

# Resurrection Bay Marine Trail



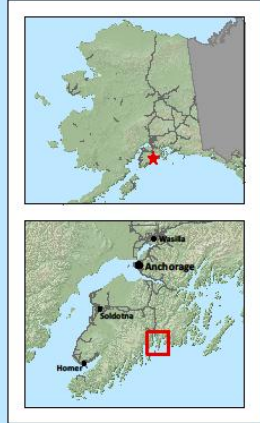
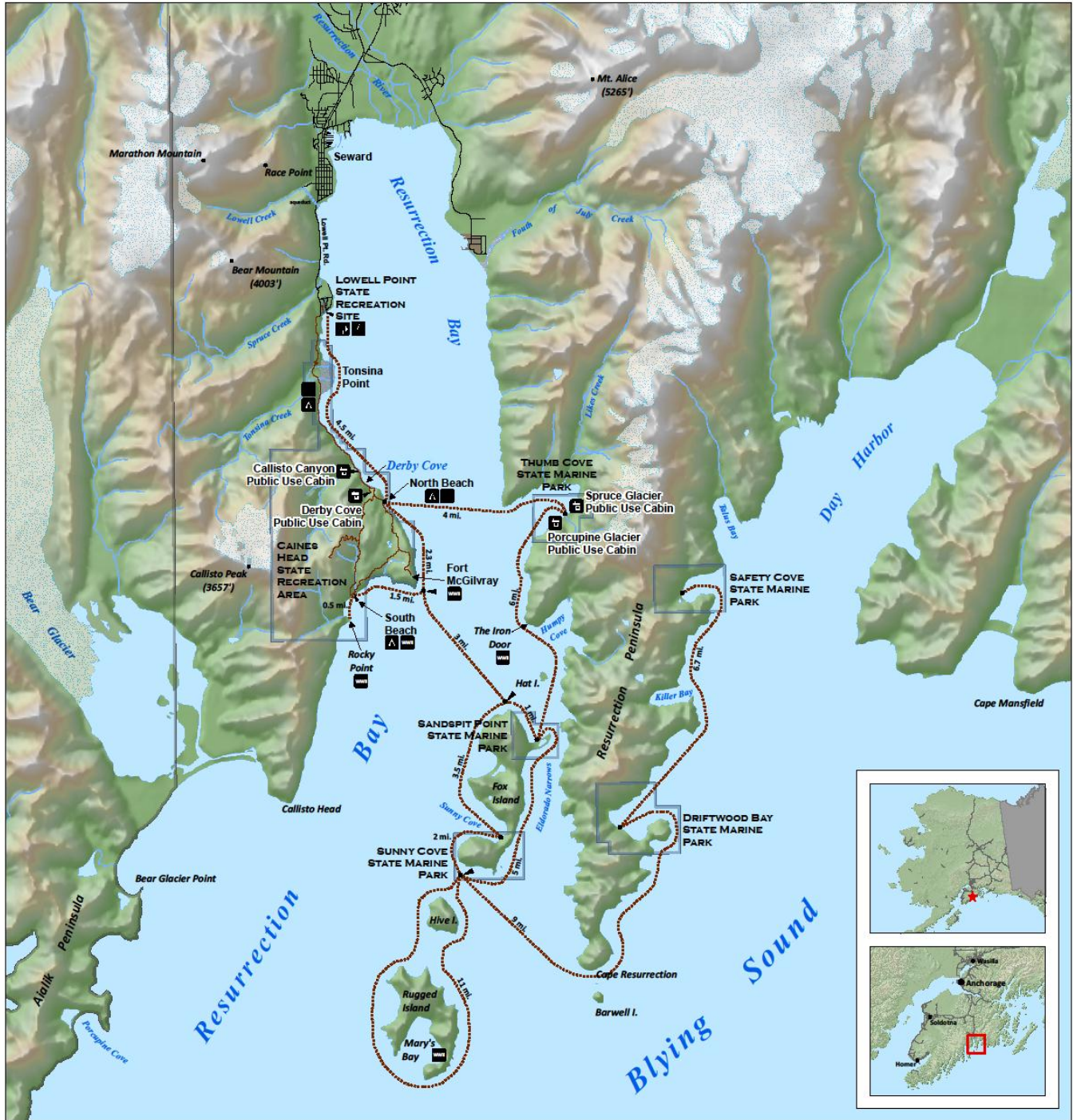
A kayaker's perspective

connecting Resurrection Bay to Day Harbor.

Throughout Resurrection Bay and Day Harbor are a variety of Alaska State Park units, near Seward, including five state marine parks, one state recreation area, and one state recreation site. These parks provide for protected anchorages, excellent kayaking opportunities, good seasonal fishing, historic World War II remnants, and dramatic glacier views.



# RESURRECTION BAY MARINE TRAIL



- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| State Park Unit            | Water Trail/Mileage        |
| Kenai Fjords National Park | Hiking Trail               |
| River/Lake/Ocean           | Road                       |
| Gravel Bar                 | Trailhead                  |
| Stream                     | Hiking                     |
| Intertidal Zone            | Campsite                   |
| Glacier                    | Picnic Shelter             |
|                            | Public Use Cabin           |
|                            | World War II Historic Site |

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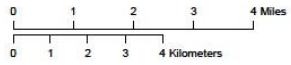
This map represents differential GPS data collected during the Alaska State Parks Trail Inventory Project, that was conducted in conjunction with Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR), and Caines Head State Recreation Area.

Lowell Point Office: (907) 234-3434  
Alaska State Parks: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks. Emergency: 911.

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Projected Coordinate System:  
NAD 83, State Plane Alaska, Zone 4  
1:85,650





## Lowell Point State Recreation Site (LPSRS)



**Park Description:** Lowell Point State Recreation Site marks the beginning of the Resurrection Bay Marine Trail located 2.0 miles south of downtown Seward. The recreation site offers great opportunities for beach walks, picnics, fishing, and trailhead access to the Caines Head Trail.

**Facilities:** There are two latrines and two information kiosks within the recreation site. One is located at the lower beach parking area and one at the upper trailhead parking area.

**Kayaking:** A section line easement adjacent to the recreation site allows for access for launching kayaks and small boats. The southern exposure and loose beach gravel, however, may limit the launching of motor boats. This is not a maintained boat launch or part of the recreation site.

**Anchorage:** Due to afternoon southerly winds, anchoring is not recommended.

**Camping:** The recreation site is a day use area only and camping is prohibited. Two private campgrounds are located nearby.

**Hiking:** Hiking opportunities from the recreation site include a 1.5 mile overland trail from Lowell Point to Tonsina Point. This hike can be done at any time of the day. The trail between Tonsina Point and North Beach of Caines Head SRA is tidally influenced and can only be hiked at certain low tides. Tonsina Point marks the beginning of the intertidal section of the Caines Head Trail. This means that the section from Tonsina Point (mile 1.5) to Derby Cove (mile 4.0) can only be hiked during a low tide of 3 feet or less. From the trailhead at the Lowell Point State Recreation Area, one must leave **2 hours before the low tide** when traveling beyond Tonsina Point to the public use cabins or North Beach. When hiking from North Beach to Lowell Point one must leave 1.5 hours before the low tide. For more information please contact the Kenai/Prince William Sound Area Office at (907) 262-5581 or the Lowell Point Office (907) 224-3434

**Water Source:** There is no potable water within the recreation site. Please treat all surface water sources before using.

**Private Property:** The first 1/2 mile of the Caines Head Trail is on an easement through private property. Please stay on the trail and respect our neighbor's privacy.



## Caines Head State Recreation Area



**Park Description:** The Caines Head State Recreation Area (CHSRA) is located 4 miles south of downtown Seward. It can be accessed by hiking, kayaking, water taxi drop off, or by pleasure boat. The 6,571 acre recreation area offers 16.5 miles of hiking trails and an array of historic World War II remnants. The trailhead for the Caines Head Trail is located at the parking area within the Lowell Point State Recreation Site.

**Facilities:** There are two public use cabins, two picnic shelters, six latrines, and one bear resistant food storage locker located within the recreation area. Tonsina Point is 1.5 miles from the Lowell Point SRS (LPSRS) offering a picnic shelter, latrine, and excellent beach camping opportunities. The Callisto Public Use Cabin and Derby Cove Public Use Cabin are located 3.75 miles and 4.35 miles, respectively, from the LPSRS. Reservations and a permit are required for staying at the public use cabins. North Beach offers a picnic shelter for food preparation, a bear resistant food storage locker along with two latrines. One latrine is located on the south end of the beach and one located across the creek near the picnic shelter. South Beach has one latrine and primitive camping while Rocky Point also has primitive camping but no facilities.

**Kayaking:** There are several good kayak landings throughout the recreation area and some known hazards. Tonsina Point is the first area that paddlers will want to be aware of as they paddle south towards North Beach. This point is a broad delta feature that creates small to moderate waves up to ½ mile offshore. It is recommended to paddle around the point and tuck back towards the shoreline once you are beyond it to allow for more protected waters when a south wind is present.

There will be three landing opportunities between Tonsina Point and North Beach. The first and smallest beach, located 2.8 miles from the LPSRS, allows one to take a short primitive trail to a 100' waterfall. The next beach landing is home of the Callisto Canyon Public Use Cabin about 3.75 miles from LPSRS. This beach is large and offers plenty of camping on the gravel beach berm and a water source located on the south end of the beach. Please respect the cabin user's privacy and don't camp within 300 feet of any public use cabin. Occupancy of the cabins is by permit only. The third landing opportunity before North Beach, located 4.35 miles from LPSRS, is home of the Derby Cove Public Use Cabin. It also allows for excellent camping opportunities on the beach berm and access to a creek in front of the cabin. Again, please respect the cabin user's privacy.

From North Beach one can continue south around Caines Head towards South Beach or Rocky Point. This is another area that paddlers will want to be aware of as conditions will usually become rougher once you arrive at the headland of



Caines Head. This prominent point will present rebounding waves, confused seas, and generally larger waves no matter which direction the wind is blowing. While paddling this part of the recreation area one will be exposed to the south winds and the swell from the Gulf of Alaska requiring intermediate paddling and self-rescue skills. Kayakers should be aware that there is an exposed rock between Caines Head and South Beach offshore about ½ mile.

There are three potential landing opportunities between Caines Head and Rocky Point, though, surf conditions may not allow for safe kayak landings. The first is Minnesota Beach which may not seem very inviting as a kayak landing due to the small beach margin between the surf and the cliffs, though, calm seas will permit landing. The second and largest beach landing is South Beach. This beach is steep with larger cobbles and is influenced by the ocean's swell and south/southeasterly winds. Landings on South Beach must be quick and coordinated with the swell to prevent tipping as the swell recedes away from the shore. There is one latrine on the eastern end of the beach and numerous camping opportunities along the top of the beach berm or in the forested area on the eastern end of the beach. This beach was once home to over 250 soldiers during World War II and now contains numerous historical remnants of their occupation. Please enjoy this historical area and leave artifacts in place for future park users to observe.

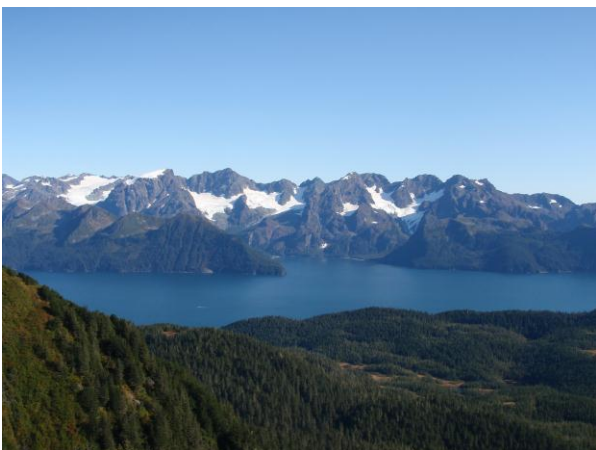
The third kayaking landing beach is Rocky Point located near the recreation area's southern boundary. A smaller bight with eastern exposure offers a more protected landing than South Beach, however, it is also influenced by the ocean swell and can be difficult to land, at times. Several World War II remnants remain in the area including four gun mounts for the 155mm long rifles, a searchlight station, officer quarters, and one of the largest concrete ammunition magazines in Resurrection Bay.



View from South Beach



View from Rocky Point



View from the Alpine Trail



View from Fort McGilvray

**Camping:** Camping permits are not needed. There are no developed campsites within the recreation area. Leave No Trace camping techniques are recommended. Gravel beach berms offer endless opportunities for durable campsites. Campsite locations should be 150' minimum away from the picnic shelter areas and 300' from Public Use Cabins.

**Hiking:** North Beach is the main drop off point in the Caines Head State Recreation Area offering a variety of hiking options. The Alpine Trail begins between Derby Cove and North Beach along the Caines Head Trail (approximately 0.33 miles south of North Beach). The South Beach Trail begins approximately 1.2 miles south of North Beach along the Caines Head Trail. The Loop Trail connects the Alpine Trail to South Beach. A 9.0 mile "loop" can be hiked from North Beach connecting all four trails. Please see the **Resurrection Bay Trail System** descriptions for more info.

**Water Source:** Numerous streams and waterfalls are located in the recreation area and will require appropriate treatment or filtration prior to use.

**Private In holdings:** There are no private in holdings within the **CHSRA**.



war reserve magazine



Rocky Point

## Thumb Cove State Marine Park



View of Thumb Cove from the N Ridge of Callisto Canyon

**Park Description:** Thumb Cove is one of the bay's most scenic and popular anchorages. The spectacular rock faces and waterfalls of this cove offer the paddler a peaceful respite from the bay's afternoon wind and waves. Outstanding natural features of the area include Porcupine, Spoon and Prospect Glaciers hanging from the surrounding 3,500' peaks.

**Facilities:** This state marine park has two public use cabins, Porcupine Glacier and Spruce Glacier cabins. The Spruce Glacier cabin is fully wheelchair accessible but requires assisted access from the water landing to the beach berm at the end of the boardwalk. Both cabins have a latrine adjacent to them. Reservations and a permit are required for staying at the public use cabins

**Camping:** The beach in the park allows for numerous camping options above the high tide level with a kayaker's latrine recently built about 250 feet east of the Porcupine Public Use Cabin on the western end of the beach. Please use this facility allowing the cabin users their privacy.

**Hiking:** There are no developed trails in the area; however, access to the Porcupine Glacier can be reached by following the creek bed on the western end of the beach.

**Water Source:** Streams at either end of the beach provide fresh water and will require filtration or treatment. The western stream near Porcupine Glacier is not accessible during high tides.

**Private In-holdings:** There are no private inholdings in the park. The north side of Thumb's Cove does have private property and general state land ownership located outside the park boundaries.



## Sandspit Point State Marine Park



Northern beach of Sandspit Point SMP

**Park Description:** Sandspit Point, also known as the Fox Island Spit, lies at the north end of Fox Island, approximately 12 miles from Seward. Sandspit Point offers dramatic views of the rugged mountains of the Resurrection Peninsula and the Gulf of Alaska.

**Facilities:** There are currently no facilities within the state marine park. A “Low Boy” privy is expected to be installed in the next few years. Please practice “Leave No Trace” techniques when disposing of human waste.

**Kayaking:** Accessing Fox Island will require intermediate paddling and self-rescue skills and a 2-3 mile crossing through an area of high vessel traffic throughout the summer months. It is prudent to advise other vessels traveling in the area by means of a marine VHF channel 16 announcement of “Securite, Securite, Securite “ prior to making the crossing. One can cross from Caines Head to the northern tip of Fox Island or from North Beach to Thumb Cove then follow the shoreline to Humpy Cove and then cross to Sandspit Point.

From the state marine park, one can explore the western shoreline of the Resurrection Peninsula, Humpy and Kayaker’s Cove, or circumnavigate Fox Island. There are private cabins and yurts located in Kayaker’s Cove and Humpy Cove that are available for nightly rentals. Several day-tour boats and fishing vessels travel through Eldorado Narrows in the early morning hours and around the five o’clock hour which is something to keep in mind when paddling in the area or when landing on Sandspit Point.

**Anchorage:** Access to the park is generally from the north side. The sandy bottom just offshore provides good fair-weather anchorage. South winds generally will allow for a safe anchorage, however, north winds will make it nearly impossible for anchoring.

**Camping:** The north side of the spit is composed of fine gravel offering the best camping sites. There are not any hardened or developed camping sites within the park. Please choose a gravel site that does not disturb the vegetation. There are limited sites on the southern side of the spit as the shoreline and beach berm are composed of larger grapefruit-sized cobbles and generally not as many flat areas.

**Hiking:** The shoreline and terrain allow one to travel freely within the state marine park and, therefore, there are no established trails.

**Water Source:** There is not an accessible water source within the state marine park.

**Private In-holdings:** There are no private in-holdings within the state marine park.



Southern beach of Sandspit Point SMP

## Sunny Cove State Marine Park



**Park Description:** Sunny Cove SMP is located within the southern cove of Fox Island approximately 14 miles from Seward. It offers an excellent anchorage and beautiful views of Callisto Head, Cape Aialik, and Kenai Fjords National Park. Several sea arches and sea caves are located on the southern portion of the park.

**Facilities:** There are no facilities in the state marine park which offer a unique opportunity for kayakers to enjoy Resurrection Bay in an undeveloped environment.

**Kayaking:** Paddling on the southern end of Fox Island will require intermediate paddling skills and advanced self-rescue skills. The exposure to the Gulf of Alaska will allow one to “feel the swell” and provide a more open water paddling experience. There are no landings between Sunny Cove SMP and Sandspit Point SMP when heading south. Sunny Cove and Sandspit Point are the last beach landings before rounding the cape to reach Driftwood Bay State Marine Park.

Sunny Cove SMP has unique rock formations that have eroded over time creating picturesque sea arches and sea caves on the southern end of the island. The sea caves are best viewed from afar and paddling through the caves is not recommended as rocks exist in the middle of the cave and are exposed as the swell falls.

From Sunny Cove there are excellent opportunities to access and explore the outer bay barrier islands. Hive and Rugged Island offer minimal landing opportunities and those paddling the barrier islands should expect to stay in their kayaks until returning to Sunny Cove or Sandspit Point. Be prepared for rough seas and large swells. If weather permits one can land in Mary’s Bay on the south side of Rugged Island and explore remnants of World War II including a gun battery, command station, and ammunition magazine. Rugged Island was home of Fort Bulkley during the early 1940’s.

**Anchorage:** A good, sandy bottom exists in the cove. Weather coming out of the west makes anchoring in the cove difficult. The prevailing winds are from the north and the south and tend to make this a good day use anchoring spot. Caution is advised during strong easterlies which will produce williwaws down the saddle.

**Camping:** There are good camping locations above the high tide level and park users are encouraged to follow Leave No Trace principals regarding proper disposal of human waste. The marsh area behind the beach berm is tidally influenced and camping is not recommended.



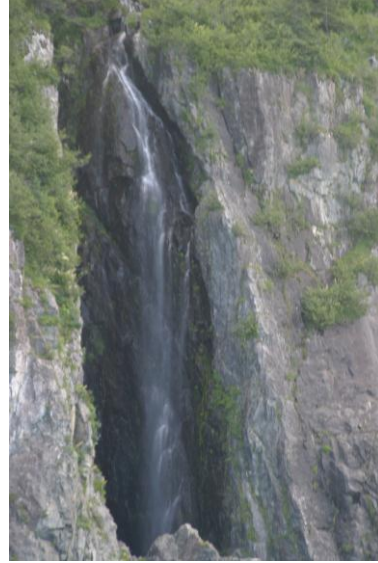
**Hiking:** There are no developed trails within the state marine park. Game trails do allow one to bushwhack and scramble to access the saddle for a breathtaking view the Resurrection Peninsula and the Gulf of Alaska.

**Water Source:** There is no water source within the state marine park; however, there are waterfalls and streams along the northern shoreline of Sunny Cove.

**Private In-holdings:** There is one private in holding within the state marine park located on the southern shoreline near the SW mouth of the cove. There is also private property on the northern half of Sunny Cove adjacent to the state marine park. Please respect our neighbors' privacy.



## Driftwood Bay State Marine Park



**Park Description:** Driftwood Bay SMP is located on the southern end of the Resurrection Peninsula at the mouth of Day Harbor, approximately 22 miles from Seward. Rugged pillow basalt rock formations and lush vegetation surround the park with a picturesque waterfall seen from the beach. Sport fishing of silver salmon and halibut is popular during July and August. The beach and lagoon are littered with driftwood allowing the park users a glimpse of the powerful winter storms and offer a beach comber's paradise each spring.

**Facilities:** There are no facilities or developments with the state marine park.

**Kayaking:** To access the park by kayak one will need to possess advanced paddling and rescue skills. There is a 13 mile stretch with no kayak landings and exposed seas along with ocean swell. Paddling around Cape Resurrection should be done by expert kayakers only and dry suits are recommended. It is also recommended to paddle offshore ½ mile as there are submerged and exposed rock along the entire shoreline. From Driftwood Bay SMP, one will likely follow the shoreline towards Safety Cove SMP or continue paddling to the head of the bay to explore the Ellsworth Glacier.

**Anchorage:** This is considered a fair weather anchorage during north and west winds and not recommended during east or southeast winds.

**Camping:** There are a few campsites along the beach berm but is limited due to the small lagoon and steep uplands beyond the berm.

**Hiking:** There are no developed trails within the state marine park.

**Water Source:** Water is limited to surround waterfalls and streams outside of Driftwood Bay.

**Private In-holdings:** There is a private in holding on the NW corner of the bay. Please respect our neighbors and their privacy.

## Safety Cove State Marine Park



**Park Description:** Safety Cove SMP is located on the western side of Day Harbor approximately 27 miles from Seward. The cove offers an escape from the crowds in Resurrection Bay and Kenai Fjords NP and an opportunity to enjoy the pristine and undeveloped shoreline in Day Harbor. Wildlife is abundant with seabirds, sea lions, seals, whales, and porpoises. Day Harbor also offers sport fishing opportunities for Coho salmon in early August and bottom feeders throughout the summer months.

There are remnants of World War II fortifications on the southern end of the cove and atop Chamberlin Point. A searchlight station, observation bunker, and powerhouse remain atop of Chamberlin Point; however, access is very difficult and not recommended. This marks the outer limits of the Seward Harbor Defenses fortifications from World War II, as well as, the Resurrection Bay Marine Trail.

**Facilities:** There are no facilities within the state marine park.

**Kayaking:** To access the park by kayak one will need to possess advanced paddling and self-rescue skills. There is a 13 mile stretch with no kayak landings, exposed seas, and ocean swell. Paddling around Cape Resurrection should be done by expert kayakers only and dry suits are recommended.

**Anchorage:** This cove offers the best anchorage on the western shoreline though still has moderate exposure to the ocean swell and foul weather. The south shore near the head of the cove is preferred where you will find mud and gravel for anchoring. This location is not recommended during easterlies.

**Camping:** Camping is limited to the beach berm but can accommodate small groups.

**Hiking:** There are no developed hiking trails in the park.

**Water Source:** There is a small lake at the head of the cove beyond the beach berm.

**Private In-holdings:** There are no private in holdings in the state marine park.