

Chitqawi

Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

Petition 2023-19MPA



10/10/2023; Map Designed by Sophie Wilhoit; Tribal Marine Stewards Network; Base map by Esri

The Petition

- To ensure 30% of California waters are fully protected by 2030 and to foster Tribal engagement and co-management of MPAs, this Petition submitted by the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (SYBCI) recommends an additional MPA for the Central Coast Region MPA network. There is no Tribal MPA for co-management within this regional network. The SYBCI are co-managers of four south coast SMCAs. The Tribe is recommending the adoption of a new MPA between Morro Bay and Cambria for the Central Coast Region.
- An “insurance factor” to protect against impacts of anthropogenic disturbance events (climate change)
- To strengthen the role of Tribes in co-management and monitoring efforts

Importance of Chitqawi to the Tribe

The northernmost coastal Chumash village site of the territory traditionally inhabited by the diverse Chumash peoples

Very culturally important to the Tribe both historically and currently

Habitat

- Sandy beach, rocky intertidal, surfgrass, shallow hard and soft bottom, kelp bed
- Morro Bay estuary where Chitqawi is is a “nursery of the sea” because so many animal species rely on estuaries for nesting and breeding
- Most of the fish and shellfish in the US (salmon, herring and oysters) complete at least part of their lifecycle in estuaries
- These species were essential to the maintenance of Chumash culture and maritime society
- Species expected to benefit: rockfish, squid, mussels, turban snails, limpets, California halibut among other species

Detailed Objectives

- Protect natural trophic structure and food webs, including forage species such as juvenile rockfish, squid, and coastal pelagic finfish that serve as prey for other fish, marine birds and marine mammals
- Protect larval sources and enhance reproductive capacity of nearshore fish and invertebrate species
- Provide protection to nearshore shelf rockfish species
- Replicate within a state marine reserve the range of shallow habitats found at Cambria and White Rock SMCAs
- Include and replicate sandy beaches, shallow hard and soft bottom habitat

CDFW Evaluation Framework

- Note: framework created nearly 2 years after petitions submitted
- Question 1: align with MPA master plan adaptive management objectives?
- Question 2a: advance adaptive management recommendations in DMR?
- Question 9: better align with MPA science guidelines?
- Question 11: improve enforceability of MPA regulations?
- Question 13: maintain or enhance protection of marine resources?
- Question 14: more equitable access opportunities for traditionally marginalized communities?
- Question 16: consistent with JEDI?

2016 Master Plan

- *Chitqawi meets the Master Plan MPA Network Design Science Guidance:*
- “To protect the diversity of species that live at different depths, and to accommodate the movement of individuals to and from shallow nursery or spawning grounds to adult habitats offshore, MPAs should extend from the intertidal zone to deep waters offshore.” Chitqawi has a wide variety of depth (0-219 feet, average 114) and extends from the intertidal zone to deep waters offshore
- “To best protect adult populations, based on adult neighborhood sizes and movement patterns, MPAs should have an alongshore extent of at least 3-6 miles of coastline.” Chitqawi shoreline habitat is 2.43 miles of beach, 1.6 mi hardened shores
- To facilitate dispersal among MPAs for important bottom-dwelling fish and invertebrate groups ... MPAs should be placed within 31-62 miles of each other. There are no tribally managed or tribal take MPAs in this regional network.

From SeaSketch

- Level of protection would be HIGH (as amended)
- Wide variety of depth (0-219 feet, average 114)
- Shoreline habitat is 2.43 miles of beach, 1.6 mi hardened shores
- Near shore protected substrate is 2.79 miles

