

Committee Staff Summary for July 16-17, 2025 MRC

9. Evaluating Marine Protected Area (MPA) Petitions

Today's Item	Information <input type="checkbox"/>	Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(A) Department-proposed evaluation framework Receive and discuss the Department's proposed framework for evaluating 2023 MPA petitions in bin 2. Develop a committee recommendation.		
(B) Petition groupings for future discussions of evaluations Discuss options for grouping 2023 MPA petitions in bin 2 for future review and discussion of petition evaluations and recommendations. Develop a committee recommendation.		

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

- Department proposed Phase 1 "binning" of MPA petitions into bin 1 (5 petitions) and bin 2 (15 petitions), and MRC developed recommendation (Commission approved in August 2024) July 17-18, 2024; MRC
- Commission took action on MPA petitions in bin 1, adopting November 2024 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) recommendations for all individual proposed actions in each petition December 11-12, 2024
- Received updates on timeline and evaluation process and updated SeaSketch mapping platform for MPA petitions reviewing March 13, 2025; MRC
- **Today, receive proposed evaluation framework for bin 2 MPA petitions and proposed groupings for future discussions; develop committee recommendation(s)** July 16-17, 2025; MRC

Background

In 2023, the Commission determined it would accept public proposals for adaptive management changes to the MPA network, which could include changes to MPA regulations or non-regulatory requests related to the MPA Management Program. Considering adaptive management changes was one of over two dozen recommendations from the 2023 decadal management review of the MPA network and management program.

The proposals were submitted as individual petitions through the Commission's regular petition process for regulation changes; in December 2023, the Commission received 20 publicly-submitted MPA petitions, collectively proposing over 80 individual actions. The petitions were then referred to the Department in February 2024 for review, evaluation, and recommendations. A more complete description of the petition process is included in Exhibit 1.

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Evaluation Framework and Process

In April 2024, the Commission approved a three-phase framework for evaluating the petitions and developing recommendations, as recommended by MRC. The framework (summarized in Exhibit 1) has guided the evaluation process to date.

- *Phase 1: Petition binning (completed July 2024).* Five petitions were categorized as “bin 1” for near-term evaluation, and 15 as “bin 2” for longer-term evaluation. The Commission approved this binning in August 2024, which began phase 2 for the bin 1 petitions.
- *Phases 2 and 3: Bin 1 separation of proposed actions and evaluations (completed November 2024).* The Department divided the five bin 1 petitions into the individual proposed actions and provided draft recommendations for the 21 actions, covering both regulatory and non-regulatory proposals. MRC refined these recommendations, which the Commission adopted in December 2024.
- *Phases 2 and 3: Bin 2 separation of proposed actions (completed) and evaluations (upcoming).* The bin 2 petitions have been separated into individual proposed actions (phase 2). Phase 3 evaluations are set to begin soon, following a general process and timeline presented by the Department in March 2025, which received support from MRC and the Commission. The analysis of bin 2 petitions was always anticipated to be more complex than the bin 1 analyses, and to require additional policy guidance, information, or resources before a full evaluation could proceed. Consequently, one focus of today’s discussion is to review information needs and inquiries to support petition evaluations.

Today’s Meeting**(A) Department-Proposed Evaluation Framework Template for Bin 2 Petitions**

In partnership with California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and Commission staff, the Department has developed a draft framework for evaluating the 15 bin 2 petitions and their associated individual proposed actions (exhibits 3 through 5). Both a proposed petition evaluation template (Exhibit 4) and an annotated summary (Exhibit 5) — which cross-references its questions with the evaluation considerations adopted by the Commission in August 2023 — have been provided.

Today, the Department will present an overview of its draft bin 2 evaluation template for discussion and potential Committee recommendation (Exhibit 6).

(B) Petition Groupings: *Optimizing Future Commission Review*

Recognizing the challenge of reviewing over 70 individual proposed actions contained within the bin 2 petitions, within the span of a single meeting, the Commission requested that the Department and staff work together to develop and propose alternative approaches. The goal of this collaboration was to develop potential groupings of petitions and/or individual actions, likely spanning two or more meeting days in either an MRC meeting or a committee-style convening of the Commission.

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As requested, the Department, upon conferring with OPC and Commission staff, has prepared draft groupings of petitions (Exhibit 5) to facilitate future discussions. Building on the Department's draft, staff has also developed detailed two- or three-day grouping suggestions incorporating a bioregional perspective to support future discussions of petitions, evaluations, and recommendations. While there were four planning regions during the development of the MPA network, long-term monitoring has confirmed three ecologically distinct bioregions, around which performance monitoring is structured. A bioregional lens would support the review of petitions and their evaluations in the context of the current bioregional network components and other petitions affecting each bioregion. This approach offers both ecological and social context for petition review. MRC may also want to consider further sorting grouped petitions by the type of action proposed, similar to that applied for review of bin 1 petition evaluations. See proposed groupings and rationale in Exhibit 7.

Today, the Department and staff will present the petition grouping options for MRC discussion and potential recommendation, which will help inform the structure the Commission selects for reviewing evaluations and recommendations for bin 2 petitions.

Note: Public input on this agenda item will be focused on the proposed evaluation approach and its functionality. The Committee is not expected to discuss specific MPA petitions at this meeting. However, public comments on specific MPA petitions or MPAs in general may be provided under general public comment (items 2 or 10).

Significant Public Comments

1. The petitioner for Petition 2023-15MPA_AM2 submits that levels of protection (LOPs) from the original Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative planning process are important to consider when evaluating petitions as part of adaptively managing the MPA network. He notes that both high LOP state marine conservation areas and very high LOP state marine reserves were accounted for as contributing to the MPA network's ecological connectivity. He illustrates the approach by applying the LOPs to the options within his petition (see Agenda Item 2, Exhibit 4 for today's meeting).
2. A joint letter from two recreational fishing advocacy groups, requests transparency in the MPA petition evaluation process. Specifically, they are looking for the specific criteria that will be used in the evaluations and for clear communications on the difference between the MPA petition process and OPC's 30x30 process. They support the MPA petition process to continue as outlined by the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) master plan, utilizing the master plan's regional objectives and regional LOP frameworks to evaluate petitions (Exhibit 8).
3. A joint letter from eight environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) urges the Commission to streamline adaptive management and address gaps in the MPA network. They believe the Department's draft petition evaluation template fits within the state's broader adaptive management framework, but offer recommendations for prioritizing adaptive management around four key areas: non-regulatory network changes, the regulatory adaptive management framework, addressing network gaps and future needs, and equitable access criteria. Their focus is aligning the MPA network with the MLPA master plan and DMR guidelines (Exhibit 9).

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Recommendation

Commission staff: (A) Recommend the Commission support the draft MPA petition evaluation framework template as proposed by the Department, with any adjustments supported by MRC from today's discussion. (B) Recommend the Commission support petition grouping by tribally-focused and non-tribally-focused as proposed by the Department (Exhibit 5), and support grouping petitions and individual actions by bioregion for future discussions of petitions, evaluations, and recommendations, as proposed by staff (Exhibit 7).

Department: Support the draft MPA petition evaluation framework template as displayed in Exhibit 3. Support grouping of petitions by tribally-focused and non-tribally-focused petitions as displayed in Exhibit 5.

Exhibits

1. [Staff summary and exhibits for Agenda Item 10\(C\), October 2024](#) Commission meeting *(for background purposes only)*
2. [Department memo: MPA bin 2 petition evaluation framework](#), received June 26, 2025
3. [Memo attachment 1: Department draft MPA bin 2 petition evaluation template](#), received June 26, 2025
4. [Memo attachment 2: Department annotated summary of MPA petition framework](#), received June 26, 2025
5. [Memo attachment 3: Department draft bin 2 petition groupings](#), received June 26, 2025
6. [Department presentation](#)
7. [Commission staff draft bin 2 petition grouping options](#), dated July 11, 2025
8. [Letter from Chris Arechaederra, Coastal Conservation Association California and Matt Bond, All Waters Protection and Access Coalition](#), received June 5, 2026
9. [Letter submitted by Katie O'Donnell, US Ocean Conservation Manager, WILDCOAST, on behalf of eight environmental NGOs](#), received July 3, 2025

Committee Direction/Recommendation

- (A) The Marine Resources Committee recommends that the Commission adopt the Department's evaluation framework as presented.

OR

The Marine Resources Committee recommends that the Commission adopt the Department's evaluation framework with the following changes:

_____.

- (B) The Marine Resources Committee recommends the following grouping of petitioned actions approach(es) for reviewing and discussing petitions, evaluations, and recommendations: _____.

Staff Summary for October 9-10, 2024
(For Background Purposes Only)

10C. Department Marine Region Report

Today's Item	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action <input type="checkbox"/>
I.	Update on developing recommendations for marine protected area (MPA) regulation changes for Bin 1 petitions (near-term) and proposed next steps for commencing Bin 2 (longer-term) petition evaluations.	

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

• Received MPA Decadal Management Review (DMR) report and recommendations	February 8-9, 2023
• Received 20 MPA regulation change petitions	December 13-14, 2023
• Referred 20 MPA petitions to Department for review and to the Commission Marine Resources Committee (MRC) for discussion	February 14-15, 2024
• MRC received and discussed Department-proposed approach for reviewing and evaluating petitions for MPA regulation changes	March 19, 2024; MRC
• Requested Department update on status of adaptive management actions	June 19-20, 2024
• Department presented proposed Phase 1 “binning” of MPA petitions into bin 1 and 2, and MRC developed recommendation	July 17 2024; MRC
• Approved MRC recommendation for bin 1 and bin 2 petitions; requested update on process for bin 2 petitions and proposed timeline	August 14-15, 2024
• Today's update	October 9-10, 2024

Background

MPA Regulation Change Petitions Review and Evaluation Process Update

In February 2024, the Commission referred 20 MPA regulation change petitions, submitted by the public in December 2023, to the Department for review, evaluation, and recommendation. The Department developed a 3-phased evaluation framework (Exhibit 1) with specific evaluation criteria to begin sorting petitions, which the Commission concurred with in April 2024 based on an MRC recommendation.

The Department subsequently completed Phase 1 of the evaluation process and presented results to MRC in July 2024. In August 2024, the Commission approved the Phase 1 binning as proposed and recommended by MRC (Exhibit 2). The Department highlighted mapping visualization tools — under development in partnership with the California Ocean Protection Council — to assist with understanding and evaluating petitions. The Commission requested that the Department provide a progress update in October 2024 (this meeting) on the evaluation process and timeline.

**Staff Summary for October 9-10, 2024
(For Background Purposes Only)**

As requested, for today's meeting the Department has prepared an update on the MPA petition evaluation process and timeline (Exhibit 3) that includes a presentation focused on orienting the full Commission to the work underway through MRC as directed by the Commission. The presentation includes the status of petition evaluation efforts under the approved MPA petition evaluation framework, proposed next steps for pursuing phases 2 and 3 of the petition evaluation framework, and a look ahead at near-term milestones for MRC and Commission meetings in late 2024 to early 2025.

Finally, the Department has just launched a new [Marine Protected Area \(MPA\) Petitions StoryMap](#). The web-based StoryMap provides information for anyone interested and with internet access to view maps and details for the submitted MPA petitions and view updates on the petition evaluation process. See Exhibit 4 for the [Department blog post](#) announcing the site's availability.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)

Recommendation (N/A)

Exhibits

1. [Department memo with proposed three-phase MPA petition evaluation process and timeline, dated April 2, 2024 \(for background purposes only\)](#)
2. [Department document, "Phase 1 Categorization of MPA Petitions," dated June 20, 2024 \(for background purposes only\)](#)
3. [Department presentation, "MPA Petition Evaluation Process Status and Timeline," received October 2, 2024](#)
4. [Department Marine Management News blog post: New Web Page Provides Information on Proposed Changes to the California Marine Protected Area Network, posted September 30, 2024](#)

Motion (N/A)

Memorandum

Date: April 2, 2024

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

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director

Subject: Proposed Marine Protected Area Petition Evaluation Process and Timeline

At their February 14-15, 2024, meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGF) referred 20 Marine Protected Area (MPA) regulation change petitions to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation. In addition, the CFGF requested CDFW develop a proposed approach to evaluate the petitions to discuss at the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting on March 19, 2024. After discussion and input from interested stakeholders, the MRC recommended approval of CDFW's proposed 3-phase approach to evaluate MPA petitions. The proposed approach is briefly described below and in the enclosed presentation that was provided to the MRC on March 19, 2024.

Proposed 3-Phase Approach to MPA Petition Evaluation

Phase 1: Petitions will be categorized into two bins using the criteria outlined below to determine which petitions can be evaluated in the near-term and which petitions will require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources prior to evaluation.

- **Bin 1 petitions:** Petitions that can be evaluated in the *near-term* must meet all the following criteria:
 - Policy direction not needed for next phases.
 - Within CFGF authority.
 - Immediate evaluation possible.
 - Limited clarification needed from petitioner.
 - Limited controversy anticipated.
- **Bin 2 petitions:** Petitions that do not meet all the above criteria will be categorized into Bin 2. The analysis of these petitions will be more complex as they will require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources before they can be evaluated. Due to the complexity of these petitions, these will be evaluated in the *longer term*.

Phase 2: Separate all Bin 1 petitions into individual actions and proceed to phase 3. Separate Bin 2 petitions into individual actions and identify additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources that are necessary to advance individual actions to phase 3.

Phase 3: Adaptive management evaluation and recommendations. Apply the evaluation framework approved by the CFGC to each petition action. The process will identify which petitions, and/or actions within each petition, would be recommended to be granted, denied, or considered through an alternative pathway.

Proposed MPA Petition Evaluation Anticipated Timeline

- **March-April 2024: Development of Evaluation Framework**
 - Receive and discuss proposed 3-phase evaluation process at the March 19 MRC and April 17 CFGC meetings.
- **April-August 2024: Phase 1— CDFW Sort Petitions into 2 Bins**
 - Discuss proposed bins at the July 18 MRC and August 14 CFGC meetings.
- **August 2024 and beyond: Phases 2 and 3—Separate petitions into individual actions**
 - Receive guidance on Bin 2 actions as needed.
 - Move forward with evaluation on both Bin 1 and 2 actions. Evaluation timelines for Bin 1 and Bin 2 actions will vary.

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

Attachment 1: Proposed Marine Protected Area Petition Evaluation presentation.

Attachment 2: Evaluation Framework

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

Craig Shuman, D. Env., Region Manager
Marine Region

Becky Ota, Environmental Program Manager
Marine Region

Stephen Wertz, Senior Environmental Scientist
Marine Region

Sara Worden, Environmental Scientist
Marine Region

Department of Fish and Wildlife: Summary of Marine Protected Area (MPA) Regulation Change Petition Framework Discussion

(07/27/23) Revised 08/10/23; Revised 8/17/23

At the California Fish and Game Commission's (CFGF) July 20, 2023 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting, MRC, CFGF staff, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff, and stakeholders discussed potential next steps in pursuing the MPA Decadal Management Review (DMR) report recommendations and goals. The discussion included a potential framework to assist in evaluation of petitions the CFGF may receive related to changes to the MPA network and management program. At the request of MRC, staff from CDFW summarized the input received at the July 20, 2023 MRC meeting regarding these MPA petition framework considerations.

Broadly, petitions submitted to the CFGF are evaluated on a case by case by basis. To help guide petition development and subsequent review by CDFW, the MRC received the following input for evaluating petitions related to MPAs:

- Compatible with the goals and guidelines of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA);
- Help advance one or more of the [six goals](#) of the MLPA;
- Garner strong community support; and/or
- Advance adaptive management recommendations under the cornerstones of MPA governance, MPA Management Program activities, and MPA Network Performance outlined in [DMR Table 6.1](#) to ensure that petitions meet MPA management priorities.

The MRC also received input organized by cornerstone as follows:

- MPA Governance:
 - Simplifies regulatory language or enhances public understanding
 - Addresses inaccuracies or discrepancies in regulations
 - Accounts for regional stakeholder group intent identified during the regional MLPA planning process (including MPA-specific goals/objectives and design considerations)
 - Accounts for CDFW's [MPA design and management feasibility guidelines](#)
 - Advances tribal stewardship and co-management, consistent with the CFGF [Co-Management Vision Statement and Definition](#)
 - Improves access for traditionally underserved or marginalized communities, consistent with the [CFGF Policy on Justice Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
 - Acknowledges socio-economic implications, such as access for consumptive or non-consumptive users
- MPA Management Program Activities:
 - Clearly addresses or identifies scientific need for MPA Network based on best available science and scientific advancement since Network completion
 - Improves compliance and/or enforceability
- MPA Network Performance:
 - Maintains or enhances the protections and integrity of the MPA Network
 - Maintains or enhances habitat and species connectivity
 - Adheres to science guidelines, such as maintaining minimum size and spacing, and protection of diverse habitats
 - Enhances climate resilience and/or helps mitigate climate impacts

Memorandum

Date: June 27, 2024

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

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

Subject: **Draft Proposed Phase 1 Categorization of Marine Protected Area Petitions**

At their February 14-15, 2024 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) referred 20 MPA petitions received to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation. In addition, they requested CDFW provide an administrative update at their March 19 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting on the approach to evaluate the petitions. After discussion and input from interested stakeholders, the MRC recommended approval of CDFW's proposed 3-phase approach to evaluate petitions, and the CFGC approved the approach at their April 17 meeting. CDFW has completed Phase 1 of the 3-phase approach and will present the proposed draft binning at the July 17, 2024, MRC meeting.

Phase 1 petitions are categorized into two bins using the criteria outlined in the 3-phase approach to determine which petitions can be evaluated in the near-term (Bin 1) and which petitions will require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources prior to evaluation (Bin 2). CDFW released the draft Phase 1 outcomes to California Native American tribes and the public on May 31, which includes tables that outline the proposed Bin 1 and Bin 2 petitions with brief justifications that describe why petitions are categorized into each bin.

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

Attachment 1: 3-phase approach for MPA Petition review and evaluation

Attachment 2: Draft Proposed Phase 1 Categorization of Marine Protected Area Petition background, Bin 1 and Bin 2 tables, and brief justifications

Attachment 3: Power Point presentation outlining process, proposed binning, and next steps

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

Stephen Wertz, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor
Marine Region

Draft Proposed Phase 1 Categorization of Marine Protected Area Petitions

In 2023, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) publicly released the first 10-year [comprehensive review](#) of California's Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network that included [28 adaptive management recommendations](#) prioritizing strategies for the next decade of MPA management. One of the near-term priority recommendations called for applying what was learned from the comprehensive management review to support proposed changes to the MPA Network and Management Program. To advance this recommendation, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) requested that MPA regulation change petitions be submitted for their December 2023 meeting. CFGC received [20 petitions](#) with over 80 unique requests for changes to the MPA Network.

At their February 14-15, 2024 meeting, CFGC referred the 20 MPA petitions received to CDFW for review, evaluation, and recommendation. In addition, they requested CDFW provide an administrative update at their March 19 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting on the approach they would take to evaluate the petitions. After discussion and input from interested stakeholders, the MRC recommended approval of CDFW's [proposed 3-phase approach](#) to evaluate MPA petitions, and the CFGC approved the approach at their April 17 meeting. CDFW has completed Phase 1 of the 3-phase approach and will present the proposed binning of petitions for discussion and consideration at the July MRC meeting. In addition to the MRC's regularly scheduled July 18 meeting, the CFGC approved a separate day on July 17 be added to the meeting for this discussion. There will be an update about the outcomes from this meeting at the August 14-15 CFGC meeting.

Petitions are categorized into two bins (Tables 1 and 2) using the criteria outlined below to determine which petitions can be evaluated in the near-term (Bin 1) and which petitions will require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources prior to evaluation (Bin 2). The proposed binning of petitions by CDFW are recommendations for the MRC to consider at their July 17 meeting. It is anticipated the MRC will make a recommendation on the binning of petitions for the CFGC to consider at their August meeting. ***Inclusion in Bin 1 does not automatically mean the requests in any given petition will be granted.*** Following approval of the binning of petitions by CFGC, CDFW will move forward with the evaluation of Bin 1 petitions for subsequent discussion and consideration by the MRC and CFGC.

Bin 1: Petitions that can be evaluated in the ***near-term*** must meet all the following criteria:

- Policy direction not needed for next phases: The requested changes are consistent with existing policies regarding the MPA Network.
- Within CFGC authority: CFGC has clear regulatory authority over the changes requested in the MPA petitions.
- Immediate evaluation possible: Information and resources are available to evaluate petitions in the near-term
- Limited clarification needed from petitioner: The changes requested in the petitions are clear and understandable.
- Limited controversy anticipated: Changes that have limited impact on human uses and network design, such as minor boundary changes and/or updating regulatory language, are expected to cause limited controversy.



Bin 2: Petitions that do not meet all the above criteria are categorized into Bin 2. The analysis of these petitions will be more complex as they will likely require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources *before* they move forward into the evaluation phase. Bin 2 petitions that could move forward based on CFGC guidance will be evaluated in the ***longer-term***. In addition, due to the larger breadth and scope of these petitions, they will likely require more extensive coordination with California Native American Tribes, other government agencies, partners, and stakeholders.

The tables below outline the proposed Bin 1 and Bin 2 petitions. There are brief justifications following each table that describe why a metric was met or not, and why petitions are categorized into Bin 1 or Bin 2. CFGC is seeking feedback on the draft proposed binning of petitions into either Bin 1 or Bin 2. Comments should be sent directly to CFGC to inform the discussions scheduled for July 17, 2024 at the MRC meeting. Written comments must be received by CFGC by July 5 to be included in the July MRC meeting materials. The CFGC website includes [instructions for how to submit written comments](#) and a [schedule of upcoming Commission meetings](#).



Table 1: Proposed Bin 1 Petitions. N=No, Y=Yes. Y/N in the “Within CFGC Authority?” column indicates that some of the actions proposed in the petition do fall within the regulatory authority of the CFGC, while others are non-regulatory requests. MPA designations state marine reserve (SMR), state marine conservation area (SMCA).

CFGC Tracking No.	Name of Petitioner	Short Description	Policy guidance needed?	Within CFGC Authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-22MPA	Wendy Berube, Orange County Coast Keeper	Change color coding on outreach maps, add language to tidepool take prohibitions, modify definition of tidepools, and allow research, monitoring, restoration, and education in Orange County MPAs, with the exception of Upper Newport Bay (Bolsa Chica, Laguna Beach, Crystal Cove, and Dana Point)	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-25MPA	Burton Miller	Change color designation of Blue Cavern Onshore and Casino Point SMCAs, change boundary of Long Point SMR, and remove allowance for feeding fish and Lover's Cove and Casino Point SMCAs.	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-26MPA	Lisa Gilfilan, WILDCOAST	Shift Swami's SMCA south from the lifeguard tower to the State/Solana Beach line to cover tidepools on the south side and change map color of no-take SMCAs at Batiquitos Lagoon, San Elijo Lagoon, and Famosa Slough from purple to red.	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-30MPA_1	Robert Jamgochian	Change gear restrictions within Big River SMCA to only allow Type A hoop nets that are compatible and eliminate the hoop net Type B option (rigid frame) from general provisions, reduce the number of set traps allowed from 10 to 5, and reduce the bag and possession limit for recreational take of crabs from 10 to 5.	N	Y	Y	N	Y
2023-31MPA_1	Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin	Subsume Drake's Estero SMCA into Estero de Limantour SMR to create a single SMR.	N	Y	Y	N	Y



Justifications for Proposed Bin 1 Petitions

Proposed Bin 1 petitions do not need policy direction from the CFGC to move forward with evaluation, are within CFGC regulatory authority, can be evaluated in the near-term, require minimal follow-up with the petitioner, and limited controversy is anticipated regarding petition requests. Justifications for each criterion are outlined below.

Petition Number: 2023-22MPA

Petitioner: Wendy Berube, Orange County Coastkeeper

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from CFGC.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y/N):**
 - Modifying the descriptions of specific MPAs and updating regulatory language are within CFGC authority.
 - Changing the color of a purple no-take SMCA to red *on outreach materials only* is a non-regulatory request. However, alternative pathways for this and other similar non-regulatory requests may be explored as a part of the 3-phase approach to evaluate petitions.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (Y):** Related information and data needed to evaluate petition are currently available.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (Y):** Limited controversy anticipated because the requested changes are to simplify and clarify regulatory language.

Petition Number: 2023-25MPA

Petitioner: Burton Miller

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from CFGC.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y/N):**
 - Boundary clarification at Long Point SMR, and the proposed removal of fish feeding from the regulations all fall within the CFGC's authority.
 - Changing the color of a purple no-take SMCA to red *on outreach materials only* is a non-regulatory request. However, alternative pathways for this and other similar non-regulatory requests may be explored as a part of the 3-phase approach to evaluate petitions.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (Y):** Related information and data needed to evaluate petition are currently available.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (Y):** Limited local controversy is anticipated regarding the request to end fish feeding within the Lover's Cove and Casino Point SMCAs.



Petition Number: 2023-26MPA

Petitioner: Lisa Gilfillan, WILDCOAST

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from CFGC.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y/N):**
 - Changing the boundaries of an MPA is within CFGC authority.
 - Changing the color of a purple no-take SMCA to red *on outreach materials only* is a non-regulatory request. However, alternative pathways for this and other similar non-regulatory requests may be explored as a part of the 3-phase approach to evaluate petitions.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (Y):** Related information and data needed to evaluate petition are currently available.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (Y):** Limited local controversy is anticipated regarding the proposed boundary shift.

Petition Number: 2023-30MPA

Petitioner: Robert Jamgochian

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from CFGC.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** The proposed amendments to the allowed take and gear type are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (Y):** Related information and data needed to evaluate petition are currently available.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Limited clarification with the petitioner may be necessary to determine the request for Type A hoop nets only.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (Y):** Limited local controversy is anticipated regarding proposed change in Dungeness crab take regulations.

Petition Number: 2023-31MPA

Petitioner: Ashley-Eagle Gibbs, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from the CFGC. The requested redesignation aligns with the intent of this MPA identified during the north central coast marine life protection act (MLPA) Initiative design and siting process to redesignate as an SMR once the pre-existing aquaculture lease was terminated.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** The proposed amendments to the allowed take and gear type are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (Y):** Related information and data needed to evaluate petition are currently available.



- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (Y):** Limited local controversy regarding ending recreational clamming. This petition is consistent with the recommendation of the northcentral coast MLPA regional stakeholder group at the end of the MLPA Initiative design and siting process.



Table 2: Proposed Bin 2 Petitions. N=No, Y=Yes. Y/N in the “Within CFGC Authority?” column indicates that some of the actions proposed in the petition do fall within the regulatory authority of the CFGC, while others are non-regulatory requests. MPA designations state marine reserve (SMR), state marine conservation area (SMCA).

CFGC Tracking No.	Name of Petitioner	Short Description	Policy guidance needed?	Within FGC Authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-14MPA	David Goldberg, California Sea Urchin Commission	Allow commercial take of sea urchins in 9 SMCAs.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-15MPA	Blake Hermann	Reclassify three SMRs in the northern Channel Islands, Santa Barbara County, as SMCAs and allow either the limited take of highly migratory species and possession of coastal pelagic species, or allow the take of pelagic finfish.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-16MPA	Richard Ogg	Reclassify Stewarts Point and Bodega Head SMRs and SMCAs to allow commercial take of salmon by trolling.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-18MPA	Greg Helms	Create small SMCA within Vandenberg SMR; modify multiple MPAs within the Santa Barbara Channel to allow range of activities, from changes to take of natural resources restrictions to vessel landing requirements.	Y	Y/N	N	N	N
2023-19MPA	Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians	Designate new Chitaqwi SMCA with a tribal take-exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians along the central coast.	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-20MPA	Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians	Add a tribal take exemption to Point Buchon SMCA for co-management with Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and modify northern boundary of the Point Buchon SMR.	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-21MPA	Rosa Laucci, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	Modify take allowances in Pyramid Point SMCA to no-take with tribal exemption and change northern boundary to align with California/Oregon border.	Y	Y	N	Y	N



CFGC Tracking No.	Name of Petitioner	Short Description	Policy guidance needed?	Within FGC Authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-23MPA	Keith Rootsart, Giant Giant Kelp	Reclassify three SMCAs as SMRs, designate Tanker's Reef as an SMR, allow kelp restoration in these four MPAs as follows: allow unlimited urchin take, allow outplanting of kelp, kelp spore dispersal, and kelp canopy pruning without a DFW scientific collecting permit (SCP). Proposes several actions to support kelp restoration such as placement of buoys at restoration sites, establishing a new process for restoration permits in DFW SCP program, designating "adopted reefs," and others.	Y	Y/N	N	Y	N
2023-24MPA	Mike Beanan, Laguna Bluebelt Coalition	Extend Laguna no-take SMCA southern boundary to the southern border of City of Laguna Beach, which will require modification of northern boundary of Dana Point SMCA.	N	Y	N	N	N
2023-27MPA	Azsha Hudson, Environmental Defense Center	Reclassify Anacapa SMCA as an SMR or reclassify the portion of the SMCA from shore to at least 30 meters deep.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-28MPA	Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council	Designate a new SMR around Point Sal in central California and consult with tribes first to determine whether an SMCA with exemptions for cultural and subsistence purposes.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-29MPA_1	Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council	Designate Mishopshno SMCA, a California-Chumash co-management MPA that allows take by members of Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians for traditional, ceremonial, cultural, and subsistence purposes.	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-32MPA_1	Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin	Change Duxbury Reef SMCA to an SMR, extend the southern boundary further south, and extend the northern boundary to the Double Point Special Closure.	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-33MPA_1	Laura Deehan, Environmental California Research and Policy Center and Azul	Expand boundaries of SMCAs and SMRs, and designate new MPA.	Y	Y	N	N	N



CFGC Tracking No.	Name of Petitioner	Short Description	Policy guidance needed?	Within FGC Authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-34MPA_1	Laura Deehan, Environmental California Research and Policy Center and Azul	Reclassify Point Buchon SMCA as an SMR, and modify regulations of Farnsworth Onshore and Offshore SMCAs to allow only recreational spearfishing.	Y	Y	N	N	N



Justifications for Proposed Bin 2 Petitions

Petitions that do not meet the above criteria for Bin 1 petitions are categorized into Bin 2. The analysis of these petitions will be more complex as they will likely require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources, before they can be evaluated. Below are brief justifications that describe why a metric was met or not.

Petition Number: 2023-14MPA

Petitioner: David Goldenberg, California Sea Urchin Commission

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding changing take regulations in SMCAs over a large geographic scale.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):**
 - Requested changes will require coordination with other management priorities such as the Kelp Restoration, Recovery, and Management Plan (KRMP) and updates to invertebrate take regulations.
 - A more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance will be needed for this petition before staff can analyze the proposed change.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Changing take regulations in several MPAs statewide is likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-15MPA

Petitioner: Blake Hermann

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding re-designation of entire SMRs into SMCAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require in-depth analysis of many resources and extensive coordination with external partners, including but not limited to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries, National Parks Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Redesignating SMRs to SMCAs is likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-16MPA

Petitioner: Richard Ogg

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding re-designation of entire SMRs to SMCAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.



- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with other management efforts regarding the ocean salmon fishery.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Redesignating SMRs to SMCAs is likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-18MPA

Petitioner: Greg Helms

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding partial designation change of an SMR to an SMCA and modifications to special closures.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y/N):**
 - Creation of an SMCA and modifications to, or removal of, an existing state MPA or special closure are within CFGC authority.
 - Continued support of M2 radar is a non-regulatory request. Changing the color of a purple, no-take SMCAs to red *on outreach materials only* is a non-regulatory request. However, alternative pathways for this and other similar non-regulatory requests may be explored as a part of the 3-phase approach to evaluate petitions.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Evaluation of this petition will require coordination with many external partners including National Marine Sanctuaries and the National Park Service. A more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance will also be needed to analyze the proposed changes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** The partial redesignation and changes to special closures around the Channel Islands are likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-19MPA

Petitioner: Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding approach to co-management of MPAs with California Native American Tribes and creation of new MPAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency, other state and federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and other partners regarding policies for co-management of the state's natural resources with California Native American Tribes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (Y):** Additional clarification needed from the petitioner regarding the definition of tribal co-management in the context of this petition and proposed regulation changes.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Establishing a new MPA is likely to be controversial.



Petition Number: 2023-20MPA

Petitioner: Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance on approach to co-management of MPAs with California Native American Tribes and changes in take regulations of an SMCA.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency, other state and federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and other partners regarding policies for co-management of the state's natural resources with California Native American Tribes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (Y):** Significant clarification is needed from the petitioner regarding the definition of tribal co-management in the context of this petition.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Decreasing the level of protection of an SMCA and proposed differences in take allowances by diverse sectors are likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-21MPA

Petitioner: Rosa Laucci, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance on approach to co-management of MPAs with California Native American Tribes and the creation of a tribal take-only MPA.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency, other state and federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and other partners regarding policies for co-management of the state's natural resources with California Native American Tribes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (Y):** Clarification is needed from the petitioner about the tribal take exemption.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Creating a tribal-take only MPA and proposed differences in take allowances by diverse sectors are likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-23MPA

Petitioner: Keith Rootsart, Giant Kelp Restoration

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding redesignation of entire MPAs and creation of new MPAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y/N):** Several requested changes are within CFGC authority, while many are non-regulatory requests.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Several requested changes will require coordination with other management priorities such as the KRMP and updates to statewide invertebrate take regulations. Evaluation of the requested changes will require in-depth analysis and coordination with many partners including National Marine Sanctuaries and several other state agencies.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (Y):** The scope of changes requested in this petition are extensive and complex and will require extensive coordination with the petitioner.



- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Establishment of new MPAs is likely to be controversial. Stakeholders in the Monterey area have consistently provided public comments on prior CFGC actions like those proposed within the petition, indicating a high degree of anticipated controversy on other petition components.

Petition Number: 2023-24MPA

Petitioner: Mike Beanan, Laguna Bluebelt Coalition

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (N):** Changes requested do not require policy guidance from the CFGC.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** A more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance will be needed for this petition to analyze the proposed change.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Public comments/letters have already been received by CDFW and CFGC about this petition, indicating a high degree of anticipated controversy.

Petition Number: 2023-27MPA

Petitioner: Azsha Hudson, Environmental Defense Center

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding re-designation of SMCA to SMR. The requested change does not align with the intent of this MPA identified during the Channel Islands planning process and would affect current tribal take allowances.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory Authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Evaluation of this petition will require coordination with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians and many external partners including National Marine Sanctuaries, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the National Park Service. A more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance will also be needed to analyze the proposed changes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Re-designation of entire MPA, effects on tribal take exemptions, and effects of proposed changes to the commercial and recreational lobster fisheries are likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-28MPA

Petitioner: Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding the creation of new MPAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.



- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency, other state and federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and other partners regarding policies for co-management of the state's natural resources with California Native American Tribes.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Establishment of a new MPA is likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-29MPA

Petitioner: Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding the creation of new MPAs.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Requested changes will require coordination with the California Natural Resources Agency, other state and federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and other partners regarding policies for co-management of the state's natural resources with California Native American Tribes. A more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance will be needed for this petition before staff can analyze the proposed change.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (Y):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Establishment of a new MPA is likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-32MPA

Petitioner: Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding the redesignation of an SMCA to an SMR that does not align with MLPA design process intent of the MPA and expansion of the existing MPA.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** A more in-depth examination of the original MPA science design guidance will be needed to analyze the proposed change.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Due to this site being a popular area for human use, a designation change and boundary expansion are likely to be controversial.

Petition Number: 2023-33MPA

Petitioner: Laura Deehan, Environment California Research and Policy Center and Azul

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance regarding the redesignations of SMCAs to an SMRs that do not align with MLPA design process intent of the MPA, creation of a new MPA, and expansion of existing MPAs.



- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Because this petition's stated intent is to assist in kelp forest recovery, this petition will need to be evaluated in concert with the KRMP, which is not yet complete.
- **Is clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N)** Creation of a new MPA and large expansion of existing MPAs are likely to be controversial. There has already been significant local stakeholder discussion regarding the proposed Pleasure Point MPA in Santa Cruz County.

Petition Number: 2023-34MPA

Petitioner: Laura Deehan, Environment California Research and Policy Center and Azul

- **Is policy guidance needed for the next phase of evaluation? (Y):** Requires guidance on the redesignation of the SMCA to an SMR that does not align with MLPA design process intent of the MPA.
- **Does the petition fall within CFGC regulatory authority? (Y):** All requested regulatory changes are within CFGC authority.
- **Is immediate evaluation possible? (N):** Analysis will require a more in-depth examination of the original MPA design guidance regarding the proposed changes.
- **Is Clarification needed from the petitioner? (N):** Changes requested are straightforward and do not require detailed clarification from petitioner.
- **Is limited controversy anticipated? (N):** Anticipated to be highly controversial with the recreational and commercial fishing communities in the areas of the proposed changes.





Draft Phase 1 Proposed Marine Protected Area Petition Bins

17 July 2024

Presented to:

Marine Resources Committee
California Fish and Game Commission

Presented by:

Dr. Craig Shuman
Marine Regional Manager



How We Got Here: DMR Report and Petition Timeline



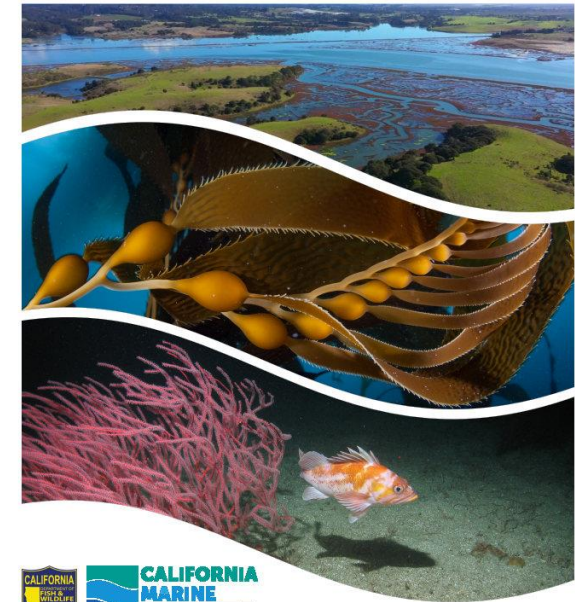
CFGF=California Fish and Game Commission
CDFW=California Department of Fish and Wildlife
DMR=Decadal Management Review



Petitions for Proposed MPA Network Changes

- CFGC received **20 petitions** to change MPAs at the December 2023 meeting
- **16 individual organizations** submitted petitions
- Petitions include **80+ proposed petition actions**
- **49+ MPAs and special closures affected** by proposals

California's Marine Protected Area Network **DECADAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW**



2022





Where We Are: MPA Petition Process 2024

**2024
and beyond**

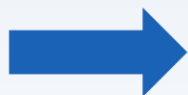
Policy guidance on
petitions and
evaluation

- **February 2024** - CFGC referred all petitions to CDFW for evaluation
- **March 2024** – CDFW proposed 3-phased approach to petition evaluation process
- **April 2024** – CFGC accepted CDFW's approach
- **May 2024** – CDFW released a blog with the draft petition binning for public review
- **July 2024** - Marine Resources Committee discussion

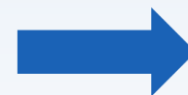


Petition Evaluation Framework: 3-phase Approach

Phase 1: Bin whole petitions



Phase 2: Separate petitions into individual actions to determine evaluation pathway



Phase 3: Adaptive management evaluation and recommendations



Phase 1: Bin Whole Petitions





Draft Proposed Bin 1 Petitions

CFGC Tracking No.	Brief description	Policy guidance needed?	Within CFGC authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-22MPA	Orange County MPAs; change color coding on outreach maps, update regulatory language	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-25MPA	Catalina Island MPAs; change color coding on outreach maps, remove fish feeding; boundary update	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-26MPA	San Diego County MPAs; change color coding on outreach maps; Swami's SMCA boundary shift	N	Y/N	Y	N	Y
2023-30MPA_1	Big River SMCA; change Dungeness crab gear and take limits	N	Y	Y	N	Y
2023-31MPA_1	Drake's Estero SMCA; subsume into Estero de Limantour SMR	N	Y	Y	N	Y



Draft Proposed Bin 2 Petitions (1 of 3)

CFGC Tracking No.	Brief description	Policy guidance needed?	Within CFGC authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-14MPA	Allow commercial take of sea urchins in 9 SMCAs	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-15MPA	Northern Channel Island MPAs; allow take of highly migratory species; pelagic finfish	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-16MPA	Bodega Head and Stewarts Point SMRs; redesignate to SMCAs to allow commercial salmon trolling	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-18MPA	Santa Barbara County MPAs; modify take allowances; modify special closures; create small SMCA within Vandenberg SMR	Y	Y/N	N	N	N
2023-19MPA	Designate new tribal SMCA with take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians	Y	Y	N	Y	N



Draft Proposed Bin 2 Petitions (2 of 3)

CFGC Tracking No.	Brief description	Policy guidance needed?	Within CFGC authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-20MPA	Point Buchon MPAs; tribal take exemption for Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians, boundary shift	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-21MPA	Pyramid Point SMCA; tribal take only for Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, boundary adjustment	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-23MPA	Monterey County MPAs; designation changes, new permitting process, various other activities	Y	Y/N	N	Y	N
2023-24MPA	Laguna Beach no-take SMCA boundary shift	N	Y	N	N	N
2023-27MPA	Anacapa SMCA; redesignation to SMR, or partial redesignation	Y	Y	N	N	N



Draft Proposed Bin 2 Petitions (3 of 3)

CFGC Tracking No.	Brief description	Policy guidance needed?	Within CFGC authority?	Evaluate in the near-term?	Clarification needed from petitioner?	Limited controversy anticipated?
2023-28MPA	San Luis Obispo County; new MPA near Point Sal	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-29MPA_1	Santa Barbara County; new tribal co-management MPA with Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians	Y	Y	N	Y	N
2023-32MPA_1	Duxbury Reef SMCA; redesignate to SMR and expand boundaries	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023 33MPA_1	Expand boundaries of multiple SMCAs and SMRs; designate new MPA	Y	Y	N	N	N
2023-34MPA_1	Redesignate Point Buchon SMCA to SMR; modify take allowances in Farnsworth SMCAs	Y	Y	N	N	N



Next Steps: Implement DMR Recommendations

Near-Term (ongoing – 2 years)

- Rec 1: Improve state agencies tribal engagement
- Rec 4: Apply Review knowledge to Network/Management changes ★
- Rec 7: Expand outreach and education materials
- Rec 9: Continue OPC coordination
- Rec 10: Improve coordination across Management Program pillars
- Rec 11: Update Action Plan
- Rec 16: More targeted outreach to specific audiences
- Rec 17: Improve SCP process
- Rec 18: Use policy to review MPA restoration/mitigation efforts
- Rec 20: Increase enforcement capacity
- Rec 21: Enhance citation record keeping and management
- Rec 25: Implement MPA climate change research
- Rec 27: Improve understanding of MPA effects on fisheries

Mid-Term (2 – 5 years)

- Rec 2: Create pathway to tribal MPA management
- Rec 3: Build tribal capacity to participate in MPA management
- Rec 6: Include and fund more diverse researchers and stakeholders
- Rec 8: Evaluate MPA accessibility
- Rec 12: Improve understanding of human dimensions
- Rec 13: Explore innovative technologies
- Rec 14: Develop MPA community science strategy
- Rec 15: Evaluate Outreach needs and resource effectiveness
- Rec 22: Increase knowledge on MPA judicial outcomes
- Rec 23: Examine MPA Network design attribute more effectively
- Rec 26: Consider climate change in human dimensions monitoring
- Rec 28: Integrate influencing factors into MPA performance evaluations

Long-Term (5- 10 years)

- Rec 5: Establish targets to meet MLPA goals
- Rec 19: Create MPA Enforcement Plan
- Rec 24: Better incorporate marine cultural heritage into MPA Network





Roadmap for Today's Discussion

- **Draft bins and justifications**
 - Move petitions?
 - Change criteria outcomes and justifications?
- **Evaluation process and timeline**
 - Phase 2: Individual actions
 - Policy guidance
 - Extent of evaluations and trade-offs
- **Next steps and MRC recommendations for August CFGC meeting**

Scan for draft
bins and
justifications



A. Van Diggelen



Marine Protected Area Petition Evaluation Process Status and Timeline

9 October 2024

Presented to:

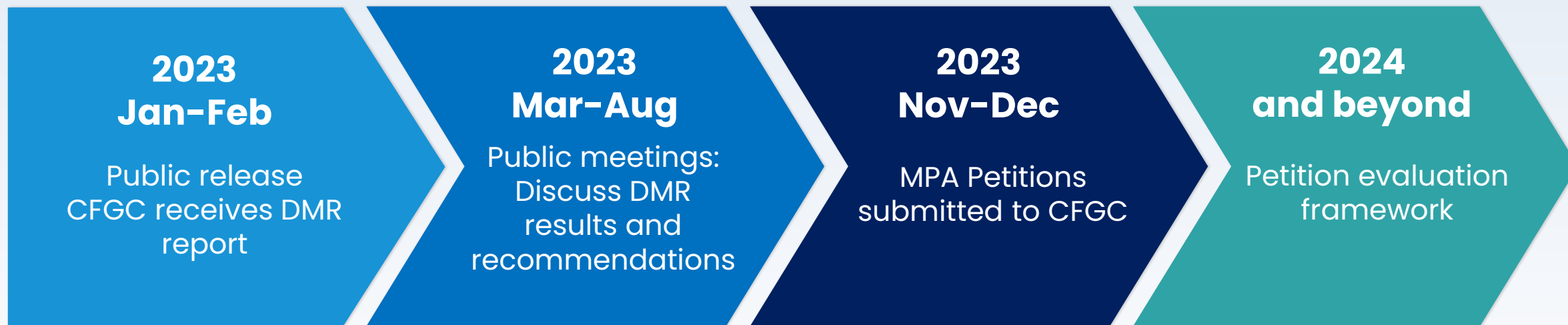
**California Fish and Game
Commission**

Presented by:

**Dr. Craig Shuman
Marine Regional Manager**



Recap: Decadal Management Review and Petition Timeline



Common acronyms:

CFGC=California Fish and Game Commission
CDFW=California Department of Fish and Wildlife
DMR=Decadal Management Review



Where We Are: MPA Petition Process

**2024
to date**

Petition evaluation
framework

- **February:** CFGC referred all 20 received petitions to CDFW for evaluation.
- **March – May:** CFGC approval of CDFW's proposed 3 phase evaluation approach; CDFW completes phase 1.
- **June:** CFGC requested an update on the other DMR recommendations.
- **July:** Marine Resource Committee (MRC) approved phase 1 outcomes.
- **August:** CFGC approved phase 1 outcomes, requests update in Oct. meeting and draft recommendations for Bin 1 petitions at Nov. MRC.



Petition Evaluation Framework: Status





Proposed Next Steps For Bin 2 Petitions: Phases 2 and 3

**Bin 2 Petition
Actions**



Do they meet Bin 1 criteria?

- Policy direction not needed for next phases
- Within CFGC authority
- Immediate evaluation possible
- Limited clarification needed from petitioner
- Limited controversy anticipated

YES

NO

**Move forward to
Phase 3 evaluation**

**Policy guidance,
information, resources**



Approved MPA Petition Evaluation Framework

- Compatible with the goals and guidelines of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA);
- Help advance one or more of the six goals of the MLPA;
- Garner community support; and/or
- Advance DMR adaptive management recommendations.



Petition Evaluation Framework Example Considerations

Compatible with MLPA goals and MPA Master Plan Guidelines, e.g.

- Maintains or enhances the protections, resiliency, connectivity, of the MPA Network
- Adheres to science design and CDFW management feasibility guidelines
- Accounts for the regional stakeholder group intent
- Improves enforceability and compliance

Advances DMR Recommendations, e.g.

- Advances tribal stewardship and co-management
- Improves access for traditionally underserved communities
- Acknowledges socioeconomic implications
- Clearly addresses scientific need based on DMR results
- Simplifies/clarifies regulatory language

Garners Community Support

- Commission Guidance needed to define "community support"
- Example: Aligns with management priorities of other agencies with overlapping jurisdictions



Looking Ahead: MPA Petition Evaluation Process

**2024
and beyond**

Petition evaluation
framework

- **November Marine Resources Committee:**
 - Draft Bin 1 actions and CDFW recommendations
 - Draft sorting of Bin 2 actions and next steps
- **December CFGC:**
 - Final CDFW Bin 1 recommendations and next steps
 - MPA Management Program annual report
- **March 2025 Marine Resources Committee:**
 - Draft CDFW recommendations on Bin 2 actions



Next Steps: Implement DMR Recommendations

Near-Term (ongoing – 2 years)

- Rec 1: Improve state agencies tribal engagement
- Rec 4: Apply Review knowledge to Network/Management changes ★
- Rec 7: Expand outreach and education materials
- Rec 9: Continue OPC coordination
- Rec 10: Improve coordination across Management Program pillars
- Rec 11: Update Action Plan
- Rec 16: More targeted outreach to specific audiences
- Rec 17: Improve SCP process
- Rec 18: Use policy to review MPA restoration/mitigation efforts
- Rec 20: Increase enforcement capacity
- Rec 21: Enhance citation record keeping and management
- Rec 25: Implement MPA climate change research
- Rec 27: Improve understanding of MPA effects on fisheries

Mid-Term (2 – 5 years)

- Rec 2: Create pathway to tribal MPA management
- Rec 3: Build tribal capacity to participate in MPA management
- Rec 6: Include and fund more diverse researchers and stakeholders
- Rec 8: Evaluate MPA accessibility
- Rec 12: Improve understanding of human dimensions
- Rec 13: Explore innovative technologies
- Rec 14: Develop MPA community science strategy
- Rec 15: Evaluate Outreach needs and resource effectiveness
- Rec 22: Increase knowledge on MPA judicial outcomes
- Rec 23: Examine MPA Network design attribute more effectively
- Rec 26: Consider climate change in human dimensions monitoring
- Rec 28: Integrate influencing factors into MPA performance evaluations

Long-Term (5- 10 years)

- Rec 5: Establish targets to meet MLPA goals
- Rec 19: Create MPA Enforcement Plan
- Rec 24: Better incorporate marine cultural heritage into MPA Network





MPA Petition Updates: StoryMap



Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Petition Process

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Click through the collection to:

- See an **overview** of the petition process, petition evaluation framework, and anticipated timeline
- Dive into an **interactive map** to visualize proposed changes
- Explore **petitions sorted** by numerical order, change category, or county, and click the links to learn more about each petition. Any petition proposing a change that can be visualized on a map (e.g., boundary or designation change) will have an image with a slider to swipe between the existing network and the proposed change. Any petition proposing a non-spatial change (e.g., take allowance or regulatory language change) will have a static image showing the location of the affected MPA(s).



Explore and stay up-to-date!



storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/27e78c677dc-a484ebfb37120abc59d10



Thank You

Questions?

fgc@fgc.ca.gov

mpamanagementreview@wildlife.ca.gov

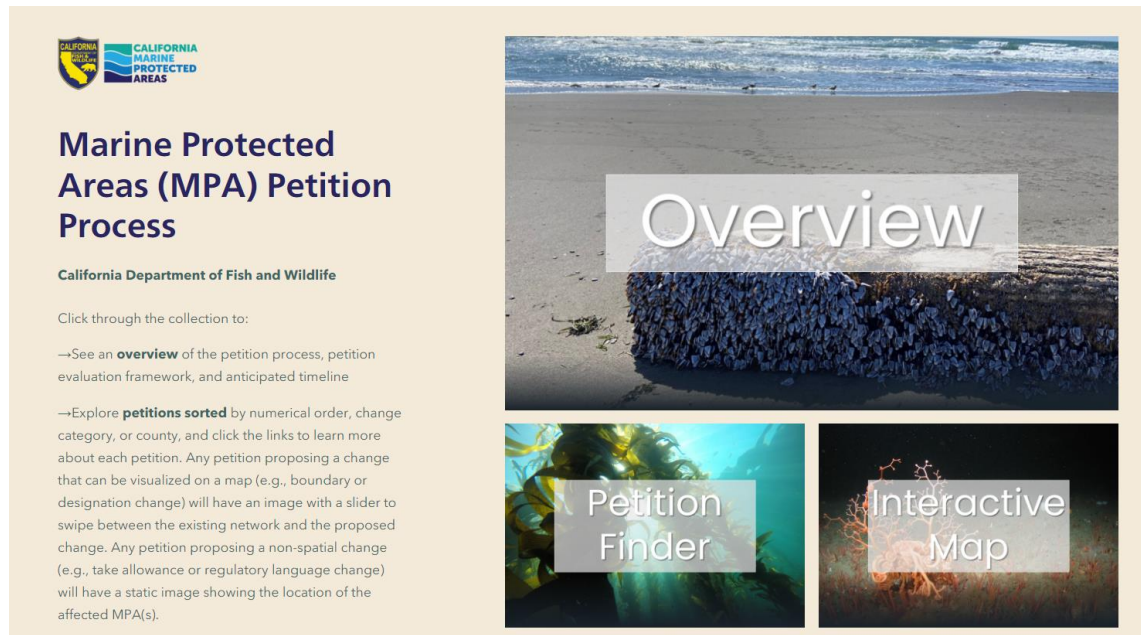




[Marine Management News](#)

New Web Page Provides Information on Proposed Changes to California Marine Protected Area Network

September 30, 2024



Landing page for CDFW's new MPA StoryMap, which describes petitions for changes to California MPAs

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is happy to announce the launch of a new [Marine Protected Area \(MPA\) Petitions StoryMap](#) to help provide information about 20 petitions for changes to the [California MPA Network](#). These petitions collectively propose more than 80 individual changes to California MPAs.

Each of these proposed changes can be visualized on maps housed in the MPA Petitions StoryMap. Visitors may browse among individual web pages that provide maps and details on each petition.

The [MPA Petitions StoryMap overview page](#) includes:

Up-to-date information on the individual petitions

An overview of the petition process and timeline

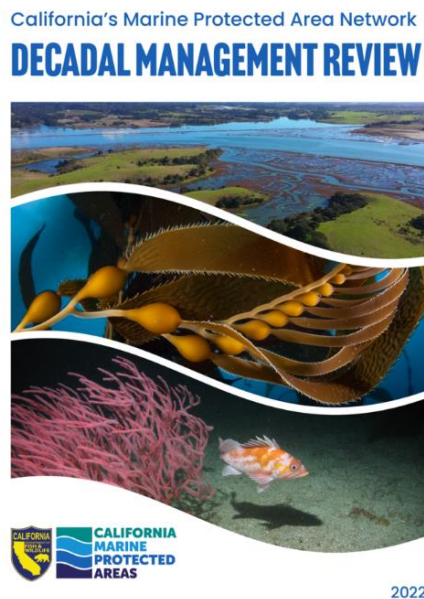
Status updates on the individual petitions

Instructions for how to engage in the public process through the California Fish and Game Commission as they consider the petitions

You can easily find [petitions proposing changes in certain counties or proposing specific types of change](#) to help pinpoint the petitions most important or relevant to you.

An [interactive map](#) also allows you to see the locations of key marine habitats in relation to both existing MPAs and proposed changes.

The California Fish and Game Commission received the petitions from Tribes and the public in December 2023, and referred the petitions to CDFW for evaluation in February 2024 as part of the MPA adaptive management process.



MPA Decadal Management Review cover

The new, publicly available MPA Petitions StoryMap aims to provide information to anyone interested in the MPA petitions and facilitate a transparent petition evaluation process. We invite you to bookmark the landing page and check back regularly for updates!

Questions or comments about the new [MPA Petitions StoryMap](#)? [Contact the MPA team!](#)

post by Kara Gonzales, CDFW Environmental Scientist

Memorandum

Date: June 26, 2025

Received 6/26/25
Original signed copy on file

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 (CFGF) 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 CFGF. The MRC considered CDFW's recommendations on 5 petitions (Bin 1) at the November 6-7, 2024 MRC meeting and CFGF adopted [the recommendations](#) at the December 11-12, 2025 CFGF 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. CFGF approved the proposed timeline and process at their April 16-17, 2025 meeting.

CDFW, with support from staff at CFGF 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 CFGF 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 CFGF, 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 CFGF 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

Attachment 1

DRAFT Evaluation Framework for 2023 Marine Protected Area Bin 2 Petitions

The following draft evaluation framework (Draft Framework) was developed for the 15 [Bin 2 Petitions](#) that propose changes to the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network that were received by the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) and referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in 2023. CDFW developed the Draft Framework, with support from staff at the CFGC and Ocean Protection Council (OPC), based on the adaptive management process outlined in chapter 4 of the [2016 Master Plan for MPAs](#). The 2016 Master Plan directs CDFW and CFGC to use the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) goals and mandates, MPA objectives, and design considerations as the primary basis for any action taken to make changes to the MPA Network. The Draft Framework also draws from the [Decadal Management Review \(DMR\)](#) and [recommendations](#), and the [MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework](#) approved by CFGC at their August 2023 meeting, which is rooted in the DMR recommendation cornerstones of MPA Governance, MPA Management Program Activities, and MPA Network Performance.

The Draft Framework includes the following sections:

- I. Petition Summary
- II. CDFW Draft Recommendations with Brief Justifications
- III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions
- IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation
- V. Supplemental Analyses, Data and Information, and Citations
- VI. Summary of Other Considerations

CDFW proposes to use the Draft Framework to present the information used to evaluate petitions and develop recommendations to CFGC for the 2023 MPA Bin 2 petitions. The Bin 2 petitions and petition actions vary in complexity and the Draft Framework is designed to address this spectrum of complexity. In some cases, it will be more appropriate to evaluate whole Bin 2 petitions and in other cases, it will be more appropriate to evaluate the individual proposed actions within a petition. Not all evaluation components in Section IV will apply to every proposed action or petition. CDFW will apply the evaluation components as appropriate, and the level of detail when evaluating each component may vary based on factors such as applicability or information available.

I. Petition Summary

CFGC Tracking Number	
Petition Contact/Affiliation	
Number of Proposed Actions	
Affected MPAs	
Petition Summary	
Link to StoryMap page	
Petitioner's stated rationale and brief justification for proposed actions	

DRAFT

II. CDFW Draft Recommendations and Brief Justification

Note: If a change to the MPA regulations is not needed to address the proposed change, CDFW will not evaluate the proposed change using the framework. However, CDFW may recommend an alternative pathway to achieving the desired outcome of the proposed change.

Petition Action ID	Petition Proposed Action	Petitioner's stated rationale and brief justification for proposed actions	CDFW Draft Recommendation	Brief Justification

III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions

The purpose of this section is to identify if the petition explicitly aims to advance tribal co-management and stewardship of the MPA Network, if it is submitted by a tribe, or includes proposed actions explicitly related to tribes (e.g., tribal exemption, tribal take only MPA). CDFW will use this stage to sort the petitions into “Tribally-focused Petitions” and “Other Petitions.” A “yes” to one or more of the questions below will result in the petition being sorted into the Tribally-focused petitions. CDFW will meet with those identified petitioners and recommend the Tribal Committee discuss the Tribally-focused Petitions. At any point in the process tribes may request consultation with CDFW. All Bin 2 petitions, including Tribally-focused Petitions, may be evaluated with the CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework in Section IV.

Tribal Components Questions	Answer and Explanation
Was the petition submitted by a tribe, tribal representative, or have a tribal co-sponsor?	
Does the proposed change explicitly aim to advance tribal co-management, subsistence harvesting, stewardship, and/or provide a tribal benefit through recognizing the cultural significance of an area?	
Is the proposed regulatory change explicitly linked to a tribe or tribes? (i.e. tribal exemption, tribal take only MPA, or new MPA for co-management)	

IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation

The Draft Framework is based on the [MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework](#) approved by the CFGC at their August 2023 meeting, which is rooted in the DMR recommendation cornerstones of MPA Governance, MPA Management Program Activities, and MPA Network Performance. CDFW has organized the evaluation questions to reflect the structure of the 2023 framework to ensure the petition evaluations align with considerations proposed by CFGC to help guide petition development and evaluation. Additionally, CDFW will identify information and governance gaps and other key considerations, such as competing regulations, effects on other agencies that have overlapping jurisdictions, and interactions between 2023 petitions, that will be critical for CFGC to consider in their decision-making.

Not all evaluation components will apply to every proposed petition action. CDFW will apply the evaluation components as appropriate, and the level of detail when evaluating each component may vary based on factors such as applicability or information available.

Evaluation Narrative: *[This section will include a summary narrative of the CDFW evaluation and recommendations.]*

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 1: Does the proposed change support the MPA Network in meeting one or more of the MLPA Goals and align with MPA Master Plan adaptive management objectives?			
Question 2a: Does the proposed change advance adaptive management recommendations in the Decadal Management Review? Question 2b: If not, does the proposed change address a current or emerging MPA management challenge?			
Question 3: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect existing CFGC non-MPA regulations, permits, or leases (e.g., kelp leases, aquaculture leases, Experimental Fishing Permits)?			
Question 4: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect existing regulations, permits, leases, or management activities of any other agency or entity?			
Question 5: Are there significant information gaps that need to be filled to inform the evaluation of the proposed change?			

¹ If it is more appropriate to evaluate the whole petition there will be one column for the answer and explanation. If it is more appropriate to evaluate the individual proposed actions within a petition, there will be a column for each action denoted as 2023_XMPA_1, where X is the petition number followed by the action number.

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 6: Are there significant management gaps that need to be filled to inform the evaluation of the proposed change?			
Question 7a: Was the proposed change considered during the MLPA Planning Process or the implementation of MPAs around the Northern Channel Islands? Question 7b: If so, is there new information available, changing conditions since the implementation phase, and/or information presented in the DMR that warrants reevaluation of the proposed change?			
Question 8: If the proposed change affects an existing MPA, does the proposed change align with the original intent of the MPA identified during the MLPA Initiative planning process or the implementation of MPAs around the Northern Channel Islands?			
Question 9: Does the proposed change improve individual MPA or MPA Network design so that it better aligns with or meets the MPA science guidelines?			
Question 10a: Does the proposed change align with CDFW Feasibility Guidelines? Question 10b: If not, is there a rationale for moving forward with the proposed change or an alternative that could meet the intent but better align with feasibility guidelines?			

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 11: Does the proposed change maintain or improve enforceability of MPA regulations?			
Question 12: Does the proposed change simplify regulatory language or enhance public understanding without changing the intent of the MPA?			
Question 13: Does the proposed change maintain or enhance protection of marine resources?			
Question 14: Does the proposed change provide more access opportunities (i.e. fishing, educational, and/or other recreational opportunities) for traditionally underserved or marginalized communities?			
Question 15: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect consumptive and/or non-consumptive activities? If so, how?			
Question 16: Does the proposed change interact with or have the potential to affect proposed changes in other 2023 MPA petitions?			

V. Supplemental Analyses, Data and Information, and Citations

This section will include any supplemental analyses, supporting data or information, and citations used to inform CDFW's recommendation.

VI. Summary of Other Considerations

This section will summarize other factors, if any, that the Commission should be aware of related to the petition.

DRAFT

Attachment 2

Department of Fish and Wildlife: Summary of Marine Protected Area (MPA) Regulation Change Petition Framework Discussion

(07/27/23) Revised 08/10/23; Revised 8/17/23; Revised 6/26/25 (new text is *italicized*).

CDFW has annotated this document to reflect which questions in the [DRAFT Evaluation Framework \(Draft Framework\)](#) for 2023 MPA Bin 2 petitions relate to each component of the MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework approved by CFGC in 2023 outlined [here](#). Related question numbers that appear in the Draft Framework are listed in bold font.

At the California Fish and Game Commission's (CFGC) July 20, 2023 Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting, MRC, CFGC staff, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff, and stakeholders discussed potential next steps in pursuing the MPA Decadal Management Review (DMR) report recommendations and goals. The discussion included a potential framework to assist in evaluation of petitions the CFGC may receive related to changes to the MPA network and management program. At the request of MRC, staff from CDFW summarized the input received at the July 20, 2023 MRC meeting regarding these MPA petition framework considerations.

Broadly, petitions submitted to the CFGC are evaluated on a case by case by basis. To help guide petition development and subsequent review by CDFW, the MRC received the following input for evaluating petitions related to MPAs:

- Compatible with the goals and guidelines of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) (**Draft Framework Question 1**)
- Help advance one or more of the [six goals](#) of the MLPA; (**Draft Framework Question 1**)
- Garner strong community support; and/or (**Public input will be considered throughout the petition evaluation process**)
- Advance adaptive management recommendations under the cornerstones of MPA governance, MPA Management Program activities, and MPA Network Performance outlined in [DMR Table 6.1](#) to ensure that petitions meet MPA management priorities (**Draft Framework Question 2**)

The MRC also received input organized by cornerstone as follows:

- MPA Governance:
 - Simplifies regulatory language or enhances public understanding (**Draft Framework Questions 11 and 12**)
 - Addresses inaccuracies or discrepancies in regulations (**Draft Framework Questions 11 and 12**)
 - Accounts for regional stakeholder group intent identified during the regional MLPA planning process (including MPA-specific goals/objectives and design considerations) (**Draft Framework Questions 7 and 8**)

- Accounts for CDFW's [MPA design and management feasibility guidelines](#) (**Draft Framework Question 10**)
- Advances tribal stewardship and co-management, consistent with the CFGC [Co-Management Vision Statement and Definition](#) (**Section III of the Draft Framework**)
- Improves access for traditionally underserved or marginalized communities, consistent with the [CFGC Policy on Justice Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#) (**Draft Framework Question 14**)
- Acknowledges socio-economic implications, such as access for consumptive or non-consumptive users (**Draft Framework Question 15**)
- MPA Management Program Activities:
 - Clearly addresses or identifies scientific need for MPA Network based on best available science and scientific advancement since Network completion (**Draft Framework Question 9**)
 - Improves compliance and/or enforceability (**Draft Framework Questions 11 and 12**)
- MPA Network Performance:
 - Maintains or enhances the protections and integrity of the MPA Network (**Draft Framework Question 13**)
 - Maintains or enhances habitat and species connectivity (**Draft Framework Question 9**)
 - Adheres to science guidelines, such as maintaining minimum size and spacing, and protection of diverse habitats (**Draft Framework Question 9**)
 - Enhances climate resilience and/or helps mitigate climate impacts (**This will be discussed, as appropriate, in the evaluation narrative in Section IV and/or in Section VI**)

Attachment 3
DRAFT 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Groupings

At the March 13, 2025 Marine Resources Committee meeting, CDFW received direction to sort the 15 Bin 2 petitions into groupings to facilitate subsequent petition evaluation and discussion. Using the questions in section III of the Draft Evaluation Framework for 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petitions (Draft Framework), CDFW sorted the petitions into two groups: Tribally-focused Petitions and Other Petitions. Tribally-focused Petitions are those that either explicitly aim to advance tribal co-management and stewardship of the MPA Network, are submitted or co-sponsored by a tribe, or include proposed actions explicitly related to tribes (e.g., tribal exemption, tribal take only MPA). CDFW identified five out of the 15 Bin 2 petitions as Tribally-focused Petitions (Table 1) and the remaining 10 as Other Petitions (Table 2).

Table 1. 2023 MPA Bin 2 Tribally-focused Petitions

CFGC No. 2023-	Petition Contact	Affected MPA	Proposed Action
19MPA	Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians	NA	Add new MPA near Morro Bay
20MPA	Sam Cohen, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians	Point Buchon SMCA, Point Buchon SMR	Modify boundary and take allowances at Point Buchon MPAs
21MPA	Rosa Laucci, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	Pyramid Point SMCA	Modify boundary and take allowances at Pyramid Point SMCA
28MPA_AM1	Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council	NA	Add new MPA near Point Sal
29MPA_AM1	Lisa Suatoni, Natural Resources Defense Council	NA	Add new MPA near Carpinteria

Table 2. 2023 MPA Bin 2 Other Petitions

CFGC No. 2023-	Petition Contact	Affected MPA	Proposed Action
14MPA	David Goldenberg, California Sea Urchin Commission	Sea Lion Cove SMCA, Stewart's Point SMCA, Salt Point SMCA, Double Cone Rock SMCA, Naples SMCA, Anacapa Island SMCA, Point Dume SMCA, Point Vicente SMCA, Swami's SMCA	Allow commercial sea urchin take in 9 MPAs
15MPA_AM2	Blake Hermann	Footprint SMR, Gull Island SMR, Santa Barbara Island SMR	Reclassify 3 Channel Islands SMRs to allow take
16MPA	Richard Ogg, Bodega Bay Fisherman's Marketing Association	Stewart's Point SMR, Bodega Head SMR	Reclassify 2 north coast SMRs to allow take
18MPA	Greg Helms, Santa Barbara Channel MPA Collaborative	Vandenberg SMR, Point Conception SMR, Kashtayit SMCA, Campus Point SMCA, San Miguel Island Special Closure, Anacapa Island Special Closure	Modify allowed uses in several Santa Barbara Channel MPAs
23MPA_AM1	Keith Rootsart, Giant Giant Kelp Restoration project	Edward F. Ricketts SMCA, Pacific Grove Marine Gardens SMCA, Carmel Bay SMCA, Point Lobos SMR	Add new MPA, and modify regulations and take allowance in several Monterey County MPAs
24MPA_AM1	Mike Beanan, Laguna Bluebelt Coalition	Laguna Beach no- take SMCA	Expand Laguna Beach no-take SMCA

CFGC No. 2023-	Petition Contact	Affected MPA	Proposed Action
27MPA_AM1	Azsha Hudson, Environmental Defense Center	Anacapa SMCA	Eliminate take allowance at Anacapa Island SMCA
32MPA_AM1	Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin	Duxbury Reef SMCA	Reclassify and expand Duxbury Reef SMCA
33MPA_AM1	Laura Deehan, Environment California Research and Policy Center and Azul	Cabrillo SMR, Point Dume SMCA, South Point SMR, Gull Island SMR, Point Conception SMR, Natural Bridges SMR	Add new MPA near Pleasure Point, expand 6 MPAs, add take allowance at Point Dume SMCA
34MPA	Laura Deehan, Environment California Research and Policy Center and Azul	Point Buchon SMCA, Farnsworth Onshore SMCA, Farnsworth Offshore SMCA	Reclassify Point Buchon SMCA and modify regulations at Farnsworth MPAs



Proposed Marine Protected Area Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework

17 July 2025

Presented to:

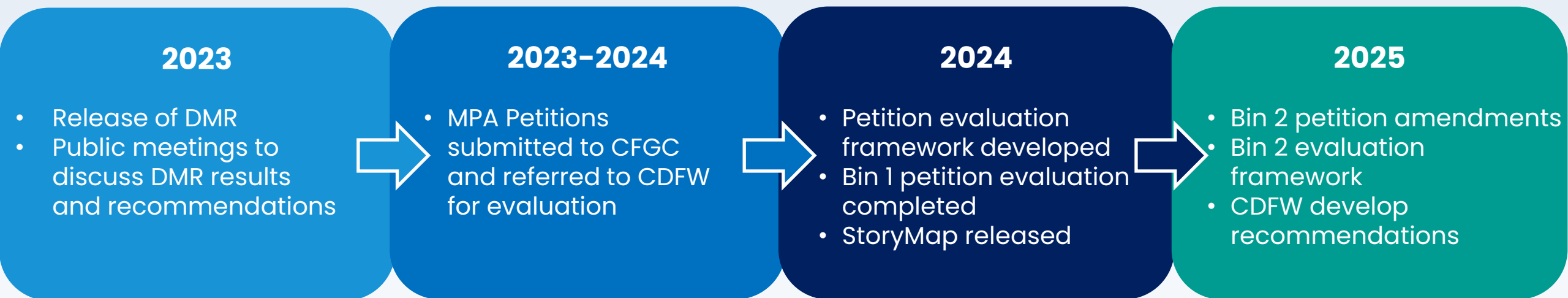
Marine Resources Committee
California Fish and Game Commission

Presented by:

Craig Shuman, D. Env.
Marine Region Manager



Recap: Decadal Management Review and Petition Timeline



Common acronyms:

CFGC=California Fish and Game Commission

CDFW=California Department of Fish and Wildlife

DMR=Decadal Management Review

MRC=Marine Resources Committee



2023 MPA Petition Evaluations: Status





Discussion Overview

- Draft 2023 MPA Bin 2 petition evaluation framework
- Petition groupings
- Potential Next steps





Draft Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework

- Developed in collaboration with Commission and Ocean Protection Council staff.
- Based on:
 - Adaptive management process outlined in chapter 4 of the 2016 Master Plan for MPAs
 - Decadal Management Review
 - MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework approved by the CFGC in August 2023





Draft Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework (cont.)

- I. Petition Summary
- II. CDFW Draft Recommendations with Brief Justifications
- III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Petitions with Tribal Components
- IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Evaluation and Narrative
- V. Supplemental Analyses, Data and Information, and Citations
- VI. Summary of Other Considerations





Draft Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework: Petition Summary

I. Petition Summary

CFGC Tracking Number	
Petition Contact/Affiliation	
Number of Proposed Actions	
Affected MPAs	
Petition Summary	
Link to StoryMap page	
Petitioner's stated rationale and brief justification for proposed actions	



II. CDFW Draft Recommendations and Brief Justification

II. CDFW Draft Recommendations and Brief Justification

Note: If a change to the MPA regulations is not needed to address the proposed change, CDFW will not evaluate the proposed change using the framework. However, CDFW may recommend an alternative pathway to achieving the desired outcome of the proposed change.

Petition Action ID	Petition Proposed Action	Petitioner's stated rationale and brief justification for proposed actions	CDFW Draft Recommendation	Brief Justification



III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions

III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions

Tribal Components Questions	Answer and Explanation
Was the petition submitted by a tribe, tribal representative, or have a tribal co-sponsor?	
Does the proposed change explicitly aim to advance tribal co-management, subsistence harvesting, stewardship, and/or provide a tribal benefit through recognizing the cultural significance of an area?	
Is the proposed regulatory change explicitly linked to a tribe or tribes? (i.e. tribal exemption, tribal take only MPA, or new MPA for co-management)	

Yes to one or more = Tribally-focused petitions

No to all = Other Petitions



IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation

- Based on the August 2023 CFGC approved MPA Regulation Change Petition Framework and rooted in the DMR recommendations.
- Not all evaluation components will apply to every proposed petition action.
- The level of detail and analyses may vary based on petition/petition action.



Evaluation Narrative: *[This section will include a summary narrative of the CDFW evaluation and recommendations.]*



IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation (Cont .1)

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 1: Does the proposed change support the MPA Network in meeting one or more of the MLPA Goals and align with MPA Master Plan adaptive management objectives?			
Question 2a: Does the proposed change advance adaptive management recommendations in the Decadal Management Review? Question 2b: If not, does the proposed change address a current or emerging MPA management challenge?			
Question 3: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect existing CFGC non-MPA regulations, permits, or leases (e.g., active kelp, aquaculture leases, Experimental Fishing Permits)?			
Question 4: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect existing regulations, permits, leases, or management activities of any other agency or entity?			
Question 5: Are there significant information gaps that need to be filled to inform the evaluation of the proposed change?			



IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation (Cont .2)

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 6: Are there significant management gaps that need to be filled to inform the evaluation of the proposed change?			
Question 7a: Was the proposed change considered during the MLPA Planning Process or the implementation of MPAs around the Northern Channel Islands? Question 7b: If so, is there new information available, changing conditions since the implementation phase, and/or information presented in the DMR that warrants reevaluation of the proposed change?			
Question 8: If the proposed change affects an existing MPA, does the proposed change align with the original intent of the MPA identified during the MLPA Initiative planning process or the implementation of MPAs around the Northern Channel Islands?			



IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation (Cont .3)

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 9: Does the proposed change improve individual MPA or MPA Network design so that it better aligns with or meets the MPA science guidelines?			
Question 10a: Does the proposed change align with CDFW Feasibility Guidelines? Question 10b: If not, is there a rationale for moving forward with the proposed change or an alternative that could meet the intent but better align with feasibility guidelines?			



IV. CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Narrative and Evaluation (Cont .4)

Evaluation Question	2023_XMPA_1 ¹ Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_2 Answer and Explanation	2023_XMPA_3 Answer and Explanation
Question 11: Does the proposed change maintain or improve enforceability of MPA regulations?			
Question 12: Does the proposed change simplify regulatory language or enhance public understanding without changing the intent of the MPA?			
Question 13: Does the proposed change maintain or enhance protection of marine resources?			
Question 14: Does the proposed change provide more access opportunities (i.e. fishing, educational, and/or other recreational opportunities) for traditionally underserved or marginalized communities?			
Question 15: Does the proposed change have the potential to affect consumptive and/or non-consumptive activities? If so, how?			
Question 16: Does the proposed change interact with or have the potential to affect proposed changes in other 2023 MPA petitions?			



Draft Bin 2 Petition Evaluation Framework: Sections V & VI

V. Supplemental Analyses, Data and Information, and Citations

This section will include any supplemental analyses, supporting data or information, and citations used to inform CDFW's recommendation.

VI. Summary of Other Considerations

This section will summarize other factors, if any, that the Commission should be aware of related to the petition.





III. Bin 2 Petition Groupings: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions

III. Bin 2 Petition Grouping: Identify Tribally-focused Petitions

Tribal Components Questions	2023_19MPA New MPA Chitaqwi SMCA	2023_20MPA Point Buchon MPAs	2023_21MPA Pyramid Point SMCA	2023_28MPA New MPA Point Sal SMCA	2023_29MPA New MPA Mishopshno SMCA
Was the petition submitted by a tribe, tribal representative, or have a tribal co-sponsor?	✓	✓	✓		✓
Does the proposed change explicitly aim to advance tribal co-management, subsistence harvesting, stewardship, and/or provide a tribal benefit through recognizing the cultural significance of an area?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Is the proposed regulatory change explicitly linked to a tribe or tribes? (i.e. tribal exemption, tribal take only MPA, or new MPA for co-management)	✓	✓	✓		✓

Yes to one or more = Tribally-focused petitions

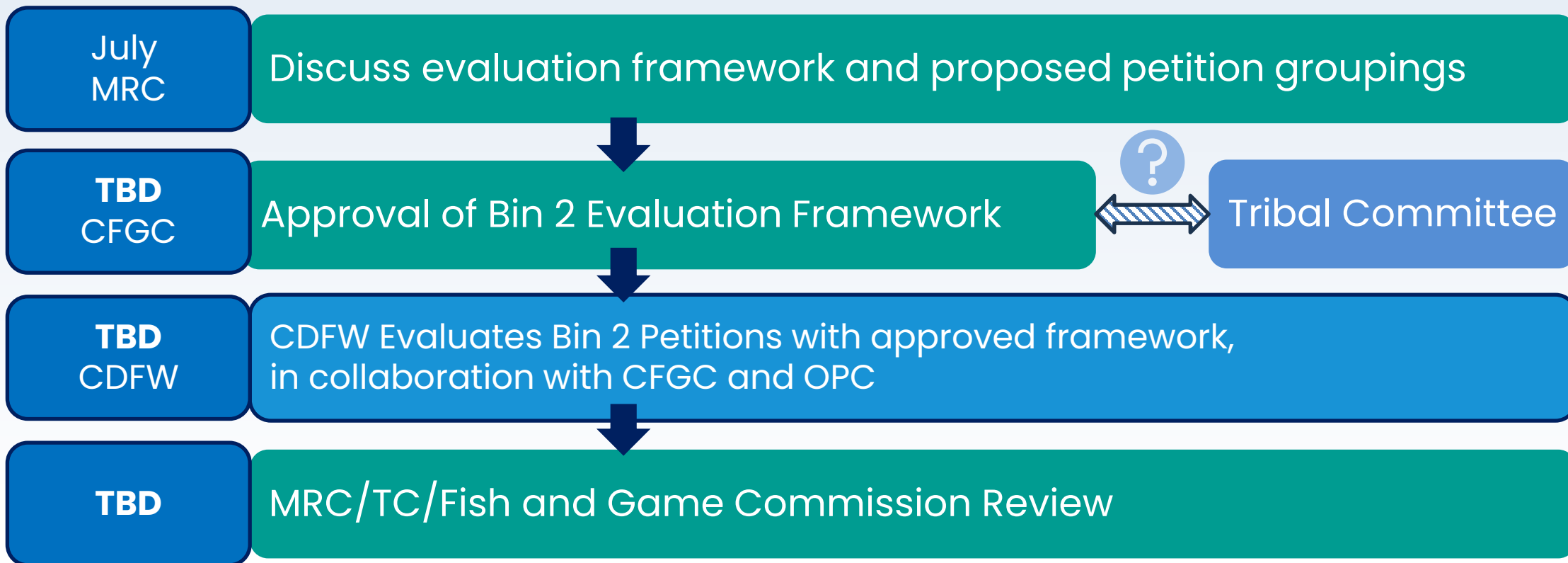


Proposed Bin 2 Petition Groupings

Group 1 – Tribally-focused Petitions		Group 2 – Other Petitions	
19	Add new MPA near Morro Bay	14	Allow commercial sea urchin take in 9 MPAs
20	Modify boundary and take allowances at Point Buchon MPAs	15	Reclassify 3 Channel Islands SMRs to allow take
21	Modify boundary and take allowances at Pyramid Point SMCA	16	Reclassify 2 north coast SMRs to allow take
28	Add new MPA near Point Sal	18	Modify allowed uses in several Santa Barbara Channel MPAs
29	Add new MPA near Carpinteria	23	Add new MPA, and modify regulations and take allowance in several Monterey County MPAs
		24	Expand Laguna Beach no-take SMCA
		27	Eliminate take allowance at Anacapa Island SMCA
		32	Reclassify and expand Duxbury Reef SMCA
		33	Add new MPA near Pleasure Point, expand 6 MPAs, add take allowance at Point Dume SMCA
		34	Reclassify Point Buchon SMCA and modify regulations at Farnsworth MPAs



Bin 2 Petitions Potential Next steps



TBD-To be determined



MPA Petition Updates: StoryMap



Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Petition Process

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Click through the collection to:

→ See an **overview** of the petition process, petition evaluation framework, and anticipated timeline

→ Dive into an **interactive map** to visualize proposed changes

→ Explore **petitions sorted** by numerical order, change category, or county, and click the links to learn more about each petition. Any petition proposing a change that can be visualized on a map (e.g., boundary or designation change) will have an image with a slider to swipe between the existing network and the proposed change. Any petition proposing a non-spatial change (e.g., take allowance or regulatory language change) will have a static image showing the location of the affected MPA(s).



Current status:

- CDFW is in Phase 2 of its 3-phased petition evaluation framework and splitting each petition into individual action items
- At the December Commission meeting, CDFW provided its annual report on MPA Management Program accomplishments for 2024; next steps for Bin 2 petition evaluation were discussed, including setting a timeline for accepting amendments to Bin 2 petitions; and, as recommended by the MRC, the Commission adopted a slightly modified version of CDFW's [draft recommendations](#) for Bin 1 petitions

Up next:

- For Bin 2 petitioners who submitted a notice to amend their petition, the full amendment package is due March 14, 2025



Stay up to date!





Next Steps: Implement DMR Recommendations

Near-Term (ongoing – 2 years)

- Rec 1: Improve state agencies tribal engagement
- Rec 4: Apply Review knowledge to Network/Management changes
- Rec 7: Expand outreach and education materials
- Rec 9: Continue OPC coordination
- Rec 10: Improve coordination across Management Program pillars
- Rec 11: Update Action Plan
- Rec 16: More targeted outreach to specific audiences
- Rec 17: Improve SCP process
- Rec 18: Use policy to review MPA restoration/mitigation efforts
- Rec 20: Increase enforcement capacity
- Rec 21: Enhance citation record keeping and management
- Rec 25: Implement MPA climate change research
- Rec 27: Improve understanding of MPA effects on fisheries

Mid-Term (2 – 5 years)

- Rec 2: Create pathway to tribal MPA management
- Rec 3: Build tribal capacity to participate in MPA management
- Rec 6: Include and fund more diverse researchers and stakeholders
- Rec 8: Evaluate MPA accessibility
- Rec 12: Improve understanding of human dimensions
- Rec 13: Explore innovative technologies
- Rec 14: Develop MPA community science strategy
- Rec 15: Evaluate Outreach needs and resource effectiveness
- Rec 22: Increase knowledge on MPA judicial outcomes
- Rec 23: Examine MPA Network design attribute more effectively
- Rec 26: Consider climate change in human dimensions monitoring
- Rec 28: Integrate influencing factors into MPA performance evaluations

Long-Term (5- 10 years)

- Rec 5: Establish targets to meet MLPA goals
- Rec 19: Create MPA Enforcement Plan
- Rec 24: Better incorporate marine cultural heritage into MPA Network

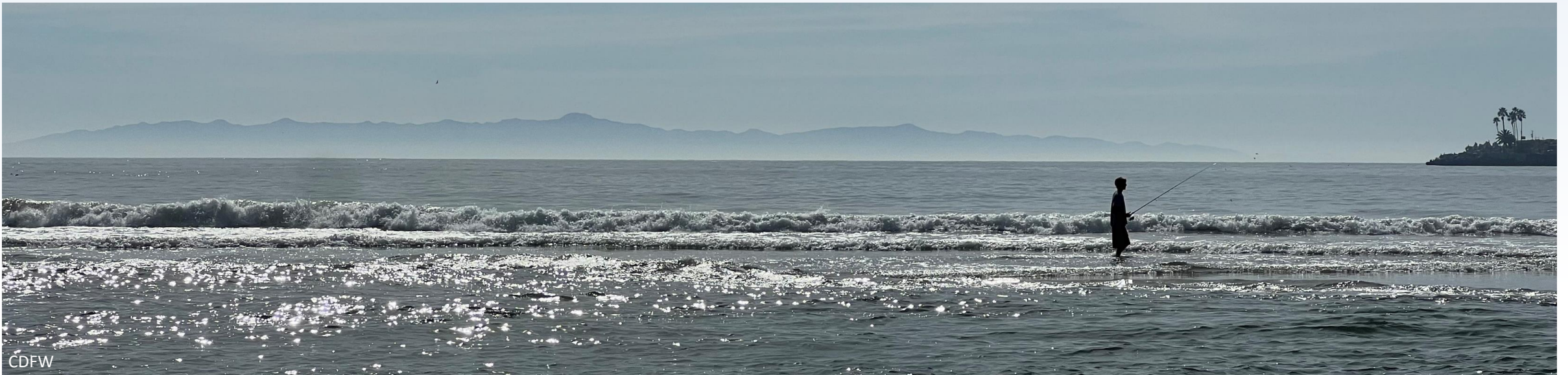




Thank You

Questions?

mpamanagementreview@wildlife.ca.gov



California Fish and Game Commission

Staff-Proposed Grouping Options for Marine Protected Area Petitions

July 11, 2025

Overview

At its March 2025 meeting, MRC requested a recommendation for grouping petitions. To facilitate preparation for responding to the request and evaluating the bin 2 marine protected area (MPA) petitions, staff from the Department, Commission, and California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) formed an interagency work group. The group has discussed the evaluation approach and explored options for grouping the 2023 bin 2 MPA petitions for future public and Commission review.

As requested, the Department has developed a recommendation to group petitions as "tribally-focused" and "other" (Exhibit 9.6). Building on the Department's proposal, Commission staff developed an option for further organizing grouped petitions, for input and discussion at the July 2025 MRC meeting. An MRC-recommended and Commission-approved grouping structure will support future discussion of petitions evaluations once completed.

This document presents Commission staff's proposed grouping option, designed to support discussions of petitions and evaluations across three days. To transition to a two-day option, the first and second days potentially could be combined.

Grouping by Tribal and Non-Tribal Focus

The Department's categorization of the bin 2 petitions into "tribally-focused" and "other" groups, as presented in Exhibit 9.6, was developed using the questions outlined in Section III of the Department's draft petition evaluation framework (Exhibit 9.3). The interagency work group supported reviewing all tribally-focused petitions together, but recognized that additional sub-groupings of "other petitions" might be necessary to distribute the extensive content across more than one day to ensure sufficient discussion time.

Grouping by Bioregion

Commission staff additionally propose grouping petitions by bioregion to consider the proposals within the context of the network design elements in each bioregion. A bioregional approach is consistent with the 2018 MPA monitoring action plan and the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) planning requirements, and facilitates public engagement by organizing feedback around regional locations.

- *2018 MPA monitoring action plan*: The action plan identified three bioregions for long-term monitoring as northern, central, and southern. The bioregions were defined based on data collected during baseline monitoring that identified clusters of similar biota, ecological communities, and key habitats. The action plan prioritizes monitoring efforts within these bioregions to assess the effectiveness of the MPA network over time within an ecologically relevant context.
- *MLPA planning requirements*: Evaluating petitions within the context of their respective bioregion aligns with the MLPA requirements for habitat representation and replication

by bioregion. The MLPA planning requirements call for highly protective MPAs in each bioregion to encompass a representative variety of marine habitat types and communities, across a range of depths and environmental conditions.

- *Public engagement:* Organizing petitions and actions by bioregion can significantly aid public engagement. Many MPA petition comments received from the public did not cite specific petition numbers; instead, comments refer to the name of the impacted geographic location, suggesting that public engagement will be well-facilitated by organizing around locations. Doing this also allows members of the public concerned about local impacts to avoid attending multiple days to speak on petitions important to them. While organizing by bioregion may benefit public engagement, four sets of petitioners (petitions 14, 18, 33 and 34) would still need to attend multiple days as their petitions include proposed actions across multiple bioregions.

Proposed Bioregional Groupings

The three proposed bioregional groupings are based on updated science and MPA monitoring action plans.

- *Northern:* California/Oregon border to San Francisco Bay
- *Central:* San Francisco Bay to Point Conception
- *Southern:* Point Conception to US/Mexico border

Petition Sub-Grouping by Action Type

For each day's discussion of petitions, Department evaluations, and recommendations, staff proposes to further group individual proposed actions in each bioregion by action type for purposes of discussion. This approach aligns with the organizational structure used for MRC discussion of the bin 1 petition evaluations, which proved effective in facilitating focused discussions on similar types of proposed actions. The two most broad action types are:

1. New or expanded MPAs (identified by ♦).
2. All other actions, to include adjusting boundaries, modifying take, changing classification, changing other uses, and non-regulatory requests (identified by □).

Staff proposes to organize the petitions each day such that within each bioregion the discussion starts with new or expanded MPAs (♦) and ends with all other actions (□).

Petition Grouping Tables

Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarize proposed petition groupings, organized across the three proposed days. Key details included in the tables include:

- *Petition numbers:* The "2023-" prefix and "MPA" suffix, common to all petitions, have been omitted; hence, the petitions are abbreviated to the unique number identification (e.g., "14" instead of "Petition 2023-14MPA").
- *Order:* Petitions are ordered by bioregion, from north to south, and within that they are ordered by action type.

- *Multi-bioregion petitions*: Petitions proposing actions across multiple bioregions are listed under each relevant bioregion. Within each listing, only the specific actions pertaining to that individual bioregion are detailed.
- *Multiple petitions affecting the same MPA*: When an MPA is subject to proposed changes in more than one petition, its name is displayed in *italics*.
- *Bioregion shading*: Box shading indicates bioregion, as noted in right-hand column.

Table1: (Day 1) Tribally-Focused Petitions with Proposals in Any of the Three Bioregions

Petition	Proposed Action Type	Affected MPA	Bioregion
21	<input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change, boundary change (minor)	Pyramid Point SMCA	Northern
19	♦ Designate a new MPA (near Morro Bay)	New “Chitqawi SMCA”	Central
20	♦ Expand boundaries <input type="checkbox"/> Modify take regulations	<i>Point Buchon SMR</i> , Point Buchon SMCA	Central
28	♦ Designate a new MPA (near Point Sal)	New “Point Sal SMR”	Southern
29	♦ Designate a new MPA (near Carpinteria)	New “Mishopshno SMCA”	Southern

Table 2: (Day 2) Other (Non-Tribally-Focused) Petitions with Proposals in the **Northern** and **Central** Bioregions

Petition	Proposed Action Type	Affected MPA	Bioregion
32	♦ Expand boundaries <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassify SMCA as SMR	Duxbury Reef SMCA	Northern
14	<input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change (allow commercial sea urchin take)	Double Cone Rock SMCA, Sea Lion Cove SMCA, Stewart’s Point SMCA, Salt Point SMCA	Northern
16	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification change, take allowance change (reclassify 2 SMRs as SMCAs to allow take)	Stewart’s Point SMR, Bodega Head SMR	Northern
33	♦ Designate a new MPA ♦ Expand 2 MPAs	New “Pleasure Point SMCA;” Natural Bridges SMCA, Point Conception SMR	Central
23	♦ Designate a new MPA <input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance changes, non-regulatory changes (in 4 Monterey MPAs)	New “Tanker’s Reef SMCA;” Pacific Grove Marine Gardens SMCA, Point Lobos SMR, Edward F. Ricketts SMCA, Carmel Bay SMCA	Central

Petition	Proposed Action Type	Affected MPA	Bioregion
18	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification, boundary, regulatory change (reclassify nearshore ribbon of Vandenberg SMR as SMCA to allow shore fishing) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-regulatory request (Point Conception SMR)	Vandenberg SMR, Point Conception SMR	Central
34	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification change (Reclassify SMCA to SMR)	<i>Point Buchon SMCA</i>	Central

Table 3: (Day 3) Other (Non-Tribally-Focused) Petitions with Proposals in the **Southern** Bioregion

Petition	Proposed Action Type	Affected MPA	Bioregion
24	♦ Expand MPA	Laguna Beach no-take SMCA	Southern
33	♦ Expand 4 MPAs <input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change (<i>Point Dume SMCA</i>)	<i>Point Dume SMCA</i> ; Cabrillo SMR, South Point SMR, Gull Island SMR	Southern
14	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification change (Point Vicente no-take SMCA) <input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change (allow commercial sea urchin take in 5 SMCAs)	Point Vicente no-take SMCA, Naples SMCA, <i>Anacapa Island SMCA</i> , <i>Point Dume SMCA</i> , Swami's SMCA	Southern
15	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification and take allowance change (reclassify 3 SMRs to allow take)	Footprint SMR, Gull Island SMR, Santa Barbara Island SMR	Southern
18	<input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory change (modify allowed uses at Kashtayit SMCA) <input type="checkbox"/> Remove or change boundaries (modify allowed uses in San Miguel Island and <i>Anacapa Island</i> special closures)	Kashtayit no-take SMCA; San Miguel Island Special Closure, <i>Anacapa Island Special Closure</i>	Southern
27	<input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change (eliminate take allowance at 1 MPA)	<i>Anacapa Island SMCA</i>	Southern
34	<input type="checkbox"/> Take allowance change (modify take regulations at 2 MPAs)	Farnsworth Onshore SMCA, Farnsworth Offshore SMCA	Southern

From: Matthew Bond <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, June 5, 2025 06:06 PM

To: FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>

Cc: Chris Arechaederra <[REDACTED]>; Chris Killen <[REDACTED]>

Subject: July 2025 MRC meeting comment from Allwaters and CCA Cal regarding bin 2 petition evaluation process

[REDACTED]

Hello,

Please accept the joint comment, from CCA California and Allwaters, attached to this message for the July 2025 MRC meeting.

Thank you.

Matt Bond

June 5, 2025

California Fish and Game Commission
Marine Resources Committee
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090



Submitted electronically to fgc@fgc.ca.gov

Re: 7/16 & 7/17 2025 Marine Resources Committee Meeting; request for public statement from The Commission to clarify which Level of Protection (LOP) framework is being used for MLPA DMR adaptive management petitions.

Dear Vice President Murray, Commissioner Sklar and FGC/CDFW Staff,

Thank you for your dedication to the management of our state's natural resources.

With recommendations on the bin 2 petition evaluation process central to the July MRC meeting agenda, we would like to stress the importance of making public the exact evaluation criteria that will be used by the department for petition evaluation and recommendations. While SeaSketch gives an inkling into the MLPA LOP framework being used to evaluate connectivity, and past meeting presentations have referenced the regional objectives of the MLPA MPA Master Plan (MMP) to evaluate the petitions under the MLPA, we feel it is extremely important to make the specific criteria being used as clear as possible to the public.

The following is not an argument to choose one process governing methodology over another. It is abundantly clear that these petitions are part of the MLPA process and thus must adhere to its rules. What follows is a detailed explanation of what we see as a major problem in public and some petitioner perception regarding LOPs and MPA connectivity for the rationale behind our request for this clarification.

In our numerous interactions with stakeholders and some petitioners themselves, there seems to be confusion about this critical detail. We believe this is mainly because OPC's concurrently running 30x30 process has settled on using the "MPA Guide" as their guide for evaluating conservation areas, the name of which is possibly leading to confusion as the FGC's and OPC's processes are running in parallel. The public and even some petitioners seem to not understand that 30x30 is a separate endeavor, and the MPA Guide is a part of the separate process. As multiple commissioners and the staff have stated multiple times, "this is not 30x30." It must be made clear that we are

utilizing MLPA adaptive management processes and frameworks, the MMPs and MLPA LOPs, not those under the OPC like the MPA guide.

As you are aware, under 30x30, all MPAs in the State of California will count toward the end goal of conserving 30% of our oceans by 2030, regardless of limited take allowance, per the OPC's June 2025 roadmap (pg. 9). A primary reason the entire MPA network counts under 30x30 is the MLPA's more "strict" requirements compared to those in the OPC's MPA guide. The OPC's MPA guide primarily references the total number of allowable fisheries to arrive at a fisheries level of protection, loosely referencing allowed fisheries impact on the environment and only penalizing excessively "destructive" fisheries like bottom trawling or gillnetting. The MLPA process, on the other hand, does not look at total numbers of allowable fisheries at all. The MLPA's Level of Protection Framework only looks at how negatively impactful the "worst" allowed fisheries are in an MPA and then assigns the lowest protection tier for an MPA according to that lowest ranked fishery. Under the MLPA LOP framework, if a single fishery is deemed too impactful, that one fishery allowance alone can remove any connectivity benefits that the MPA provides. In the case of MLPA LOP framework rankings, only MPAs with an MLPA LOP rank of moderate-high, high, and very high count toward MPA connectivity and protection benefits. This stricter adherence to stronger protections is why the entire State MPA Network is ranked so high under OPC's 30x30.

Adhering to the LOPs and MMPs under the MLPA process for these petitions ensures more stringent connectivity requirements are employed. For example, a single fishery allowances like general finfish shoretake with hook-and-line removes any connectivity under the MLPA, ranking as an LOP of moderate or moderate low depending on the bioregion. However, shoretake would still be counted under the OPC's MPA guide for 30x30. This difference is because, under the MLPA, shoretake is seen as being too harmful in the nearshore environment as most species are present in the nearshore region, and because typically the highest level of biodiversity exists nearshore. On the other hand, offshore allowances for taking of pelagic species by hook-and-line or spear are okay under both the 30x30's MPA guide the MLPA frameworks. This is because pelagic fishing access offshore is seen as being less harmful and affects species that are away from the more populous nearshore region and that benefit less from MPAs in general. These are just two examples of the many differences and similarities between these two frameworks highlighting the MLPA's higher focus on protections, especially nearshore, compared to 30x30.

The complement to the MLPA LOP framework are the regional objectives of the 2016 MLPA MPA Master Plan (MMP), which outline a path to meet the six broad goals of the

MLPA. While the 2016 MMP's regional objectives are published on the CDFW website, and are easily accessible, locating and providing all the original LOP documents from the MLPA will be pivotal in allowing stakeholders to understand how levels of protection are to be evaluated in this process. Attached is a chart, provided by the department, consolidating all LOPs of each bioregion in one document, even merging them all to a generic "all regions" category in column one. With the MPA Master Plan's regional objectives and the regional LOP requirements for the MLPA published and easily accessible, petitioners and stakeholder can best grasp and follow the MPA petition evaluation process to make the most informed decisions possible.

An example of how these frameworks can be applied for each petition in bin 2 has, in part, been provided by one of the petitioners already. The petitioner under Petition 2023-15-MPA has given self-evaluations of both the MMP regional objectives and LOP frameworks to argue for and refine their own petition. While we are all still forming final thoughts on all bin 2 petitions, including petition 15, these analyses submitted by the petitioner give a possible example of the future of this evaluation process, showing possible pathways for how these frameworks may be applied to all bin 2 petitions by the department and illustrated for the public.

We wholeheartedly support and encourage this process to continue as outlined by the MLPA MMP, utilizing the MMP's regional objectives and MLPA LOP frameworks to evaluate petitions and strongly encourage you to make clear to the public that this is indeed the framework these petitions are governed by.

Again, thank you for the difficult and impactful work you do.

Matt Bond
Allwaters Protection and Access Coalition

Chris Arechaederra
CCA California

LOP	MPA Type	All regions from Monitoring Action Plan, Appendix F	North	North Central	Central	South
Very High	SMR SMCA (no-take)	No take	No take	No take	No take	No take
High	SMCA SMP	Salmon (H&L or troll in waters >50 m depth); coastal pelagic finfish (H&L, round-haul net, dip net); white seabass and bonito (spear)	Salmon and other pelagic finfish (H&L or troll in water depth >50 m); pelagic finfish except salmon (spearfishing); coastal pelagic finfish (H&L, round-haul net, dip net, cast net, hand); Pacific lamprey (H&L, hand harvest, spear, bow and arrow, dip net); eulachon (dip net); non-living shells (hand)	In water depth > 50m: pelagic finfish (H&L) salmon by troll only, coastal pelagic finfish (pelagic seine)	In water depth > 50 m: Pelagic finfish, salmon	Coastal pelagic finfish, bonito, and market squid (pelagic seine, dip-net, crowder); jumbo squid (squid jigs); swordfish (harpoon); in water depth >50 m: pelagic finfish, bonito, and white seabass (H&L; spear at any depth)

LOP	MPA Type	All regions from Monitoring Action Plan, Appendix F	North	North Central	Central	South
Mod-High	SMCA SMP	Dungeness crab (trap, hoop-net, diving); salmon (troll in water <50 m depth); pier-based fishing (H&L, hoop net)	Dungeness crab (trap, hoop-net, diving, hand); salmon and other pelagic finfish (troll in water depth <50 m); surf and night smelts (dip net, a-frame net, cast net); sharks, skates, and rays (spear, harpoon, bow and arrow in non-estuarine waters); trout except steelhead rainbow trout (H&L); California halibut, flounders, soles, turbot, and sanddabs (spearfishing); market squid (H&L, round-haul net, dip net, cast net, hand)	Dungeness crab (traps/pots); squid (pelagic seine); In water depth <50 m: pelagic finfish (H&L) salmon by troll only, coastal pelagic finfish (pelagic seine)	None.	Catch and release in <10 m water or using surface gear (H&L single barbless hooks and artificial lures only); pier-based fishing (H&L, hoop-net); halibut (spear); in water depth 30-50 m on mainland: pelagic finfish, bonito, and white seabass (H&L)

LOP	MPA Type	All regions from Monitoring Action Plan, Appendix F	North	North Central	Central	South
Mod	SMCA SMP	Spot prawn (trap); sea cucumber (scuba/hookah); surfperch (H&L from shore); salmon (H&L in waters <50 m depth)	Redtail surfperch (H&L from shore); surfperch (H&L from shore); California halibut, flounders, soles, turbot, and sanddabs (H&L); coonstripe shrimp and spot prawns (trap); clams (intertidal hand); nori/laver and sea lettuce (intertidal hand); salmon and other pelagic finfish (H&L in waters <50m depth); white sturgeon (H&L); sharks, skates, and rays (H&L)	Salmon (non-troll H&L); abalone (diving); halibut, white seabass, striped bass, shore-based finfish, croaker, and flatfishes (H&L); smelt (H&L and hand/dip nets); clams (hand harvest); giant kelp (hand harvest)	Giant kelp (hand harvest); pelagic finfish, squid, jacksmelt, butterfish, crab, spot prawn	Spot prawn (traps/pots); sea cucumber (scuba/hookah); grunion (hand harvest); giant kelp (hand harvest); clams (hand harvest)

LOP	MPA Type	All regions from Monitoring Action Plan, Appendix F	North	North Central	Central	South
Mod-Low	SMCA SMP	Lingcod, cabezon, rockfishes, sheephead, and greenlings (H&L, spearfishing, trap); red abalone (free-diving); urchin (diving)	Pacific halibut (H&L); rockfishes, cabezon, and other sculpins, lingcod and other greenlings, California moray eel, wolf eel, and monkeyface and rock prickleback (H&L, spearfishing, trap, hand, bow and arrow); red abalone (free diving); urchin (diving); surfperch (H&L); shiner surfperch (H&L, dip net, cast net); unspecified finfish (H&L, spearfishing); sharks, skates, and rays (H&L, spear, harpoon, bow and arrow in estuarine waters); limpets and turban snails (hand); octopus (H&L, hand); crabs (trap, hoop net, hand); Turkish towel and Mendocino grapestone (intertidal hand)	Urchin (diving); lingcod, cabezon, greenling, rockfish, and other reef fish (H&L); surfperches (H&L)	None	Catch and release in >10 m (H&L); shore-based finfish (H&L); kelp bass, barred sand bass, lingcod, cabezon, and rockfish (H&L, spear); sheepshead (H&L, spear, trap); spotted sand bass and halibut (H&L); lobster (trap, hoop net, scuba); urchin (scuba/hookah); rock crab and kellet's whelk (trap); in water depth <50 m at islands and <30 m on mainland: pelagic finfish, bonito, and white seabass (H&L)

LOP	MPA Type	All regions from Monitoring Action Plan, Appendix F	North	North Central	Central	South
Low	SMCA SMP	Rock scallop (scuba); giant kelp (mechanical harvest); ghost shrimp (hand harvest); mussels (hand harvest); bull kelp (hand harvest)	Rock scallop (diving); mussels (hand); bull kelp (hand); ghost shrimp (hand); sea palm (intertidal hand); canopy forming algae (intertidal hand); native oysters (hand); unspecified shrimps (hand); unspecified marine invertebrates (hand); unspecified marine algae (hand)	Bull kelp and mussels (any method); all trawling ; giant kelp (mechanical harvest); mariculture (existing methods in NCCSR)	Giant kelp (mechanical harvest); Bull kelp (any method)	Rock scallop (scuba); mussels (hand harvest); giant kelp (mechanical harvest); marine algae other than giant and bull kelp (hand harvest)

From: Katie O'Donnell <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, July 3, 2025 1:22 PM

To: FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>

Cc: Rikki Eriksen; Ella Merkle; Zoe Collins

Subject: Comment Letter for MRC July 16-17 Meeting General Comment

Hello,

Please see the attached letter for general comment agenda items 2 and 10. We're looking forward to the upcoming MRC meeting, and thank you for all your work for our coast and oceans!

Please let us know if you have any questions!

Thanks,

Katie

--



Katie O'Donnell

US Ocean Conservation Manager

she/her/hers



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July 3, 2025

California Fish and Game Commission
Marine Resources Committee
P.O. Box 944209 Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Submitted electronically to fgc@fgc.ca.gov

RE: Streamlining Adaptive Management and Addressing Gaps in the California MPA Network

Dear Vice President Murray and Commissioner Sklar:

The undersigned organizations—representing the public interest, environment, marine science, environmental justice, and recreational and subsistence fishing interests—are committed to a resilient Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network and fostering an inclusive and transparent adaptive management process in California.

This letter provides an outline of recommendations for adaptively managing the MPA Network to meet the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Master Plan and Decadal Management Review (DMR) guidelines, and is intended to inform and contextualize the evaluation framework that will be proposed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) at the July 17, 2025 meeting.

CDFW's proposed petition evaluation criteria fits within the state's broader adaptive management framework, which must address I) Non-regulatory MPA Network Changes, II) Regulatory Changes and Adaptive Management Framework, III) Gaps and Future Needs of the MPA Network, and IV) Equitable Access Criteria.

As this phase of adaptive management concludes, we plan to integrate lessons learned from the DMR and provide specific recommendations related to all four topics, with our initial priorities listed below.

I. Non-regulatory MPA Network Changes

We recommend establishing a clear, easy, and expeditious pathway for proposing, assessing, and adopting minor non-regulatory changes that enhance MPA management, such as color or name changes. This pathway should define submission procedures, consideration processes, and decision-making timelines. The rationale for an expeditious process for adaptively managing non-regulatory changes to the Network is grounded in the need for flexibility, responsiveness, and efficiency in addressing dynamic ecological, social, and climatic challenges. CDFW recommends supplementing decadal reviews with annual updates to address non-regulatory changes without waiting for formal reviews¹. This guidance should be implemented for non-regulatory changes in the future.

II. Regulatory Changes and Adaptive Management Framework

The MLPA defines “adaptive management” as “a management policy that seeks to improve management of biological resources, particularly in areas of scientific uncertainty, by viewing program actions as tools for learning. Actions shall be designed so that, even if they fail, they will provide useful information for future actions, and monitoring and evaluation shall be emphasized so that the interaction of different elements within marine systems may be better understood”^{2,3}.

MPA adaptive management should be grounded in the MLPA objectives, MPA monitoring, and science-based gap analyses of the network. We recommend that the state clearly establishes science-based thresholds for monitoring data and articulates potential actions when thresholds are met. California has invested significantly in MPA monitoring, and has incredibly rich ecological and socioeconomic data to inform decision-making. We recommend utilizing the state’s extensive research and best available science to advance the MPLA’s precautionary principles and ensure that we promptly address pressing threats to marine ecosystems.

Public recommendations for changes should be evaluated within the context of science and gap analyses, and those that align with the adaptive management goals of the MLPA should be favored.⁴ Clarifying definitions of terms such as “best available science,” and clearly integrating lessons learned into future iterations of an adaptive management process, will be critical for the success of California’s resource and ecosystem management.

III. Gaps and Future Needs of the MPA Network

¹ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Management>

² Fish and Game Code 2852

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=FGC§ionNum=2852.

³ Underline emphasis added to quote

⁴ Fish and Game Code 2861

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=FGC§ionNum=2861.

To meet MLPA goals and the Science Advisory Team (SAT) guidelines, the MPA network must be assessed against size and spacing guidelines (by network and habitat), with clear pathways proposed to fill identified gaps. Continued monitoring is crucial, and the MLPA should be reexamined in the context of current ocean conditions and threats, applying a precautionary, science-based approach. A comprehensive evaluation of the MPA Network's adherence to the SAT's science guidelines, such as whether habitat representation remains consistent with SAT guidelines, and new monitoring data and research should be conducted to assess performance and inform adaptive management.

IV. Equitable Access Criteria

MPA design should prioritize equitable access to healthy coastal ecosystems, consistent with MLPA Goal 3, which states: "Improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbance, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity." This includes ensuring MPAs enhance subsistence fishing for communities that rely on it, and establishing clear standards for network change outreach that meet community needs while retaining no-take MPAs as the backbone of the MPA network.

We urge continued state investment in science, monitoring, and data synthesis, while emphasizing that critical decisions can and should be made now. As we prepare for the next steps following the current MPA petition process, we are looking forward to working with the Fish and Game Commission, CDFW, Ocean Protection Council, and partner agencies on the next phase of the state's adaptive management to strengthen and build resilience for our MPA Network.

Thank you for considering these comments. We are available to answer questions or discuss these items further.

Sincerely,

Rikki Eriksen
Marine Ecologist
California Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Tomas Valadez
California Policy Manager
Azul

Laura Deehan
State Director
Environment California

Azsha Hudson
Marine Conservation Analyst & Program
Manager
Environmental Defense Center

Ashley Eagle-Gibbs
Executive Director
Environmental Action Committee of West
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Katie O'Donnell
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WILDCOAST

Ray Hiemstra
Associate Director of Policy and Projects
Orange County Coastkeeper

Michael Quill, PhD
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Los Angeles Waterkeeper