

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FISH AND GAME COMMISSION
MEMORANDUM

DATE: ~~May 29, 2026~~ Updated July 6, 2026 (updates displayed in blue font)

TO: Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region
California Department of Fish and Wildlife



CC: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Meghan Hertel, Director
Chad Dibble, Deputy Director, Wildlife and Fisheries Division
Sarah Fonseca, Tribal Liaison
Samara Maxey, Regional Tribal Coordinator, Marine Region

FROM: Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission

SUBJECT: Actions Proposed for Tribally Led and Co-Led Marine Protected Area Petitions

This memo is intended to transmit to the Department, for evaluation purposes, current descriptions of specific proposed actions in the five tribally led or co-led marine protected area (MPA) petitions under consideration by the Commission.

During its April 14, 2026 meeting, the Commission Tribal Committee received presentations from tribes that are leading or co-leading MPA petitions, [during which the tribes described updates or clarifications to their original petitions](#). The committee recommended that the Commission request the Department move forward with tribally led or co-led petition evaluations based on how the petitions, and individual actions contained within, were presented and described during the April 14 meeting.

At its April 15-16, 2026 meeting, the Commission supported the Tribal Committee recommendation and directed staff to submit to the Department the amended proposed actions for tribally led or co-led MPA petitions. Since the April meeting, the Commission held three regional meetings focused on MPA petitions, during which the five tribally led or co-led petitions were presented and petitioners reaffirmed the specific proposed actions as described on April 14.

Table 1 details the five tribally led or co-led MPA petitions and the specific actions requested in each, [including those](#) presented in April and reaffirmed during the regional MPA petition meetings. [For clarity, the tribal changes are identified in the third column and petitions are renamed with an amendment number in the fourth column](#). The Department is asked to evaluate the five petitions consistent with the amendments summarized in the "...Description of Amended Petition Proposed Actions, Effective April 15, 2026" column. The Commission has requested that the Department complete and submit the evaluations to the Commission prior to, and present its recommendations during, the Commission's August 12-13, 2026 meeting.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Table 1: Tribally Led or Co-Led Marine Protected Area Petitions, Updated July 1, 2026 (updates displayed in blue font)

Petition Number Tribal Lead or Co-Lead and Co-Sponsor(s)	Description of Petition Proposed Actions (Original 2023 or as Amended 2025)	Tribal Petitioner Changes	Amended Petition Number and Description of Amended Petition Proposed Actions (Effective April 15, 2026)
2023-21MPA Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	- Amend northern boundary of Pyramid Point State Marine Conservation Area (SCMA) - Remove recreational take of surf smelt - Maintain tribal take exemption for the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	No changes proposed <i>The Department explained that surf smelt is part of a three-species "true smelt" group (surf, night, and whitebait); because the MPA allows recreational take of the group, it is necessary to remove the recreational allowance for true smelt, not just surf smelt. The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation does not oppose this change.</i>	2023-21MPA_AM1 - Amend northern boundary of Pyramid Point SMCA - Remove recreational take of surf true smelt - Maintain tribal take exemption for the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
2023-28MPA_AM1AM2 Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Northern Chumash Tribal Council	- Designate a new SMCA around Point Sal (size: 14.22 square miles with an alongshore span of 3.20 miles) - Identify a tribal name through consultation with Chumash people - Allow recreational take of finfish by hook and line from shore	<i>Add Northern Chumash Tribal Council as co-petitioner</i> <i>Move the southern boundary northward by approximately one-half mile to end of Vandenberg Space Force Base Road.</i> <i>SW corner:</i> <i>34.895212665° N Lat,</i> <i>120.731972573° W Long</i> <i>SE corner:</i> <i>34.895212665° N Lat,</i> <i>120.642637239° W Long</i> <i>Allow incidental take during mission-critical operations at Vandenberg Space Force Base</i>	2023-28MPA_AM2 <i>Northern Chumash Tribal Council added as co-petitioner</i> - Designate a new SMCA around Point Sal (size as amended: 9.18 square miles with an alongshore span of 4.03 miles) - Identify a tribal name through consultation with Chumash people - Allow recreational take of finfish by hook and line from shore - Allow incidental take during mission-critical operations at Vandenberg Space Force Base

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2023-29MPA_AM1 NRDC Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Environmental Defense Center	- Designate a new marine protected area near Carpinteria as “Mishopshno SMCA” (size: 8.97 square miles) - Allow recreational take of finfish by hook and line from shore - Include a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	- Move western boundary <i>to align with Caspia Lane in Summerland, at:</i> 34.366106° N Lat, 119.53689° W Long - Move the eastern boundary <i>to align with Franklin Creek, at:</i> 34.366106° N Lat, 119.58868° W Long	2023-29MPA_AM2 - Designate a new marine protected area near Carpinteria as “Mishopshno SMCA” (size as amended: 9.05 square miles with an alongshore span of 3.63 miles) - Allow recreational take of finfish by hook and line from shore - Include a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
2023-19MPA Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	- Designate a new marine protected area near Morro Bay as “Chitqawi SMCA” - Include a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians - Allow recreational take of finfish and invertebrates except mussels and scallops by hand - Allow incidental take from permitted operations	- Remove proposed allowance for recreational take of finfish and invertebrates except mussels and scallops by hand - Remove incidental take allowance	2023-19MPA_AM1 - Designate a new marine protected area near Morro Bay as “Chitqawi SMCA” - Include only a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

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2023-20MPA Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	• Expand northern boundary of Point Buchon State Marine Reserve (SMR) north to align with Point Buchon • Re-name Point Buchon SMCA as the “Chumash Co-Managed SMCA” • Remove current take allowance (recreational and commercial take of salmon and albacore) • Add allowance for recreational take of finfish and invertebrates except mussels and scallops by hand • Allow take incidental to operations in MPA • Add a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	• <i>Keep current take allowance (recreational and commercial take of salmon and albacore)</i> • <i>Remove proposed allowance for recreational take of finfish and invertebrates except mussels and scallops by hand</i> • <i>Remove proposed allowance for take incidental to operations in MPA</i>	2023-20MPA_AM1 • Expand northern boundary of Point Buchon SMR north to align with Point Buchon • Re-name Point Buchon SMCA as the “Chumash Co-Managed SMCA” • Add a tribal take exemption for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians