

CALIFORNIA FISHERMEN'S RESILIENCY ASSOCIATION

1118 6th St.
Eureka, CA 95501

The Honorable Jaque Hostler-Carmesin
Tribal Committee Chairperson
California Fish and Game Commission
Submitted electronically

April 12, 2026

Re: Tribal and Co-led MPA Petitions

Dear Chair Hostler-Carmesin,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on MPA petitions before your committee on April 14, 2026.

In January 2022, California Port Commercial Fishermen's Associations formed the California Fishermen's Resiliency Association (CFRA), a California Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation. CFRA membership extends from Crescent City to San Diego California and includes seventeen separate fishermen's organizations (July 2025). The CFRA represents its members interests and provides support at the local, state and federal levels, concerning spatial challenges to fishing grounds access, non-fishing ocean industrialization, ecological and environmental concerns, zoning and port infrastructure and impact mitigation. The CFRA represents all fisheries and gear types through its member associations.

Nine CFRA affiliates have had the opportunity to work closely with tribal representatives over two years and through sixty meetings of the 7C Fishermen's Working Group for the California Statewide Strategy for Offshore Wind Power Development. Throughout this process, tribal representatives and commercial fishermen on the 7C Working Group consistently shared the same concerns regarding ocean industrialization. We believe that we also share common

concerns about the consistency of criteria, scientific justification, evaluation, and management of California's MPA network.

More and more, Tribal voices and stewardship are increasingly becoming a strong and positive influence in the restoration and conservation of California's natural resources. The CFRA supports co-management of these resources when it is grounded in sound science, inclusive and democratic community engagement, and a clear understanding of the negative impacts that permanent ocean MPA closures can have on coastal fishing communities. All MPA petitions should be processed through a consistent framework for evaluation, scientific review, and public comment, rather than through a fragmented system of multiple venues, state agencies, and processes. Petitions that fail to demonstrate long-term, measurable benefits should be denied, as they risk eroding California's artisanal fishing fleet, restricting access to traditional fishing grounds, limiting Californians' ability to consume locally sourced seafood, and forcing business closures.

We respectfully request that tribal efforts to evaluate MPA petitions be guided by consistent scientific criteria, careful consideration of socio-economic impacts, exploration of alternatives to ocean closures, and a clear determination of whether each petition addresses a specific, demonstrable problem.

California's commercial fisheries are among the most highly regulated in the world. The CFRA does not support any additional restrictions on commercial fisheries or tribal traditional seafood harvests through further MPA expansion.

Thank you for all of the work that you do,

Ken Bates, Linda Hildebrand, Executive Directors

California Fishermen's Resiliency Association (CFRA)