

California Department of Fish and Game
Feasibility Evaluation of Existing MPAs in the South Coast Study Region
Revised 22 January 2009

The California Department of Fish and Game (Department) has evaluated the suite of existing marine protected areas (MPAs) in the MLPA South Coast Study Region (SCSR) for feasibility. The Department's concerns regarding feasibility of existing boundaries and regulations are provided in this document.

Part of the charge to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) is to redesign the existing suite of MPAs in the SCSR to increase its effectiveness at protecting the state's marine life, habitats and ecosystems. The effectiveness of MPAs can be highly influenced by their design. The use of easily determined boundaries and simple regulations when designing MPAs can increase enforceability and ease public understanding. The criteria used for this evaluation are presented, in depth, in the document, *Feasibility Criteria and Evaluation Components for Marine Protected Area Proposals* (CDFG, November 12, 2008).

Commission Findings that Affect Redesigning MPAs in the SCSR

At its December 11, 2008 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) adopted a motion that requests that the SCRSG not consider changes to the boundaries and regulations of the existing MPAs in the northern Channel Islands and Santa Barbara Island. Considering this request, the MPAs at the northern Channel Islands and Santa Barbara Island were listed in this evaluation, but were not individually evaluated as changes to these MPAs will not be considered by the Commission (see Table 1).

Summary of Findings

Most of the remaining existing marine protected areas in the SCSR do not meet all of the Department's feasibility criteria (see Table 2 for details of each MPA, and Table 3 for details for existing Special Closures). A variety of design elements that decrease MPA feasibility are found in the suite of existing MPAs in the region. These include the use of depth contours and distance offshore as boundary delineations, the use of complex regulations, and overlapping boundaries. In addition, most of the existing MPAs that will be considered in this process are either intertidal or nearshore in nature and do not extend protection into the adjacent subtidal waters, as recommended in the scientific guidelines for MPA design and as outlined in the DFG memo regarding feasibility guidelines. Should any of these MPAs be included in alternative proposals, careful consideration should be given to the redesign of these MPAs to conform to the Department's feasibility criteria as well as to the scientific guidelines.

Table 1. Existing MPAs in the Northern Channel Islands of the MLPA South Coast Study Region (SCSR). These MPAs were adopted under the Channel Islands MPA process. The California Fish and Game Commission requested at its December 11, 2008 meeting that the SCRSG not consider changes to the boundaries and regulations for these MPAs. Therefore, an evaluation of feasibility is not included.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description
Richardson Rock State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	San Miguel Island
Judith Rock State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	San Miguel Island
Harris Point State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	San Miguel Island
South Point State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Rosa Island
Carrington Point State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Rosa Island
Skunk Point State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Rosa Island
Gull Island State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Cruz Island
Scorpion State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Cruz Island
Painted Cave State Marine Conservation Area	Santa Barbara	Santa Cruz Island
Santa Barbara Island State Marine Reserve	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara Island
Anacapa State Marine Reserve	Ventura	Anacapa Island
Anacapa State Marine Conservation Area	Ventura	Anacapa Island
Footprint State Marine Reserve	Ventura	Northern Channel Islands

Table 2. Feasibility concerns (boundary and take regulations) for the existing MPAs in the South Coast Study Region (SCSR).

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Refugio SMCA	Santa Barbara	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
Goleta Slough SMP	Santa Barbara	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to follow feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Big Sycamore Canyon SMR	Ventura	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore and onshore boundaries are defined by depth contours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple, as no take of living marine resources is allowed in a SMR. • Regulations include a long list of restricted activities (eg: boating, swimming, etc.).
Abalone Cove SMP	Los Angeles	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Point Fermin SMP	Los Angeles	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
Catalina Marine Science Center SMR	Los Angeles	Catalina Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple, as no take of living marine resources is allowed in a SMR.
Lovers Cove SMCA	Los Angeles	Catalina Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Farnsworth Bank SMCA	Los Angeles	Catalina Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to meet feasibility guidelines. However, take regulations are determined by depth contours within the MPA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are relatively simple. However, take is restricted within the MPA by depth.
Bolsa Chica SMP	Orange	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to meet feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Upper Newport Bay SMP	Orange	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of elevation and streets to delineate boundaries does not follow feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Robert E. Badham SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
Irvine Coast SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. • Boundaries overlap with Irvine Coast SMCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Crystal Cove SMCA, which has different allowed take. This overlap of MPAs makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Crystal Cove SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by a depth contour. • Boundaries overlap with Irvine Coast SMCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Irvine Coast SMCA, which has different allowed take. This overlap of MPAs also makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations.
Heisler Park SMR	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Boundaries overlap with Laguna Beach SMCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple, as no take of living marine resources is allowed in a SMR. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Laguna Beach SMCA, which has different allowed take. This overlap of MPAs may make it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Laguna Beach SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. • Boundaries overlap with Heisler Park SMR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Heisler Park SMR which makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations. • Boundaries for this MPA are adjacent to South Laguna Beach SMCA, with different (though similar) offshore boundaries.
South Laguna Beach SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. • Offshore boundaries are defined by a depth contour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • Boundaries for this MPA are adjacent to Laguna Beach SMCA, with different (though similar) offshore boundaries.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Niguel SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • This MPA is adjacent to Dana Point SMCA which has similar take regulations to Niguel SMCA. This change in take regulations over a relatively small area may make it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
Dana Point SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • This MPA is adjacent to Niguel SMCA which has similar take regulations to Dana Point SMCA. This change in take regulations over a relatively small area may make it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Doheny SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. • Boundaries overlap with Doheny Beach SMCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Doheny Beach SMCA, which has different allowed take. This overlap of MPAs makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations.
Doheny Beach SMCA	Orange	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. • Boundaries overlap with Doheny SMCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. • The boundaries for this MPA overlap with Doheny SMCA, which has different allowed take. This overlap of MPAs makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulations.
Buena Vista Lagoon SMP*	San Diego	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to meet feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Agua Hedionda Lagoon SMR	San Diego	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are confusing and difficult to determine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple, as no take of living marine resources is allowed in a SMR.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
Batiquitos Lagoon SMP	San Diego	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern boundary does not follow a due N/S E/W orientation and is not located at readily determined line of latitude and longitude or at a easily recognizable landmark. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Encinitas SMCA	San Diego	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
Cardiff and San Elijo SMCA	San Diego	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A long list of excepted species to the general regulation makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
San Elijo Lagoon SMP	San Diego	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to meet feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
San Dieguito Lagoon SMP	San Diego	Estuarine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries appear to meet feasibility guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.
San Diego-Scripps SMCA	San Diego	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are simple.

MPA Name	County	Locality Description	MPA Boundary Concerns	Take Regulations
La Jolla SMCA	San Diego	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Boundaries are defined by irregularly shaped lines. • Boundaries are not located at readily determined lines of latitude and longitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial take regulations differ for various parts of the MPA.
Mia J. Tegner SMCA	San Diego	Mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries do not follow a due N/S E/W orientation. • Offshore boundaries are defined by distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take regulations are relatively simple.

* This MPA is outside the MLPA study region boundaries as it is not connected to marine waters.

Table 3. Existing South Coast Study Region (SCSR) Special Closures.

Name	County	Locality Description	Boundary Concerns	Regulations
San Miguel Island Special Closure	Santa Barbara	San Miguel Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundaries are not at 300' or 1000' from shore, the preferred distance offshore for special closures. Boundaries change seasonally and are different for different users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations change seasonally and by user group which makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation.
Anacapa Pelican Fledgling Area	Ventura	Anacapa Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundaries are not at 300' or 1000' from shore, the preferred distance offshore for special closures. Boundaries are confusing as they change seasonally and are described using varying depths (in fm) and distances offshore (in feet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations change seasonally which makes it difficult to understand and enforce the regulation. The regulations describe two different overlapping special closures.
Arrow Pt. to Lions Head Pt. Invertebrate Area	Los Angeles	Catalina Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a special closure, the current boundaries (1000' offshore) would meet feasibility guidelines. If this special closure was redesignated as an MPA, the offshore boundary would no longer meet feasibility guidelines, as it uses distance offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations are simple. However, they restrict take only, and do not restrict access. Therefore, if retained within an MPA proposal, the Department recommends it be reclassified as an MPA instead of a special closure.