

California Department of Fish and Game
Feasibility Analysis Summary for Final Stakeholder
Marine Protected Area Proposals
April 17, 2008

The Department of Fish and Game completed an evaluation of proposals developed by the North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSO). This evaluation provides detailed feedback on the feasibility for the suite of final marine protected area (MPA) proposals submitted to the Blue Ribbon Task Force.

This evaluation builds on the feasibility guidelines outlined in the document titled, "*Statement of feasibility criteria for use in analyzing siting alternatives during the second phase of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative*" (CDFG Memo; June 11, 2007). A second memo, "*Department of Fish and Game update of feasibility criteria for use in analyzing siting alternatives during the second phase of the Marine Life Protection Act*" (CDFG Memo; February 11, 2008), was also created to clarify feasibility issues that have arisen during the North Central Coast study region process, and was also used to evaluate the current draft MPA proposals.

The Department notes that members of the NCCRSO explicitly responded to many of the feasibility issues frequently observed in the first two rounds of proposals were greatly improved in the final proposals. For example, most of the draft proposed MPAs currently have clearly stated goals and objectives and clear and simple regulations. Also, in contrast to the previous round, most proposed MPAs used the recommended boundaries of whole number minutes of latitude and longitude or easily recognizable landmarks. However, feasibility concerns do remain in the final proposals. The most frequent design elements that would decrease MPA feasibility include:

- Unclear or difficult to enforce boundaries in some areas
- Allowed take regulations which are too complex or confusing
- MPA designations that are inappropriate for existing and continuing uses of the area

Following is a table that summarizes feasibility concerns with the final proposals (Table 1). This table includes only those MPAs and proposals where significant feasibility concerns exist. It is important to note that several individual MPAs within all three proposals met feasibility guidelines and are not included in the table. A more detailed analysis of concerns and, in some cases, recommendations for methods to alleviate or eliminate the stated concerns follows the table.

Table 1. Summary of Feasibility concerns by area and proposal. For more detailed explanations, see text below.

General Area	Proposal and MPA with Feasibility Concern	Type of Feasibility Concern			
		Boundaries	Allowed Take	MPA Type	MPA Name
Saunder's Reef	(1-3) Saunder's Reef SMCA	-	X	-	-
Del Mar Landing	(1-3) Del Mar Landing SMP	X	X	-	-
Black Point/Stewart's Point/Rocky Point to Horseshoe Point	(2-XA) Black Point SMCA & SMR	X	-	-	-
Salt Point	(4) Salt Point SMP	-	X	-	-
Russian River	(2-XA) Russian River SMRMA	-	-	X	-
	(2-XA) Russian River SMCA	-	X	-	-
Bodega Head	(1-3) Bodega Head SMCA	X	-	-	-
	(4) Bodega Head SMR	X	-	-	-
Estero de Americano & Estero de San Antonio	(1-3 & 4) Estero de Americano SMR	-	-	X	-
	(1-3 & 4) Estero de San Antonio SMR	-	-	X	-
Drakes Estero/Estero de Limantour	(1-3 & 4) Drakes Estero SMR	-	-	-	X
Double Point/Duxbury Reef/Agate Beach	(1-3) Double Point SMCA	-	X	-	-
	(1-3) Duxbury Reef SMCA	X	X	-	-
	(2-XA) Duxbury SMP	X	X	-	-
	(4) Duxbury SMCA	-	X	-	-
	(4) Agate Beach Intertidal SMCA	X	X	-	-
Fitzgerald/Montara	(1-3) Montara SMCA	-	X	-	-
SPECIAL CLOSURES	(1-3) Bean Hollow	X (access)			
	(1-3) Point Resistance	X (access & distance)			
	(2XA) Point Resistance	X (access)			

DETAILED FEASIBILITY CONCERNS

For each geographic location below, proposals with MPAs are indicated and MPAs where feasibility concerns were noted are highlighted in bold and with an asterisk (*).

Point Arena:

All proposals meet the feasibility guidelines in this area.

Saunder's Reef:

1-3: **SCMA** *

2XA: No MPA Proposed

4: SMCA

Concerns:

Proposal 1-3 includes an MPA at Saunder's Reef that *allows most of the existing take*, which could be confusing and difficult to enforce.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3:
 - 1) Eliminate Saunder's Reef SMCA from the proposal
 - 2) Reduce the number of species allowed for take
 - Proposed take currently includes:
 - Commercial and recreational salmon trolling
 - Commercial urchin
 - Recreational abalone
 - Shore-based finfishing by hook and line, and spear

Del Mar Landing:

1-3: **SMP***

2XA: No MPA Proposed

4: SMR

Concerns: The size and allowed take for Del Mar Landing SMP (1-3) are not in line with the goals of the MLPA. This proposed MPA *provides little protection ecologically and does not meet the standards for heritage purposes* due to the allowed take. This proposed MPA also does not meet the boundary guidelines recommended by the Department. The offshore boundaries are not oriented in a due north-south orientation and are not at readily determined coordinates. The boundaries proposed for his MPA would be difficult to enforce and prosecute.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3:
 - 1) Eliminate Del Mar Landing SMP from the proposal
 - 2) Reduce the number of species allowed for take and change the offshore boundaries to a due north-south orientation

Black Point:

2XA: **SMR* and SMCA***

Concerns: The proposed SMCA and SMR at Black Point for proposal 2-XA *do not meet the boundary guidelines* set by the Department. The western boundary of the SMR creates a diagonal line which is not anchored on a whole minute of latitude or longitude.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 2-XA:
 - 1) Remove the diagonal line, establishing a single MPA
 - 2) Move the northern line to 38° 43' N and place the northern anchor of the diagonal line to 38° 43'N, 123 30°N (This arrangement still does not completely meet the feasibility guidelines. However, the southern boundary is situated to avoid a boat launch).

- 3) Move the northern line to 38° 43' N, place the northern anchor of the diagonal line to 38° 43'N, 123 30°N, and move the southern boundary to either 38° 39'N or 38° 40'N.

Stewart's Point/Rocky Point to Horseshoe Point :

Proposal 1-3 and 4 include SMRs in this vicinity. The Department recommends using a single, readily located geographic reference in the MPA name for proposal 1-3. With this change, the feasibility guidelines would be met.

Salt Point and Gerstle Cove:

- 1-3: SMR
- 2XA: SMR
- 4: SMR, SMP

Gerstle Cove is included as an SMR for all of the proposals. All proposals meet the feasibility guidelines for Gerstle Cove

Concerns: Proposal 4 is the only proposal to include an MPA at Salt Point. The allowed take for Salt Point SMP is not in line with the goals of the MLPA or scientific guidelines. This proposed MPA *provides little protection ecologically* due to the allowed take.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 4:
 - 1) Eliminate Salt Point SMP from the proposal
 - 2) Reduce the number of species allowed to meet scientific guidelines

Russian River:

- 1-3: SMR and SMCA
- 2XA: **SMRMA* and SMCA***
- 4: SMR and SMCA

Note: All proposals appear to use the same boundaries for this cluster. Specific latitude/longitude boundary coordinates need to be confirmed for the area.

Concerns:

Estuarine Area

Proposal 2-XA includes an SMRMA in the estuarine portion of the Russian River. This was done to allow duck hunting in the area. However, it appears that duck hunting has not occurred in the area in many years (reportedly due to the nearby houses, Highway 101, and a nearby state park). An *SMR designation* would be appropriate for the area in light of the new information.

Ocean Area

Proposal 2-XA allows all take with the exception of Chinook salmon in the SMCA portion of the MPA cluster. By allowing all take with the exception of one species, this MPA acts as a *fishery management measure* rather than as ecosystem or habitat protection. Similar no salmon take zones exist seasonally in other river mouth areas of northern California (Klamath, Eel and Smith River). The regulations for these salmon management areas are

found in Section 27.75, Title 14. Proposals that create salmon fishery management regulations should be proposed to the Fish and Game Commission as a part of the regular salmon regulatory process.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 2-XA:
Estuarine Area
 - 1) Change designation from SMRMA to SMROcean Area
 - 1) Eliminate the proposed SMCA and use other management measures to achieve salmon protection goals
 - 2) Change take allowances to conform with the goals of the MLPA

Bodega Head:

1-3: SMR and **SMCA***

2XA: SMR and SMCA

4: **SMR*** and SMCA

Concerns:

Proposal 1-3

Bodega Head SMCA includes a south-eastern boundary that uses an existing buoy as a boundary and continues the *diagonal line* out to state waters. While this type of diagonal line creates an easily recognizable boundary for fishing in areas inside of the buoy, it creates boundaries that are difficult to determine in waters between the buoy and the state waters boundary.

Proposal 4

The MPA cluster at Bodega Head is oriented inshore/offshore. This *orientation*, in combination with the use of a buoy as a boundary marker in the south-eastern portion of the SMR, creates *complicated boundaries* that may decrease public understanding and reduce enforceability of the area.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3
 - 1) Boundaries should be adjusted to meet enforcement concerns.
- Proposal 4
 - 1) Boundaries should be adjusted to meet enforcement concerns.

Estero de Americano and Estero de San Antonio:

1-3: **SMR* and SMR***

2XA: SMRMA and SMRMA

4: **SMR* and SMR***

Note: Department enforcement personnel examined both Esteros and noted GPS locations at *easily recognizable landmarks*. To meet feasibility guidelines, all proposals should change the eastern boundaries to approximate the bridge crossings located at Valley Ford Road. The eastern boundary of Estero de Americano should be at N 38° 18.593, W 122° 56.152; and at N 38° 16.647, W 122° 56.895 for Estero de San Antonio. The Department recommends the

use of these coordinates as eastern boundaries for the Esteros *to increase public understanding and enforceability.*

Concerns:

Proposals 1-3 and 4 include SMRs in areas where *waterfowl hunting currently occurs*. The Department does not support the exclusion of waterfowl hunting in marine protected areas. Moreover, the Department also believes that discussion of waterfowl hunting should occur in a venue outside the MLPA process. Specifically, proposals for waterfowl hunting should be brought to the Department and Commission as part of normal hunting regulations processes. In areas where duck or other waterfowl hunting occurs presently, we recommend using the State Marine Recreational Management Area (**SMRMA**) designation and specifically allowing the hunting to continue.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3 and 4
 - 1) Designations should be changed from SMR to SMRMA and waterfowl hunting should specifically be allowed to continue under normal hunting regulations.

Tomales Bay:

A SMR in the south end of Tomales Bay is included for proposal 4 which meets the Department's feasibility guidelines.

Point Reyes:

All proposals meet the feasibility guidelines in this area.

Drakes Estero/Estero de Limantour:

1-3: **SMR*** and SMCA
2XA: SMR and SMCA
4: **SMR*** and SMCA

Concern: Proposals 1-3 and 4 propose the name of the SMR in the area as Drakes Estero SMR. The name of the MPA should be changed as the dominant portion of the SMR is contained in *Estero de Limantour*.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3 and 4
 - 1) Change Drakes Estero SMR to Estero de Limantour SMR

Double Point/Duxbury Reef/Agate Beach:

1-3: **SMCA*** and **SMCA***
2XA: **SMP***
4: **SMCA***, **SMCA***, and **SMCA***

Concerns:

For all three proposals, the MPAs *allow much of the existing take* (with the exception of Double Point SMCA for proposal 4).

All three proposals include intertidal MPAs that *do not extend into deeper waters*, are defined by *distance offshore*, and do not meet the Department's guidelines. The size and allowed take in these proposed MPAs are not consistent with the goals of the MLPA, *provide little protection ecologically* and *do not meet the standards for heritage purposes* due to the allowed take.

Proposal 4 includes three separate SMCAs all adjacent to one another. This will lead to *public confusion* and *difficulties in enforcement*. The Department recommends eliminating MPAs which provide little additional protection and simplifying the array.

Options to remedy:

- Take Restrictions
 - 1) Eliminate all proposed MPAs in the Double Point/Duxbury Reef/Agate Beach area
 - 2) Reduce the number of species allowed for take in the proposed MPAs in the area
- Intertidal MPAs
 - 1) Eliminate these intertidal MPAs; or
 - 2) Define the boundaries as lines of latitude and longitude, and move the boundaries offshore into deeper waters.
- Proposal 4
 - 1) Eliminate all proposed MPAs in the Double Point/Duxbury Reef/Agate Beach area
 - 2) Eliminate MPAs which allow most existing take and simplify the array

Fitzgerald/Montara:

1-3: SMR and **SMCA***
2XA: SMR and SMCA
4: SMR and SMCA

Concerns: While, all three proposals include SMCAs which allow take of multiple pelagic finfish species, squid and crab, proposal 1-3 also allows take of halibut, a bottom dwelling finfish, in an area with rocky habitat.

Options to remedy:

- Proposal 1-3
 - 1) Prohibit the take of halibut in this SMCA

San Gregorio:

Proposal 4 includes an SMR in the area and meets the feasibility guidelines.

Farallons:

All proposals meet the feasibility guidelines in this area.

SPECIAL CLOSURES

Most of the special closures included in the proposals meet feasibility guidelines. Two areas, however, do raise concerns:

Proposal 1-3:

Bean Hollow, should be eliminated due to easy frequently used public access which will cause enforcement concerns. This closure of public access may raise concerns with the California Coastal Commission.

Proposal 1-3 & 2XA:

Point Resistance is frequented by foot via off-trail access. This access may reduce feasibility due to enforcement concerns and may raise concerns from the California Coastal Commission. Proposal 1-3 uses a 500' boundary for this area which is also inconsistent with guidelines of 300' or 1000'.