

[Skip to Main Content](#)

- [Habitat Types](#)

[Habitat Types](#)

## Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC)

Along the West Coast, NOAA Fisheries relies on Fishery Management Councils to identify habitats that fall within Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC). These areas provide important ecological functions and/or are especially vulnerable to degradation. HAPCs are discreet subsets of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), as illustrated below.



HAPCs are considered high priority areas for conservation, management, or research because they are rare, sensitive, stressed by development, or important to ecosystem function. The HAPC designation does not necessarily mean additional protections or restrictions upon an area, but they help to prioritize and focus conservation efforts. Although these habitats are particularly important for healthy fish populations, other EFH areas that provide suitable habitat functions are also necessary to support and maintain sustainable fisheries and a healthy ecosystem.

Current Habitat Areas of Particular Concern types are estuaries, canopy kelp, seagrass, rocky reefs, and "areas of interest" (a variety of submarine features, such as banks, seamounts, and canyons, along with Washington State waters). To learn more about these habitat types [click here](#).

For more information see the links below:

[Pacific Fishery Management Council](#)

[West Coast Groundfish areas designated as HAPC](#)  856kb

