

# Memorandum

Date: July 31, 2025

To: Marine Protected Area Outreach Partners

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

Subject: **Guidance to inform color updates to No-Take State Marine Conservation Areas in Marine Protected Area Outreach and Education Materials**

In late 2024, in response to an action item proposed by multiple petitions submitted as part of the [2023 Marine Protected Areas \(MPA\) petition process](#), the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) supported a [recommendation](#) from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) that no-take state marine conservation areas (SMCAs) may be displayed on maps in outreach materials in the red color used for State Marine Reserves instead of the purple used to date. This non-regulatory change is intended to improve public understanding of the no-take status of these MPAs.

CDFW's [Outreach and Education Guide](#) is scheduled for an update in 2026, which will incorporate this change and provide detailed implementation guidance. In the interim, outreach partners may begin using red to represent all no-take SMCAs in outreach materials. The 2023 MPA petition process is ongoing, which may result in additional changes to the Network. This includes the implementation of Bin 1 petition actions granted by the Commission. Proposed regulatory changes will go through the formal regulatory process which is expected to take several years to complete. Consequently, partners may choose to make the color change to no-take SMCAs but should not make any other changes to outreach and education materials related to petitions.

CDFW will not update its printed MPA outreach materials (e.g., brochures, signs, etc.) until the conclusion of the regulatory process for granted petitions. However, CDFW will work to update the color change on online maps and GIS layers. Partners that choose to implement this change must apply the color change to all no-take SMCAs in the MPA Network, including:

## **Santa Barbara County**

- Goleta Slough SMCA (no-take)
- Campus Point SMCA (no-take)

## **Los Angeles County**

- Casino Point SMCA (no-take)
- Blue Cavern Onshore SMCA (no-take)
- Point Vicente SMCA (no-take)

## **Orange County**

- Bolsa Chica Basin SMCA (no-take)
- Laguna Beach SMCA (no-take)

## **San Diego County**

- Famosa Slough SMCA (no-take)
- San Elijo Lagoon SMCA (no-take)
- Batiquitos Lagoon SMCA (no-take)

## Marine Protected Area Outreach Partners

July 31, 2025

Page 2

- Partners that plan to update current materials and/or create new outreach and education materials that contain maps of no-take SMCAs should consider the following related to implementing the color change:
- Partners are encouraged to use their best judgement in deciding whether and when to implement this color change, balancing the need for clear public communication with the potential for future updates to the Network.
- This color change is non-regulatory and only applies to outreach and education materials.
- When implemented, the use of red should be consistent within and across individual outreach products and follow the map color criteria outlined in the MPA [Outreach and Education Guide](#).
- Additional review by CDFW is not required if existing products that were previously reviewed and approved by CDFW are updated solely to reflect this color change. But please notify CDFW if updates are made.
- If the color change is applied in a new outreach product, the new product must still be reviewed by CDFW staff.

CDFW values the continued collaboration of all outreach partners in raising awareness of California's MPAs and their regulations. For questions or additional information, please contact the MPA team at [mpamanagementreview@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:mpamanagementreview@wildlife.ca.gov).