, and wetlands.

Trails along the bluff offer scenic views of the coastline. Stairs lead from the parking lot down to the tidepools. Rangers and trained volunteer naturalists offer interpretive tours for groups and students in third grade and older. The Reserve's wet and slippery rocks may be challenging for some visitors.

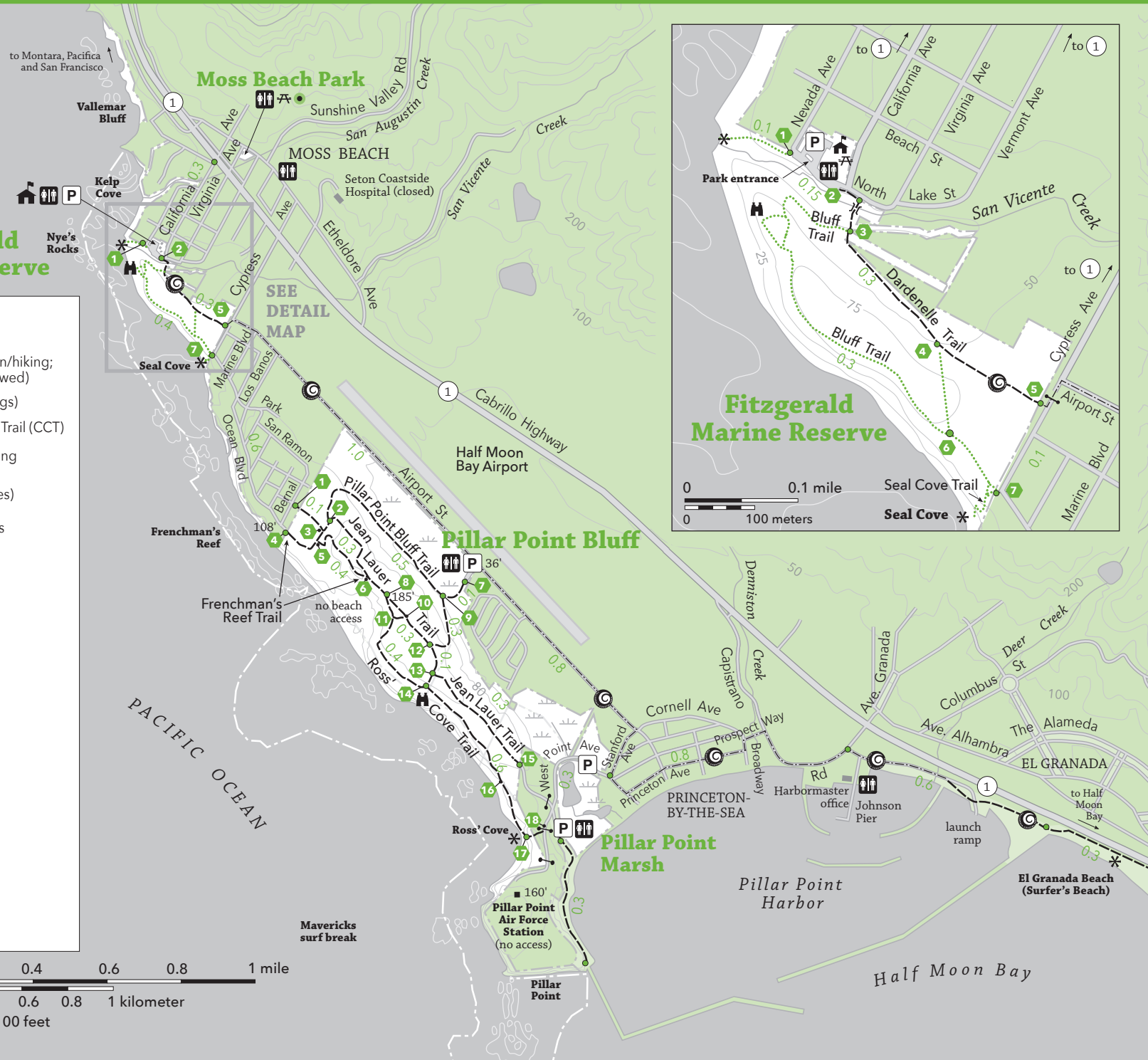
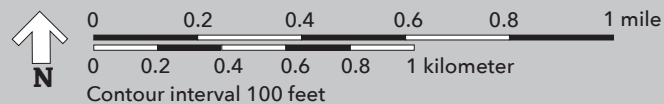
To protect the sensitive natural resources of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, groups of 15 or more are required to make reservations before visiting, and may request a docent-led tour. To make reservations for groups and tours, call 650-363-4021.

The scenic Pillar Point Bluff and Pillar Point Marsh are also part of the Marine Reserve. Trails here include a section of the California Coastal Trail, and offer views of Half Moon Bay, Pillar Point Harbor, the world-famous Mavericks surf break, and agricultural lands. These areas are popular with hikers, runners, bird watchers, and dog walkers. Dogs must be leashed.

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

LEGEND

- Multiple-use trail (bicycle/equestrian/hiking; leashed dogs allowed)
- ... Hiking trail (no dogs)
- ⊙ California Coastal Trail (CCT)
- CCT hiking/bicycling route along road
- 0.2 Trail distance (miles)
- Other public lands
- Private property
- Tide pools and exposed rocks
- P Parking
- Restrooms
- Ranger station/visitor information
- Gate
- Marsh
- * Beach access
- H Overlook
- Bridge
- Playground
- 2 Junction number
- ⌵ Picnic Table



Park hours and use

- Hours** The Park opens at 8am. Closing time changes seasonally, and is posted.
- Pets** Dogs on leash are allowed **only** on the Dardenelle Trail at Fitzgerald, and on all trails at Pillar Point Bluff. Dogs are not allowed in the tidepool areas.
- Smoking** No smoking in County parks, on trails, or at historical sites.

Please protect the Park's natural environment and do not disturb or remove any plants or animals.

Fishing is prohibited.

For current trail advisories and closures, visit www.SMCoParks.org.

Tidepool etiquette in a Marine Protected Area

- Walk gently around the tidepools, taking care not to step on plants or animals.
- Never pick up animals – observe them where they are.
- Never move rocks, shells, or plants.
- Do not remove animals, shells, or rocks from the tidepools.
- Stay at least 300 feet from all marine mammals, including harbor seals, for your safety and theirs.

