

Memorandum

Date: June 26, 2025

To: Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Craig Shuman, D. Env.
Marine Regional Manager

Subject: **Agenda Item 9, Evaluating marine protected area (MPA) petitions. Department-proposed evaluation framework**

At its February 14-15, 2024 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) referred 20 Marine Protected Area (MPA) petitions to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation. Throughout 2024, CDFW developed and implemented a [3-phased approach](#) to evaluate MPA petitions which was supported by the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) and approved by CFGC. The MRC considered CDFW's recommendations on 5 petitions (Bin 1) at the November 6-7, 2024 MRC meeting and CFGC adopted [the recommendations](#) at the December 11-12, 2025 CFGC meeting. At the March 13, 2025 MRC meeting, CDFW presented the proposed timeline and process for the remaining 15 petitions (Bin 2). This included developing an evaluation framework for the Bin 2 petitions and sorting the petitions into groups to facilitate subsequent petition discussions. CFGC approved the proposed timeline and process at their April 16-17, 2025 meeting.

CDFW, with support from staff at CFGC and the Ocean Protection Council, has developed the [draft 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework](#) (Draft Framework, Attachment 1) for consideration at the July 16-17, 2025 MRC meeting. The Draft Framework is based on the adaptive management process outlined in chapter 4 of the [2016 Master Plan for MPAs](#) and draws from the [Decadal Management Review](#) results and [recommendations](#), and the [MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework](#) approved by CFGC at their August 2023 meeting. [CDFW has annotated the 2023 Regulation Change Petition Framework](#) (Attachment 2) to identify the associated questions in the Draft Framework (Attachment 1). In response to MRC direction at their March 13, 2025 meeting, CDFW has sorted the Bin 2 petitions into 2 groups: [Tribally-focused Petitions and Other Petitions](#) (Attachment 3) using the questions in section III of the Draft Framework. After review and consideration by CFGC, CDFW will use the approved Framework to evaluate and develop recommendations for the Bin 2 petitions.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Dr. Craig Shuman, Marine Regional Manager, at (805) 568-1246.

Attachment 1: Draft 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework

Attachment 2: Annotated August 2023 CFGC approved MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework

Attachment 3: Draft 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Groupings

ec: Jenn Eckerle, Deputy Secretary for Ocean and Coastal Policy
Natural Resources Agency

Claire Waggoner, Environmental Program Manager
Marine Region