



Point Reyes
National Seashore
California

Tall cliffs pounded ceaselessly by the surging sea . . . Point Reyes beach exposed to the thrust of wind and wave . . . lagoons and esteros enclosed by sand dunes and rolling hills . . . forest-covered Inverness Ridge . . . all this and more is Point Reyes National Seashore. Bird rookeries and sea-lion herds on offshore rocks thrive in the shadow of the "white cliffs of Albion" seen by Sir Francis Drake. Inland from these cliffs is a varied terrain—freshwater lakes, shifting sand dunes, grassy lowlands, sharp ridges covered with forests of Bishop pine and Douglas-fir, and countless canyons and arroyos shaded by live oak, bay and alder.

Inland parts of the seashore may experience warm, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. The promontory itself, exposed to the full force of oceanic influence, experiences more wind and fog than other sections of the park, or, in fact, any other part of the California coast.

Point Reyes National Seashore is approximately 35 miles northwest of San Francisco. Park headquarters, within the seashore's eastern boundary at Bear Valley Ranch, is about 1 mile west of Olema on Bear Valley Road.

YOUR NATIONAL SEASHORE . . .

A National Seashore is classified in the National Park System as a recreational area. Therefore, its development and management will emphasize more and different public uses than do the National Parks and Monuments.

A National Seashore may offer unique or outstanding natural history, requiring absolute preservation, just as a National Park. However, it generally will have a varied recreation program, on a larger scale and with more diversity. Both types of areas are administered by the National Park Service.

. . . TODAY. Much of the land to be included in Point Reyes National Seashore is still in private ownership and is not open to the public. However, there are several points of interest that can be visited and enjoyed now. Many miles of beaches are now open and the Bear Valley Trail System behind seashore headquarters contains more than 40 miles of trails for hikers, horsemen, and bicyclers.

One of the principal attractions is the lighthouse, constructed in 1870 at the tip of Point Reyes. It is operated and managed by the U.S. Coast Guard. Visitors are welcome from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. A large herd of sea lions may be seen on the rocky beach at the end of the point by walking a short distance off the road. While watching the sea lions, take care to stand back from the edge of the cliff.

Beaches open for public use are Point Reyes (North), Point Reyes (South), Drakes, McClures, and Hearts Desire in Tomales Bay State Park. These are open all year for day use and all have picnicking facilities. A California fishing license is required for freshwater and surf fishing. PLEASE RESPECT THE PROPERTY RIGHTS OF PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.

. . . TOMORROW. Long-range plans for the National Seashore provide for judicious balance between three governing factors—development for public use, preservation of natural values, and maintenance of the pastoral zone. Too great an emphasis on any one factor would prejudice the others.



Future development will provide for swimming, freshwater and surf fishing, campgrounds, picnic sites, scenic overlooks, auto touring, beach and upland hiking trails, interpretive tours, wayside exhibits and campfire programs.

Concessioner developments may eventually include restaurant facilities, a small boat marina, horseback riding, and a landing for deep-sea pleasure fishing and ocean boating.

Full development is not expected to be realized until about 1975. However, by 1969, it is anticipated that along Inverness Ridge you will be able to enjoy new hiking and riding trails, picnic sites, campsites, and roads. And at the public beaches additional facilities, including comfort stations, bathhouses, and picnic sites, are expected to be completed.

HOW THE LAND LIES. The Point Reyes Peninsula can be conveniently divided into four topographic sections. From east to west these are: (1) the long straight depression occupied by Tomales Bay, Olema Valley, and Bolinas Lagoon, (2) the high country of Inverness Ridge, (3) the rolling middle ground west of the ridge, and (4) the promontory

of Point Reyes itself.

Tomales Bay separates the north end of the peninsula from the mainland. A depressed land surface extending beneath this 13-mile-long bay and continuing southward through Olema Valley under Bolinas Lagoon delineates a short segment of the San Andreas Fault. The Point Reyes Peninsula's total contact with the mainland is along this fault. For the past 80 million years the peninsula has moved slowly northward along this line, but just how far is not known. After the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906, a lateral land movement of 20 feet was recorded at the head of Tomales Bay, though the present rate of displacement is about 2 inches a year. This slow but persistent movement makes the peninsula truly an "island in time."

PLANTS AND ANIMALS. The peninsula flora indicates that this has long been the merging point of northern and southern California coast range floras. Stands of Douglas-fir along Inverness Ridge resemble in density and uniformity the forests of this species that grow much farther north, while on the other hand, forests of Bishop pine are typical

of those in the southern part of the State. Flanking the Douglas-firs at a lower level are groves of broad-leaf trees such as California laurel, madrone, tanbark oak, live oak, maple, and wax myrtle, with a profusion of shrubs including blue blossom, rhododendron, honeysuckle, wild rose, and huckleberry. Bordering the forest is an extensive belt of grasslands in which California buckeye is a common and conspicuous tree. Many of the dune plants, particularly lupine, produce a notable wildflower spectacle.

Six species of plants—a sunflower, a paintbrush, a bentgrass, a hollyhock, a lupine, and a buckbrush—are exclusive to the peninsula, while two kinds of manzanita occur only here and on Mount Tamalpais. A small grove of coast redwoods adds to the variety of plant communities.

As a result of a diversified climate and plantlife, the wildlife ranges from shorebirds and other animals to birds and mammals typical of dense mountain forests; 312 species of birds and 72 species of mammals have been recorded. Here, in thickets and tangles, a few colonies of the mountain beaver, a living fossil, still survive. Deer, rabbit, quail, and many songbirds inhabit the wooded uplands.

HISTORY. Coast Miwok Indians lived on the peninsula for centuries before occupation by the Spanish. Though doubtlessly not all of the 113 known aboriginal village sites were occupied at the same time, the number does suggest a relatively heavy population. The concentration of dwelling sites along the west side of Tomales Bay, around Drake's Estero, and on the seaward shores indicates the Indians' dependence upon the sea for food.

Sir Francis Drake, the English navigator, is thought to have repaired his vessel, the *Golden Hinde*, here in 1579 before starting across the

Pacific on his voyage around the world. The area got its name in 1602 when the expedition of Sebastian Vizcaino, coming north from Mexico, stopped briefly near Point Reyes, calling the anchorage Puerto de los Reyes, or "Port of Kings." Later efforts of the Spanish to establish a settlement of this port led to the discovery of what is now San Francisco Bay.

During the early 19th century, Drake's Bay was familiar to the traders, whalers, and fur hunters of the United States, Mexico, Great Britain, and Russia. Several large cattle ranches were established on the peninsula, and eventually it became known for its fine dairy products, as it is today.

ADMINISTRATION. Point Reyes National Seashore, authorized on September 13, 1962, and containing 53,000 acres, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

A superintendent, whose address is Point Reyes, Calif. 94956, is in immediate charge of the seashore.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—bears a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

United States Department of the Interior



National Park Service



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Drakes Beach. *Photograph by Philip Hyde*