



420 Capitola Avenue
Capitola, California 95010
Telephone: (831) 475-7300
FAX: (831) 479-8879

Website: <http://www.cityofcapitola.org>

California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

March 28, 2024

Opposition to Proposed Modifications to the California Marine Protected Area Network

Dear President Sklar and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing to express our opposition to the Environment California Research & Policy Center's petition to modify the California Marine Protected Areas Network to expand the Natural Bridges State Marine Reserve and establish a new Marine Protected Area (MPA) at or near Pleasure Point, unless the petition is amended to allow for recreational hook-and-line fishing and spearfishing.

While we recognize the critical importance of nearshore kelp forests and the Marine Life Protection Act's adaptive management process, we believe the current proposal unfairly restricts access to public resources. Recreational fishing is a popular activity in northern Monterey Bay, and the proposed expansion would hinder the ability of residents and visitors to enjoy this coastal area.

Moreover, the expansion plan raises concerns about the economic impact on Santa Cruz County. Surfing, diving, and fishing are major draws for tourism, generating revenue for local businesses. Restricting access to these activities could negatively affect the economic well-being of our community.

In conclusion, we opposed the current petition to propose a new Pleasure Point State Marine Conservation Area unless amended to allow for recreational hook-and-line fishing and spearfishing. We urge you to consider the importance of this amendment, which would effectively balance kelp forest protection with the needs of our community.

We remain committed to collaborating with you to find a solution that safeguards the marine environment while ensuring continued public access and economic prosperity for Santa Cruz County.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Brown, Mayor
City of Capitola