

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 30, 2026

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

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

Subject: **CDFW 2023 MPA Bin 2 Petition Evaluations for the Five Tribally-led Petitions**

At its February 14-15, 2024 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGF) referred 20 Marine Protected Area (MPA) petitions to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation. CDFW completed the Evaluations and Recommendations for the ten Bin 2 non-Tribally-led petitions and the Companion Document in March of 2026, which were received by CFGF at their April 15-16, 2026 meeting.

At the December 9, 2025 meeting, the CFGF Tribal Committee requested that before releasing the Tribally-led petition evaluations, CDFW engage with the tribes leading or co-leading petitions and provide an update on the engagement and any clarifications on the petitions at the April 14, 2026 CFGF Tribal Committee meeting.

At the April 14, 2026, CFGF Tribal Committee meeting, tribal representatives provided an overview and clarifications for the five Tribally-led petitions. CDFW presented an update on tribal outreach and engagement since December, and summarized the clarifications and proposed amendments for the Tribally-led petitions. At the meeting on April 15, 2026, the CFGF Tribal Committee recommended to CFGF that CDFW evaluate the Tribally-led petitions according to the proposed amendments and clarifications discussed during the Tribal Committee meeting on April 14. CFGF subsequently referred the amended petitions Tribally-led petitions to CDFW for evaluation and reaffirmed the evaluations should be completed using the Evaluation Framework approved by CFGF in August 2025.

CDFW has completed and is transmitting the evaluations and recommendations for the five Tribally-led petitions (Attachments 1-5). The Companion Document (Attachment 6) was updated with new information that includes a detailed timeline of the 2023 MPA Petition milestones, updates related to tribal outreach and engagement, a new section on Climate Resilience and MPAs, and additional supplemental information for Question 5 (information gaps) and Question 9 (MPA Network design and levels of protection) of the evaluation. The Companion Document should be read in



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advance of the petition evaluations as it includes supplemental information and additional context that is relevant for all the evaluations. CDFW also developed a [Science Guide to California's MPA Network](#) (Attachment 7). This document includes a summary of the Science Guidelines developed and applied during the MPA planning process, and a current assessment of how the network conforms to these Science Guidelines.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact me at r7regionalmgr@wildlife.ca.gov.

Attachment 1: CDFW Evaluation and Recommendations for **2023-**

19MPA_AM1: Designate a New Chitqawi SMCA near Morro Bay with a Tribal Exemption for Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

Attachment 2: CDFW Evaluation and Recommendations for **2023-**

20MPA_AM1: Establish Co-Management at Point Buchon SMCA, Change the Name, and Add a Tribal Exemption for Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians at Point Buchon SMCA, and Change the Boundary at Point Buchon SMR

Attachment 3: CDFW Evaluation and Recommendations for **2023-**

21MPA_AM1: Remove Recreational Take of True Smelt and Change the Boundary at Pyramid Point SMCA

Attachment 4: CDFW Evaluation and Recommendations for **2023-**

28MPA_AM2: Designate a New SMCA Near Point Sal with an Allowance for Recreational Take of Finfish by Hook-and-Line From Shore

Attachment 5: CDFW Evaluation and Recommendations for **2023-**

29MPA_AM2: Designate a New SMCA Near Mishopshno/Carpinteria with an Allowance for Recreational Take of Finfish by Hook-and-Line from Shore and a Tribal Take Exemption for Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

Attachment 6: CDFW's 2023 Decadal Management Review Marine Protected Area Petition Evaluation Updated Companion Document, July 2026 Version

Attachment 7: CDFW Science Guide to California's MPA Network

cc: Meghan Hertel, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Kevin Thomas, Deputy Director
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