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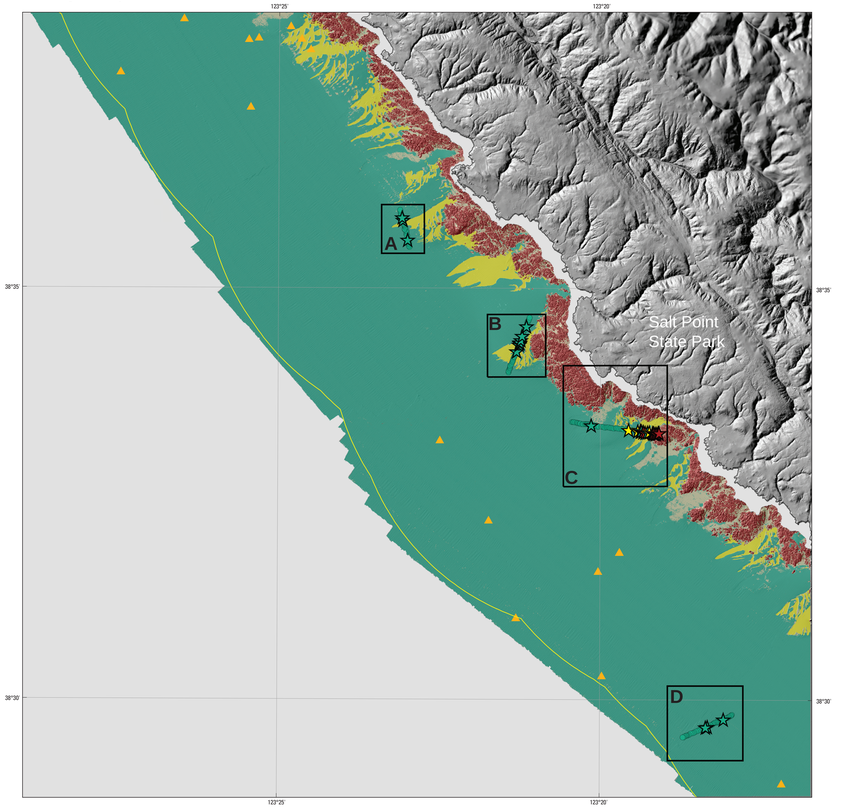
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

Open-File Report 2015–1098
Sheet 6 of 10
Pamphlet accompanies map



Onshore elevation data from National Aeronautics and Space Administration and U.S. Geological Survey, available at http://www.usgsmapography.org/, and from U.S. Geological Survey, National Elevation Dataset, available at http://ned.usgs.gov/.
California's State Waters limit from NOAA Office of Coast Survey
Universal Transverse Mercator projection, Zone 10N

NOT INTENDED FOR NAVIGATIONAL USE

APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION, 2015

SCALE 1:50 000

2 1 0 2 MILES
7000 3500 0 7000 FEET
1 0.5 0 1 KILOMETER
1 KILOMETRE 1 KILOMETRE
ONE MILE = 0.869 NAUTICAL MILES

MAP LOCATION

Seafloor-character map simplified from map on sheet 5, this report. Video observations recorded and digital still photographs taken in 2007–2008. Sample localities from usSEABED (Reid and others, 2006)

GIS database and digital cartography by Nadine E. Golden and Mercedes D. Erdey

Manuscript approved for publication May 12, 2015

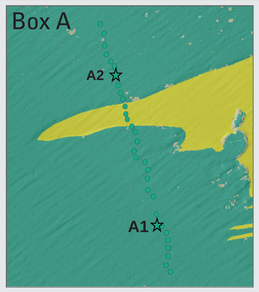


Figure 1A. Detailed view of seafloor character mapped approximately 2 km offshore from Salt Point State Park (see Box A, on map, for location), showing the locations of periodic real-time video observations (dots) and digital still photographs (stars; see figs. 1B through 1C) from camera line CAM77 cruise L–9–08–NC.

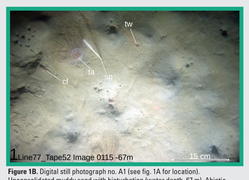


Figure 1B. Digital still photograph no. A1 (see fig. 1A for location). Unconsolidated muddy sand with bioturbation (water depth, 67 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes tube-dwelling anemones (ta), tubeworm (tw), sea pen (sp), and cornfish (cf). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

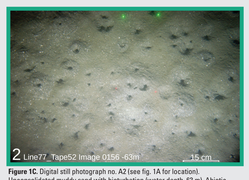


Figure 1C. Digital still photograph no. A2 (see fig. 1A for location). Unconsolidated muddy sand with bioturbation (water depth, 63 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

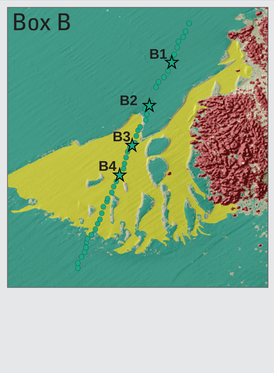


Figure 2A. Detailed view of seafloor character mapped approximately 1 km offshore of Salt Point State Park (see Box B, on map, for location), showing the locations of periodic real-time video observations (dots) and digital still photographs (stars; see figs. 2B through 2E) from camera line CAM76 cruise L–9–08–NC.

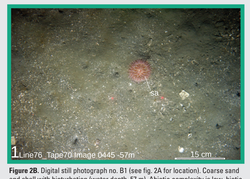


Figure 2B. Digital still photograph no. B1 (see fig. 2A for location). Coarse sand and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 57 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes stubby rose sea anemone (sa, *Urticina coriacea*). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 2C. Digital still photograph no. B2 (see fig. 2A for location). Coarse sand, gravel and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 54 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

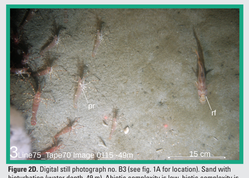


Figure 2D. Digital still photograph no. B3 (see fig. 1A for location). Sand with bioturbation (water depth, 49 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes spot prawns (pr, *Pandalus platyceros*) and rockfish (rf). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

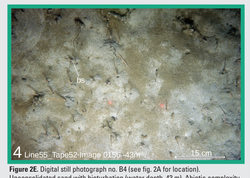


Figure 2E. Digital still photograph no. B4 (see fig. 2A for location). Unconsolidated sand with bioturbation (water depth, 43 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes brittle stars (bs). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

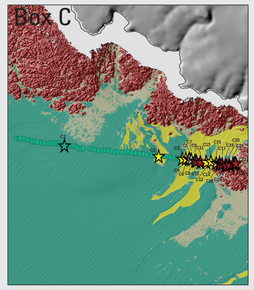


Figure 3A. Detailed view of seafloor character mapped approximately 0.5 km offshore from Salt Point State Park (see Box C, on map, for location), showing the locations of periodic real-time video observations (dots) and digital still photographs (stars; see figs. 3B through 3x) from camera line CAM75, cruise L–9–08–NC.

Figure 3B. Digital still photograph no. C1 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 59 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sea anemone (sa). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

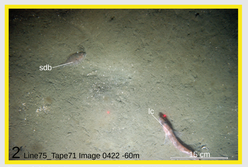


Figure 3C. Digital still photograph no. C2 (see fig. 3A for location). Coarse sand and shell in area of degraded ripples (water depth, 60 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes lingcod (lc, *Ophiodon elongatus*) and sanddab (sdb, *Citharichthys stigmaeus*). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3D. Digital still photograph no. C3 (see fig. 3A for location). Coarse sand and shell in area of degraded ripples with bioturbation (water depth, 51 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes crab (c). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

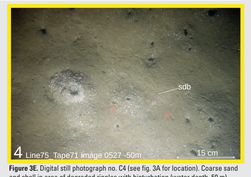


Figure 3E. Digital still photograph no. C4 (see fig. 3A for location). Coarse sand and shell in area of degraded ripples with bioturbation (water depth, 50 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sanddab (sdb, *Citharichthys stigmaeus*). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

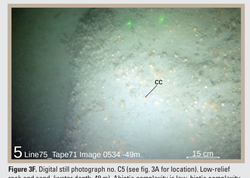


Figure 3F. Digital still photograph no. C5 (see fig. 3A for location). Low-relief rock and sand (water depth, 49 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes cup corals (cc). Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

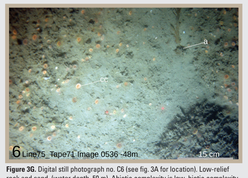


Figure 3G. Digital still photograph no. C6 (see fig. 3A for location). Low-relief rock and sand (water depth, 50 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes cup corals (cc) and drifting algae (a). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

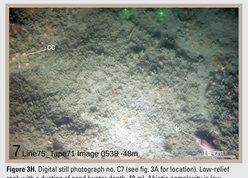


Figure 3H. Digital still photograph no. C7 (see fig. 3A for location). Low-relief rock with a dusting of sand (water depth, 48 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes cup corals (cc) and lingcod (lc, *Ophiodon elongatus*). Distance between lasers (green and red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3I. Digital still photograph no. C8 (see fig. 3A for location). Coarse sand and shell with bioturbation and trails (water depth, 48 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sand-rose sea anemone (sa, *Urticina columbiana*). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

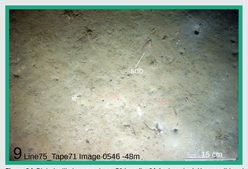


Figure 3J. Digital still photograph no. C9 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 48 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sanddab (sdb, *Citharichthys stigmaeus*). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

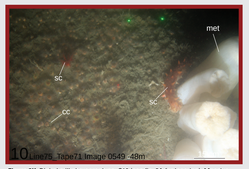


Figure 3K. Digital still photograph no. C10 (see fig. 3A for location). Massive rock (water depth, 48 m). Abiotic complexity is moderate, biotic complexity is present, and biocover is high. Biocover includes white-plumed anemones (met, *Metridium spp.*), sea cucumbers (sc), and cup corals (cc). Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

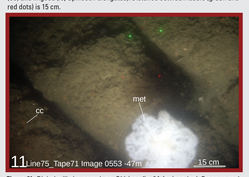


Figure 3L. Digital still photograph no. C11 (see fig. 3A for location). Fracture rock (water depth, 47 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is present, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes white-plumed anemones (met, *Metridium spp.*) and cup corals (cc). Distance between lasers (green and red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3M. Digital still photograph no. C12 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 48 m). Abiotic complexity is moderate, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

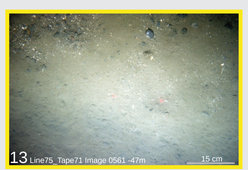


Figure 3N. Digital still photograph no. C13 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand, gravel, and shell in an area of ripples (water depth, 47 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3O. Digital still photograph no. C14 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell in area of degraded ripples and low-relief rock (water depth, 46 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sea anemone (sa) and cup corals (cc). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

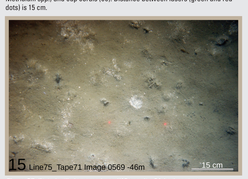


Figure 3P. Digital still photograph no. C15 (see fig. 3A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell in area of degraded ripples and low-relief rock (water depth, 46 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

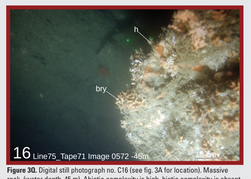


Figure 3Q. Digital still photograph no. C16 (see fig. 3A for location). Massive rock (water depth, 45 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes bryozoans (bry) and hydroids (h). Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3R. Digital still photograph no. C17 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 45 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes fish-eating anemone (sa, *Urticina piscivora*), hydroids (h), and cup corals (cc). Distance between lasers (green and red dots) is 15 cm.

Figure 3S. Digital still photograph no. C18 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 37 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes sea cucumber (sc, *Parastichopus californicus*), cup corals (cc), worm tubes (wt), and rockfish (rf). Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

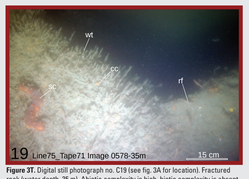


Figure 3T. Digital still photograph no. C19 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 35 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes California sea cucumber (sc, *Parastichopus californicus*), cup corals (cc), worm tubes (wt), and rockfish (rf). Distance between lasers (red dots just out of view in this image but are visible in previous video frame) is 15 cm.

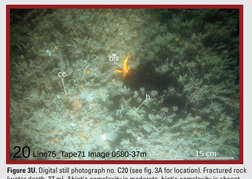


Figure 3U. Digital still photograph no. C20 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 37 m). Abiotic complexity is moderate, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes blood star (bls, *Henricia leviuscula*), cup corals (cc), and hydroids (h). Distance between lasers (red dots just out of view in this image but are visible in previous video frame) is 15 cm.

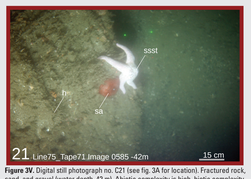


Figure 3V. Digital still photograph no. C21 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock, sand, and gravel (water depth, 42 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is moderate. Biocover includes short-spined sea star (sasst, *Pisaster brevispinus*), a sea anemone (sa), and hydroids (h). Distance between lasers (green dots) is 15 cm.

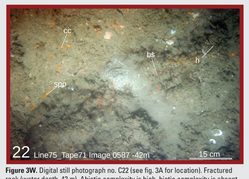


Figure 3W. Digital still photograph no. C22 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 42 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes brittle stars (bs), encrusting sponge (spo), cup corals (cc), and hydroids (h). Distance between lasers (red dots just out of view in this image but are visible in previous video frame) is 15 cm.

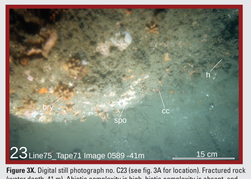


Figure 3X. Digital still photograph no. C23 (see fig. 3A for location). Fractured rock (water depth, 41 m). Abiotic complexity is high, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is high. Biocover includes bryozoans (bry), hydroids (h), cup corals (cc), and encrusting sponge (spo). Distance between lasers (red dots just out of view in this image but are visible in previous video frame) is 15 cm.

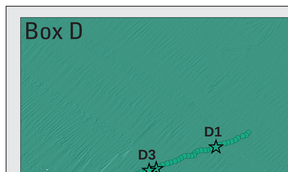


Figure 4A. Detailed view of seafloor character mapped approximately 5 km offshore of Salt Point State Park (see Box D, on map, for location), showing the locations of periodic real-time video observations (dots) and digital still photographs (stars; see figs. 4B through 4D) from camera line CAM74, cruise L–9–08–NC.

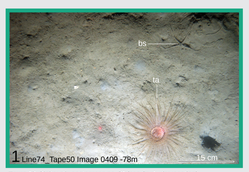


Figure 4B. Digital still photograph no. D1 (see fig. 4A for location). Unconsolidated sand and shell with bioturbation (water depth, 78 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes tube-dwelling anemone (ta) and brittle star (bs). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

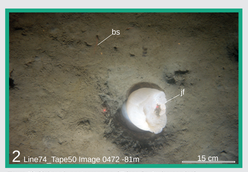


Figure 4C. Digital still photograph no. D2 (see fig. 4A for location). Unconsolidated muddy sand with bioturbation (water depth, 81 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes jellyfish (jf, dead or dying) and brittle stars (bs). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.

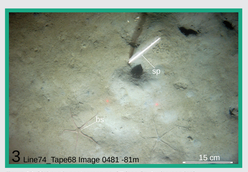
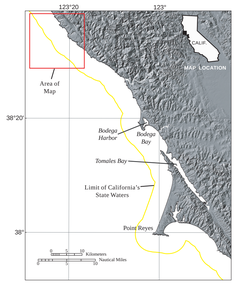


Figure 4D. Digital still photograph no. D3 (see fig. 4A for location). Unconsolidated muddy sand with bioturbation and tracks (water depth, 81 m). Abiotic complexity is low, biotic complexity is absent, and biocover is low. Biocover includes sea pen (sp) and brittle stars (bs). Distance between lasers (red dots) is 15 cm.



DISCUSSION

Between 2006 and 2007, the seafloor in the Offshore of Salt Point map area in northern California was mapped by Fugro Pelagos and California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), using both multibeam echosounders and bathymetric sidescan-sonar systems (see sheets 1, 2, 3). These mapping missions combined to collect bathymetry and acoustic-backscatter data from about the 10-m isobath to out beyond the 3-nautical-mile limit of California's State Waters. In order to characterize the bathymetry and acoustic-backscatter data into geologically and biologically useful information, the USGS ground-truth-surveyed the data by towing a camera sled (fig. 4) over specific locations throughout the map area in 2007.

During the ground-truth-survey cruise, the camera sled was towed 1 to 2 m above the seafloor, at speeds of between 1 and 2 nautical miles/hour. The sled housed two standard-definition (640×480 pixel resolution) video cameras (one forward looking, the other downward looking), a high-definition (1,080×1,920 pixel resolution) video camera, and an 8-megapixel digital still camera, which captured a digital still photograph once every 30 seconds. The video was relayed in real time to the research vessel, where USGS and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists recorded both the geologic and biologic character of the seafloor once every minute, using programmable keypads. The locations and directions of the camera-sled tracklines were chosen in order to visually inspect areas thought to represent the full range of bottom hardness and rugosity in the map area.

In the context of marine-fisheries management, benthic-habitat complexity can be divided into abiotic (geologic) and biotic (biologic) components. Benthic-habitat complexity refers to the visual classification of local abiotic and biotic vertical relief and structure that may provide potential refuge for both juvenile and adult forms of various species. Only abiotic attributes (primary- and secondary-substrate composition) were used in the production of the seafloor-character map on sheet 5. Classifications of primary and secondary substrate are based on the Wentworth (1922) scale of sediment grain-size categories, and the sand, cobble, and boulder sizes are classified as in Wentworth (1922). However, the difficulty in distinguishing the finest divisions in the Wentworth (1922) scale during video observations made it necessary to aggregate some grain-size classes: the granule and pebble sizes have been grouped together into a class called "gravel," and the clay and silt sizes have been grouped into a class called "mud." In addition, hard bottom and clasts larger than boulder size are classified as "rock." Primary and secondary substrate, by definition, constitute greater than 50 and 20 percent of the seafloor during an observation, respectively.

This sheet contains a smaller, simplified (depth-zone symbology has been removed) version of the seafloor-character map (sheet 5), on which the camera-sled tracklines used to ground-truth-survey the sonar data are indicated by aligned colored dots, each dot representing the location of a recorded observation. Primary- and secondary-substrate compositions are shown by differently colored dots. The map also shows the locations of the detailed views of seafloor character along some of the tracklines (Boxes A through D) that are highlighted on this sheet (figs. 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A). Also shown are locations of samples (triangles) from usSEABED (Reid and others, 2006) that were used to supplement the ground-truth surveys.

The seafloor-character map shows that this area is predominantly covered by sand and mud, but it also includes rock outcrops that extend from the shoreline to as far as 1 km offshore. These seafloor rock outcrops are continuous with coastal exposures of indurated sandstone, mudstone, and conglomerate of the lower Tertiary Germau Rancho Formation (sheet 10). Widespread areas of commonly rippled coarse sand, gravel, and scattered shell (for example, figs. 3C and 3N) occur in scour depressions on the deep (50 to 70 m) flanks of these rocky outcrops. The seafloor farther offshore (as deep as 95 m in California's State Waters) consists of mud and sand.

Each detailed view (figs. 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A) shows the locations of camera-sled tracklines (aligned colored dots), as well as of the photographs (colored stars) taken along the tracklines. These photographs, which are representative of the seafloor, are displayed with a description of the observed seafloor characteristics recorded by USGS and NOAA scientists (figs. 1B through 1C; 2B through 2E; 3B through 3X; and 4B through 4D). Only primary and secondary substrates are reported, although individual photographs may show more substrate types. Organisms, when present, are labeled on the photographs.

Ground-truth surveys in the Offshore of Salt Point map area include approximately 5 trackline kilometers of video and 674 still photographs, in addition to 244 seafloor observations of abiotic and biotic attributes. A visual estimate of slope also was recorded.

GLOSSARY

Rugosity—A GIS-derived characterization of seafloor roughness, calculated as the ratio of the three-dimensional surface area of seafloor to the two-dimensional planar-base area, for each cell in the bathymetry grid.

Backscatter intensity—The amplitude of the reflected sonar signal (see sheet 3) used to infer the hardness of the bottom, determined after sonar-data processing has removed (as much as possible) the effects of water depth, angle of reflection, and bottom roughness.

Biocomplexity—The assessment of the presence or absence of biological structures that have the potential of providing shelter for fauna, determined by estimating the scale, the amount, and the morphology of biological relief (as described by Tissot and others, 2006).

Biocover—The visual estimate of the proportion of biologic cover by encrusting organisms: high, greater than 50 percent; moderate, between 50 percent and 10 percent; low, less than 10 percent.

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EXPLANATION

Substrate class

- **Fine- to medium-grained smooth sediment**—Low backscatter, low rugosity; typically mud to medium-grained sand; often rippled and (or) burrowed
- **Mixed smooth sediment and rock**—Moderate to very high backscatter, low rugosity; typically coarse-grained sand, gravel, cobbles, and bedrock
- **Rock and boulder, rugose**—High backscatter, high rugosity; typically boulders and rugose bedrock
- **Medium to coarse grained smooth sediment**—Very high backscatter, medium rugosity; typically medium- to coarse-grained sediment, with varying amounts of shell hash; in scour depressions

Location of real-time video observation and interpreted substrate class of seafloor

- **Fine- to medium-grained smooth sediment**—Low backscatter, low rugosity; typically mud to medium-grained sand; often rippled and (or) burrowed
- **Mixed smooth sediment and rock**—Moderate to very high backscatter, low rugosity; typically coarse-grained sand, gravel, cobbles, and bedrock
- **Rock and boulder, rugose**—High backscatter, high rugosity; typically boulders and rugose bedrock
- **Medium to coarse grained smooth sediment**—Very high backscatter, medium rugosity; typically medium- to coarse-grained sediment, with varying amounts of shell hash; in scour depressions

Location of digital still photograph and interpreted substrate class of seafloor

- **Fine- to medium-grained smooth sediment**—Low backscatter, low rugosity; typically mud to medium-grained sand; often rippled and (or) burrowed
- **Mixed smooth sediment and rock**—Moderate to very high backscatter, low rugosity; typically coarse-grained sand, gravel, cobbles, and bedrock
- **Rock and boulder, rugose**—High backscatter, high rugosity; typically boulders and rugose bedrock
- **Medium to coarse grained smooth sediment**—Very high backscatter, medium rugosity; typically medium- to coarse-grained sediment, with varying amounts of shell hash; in scour depressions

Interpreted substrate class depicted in digital still photograph—Indicated by colored frame around photograph (not shown on map; shown in figures only)

- **Fine- to medium-grained smooth sediment**—Low backscatter, low rugosity; typically mud to medium-grained sand; often rippled and (or) burrowed
- **Mixed smooth sediment and rock**—Moderate to very high backscatter, low rugosity; typically coarse-grained sand, gravel, cobbles, and bedrock
- **Rock and boulder, rugose**—High backscatter, high rugosity; typically boulders and rugose bedrock
- **Medium to coarse grained smooth sediment**—Very high backscatter, medium rugosity; typically medium- to coarse-grained sediment, with varying amounts of shell hash; in scour depressions

Sample localities

- **From usSEABED (Reid and others, 2006)**

Area of "no data"—Areas near shoreline not mapped owing to insufficient high-resolution seafloor mapping data; areas beyond the 3-nautical-mile limit of California's State Waters were not mapped as part of California Seafloor Mapping Program

3-nautical-mile limit of California's State Waters

Figure 5. USGS-designed camera sled being loaded onto a research vessel in preparation for ground-truth studies. Components onboard sled include four digital video camcorders, one 8-megapixel digital SLR camera, lasers for scale, and various strobe and video lights, as well as telemetry instrumentation that recorded depth, altitude, and compass heading.

Ground-Truth Studies, Offshore of Salt Point Map Area, California

By

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