Channel Islands

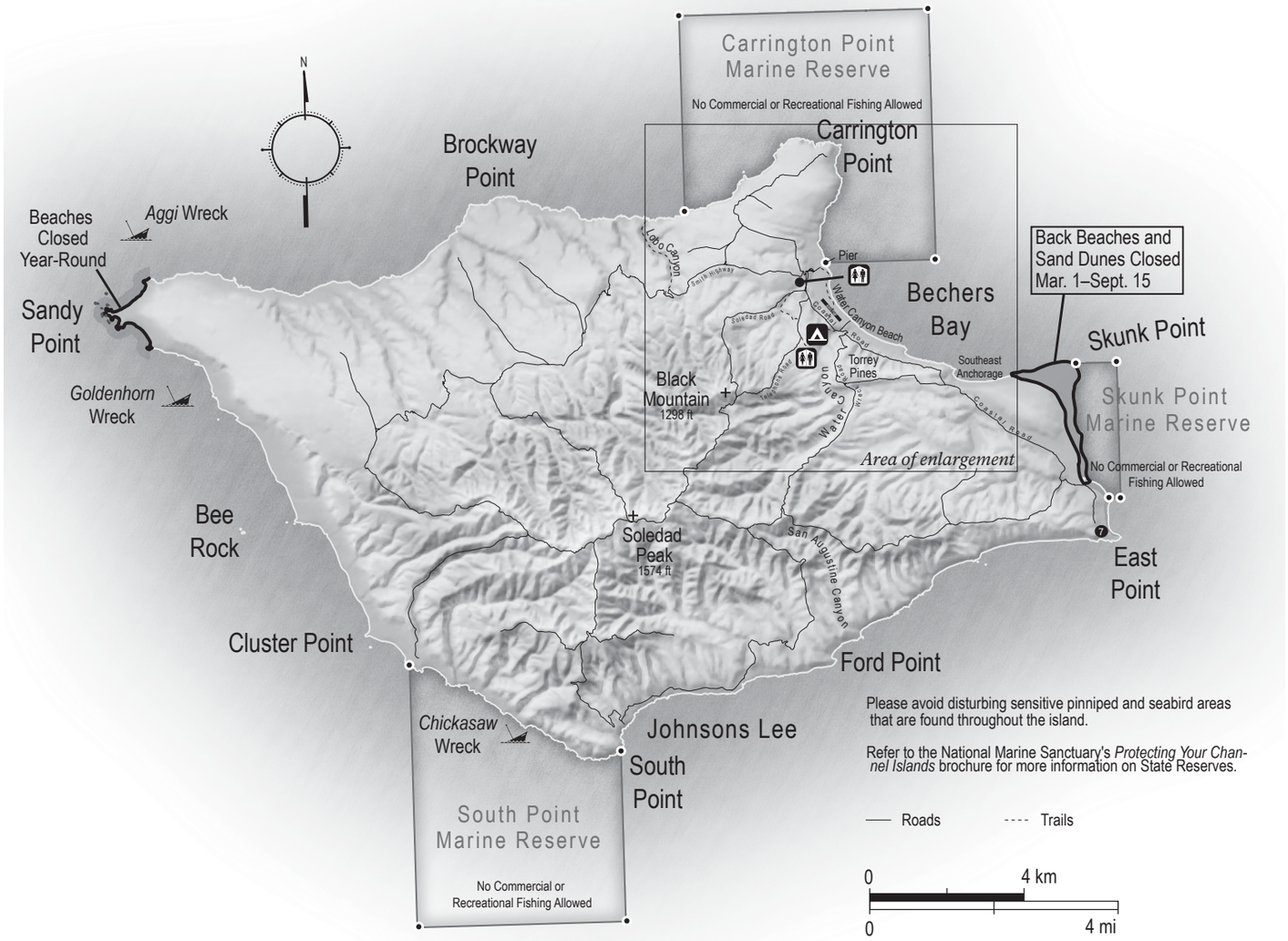
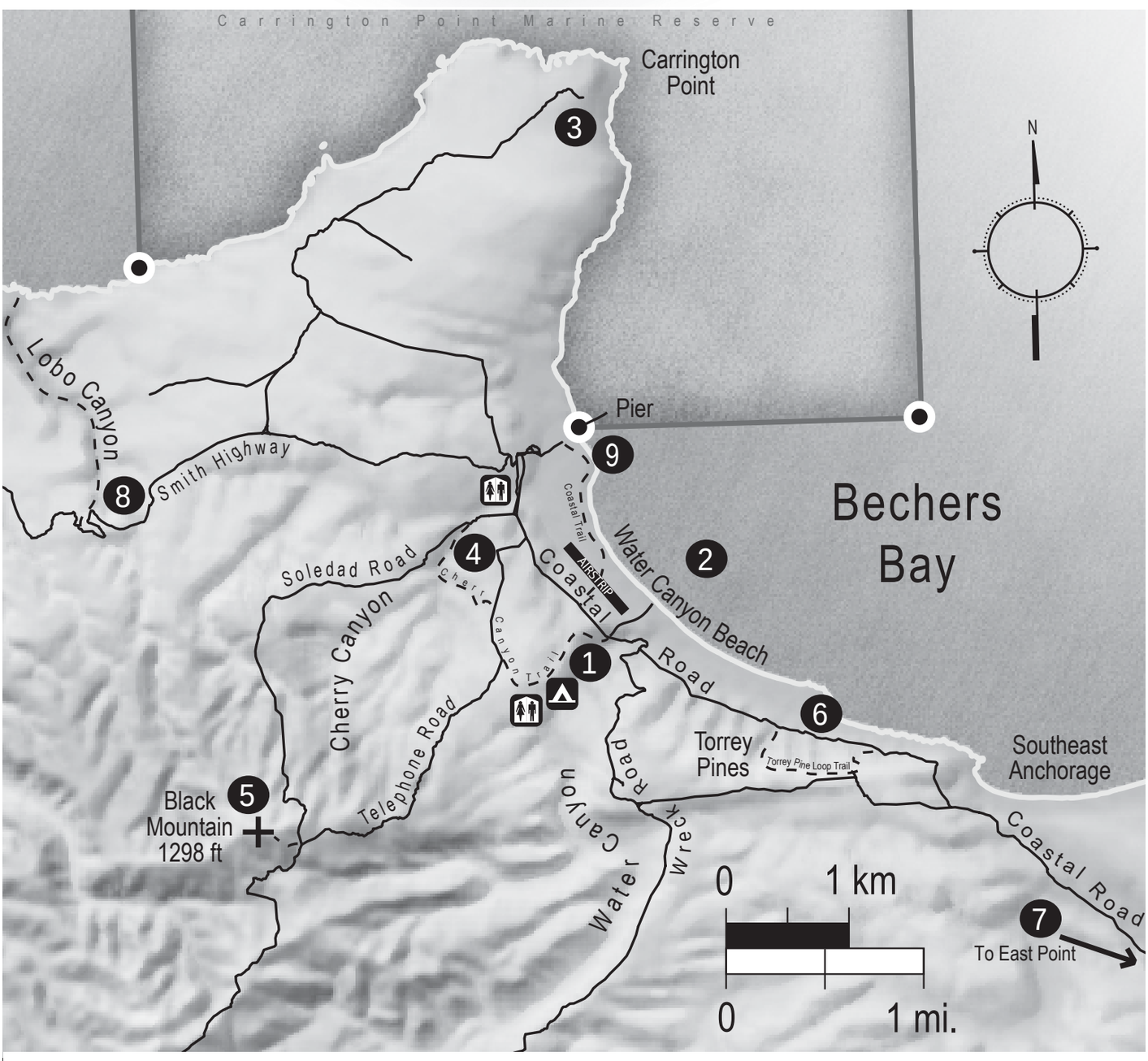
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Channel Islands National Park

Hiking Santa Rosa Island

Several trails and roads traverse Santa Rosa Island, providing visitors with spectacular hiking opportunities. These trails and roads range from the relatively flat route to Water Canyon Beach to the rugged, steep path to Black Mountain. Hikers need to assume individual responsibility for planning their trips and hiking safely. To increase your odds of a safe hike, decrease your disturbance to wildlife, and lessen damage to resources, visitors should be in good physical condition and must follow the regulations and guidelines in the "Limiting Your Impact" section of the park website and those listed below:

- The ranch buildings in Bechers Bay are closed except for escorted tours. Visitors may use the picnic area on the lawn of the main ranch house. Restrooms are located nearby.
- The back beaches and sand dunes between and including Skunk Point and just north of East Point are closed to hiking from March 1st to September 15th to protect the nesting area for the snowy plover, a federally listed, threatened shorebird. Please remain on the wet sand (below mean high tide) or the road throughout this area.
- Please avoid disturbing sensitive pinniped (seals and sea lions) and seabird areas that are found throughout the island.
- It is recommended that visitors use the trail and road system when exploring Santa Rosa Island. Please avoid animal trails, which are narrow, uneven, unstable, and dangerous.
- Avoid cliff edges since they are crumbly and unstable. Stay well back.
- Hikers should avoid hiking alone—use the buddy system.
- Carry plenty of water and drink it. Drinking water is available at the ranch and campground.
- Be aware of poison oak, "jumping" cholla cactus, and ticks. Poison oak can be identified by its clusters of three shiny leaflets. Some ticks carry disease; check your clothing and exposed skin after hiking.
- In order to help prevent wildfires, do not smoke on trails or in brush areas. Smoking is allowed only on beaches.
- When departing from the islands, visitors are responsible for meeting the boat and airline concessionaire on time. Be aware of departure time by asking the ranger or concessionaire employees. Concessionaire trips are not scheduled every day.
- Pack out what you pack in, including your trash. There are no trashcans on the island so please take your garbage with you.
- *Do not directly or indirectly feed the wildlife*. Secure your trash andfood at all times. Use the storage boxes provided at the picnic tables or behind the kiosk in the orientation area. Gulls, ravens, skunks, mice and especially foxes have all gotten into visitors' food. Failure to store your food and trash properly or intentionally feedingwildlife will result in a citation and fine.

Destination (from pier)	**Distance** (miles, round-trip)	**Difficulty**	**Description**
1 **Campground**	3 (.5 from airstrip)	Easy	A flat walk through the historic ranch and along the coastal terrace to the Water Canyon campground.
2 **Water Canyon Beach**	3 (to beach entrance)	Easy	If the wind is not too strong, explore the wonderful 2-mile-long white sand beach. *The pier is not accessible from the beach unless there is a minus tide.*
3 **Carrington Point**	9.5	Strenuous	Carrington Point is home to seals, sea lions, and seabirds, an ocean blowhole, a sea arch, the endangered soft-leaved paintbrush, and unmatched coastal views. Please avoid disturbing these sensitive resources by staying on established trails and paths.
4 **Cherry Canyon**	3.5 (via the loop trail)	Moderate	A loop hike with riparian vegetation and views of Bechers Bay. Other trails branch off of the Cherry Canyon trail allowing for visits to Black Mountain, the campground, and Water Canyon beach.
5 **Black Mountain**	8	Strenuous	A long, steep climb that rewards visitors with oak woodlands and great views (weather permitting) of Santa Rosa, San Miguel, Santa Cruz, and the mainland. Visitors may make this a loop hike by including the Cherry Canyon trail and Telephone and Soledad roads.
6 **Torrey Pines**	5 (to base of pines) 7.5 (via the loop trail)	Moderate Strenuous	View one of the rarest pines in the world, the Torrey pine. The easier, moderate route allows visitors to view the pines along the flat Coastal Road. The strenuous route follows the loop trail to the top of the grove, providing spectacular views. For the best route take the loop trail up the western edge of the grove, along the top, and down the steep, eastern side of the grove. For an easier, more gradual descent, follow the road down to Southeast Anchorage.
7 **East Point**	16	Strenuous (due to length)	A beautiful hike along the coast or along the Coastal Road with opportunities to explore the Torrey pines and beaches. *The back beaches and sand dunes between and including Skunk Point and just north of East Point are closed from March 1st to September 15th.* Please remain on the wet sand (below mean high tide) or the road throughout this area.
8 **Lobo Canyon**	9.6 (to canyon mouth)	Strenuous	A spectacular canyon with wind- and water-sculpted sandstone cliffs, a year-round stream, riparian vegetation, and a spectacular coast at its mouth. Well worth the effort.
9 **Coastal Trail**	2 (to airstrip junction)	Easy	A flat walk along coastal bluffs with great views. Connects with the coastal road near the airstrip. Be aware of planes. This is an active airstrip.

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