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April 6, 2023

California Fish and Game Commission  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090  
*Via Electronic Mail: fgc@fgc.ca.gov*

Re. Agenda Item 25. Marine protected areas decadal management review

Dear President Sklar and Honorable Commissioners,

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (EAC) has been working to protect the unique lands, waters, and biodiversity of coastal Marin County since 1971. We are deeply committed to California's marine protected area (MPA) network and have been actively supporting MPAs through outreach, education, and community science activities since the first regional stakeholder meetings that would eventually establish the network of 124 MPAs.

We submitted written comments dated March 13th in advance of the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting (attached to this letter), as well as providing oral comments at the March 16th MRC meeting related to the decadal management review. We appreciated the hybrid meeting format, which allowed us to participate remotely.

We submit this follow up letter with locally specific boundary and designation change requests to the full Commission to facilitate discussion at the April meeting. Related to our previously submitted requests (March 13 and 16), we highlight our key requests here for discussion and prioritization at the April meeting:

- 1) Request evaluation of Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve,
- 2) Request evaluation of Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve and extension of the southern boundary to fully encompass the reef habitat area, and

- 3) Request a science-based analysis to review a northern extension of the Duxbury Reef SMCA to Double Point Special Closure based on increased visitation by the public to the Area of Special Biological Significance.

This letter and our prior letter are also supported by prior written comments submitted by the National Park Service dated (November 14, 2022, also attached).

As a final request, we would like to gain clarity on the process for boundary and designation changes.

- 1) Specifically, is it necessary to submit a formal petition related to these aforementioned requests and correspondence? It was not entirely clear at the March MRC meeting whether a petition is required or if the Department of Fish and Wildlife is able to recommend adaptive management strategies based on the Decadal Review and submitted comments. We respectfully request clarification to facilitate effective public participation in this process.

Thank you for your dedication to adaptive management, and we look forward to the April Commission meeting and more collaboration on the adaptive management prioritization and recommendations as we approach the July MRC meeting.

Sincerely,



Morgan Patton, Executive Director



Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Legal and Policy Director



March 13, 2023

Fish and Game Commission Marine Resources Committee  
California Fish and Game Commission  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090  
*Via Electronic Mail: [fgc@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:fgc@fgc.ca.gov)*

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Re. MRC Agenda Item 9: Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Decadal Management Review

Dear President Sklar and Commissioner Murray,

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin has been working to protect the unique lands, waters, and biodiversity of coastal Marin County since 1971. We are deeply committed to California's marine protected area (MPA) network and have been actively supporting MPAs through outreach, education, and community science activities since the first regional stakeholder meetings that would eventually establish the network of 124 MPAs.

We continue our support for the network as members of the Golden Gate MPA Collaborative Network, collecting human-use activity data through our local MPA Watch program, Marin MPA Watch, with partners at the Point Reyes National Seashore, and we have created a team of local volunteers who provide outreach and education as intertidal docents at Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA).

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on the MPA Decadal Review. We want to thank the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and Fish and Game Commission staff and partners for the momentous achievement related to the completion of the Decadal Review and accompanying report. The report highlights the effectiveness and importance of our state's unique and precedent setting MPA network.

Before our specific comments, we would like to note that due to the flooding in Monterey County, our team is unable to travel to the in-person meetings, including the Decadal Management Review Forum. We are grateful the Marine

Resources Committee meetings will have the opportunity for hybrid participation and the Monterey County emergency highlights the continued need for hybrid meetings to ensure broad-based public engagement opportunities in the future. We look forward to viewing the Decadal Management Review Forum online and we are disappointed we will not be able to ask questions or contribute to the discussion in person.

In general, we are supportive of many of the recommendations and future steps outlined in Chapter 6; however, we have included some specific comments related to our geographic area in coastal Marin County for additional consideration. We have organized our comments by the MPA Network Performance categories noted in Chapter 6.

### **1. MPA Network Design / Boundaries and MPA Designation Changes**

We have included three specific requests below related to designation and boundary changes with additional discussion following.

**Request 1: Include condition and use change data for MPAs to provide an assessment of changed conditions (i.e. on-shore and offshore activities and uses) that would inform the need for adapting the MPA Network Design that would include boundaries and designation changes that are in alignment with today's conditions and circumstances.**

**Request 2: Request evaluation of Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve.**

**Request 3: Request evaluation of Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve and extension of the southern boundary to fully encompass the reef habitat area.**

The Decadal Review needs to include a reference of site conditions of the 124 MPAs from the date of MPA designation compared to current-day conditions that include changes in surrounding on-shore or offshore commercial/recreational consumptive and non-consumptive uses, and visitation data. This information would be beneficial when analyzing information for boundary and designation changes based on changed conditions. We highlight two Marin County examples below:

#### *Example 1: Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area*

Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA) was established at a time when a commercial aquaculture operation was in business. The commercial operator closed in 2012, and offshore and on-shore infrastructure has been removed. Drakes Estero was designated as Marine Wilderness in 2012 following the

closure of the commercial operation in its waters. Following the Marine Wilderness designation, the Point Reyes National Seashore completed an expensive restoration project (\$4 million) in the waters of Drakes Estero. The Estero is one of the last fully intact wetlands in the state of California, is an Area of Special Biological Significance, and a biologically rich estuary that consists of extensive eelgrass beds, tidal flats, wetlands, sand bars, and open water that supports a variety of fish, invertebrates, shorebirds, waders, waterfowl, and mammals including harbor seals and river otters.

On November 14, 2022, the Point Reyes National Seashore<sup>1</sup> submitted a letter to Dr. Craig Shuman, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Region Manager, and to Samantha Murray, Fish and Game Commissioner, that supports a MPA designation change of Drakes Estero from a SMCA to State Marine Reserve (SMR) for the below reasons:

*2010 designation as SMCA relied on presence of commercial aquaculture operation. DOI authorization of commercial aquaculture ended in 2012, and operations ceased in 2014. Area is now Congressionally Designated Wilderness, \$4m estuary restoration completed in 2017. Recreational take of shellfish appears to be very rare, requires long kayak trips in wilderness area with no cell service and limited emergency response. Increased protections for eelgrass, estuarine biodiversity, and marine wilderness. If converted to an SMR, join Estero de Limantour into a single SMR for naming and outreach purposes.*

*Example 2: Duxbury Reef SMCA*

Duxbury Reef SMCA was established at a time when visitation to this area was very low and not many people were visiting the intertidal area. However, visitation to this MPA has been steadily and significantly increasing as previously unknown trails and beaches of Point Reyes National Seashore have begun to attract visitors to locations such as Alamere Falls. Since 2017, MPA Watch volunteers documented approximately a 70 percent increase in visitation to Duxbury Reef that continued to increase in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic.

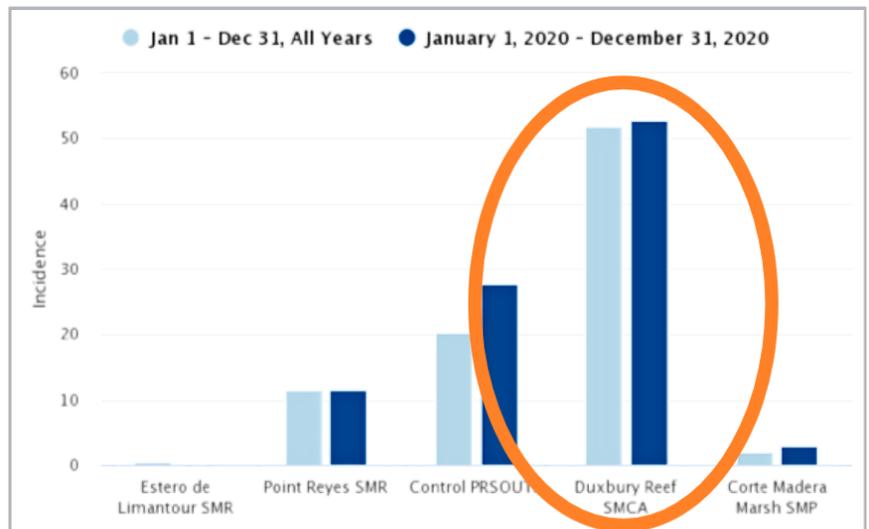


Figure 1. MPA Watch Recreational and Consumptive Activity 2014-2020 and 2020

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Point Reyes National Seashore to California Department of Fish and Wildlife, November 14, 2022

A comparison of the MPA visitation trends across all designated MPAs in coastal Marin County, Duxbury has the highest overall visitation count of all MPA Watch transects in Marin, the smallest area, and is a highly sensitive intertidal habitat.

Our MPA Watch 2020 Annual Report notes the rise in visitation in 2020:

*This MPA [Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area] recorded a use rate of 29.4 activities per mile surveyed. This is an increase of 79% compared to the prior year. 11% of the observations in the MPA are on-shore consumptive. 305 incidents of hand collection of biota in the intertidal were observed in the months of June, July, and August 2020 (emphasis added). Duxbury Reef SMR has the highest use count [66%] of all MPAs surveyed by Marin MPA Watch ... in one of the smallest survey areas. Duxbury Reef is a sensitive intertidal habitat where human impacts (trampling and collecting) may have long-term negative impacts to habitat and species.*

In 2022, we established the Duxbury Docent program in partnership with Marin County Parks and Open Space which provides visitor education and collects MPA Watch human-use data. On the ground, our docents are engaging with the public and have first-hand experience in the confusion of the designation of the MPA that is leading to unintended compliance issues at this location. Specifically, we summarized below our docent experiences while interacting with visitors,

*The allowance of finfish fishing from shore and notice about the allowance of abalone take at Duxbury generates confusion in the community and among visitors about what is and is not allowed.*

At Duxbury Reef SMCA, our experience on the ground is that the permitted allowance of recreational finfish and abalone from shore is confusing to the public, and with increased visitation since 2017 this tends to lead to non-compliance that may be hindering the goals of the MLPA at this site.

The inclusion of community science data on human use, activities, and visitation data from overlapping jurisdictions, like the Point Reyes National Seashore in coastal Marin County, would provide a wealth of data that could assist in informing the adaptive management strategies of the MPA Network.

This would be especially beneficial when analyzing information for boundary and designation changes that would provide up-to-date information on changing conditions that would ensure the management of the MPAs are meeting the goals of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA)'s six goals<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> MLPA Goals: Protect the natural diversity and abundance of marine life, and the structure, function and integrity of marine ecosystems. 1) Help sustain, conserve and protect marine life populations, including those of economic value, and rebuild those that are depleted. 2) Improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbance, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity. 3) Protect marine natural heritage, including protection of representative and unique marine life habitats in CA waters for their intrinsic values. 4) Ensure California's MPAs have

## 2. Regulatory and Framework Review / MPA Network Design:

### **Request 4: Need for inclusion of biological and environmental condition status, community science data, and ecological habitat mapping when analyzing a need for MPA designation and boundary changes.**

We support Recommendation #4 and request as part of the identification of science-based approaches to inform analysis that biological and environmental conditions, ecological habitat maps, and environmental designations (like Marine Wilderness, Areas of Special Biological Significance, etc.) are included.

We provide two examples below, Duxbury Reef and Double Point, related to immediately connected habitat areas excluded from MPA boundaries.

#### *Example 1: Duxbury Reef SMCA*

The current MPA boundaries of Duxbury Reef SMCA fail to encompass the entire reef that is exposed at a low tide. At low tide, people can walk to the portion that is outside the MPA, making it fully accessible. Figure 2 highlights the area that is part of the intertidal ecological habitat area but has been excluded from the MPA boundary.

In addition, the regulations state that the MPA seaward boundary is 1,000 feet from the seaward of mean, low, low tide, but the MPA boundary designation includes 1,000 feet from high tide. This language is ambiguous and confusing to the public.



Figure 2.

Overlay of Duxbury Reef SMCA with an orange outline of the portion of the reef that is exposed at low tide that is not currently included in the MPA. A southern boundary extension of Duxbury Reef is needed to fully connect the ecological habitat area and reduce confusion for the public on what activities are allowed.

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clearly defined objectives, effective management measures and adequate enforcement and are based on sound scientific guidelines. 5) Ensure the State's MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a network.

*Example 2: Double Point*

North of Duxbury Reef SMCA is a Special Closure Area (Double Point) that is ecologically significant and connected to Duxbury Reef. In the November 2022 letter from Point Reyes National Seashore, they note there are concerns about the protection of seabirds, marine mammals, and concerns with kayaking disturbances of harbor seals. A long-established harbor seal monitoring program by Point Reyes National Seashore at this location includes datasets on harbor seal pupping and movements. At the time the Special Closure was established, there was little human activity and disturbance in this area until about 2017 when hiking to Alamere Falls became very popular.

A science-based analysis to review whether it would make sense to extend the Duxbury Reef MPA further north to the Special Closure should be considered with data provided by the Point Reyes National Seashore on the presence of marine mammals and disturbance events. A review of this type would inform whether there is a need to extend the Duxbury MPA boundary north or expand the Double Point Special Closure, which we think is likely warranted based on our current understanding and available data.

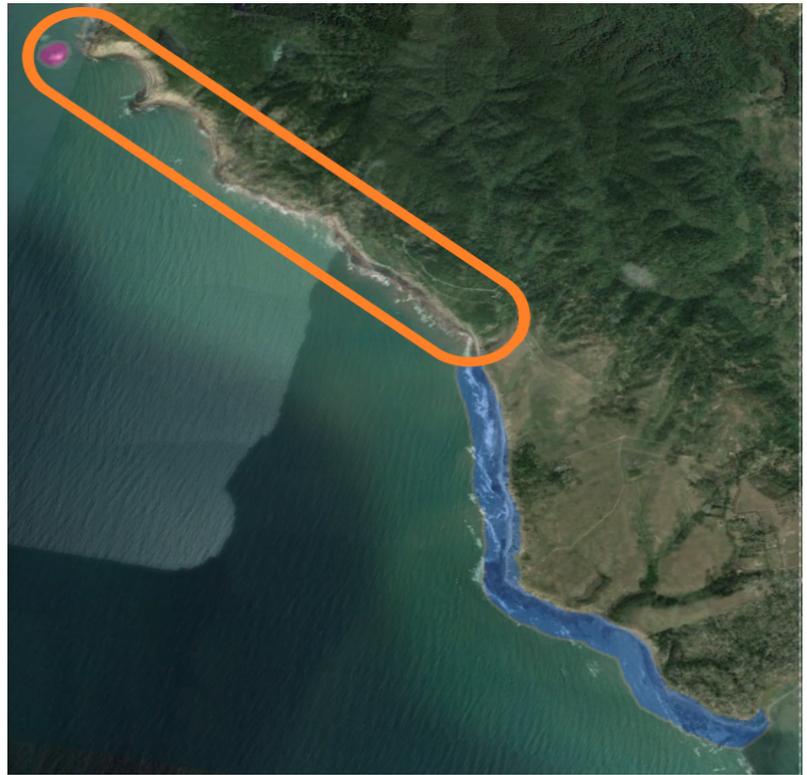


Figure 3. Image of Double Point Special Closure and Duxbury Reef SMCA boundary. The orange highlight indicates the area outside of the MPA network that is interconnected and includes an additional Area of Special Biological Significance (cove near Double Point closure).

### 3. Enforcement and Compliance:

**Request 5: Need for enforcement volunteer programs in rural areas, specifically an extension of CDFW-trained enforcement volunteers piloted in 2020 at Pillar Point due to the high visitation and poaching incidents.**

Duxbury Reef SMCA is located within a nexus of overlapping jurisdictional authority, including the CDFW, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, Point Reyes National Seashore, and Marin County Parks and Open Space. However, the only agencies who can issue citations in the areas where most people visit at Duxbury Reef are the CDFW and the Marin County Sheriff.

Duxbury Reef SMCA is a rural location with limited signage and a lack of cellular service. Prior to 2022 and the creation of our program, there was no established outreach and education program for visitors to learn about the intertidal environment and limited oversight from regulatory agencies to ensure compliance with MPA regulations.

MPAs, like Duxbury Reef SMCA, need additional resources to enhance outreach and educational efforts, otherwise, the area becomes an MPA only in name and is not meeting MLPA goals.

Since 2014, the MPA Watch program has collected human-use data including potential violation data that is not reflected in the public enforcement violation data. Specifically, the MPA Watch and Duxbury Docent programs have collected data on increased visitation prior to the noted influx of visitation due to the pandemic in 2020:

*Since 2017, MPA Watch volunteers documented approximately a 70 percent increase in visitation to Duxbury Reef, and in 2020, more than 300 observations of hand-collection of biota were documented at Duxbury Reef over a three-month period along with a 79 percent increase in visitation compared to 2019.*

*In 2022, the Duxbury Docent program completed 65 shifts. Docents engaged with more than 1,000 members of the public and successfully deterred 37 potential consumptive use violations (hand-collection of biota) during those shifts through outreach and education.*

While establishing the Duxbury Docent program is an important step, additional resources are needed from CDFW to help meet the goals of the MLPA at this MPA. For example, establishing a partnership program like the pilot program of CDFW-trained outreach volunteers at Pillar Point in 2020 would benefit the Duxbury Docent program as a partnership to improve outreach, education, and MPA regulatory compliance.

#### **4. Enforcement and Compliance:**

##### **Request 6: Need for transparency in violation tracking and numbers of visits by wardens to specific MPAs.**

It would be beneficial to the public to have a quarterly report available that lists the number of cited violations at each MPA and the number of visits by CDFW wardens to that location. This information would assist with reconciling the community science data collected by programs like MPA Watch with the enforcement data. This would assist with finding compliance and enforcement gaps and subsequently allocating resources for increased capacity, or establishing community partnerships for outreach and educational programs in the future.

#### **5. Outreach and Education:**

##### **Request 7: Need for up-to-date signage that incorporates information/access to seasonal fishing regulations.**

Throughout the MPAs located in coastal Marin County, signage continues to be a challenge. Locations within the Point Reyes National Seashore sometimes include signage that an area is an MPA and closed to fishing and collecting, while other locations include do not have signage. If there are other pressing public noticing requirements like during the pandemic, MPA signage was removed and replaced.

As CDFW analyzes what is useful for MPA signage and effectiveness related to compliance and education, it would be helpful to include options for the public to obtain up-to-date information using QR codes, including current fishing regulations and definitions. This is especially important in areas where there are overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities and within SMCAs where regulations may differ on what is allowed or not allowed. Specifically, as noted previously by our Duxbury Docent program volunteers,

*Signage is not kept up to date to reflect specific closures and hyperlinks to Fish and Game Code is not included for visitors to reference and look up current regulations.*

In general, much of the public is not up to date on the fishing seasons or what fisheries are open or closed, and the lack of information at access points creates confusion. Information for outreach and education also needs to be designed for the average recreational MPA visitor, and special signage for intertidal areas should be shared collaboratively throughout the state with intertidal groups to standardize messaging.

## **6. Tribal Coordination:**

### **Request 8: Need for pathways to increased tribal coordination and inclusion.**

We recommend increased and meaningful tribal engagement and co-management across all aspects of the MPA network including community science, building tribal capacity, improved coordination, and outreach and inclusion of all tribes, federal and non-federally recognized tribes.

## **7. Climate Resilience and Adaptation:**

### **Request 9: Need to develop pathways to integrate with California's 30x30 Initiative, climate resilience, and adaptation goals.**

We are actively engaged in coastal resiliency planning and the state's 30x30 implementation. Related to 30x30, we hope to continue the dialogue around how our MPA network intersects with California's 30x30 goals. Careful coordination is required between all these goals and planning processes to ensure the best outcome.

The Fish and Game Commission should work towards climate-resilient MPAs through an equitable, science-based process that is adaptive and includes additional monitoring metrics, connecting to the state's long-term monitoring goals. Our MPAs must be climate ready. It is important that the CDFW and the Fish and Game Commission consider the need for our MPA network to adapt to sea level rise, as wetland and public trust boundaries shift. The MPAs can also serve as important climate refugia sites.

## **8. Public Engagement and Timeline:**

### **Request 10: Outline the opportunities for public engagement and timeline for consideration of incorporation of public comments on the Decadal Review.**

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on the Decadal Review but would like clarification from CDFW and the Fish and Game Commission on the recommended pathways to ensure that concerns raised in this comment letter are considered for inclusion in the adaptive management plans.

We also raise specific boundary and designation change requests that are localized to our geographic region and clarification on how those items will be considered and if it is appropriate as part of this process or would need to be raised independently of the Decadal Review.

## Summary of Requests

**Request 1: Include condition and use change data for MPAs to provide an assessment of changed conditions (i.e. on-shore and offshore activities and uses) that would inform the need for adapting the MPA Network Design that would include boundaries and designation changes that are in alignment with today's conditions and circumstances.**

**Request 2: Request evaluation of Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Area for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve.**

**Request 3: Request evaluation of Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area for a designation change to a State Marine Reserve and extension of the southern boundary to fully encompass the reef habitat area.**

**Request 4: Need for inclusion of biological and environmental condition status, community science data, and ecological habitat mapping when analyzing a need for MPA designation and boundary changes.**

**Request 5: Need for enforcement volunteer programs in rural areas, specifically an extension of CDFW-trained enforcement volunteers piloted in 2020 at Pillar Point due to the high visitation and poaching incidents.**

**Request 6: Need for transparency in violation tracking and numbers of visits by wardens to specific MPAs.**

**Request 7: Need for up-to-date signage that incorporates information/access to seasonal fishing regulations.**

**Request 8: Need for pathways to increased tribal coordination and inclusion.**

**Request 9: Need to develop pathways to integrate with California's 30x30 Initiative, climate resilience, and adaptation goals.**

**Request 10: Outline the opportunities for public engagement and timeline for consideration of incorporation of public comments on the Decadal Review.**

## Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Decadal Review and for your consideration of our comments. We look forward to additional dialogue in the coming months as the public can comprehensively engage and participate in the pathways forward that will inform the future adaptive management decisions that help to ensure an inclusive, responsive, and resilient MPA Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MP', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Morgan Patton  
Executive Director  
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

cc: Susan Ashcraft, Senior Environmental Scientist and Marine Advisor, California Fish and Game Commission; Melissa A. Miller-Henson, Executive Director, California Fish and Game Commission; Becky Ota, Marine Habitat Conservation Program Manager, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; Craig Shuman, Marine Region Manager, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Dennis Rodoni, Marin County Supervisor District 4



# United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Point Reyes National Seashore  
1 Bear Valley Road  
Point Reyes Station, CA 94956  
Department of the Interior Region 10

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617

November 14, 2022

Craig Shuman, Marine Region Manager, CDFW

[craig.shuman@wildlife.ca.org](mailto:craig.shuman@wildlife.ca.org)

Samantha Murray, President, California Fish and Game Commission

[samanthamurrayfgc@gmail.com](mailto:samanthamurrayfgc@gmail.com)

Dear Mr. Shuman and President Murray:

The National Park Service (NPS) strongly supports the continued science-based and stakeholder driven designation and management of the most significant biodiversity focused Marin Protected Area (MPA) network in the United States. We anticipate the 10-year review will strengthen and reinforce the unparalleled benefits to protecting California's unique ecologically and economically important and irreplaceable marine biodiversity.

The NPS participated in the 2008 – 2009 stakeholder working groups recommending proposed Network of MPAs for the North-Central Coast. Since that time, NPS continues to support and conduct protection, education, monitoring, and research in the four State MPAs that overlap with the boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore: Estero de Limantour State SMR, Drakes Estero SMCA, the Point Reyes SMR, and Duxbury Reef SMCA. Similarly, we also protect and monitor seabird and marine mammal populations in the three special closures within park boundaries: Point Reyes Headlands, Point Resistance Rock, and Double Point/Stormy Stack. We are proud to help protect and monitor these MPAs that both stakeholder subgroups overwhelmingly concurred on the Commission enacted MPA designations along the Marin County coastline.

The biodiversity protections established by these seven MPAs within the boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore are key components in the NPS mission to “...*preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.*” Importantly, the majority of Point Reyes National Seashore's outer coast out to ¼ mile from shore is Congressionally designated as Potential Wilderness, which restricts commercial activities (including commercial fishing) and motorized equipment (including motorboats). These federal marine wilderness areas overlap partially or entirely with all seven State MPAs in Marin County.

Our continued support and engagement with the State MPA designations is summarized below where NPS, in collaboration with many partners, conducts ecological restoration, ecological monitoring, human use monitoring, research, protection, and education.

**Table 1: Summary of National Park Service programs and projects in the seven State MPAs that overlap with NPS waters at Point Reyes National Seashore.**

<b>State MPA</b>	<b>Ecological Restoration</b>	<b>Ecological Monitoring</b>	<b>Human Use Monitoring</b>	<b>Research</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Protection</b>
Drakes Estero SMCA	X	X	X	X	X	X
Estero de Limantour SMR				X	X	X
Point Reyes SMR	X	X	X	X	X	X
Duxbury Reef SMCA		X	X	X	X	X
Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure		X	X	X	X	X
Point Resistance Rock Special Closure		X	X		X	X
Double Point/Stormy Stack Special Closure		X	X	X	X	X

Recent and ongoing NPS investments in these State MPAs include:

- \$4m restoration of the Drakes Estero SMCA in 2016-2017 removing 3.6m lbs. of aquaculture debris and continued annual monitoring of eelgrass restoration.
- Annual harbor seal and/or elephant seal monitoring in all the MPAs (except Estero de Limantour).
- NPS Visitor and Resource Protection patrol and response at all MPA sites, including vessel response and coordination with Marin County Sheriff and CDFW game wardens.
- NPS rocky intertidal monitoring at the Duxbury Reef SMCA as well as additional reference sites throughout the park
- NPS and Partner Rocky Intertidal habitat mapping for oil spill response and climate change tracking.
- Ashy Storm-Petrel Monitoring at the Double Point/Stormy Stack Special Closure
- Logistical support for USFWS Seabird Monitoring at five of the seven MPAs.
- \$250,000 in funding to match OPC funded ROV fish and invertebrate surveys at the Point Reyes Headlands SMR (via UCSD).
- Funding to supplement and support seafloor habitat mapping between Tomales Point and Duxbury Reef to support the MPA stakeholder working groups and science teams (via Moss Landing Marine Lab).
- Funding supporting UC Davis research developing MPA larval dispersal models (Botsford Lab) in the Point Reyes region used by the MPA Science advisory Team.
- Endangered Black Abalone Restoration research (with UCSC) at the Point Reyes SMR and Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure.
- Hosting regular joint law enforcement trainings on MPA law, science, policy, and emerging issues.
- Co-development and support for of an MPA Watch program for Marin County that covers all the MPAs.

- Advising on an MPA-intertidal docent program at Duxbury Reef SMCA.
- MPA science, policy, and protection education at NPS visitor centers, interpretive programs and media.

NPS scientists, interpreters, law enforcement and partners regularly work and perform outreach, research and monitoring in these seven State MPAs. Based on our intimate long-term understanding of these areas and to continue support for the NPS Mission and Federal wilderness policies, we respectfully submit our MPA designation recommendations in Table 2 as CDFW and the Commission undergoes the 10-Year MPA review.

**Table 2: National Park Service’s State MPA recommendations for MPA 10-year review.**

<b>State MPA</b>	<b>NPS Recommendation</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Drakes Estero SMCA	Convert from SMCA to SMR	2010 designation as SMCA relied on presence of commercial aquaculture operation. DOI authorization of commercial aquaculture ended in 2012, and operations ceased in 2014.  Area is now Congressionally Designated Wilderness, \$4m estuary restoration completed in 2017. Recreational take of shellfish appears to be very rare, requires long kayak trips in wilderness area with no cell service and limited emergency response. Increased protections for eelgrass, estuarine biodiversity, and marine wilderness.  If converted to an SMR, join with Estero de Limantour into a single SMR for naming and outreach purposes.
Estero de Limantour SMR	No Change/or merge with proposed Drakes Estero SMR	Protection of eelgrass and estuarine biodiversity.
Point Reyes SMR	No Change	Continued protection of marine biodiversity, including Seabirds, Marine Mammals, Black Abalone
Duxbury Reef SMCA	Continue as SMCA or Convert to SMR	NPS staff observe periodic illegal take of invertebrates after 12 years despite SMCA status. Full SMR status would clarify regulations and ease enforcement/education needs. Premier site for intertidal and ocean education in Marin County. NPS and UCSC long-term intertidal monitoring sites.
Point Reyes Headlands Special Closure	No Change	Protection of Seabirds, Marine Mammals, Black Abalone
Point Resistance Rock Special Closure	No Change	Protection of Seabirds. NPS has concerns about boating and kayaking disturbances. However, these are generally due to the public not following existing regulations.
Double Point/Stormy Stack Special Closure	No Change	Protection of Seabirds, Marine Mammals. NPS has concerns about boating and kayaking disturbances. However, these are generally due to the public not following existing regulations. NPS continues to monitor harbor seals outside the special closure for disturbance events.

Please contact NPS Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit Science Advisor Ben Becker at [ben\\_becker@nps.gov](mailto:ben_becker@nps.gov) if you would like any additional supporting information on NPS MPA support activities or our MPA recommendations.

Sincerely,

Anne Altman  
Acting Superintendent