

California Department of Fish and Game
North Central Coast Study Region
Feasibility Evaluation of Draft MPA Proposals
February 11, 2008

This evaluation was completed by the California Department of Fish and Game for the MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSG) to provide detailed feedback on the feasibility for the suite of marine protected area (MPA) proposals received. The feasibility guidelines used were 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 arose during the North Central Coast study region process, and was also used to evaluate the current MPA proposals.

Many of the feasibility issues frequently observed in the first round of proposals were greatly improved for this round. However, feasibility concerns do remain in the current set of proposals. Many of the design elements that decrease MPA feasibility that were frequently noted include: multiple zoning (created when many regulatory changes occur over a small area); doughnut designs (which occurs when MPAs surround one another); floating corners in offshore waters that are not at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude; and unanchored diagonal lines (diagonal lines may be feasible when they follow the angle of the coastline and are anchored at whole minute points of latitude and longitude).

Marine Protected Areas that follow the Department's feasibility guidelines will help to ensure that these areas are readily enforceable and ease public understanding.

General suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals include:

1. Boundary descriptions provided in the template need to be complete with all intended boundaries described with lines of latitude and longitude. If an easily recognizable landmark is intended for use as a boundary marker, the landmark and its corresponding latitude/longitude should be provided and included in the MPA template. All corners must also have their corresponding latitude and longitude listed. This will help us accurately describe the intended lines in regulation. Shoreline boundaries also need to be specified (mean high tide).
2. Simple boundary designations are vital for the ease of public understanding and successful enforcement of the area. Optimally, offshore MPA corners should fall on whole minutes of latitude and longitude. Half minutes are less desirable and 1/10th minutes the least preferred and hardest to enforce. Onshore MPA corners that do not line up with a visible landmark should fall on whole minutes of latitude and longitude; half minutes are less desirable and 1/10th minutes the least preferred and hardest to enforce. Onshore corners that do line up with a visible landmark should use a 1/100th of a minute resolution (e.g., 36 degrees 24.56 minutes). This allows boundaries to be accurately drawn to the desired point.

3. A new MPA that included an area with an existing aquaculture lease would not automatically prohibit existing aquaculture, as "take" is prohibited only for public trust resources. Since aquaculture harvests a privatized resource, it is not constrained by MPA regulations. Additionally, existing aquaculture leases may not be removed by MPA designation. The Department recommends using an appropriate designation (e.g., SMCA or SMRMA) and specifically allowing existing aquaculture under a State Lands Commission Lease and Commission Permit to occur. This applies to the following proposed draft MPA proposals and MPAs:
 - draft MPA Proposal 1 (EC): Drakes-Limantour Estero SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal 2 (JD): Drakes Estero SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal 3 (TC): Drakes Estero SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal 4 (JC): Drakes Estero SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal External A: Tomales Bay SMR

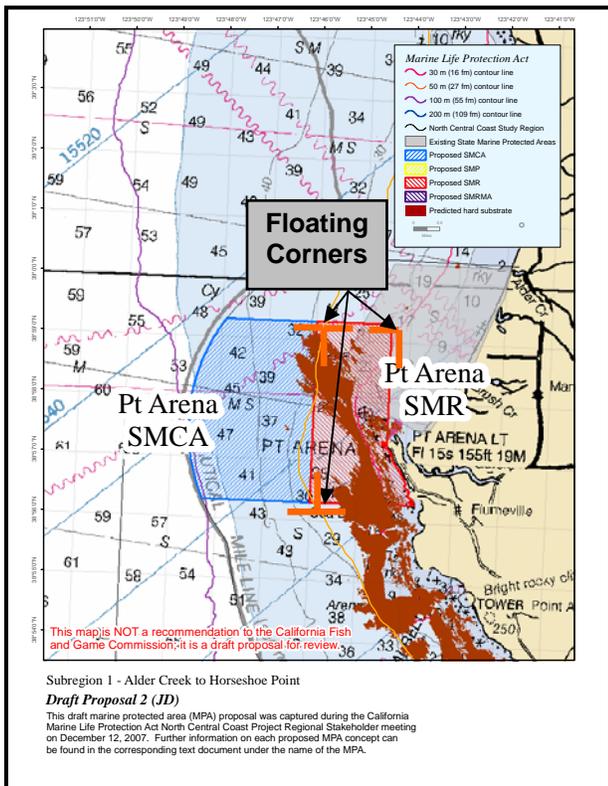
4. The Department does not support the use of marine protected areas to exclude waterfowl hunting or its discussion as part of the MLPA process. Proposals to alter waterfowl hunting activities should be brought to the Department and Commission as part of normal hunting regulations processes. In areas where duck or other waterfowl hunting occurs presently, the Department recommends using the State Marine Recreational Management Area designation and specifically allowing the hunting to continue. This applies to the following proposed draft MPA proposals and MPAs:
 - draft MPA Proposal 2 (JD): Tomales Bay SMP, Estero Americano SMR and Estero San Antonio SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal 3 (TC): Tomales Bay SMR, Estero Americano SMR and Estero San Antonio SMR
 - draft MPA Proposal External A: Tomales Bay SMR, Estero Americano SMR and Estero San Antonio SMR

Draft MPA Proposal 2 (JD)

Goals and Objectives: Proposed MPAs included clear goals and objectives with the exception of Saunder's Reef Offshore SMCA, Gerstle Cove SMR, Russian River SMR, Estero Americano SMR, Estero San Antonio and Tomales Bay SMP.

Simplicity of Regulations: Allowed/ disallowed uses appear to be readily understood for all proposed MPA's. Greater detail should be provided for boundary descriptions of Estero Americano SMR, Estero San Antonio SMR and Drakes Estero SMR.

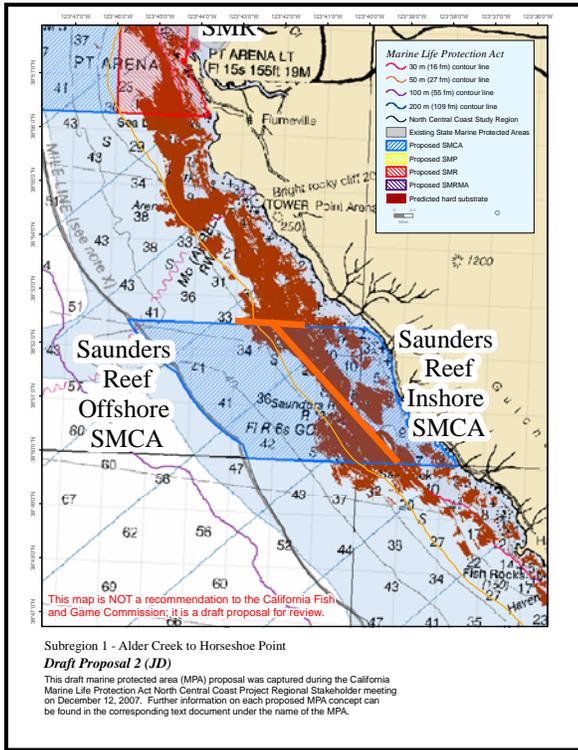
MPA Clusters Requiring Boundary Adjustments: Maps are of MPA clusters requiring adjustments to meet feasibility guidelines. Boundaries that require adjustment are displayed in orange.



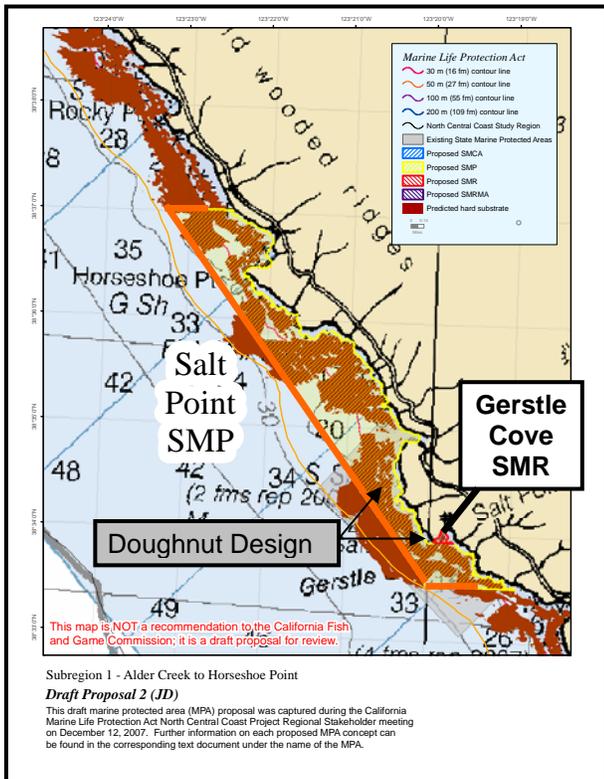
Pt. Arena SMCA and SMR: Floating corners were created in the north-eastern, north-western and south-western corners of Pt. Arena SMR. Offshore corners should be located at whole minute lines of latitude and longitude (see: general suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals; bullet #2).

Additional Comments from CDFG Enforcement:

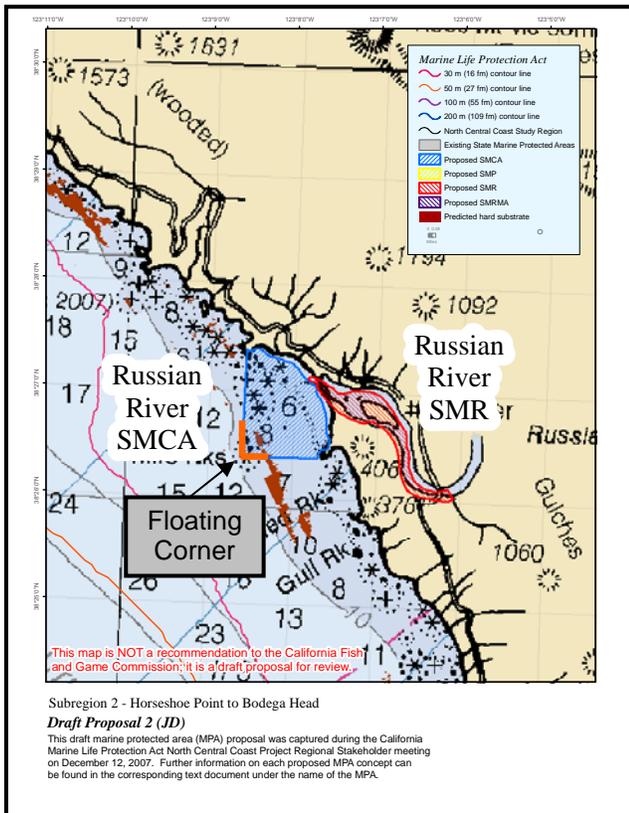
- Floating corners are difficult to enforce.



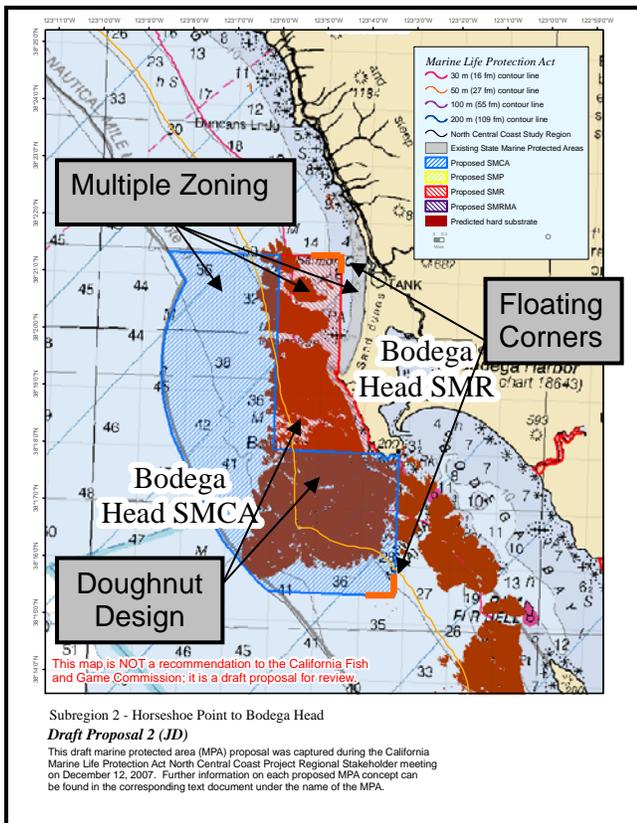
Saunders's Reef Offshore/ Inshore SMCA: The western boundary of Saunders's Reef Inshore SMCA is an unanchored diagonal line. Diagonal lines may be feasible when they follow the angle of the coastline and are anchored at whole minute points of latitude and longitude.



Salt Point SMP and Gerstle Cove SMR: Doughnut design with Gerstle Cove SMR inside of Salt Point SMP. The western boundary of Salt Point SMP is an unanchored diagonal line. Diagonal lines may be feasible when they follow the angle of the coastline and are anchored at whole minute points of latitude and longitude.



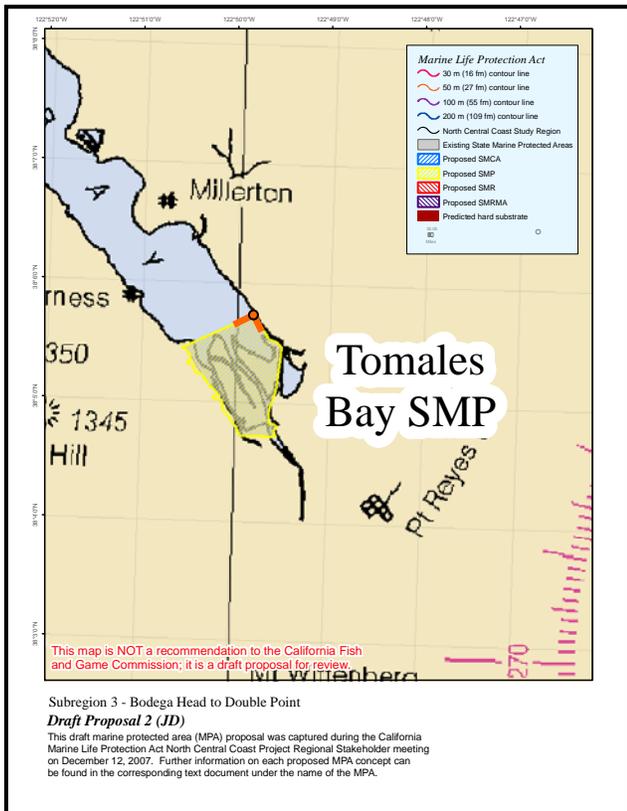
Russian River SMR and SMCA: A floating corner was created in the south western corner of the SMCA (see External Proposal A (round 2) for a similar sized/ positioned MPA using coordinates that meet feasibility guidelines). Offshore corners should be located at whole minute lines of latitude and longitude (see: general suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals; bullet #2).



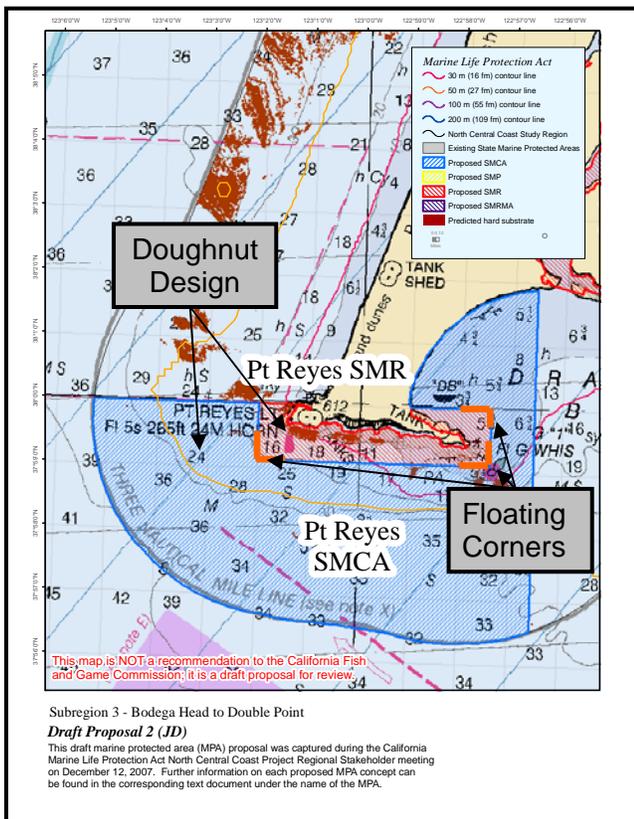
Bodega Head SMR and SMCA: Doughnut design with Bodega Head SMR surrounded on two sides by Bodega Head SMCA. Multiple zoning was created in the northern portion of this cluster with Bodega Head SMCA, Bodega Head SMR and nearshore non-MPA designated waters. Multiple designations in a small area are difficult to enforce and create confusion among user groups. Floating corners were created in the north-western corner of Bodega Head SMR and the south-western corner of Bodega SMCA. Offshore corners should be located at whole minute lines of latitude and longitude (see: general suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals; bullet #2).

Additional Comments from CDFG Enforcement:

- Enforceability and public understanding would be enhanced by simplifying this cluster.
- Suggest changing the take regulations to crab instead of Dungeness crab to ease enforcement of the area.



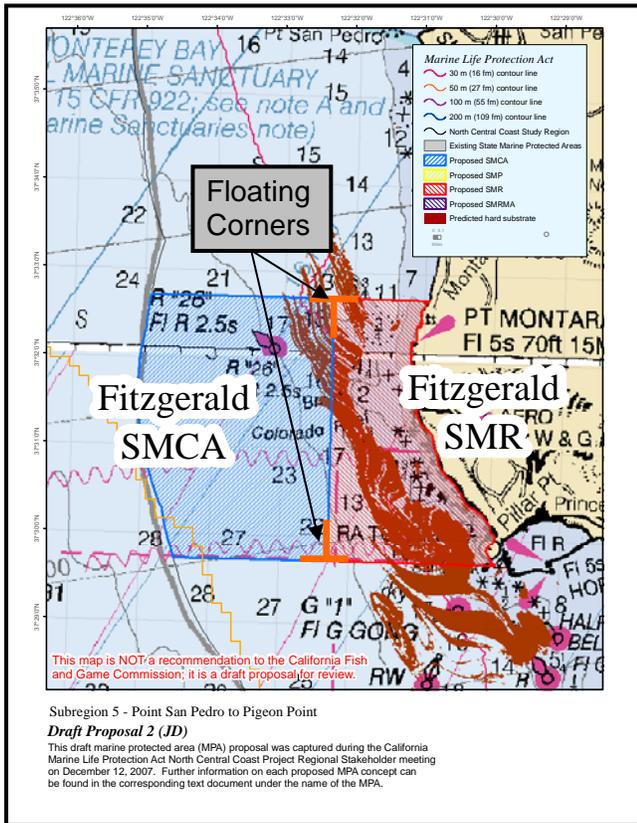
Tomales Bay SMP: The north-eastern point of the northern boundary does not at an easily recognizable landmark or at a readily determined line of latitude or longitude.



Pt. Reyes SMR and SMCA: Doughnut design with Point Reyes SMR surrounded on four sides by Point Reyes SMCA. Floating corners were created in the north-eastern, south-western and south-eastern corners of Pt. Reyes SMR. Offshore corners should be located at whole minute lines of latitude and longitude (see: general suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals; bullet #2).

Additional Comments from CDFG Enforcement:

- Floating corners are difficult to enforce.
- This area is remote and a long response time is expected.



Fitzgerald SMCA and Fitzgerald SMR: Floating corners were created in the north-western and south-western corner of Fitzgerald SMR. Offshore corners should be located at whole minute lines of latitude and longitude (see: general suggestions for improving the feasibility of the draft proposals; bullet #2).