



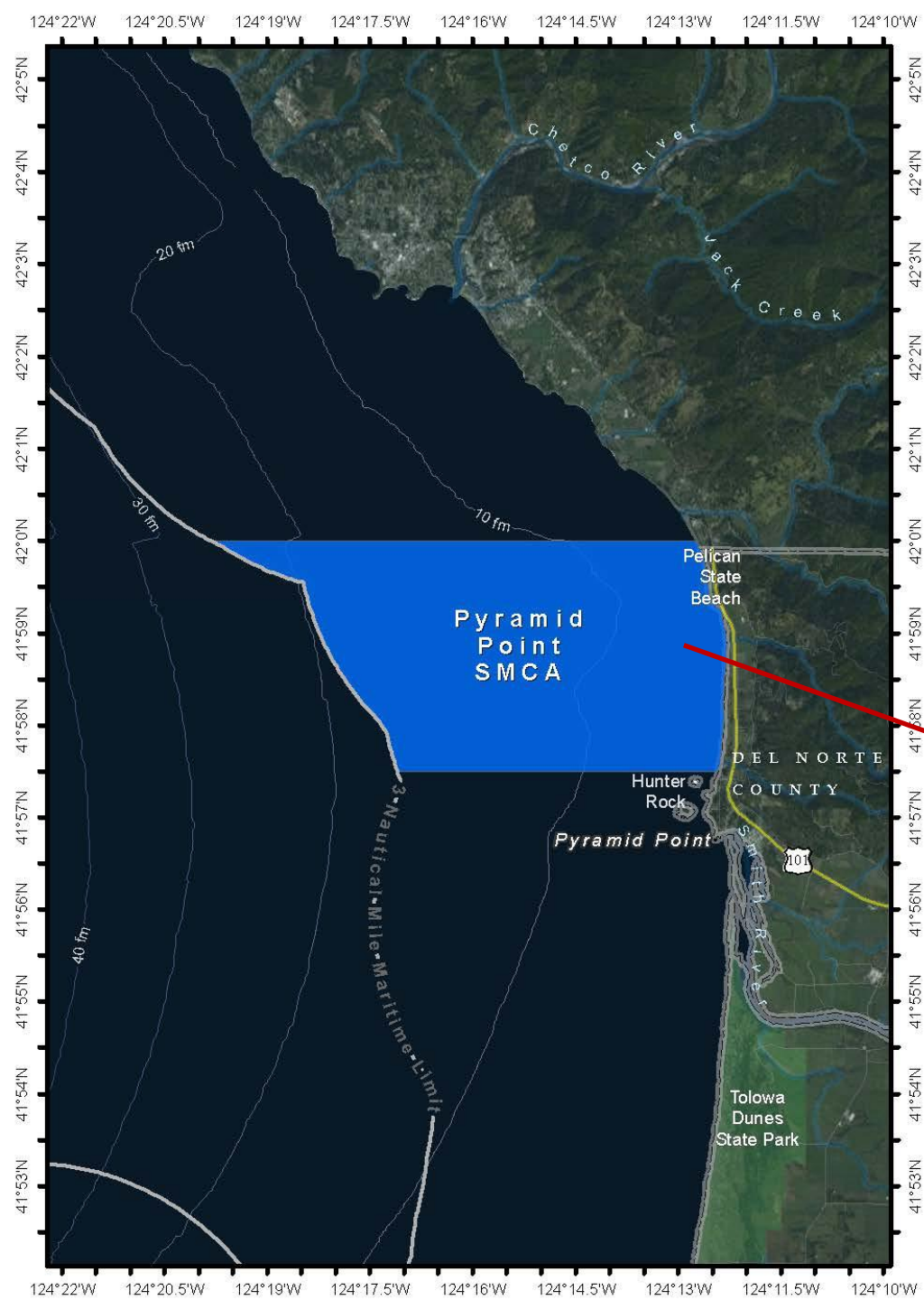
Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation

Marine Protected Area Regulation Petition 2023-21MPA

**Tr'uu-luu-k'wvt (Pyramid Point) SMCA,
Smith River, CA**

Presented to the California Fish & Game Commission

April 21, 2026



Lhvmsr – Traditional Food

- Community concern
- Annual Fish Camps
- TDN Spawning Habitat Assessment
- MPA Implementation – Tribal Historical Record
- Tribal Take



MPA Petition for Regulation Change

- Current regulation states: It is unlawful to injure, damage, take, or possess any living, geological, or cultural marine resource, EXCEPT: Recreational take of surf smelt by dip net or Hawaiian-type throw net is allowed. Includes take exemptions for the following Tribe: Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
- Remove allowance for surf smelt (*Hypomesus pretiosus*) by dip net or Hawaiian type throw net; Change to No-Take SMCA with Tribal exemption for Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
- Change northern boundary to align with recognized California/Oregon state line
- Community and State support

30x30 CA POWER IN NATURE

Submitted via email to fgc@fgc.ca.gov on January 14, 2025

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

Re: Letter of Support for The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nations' No-Take Proposal - Pyramid Point SMCA

The Power in Nature Coalition is writing to express our support for the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation's No-Take Proposal for the Pyramid Point State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA). The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation is requesting that the Fish and Game Commission modify take allowances in the Pyramid Point SMCA to no-take with a tribal exemption, and change the northern boundary to align with the California/Oregon state line. The reason for this request is because smelt is a culturally important species to the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation and a "No Take" designation will be clearer to the public, reducing violations that reduce the smelt population.

The survival of smelt or *lhvmsr* is vital to the continuation of the "fish camp" tradition, practiced by the Tolowa Dee-Ni'. The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation is the only Indigenous group in the lower Pacific Northwest to continue the practice of "fish camp." Tribal families seasonally migrate to the Tr'uuluu-k'wvt territory from July to October and set up temporary housing to fish, camp, and traditionally process the lhvmsr throughout its spawning months. Lhvmsr are harvested with a traditional A-frame net by the men of the society and then processed by the family members who oversee the family camp unit. The practice of "fish camp" plays a key role in the health of the community and environment and it is important to ensure the continuance of this important cultural tradition. Smelt is an integral part of Tolowa Dee-ni' culture as there are specific prayers and ceremonies centered on lhvmsr, being a key indicator of the health of the local ecosystem.

Furthermore, the 30x30 Draft Decision-Making Framework for Coastal Waters states, "Fully or highly protected areas have the greatest potential to protect biodiversity, confer resilience, and benefit species and ecosystems." It is, therefore, consistent with OPC policy for the Department to evaluate and approve petitions that would re-designate SMCA's to SMR's, expand existing MPAs, and create new SMR's or highly protected SMCA's such as this one. There is significant value in creating a highly protected SMCA for the natural relatives that will directly benefit from less take, but also for the local Indigenous community that will be able to continue their cultural traditions that rely on a thriving ecosystem. As a coalition dedicated to furthering 30x30 in California, we believe that this proposal, and policy actions alike truly help wildlife and the communities that depend on them.

30x30 CA POWER IN NATURE

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Organizations of the
Power in Nature Coalition:

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Shu' shaa nin-la!