



**COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA**

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For Immediate Release

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Battle Against Coastal Fishing Closures Shifts to a New Front

While the OPC assures anglers of no new MPAs in California's 30x30 plan, the Fish and Game Commission may consider expanding MPAs in its 10-year review

May 3, 2023—Thanks to the tireless efforts of the members and staff of the Coastal Conservation Association of California (CCA CAL), the state has now gone on record to assure anglers that there will be no new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as part of the 30x30 plan.

"There is no separate process to expand existing or create new MPAs to achieve 30x30 goals," according to Jenn Eckerle, executive director of California's Ocean Protection Council (OPC), the regulatory agency heading up coastal portion of the state's 30x30 plan, which seeks to protect 30 percent of waters and land by the year 2030. Eckerle made the statement on March 15, 2023, at the California MPA Day in Monterey, California.

Eckerle's statement is in direct response to CCA CAL's "Stop the Closures" campaign, which launched in January of this year to create public awareness of the potential threats to anglers posed by 30x30.

"We thank the OPC and Jenn Eckerle for addressing the angling community's concerns about 30x30," said Wayne Kotow, executive director of CCA Cal. "The OPC's acknowledgement that fishermen are not the enemy, and that 30x30 will not include more MPAs is clear evidence our voices were heard."

But the battle against fishing closures is far from over, according to Kotow. The front has now shifted as the California Fish and Game Commission and its Marine Resources Committee (MRC) considers California's MPA Decadal Management Review, Kotow explained.

This is the legally mandated 10-year review of the California MPA network, and there is intense pressure already being applied on the Commission and the MRC by outside special interest groups bent on expanding fishing closures as part of this process, Kotow has observed.

As with the 30x30 process, CCA CAL is actively engaged in ongoing discussions with members of the Commission and MRC, and at the same time forging and strengthening strategic partnerships with like-minded communities and organizations to bolster CCA CAL's opposition to more fishing closures.

CCA CAL believes that strong conservation can coexist with responsible, sustainable consumptive outdoor recreation, according to Kotow. "We're not alone, as this point of view is echoed by wide range of groups, including many environmental organizations, the tribal community, and others," he revealed.



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CCA CAL's position is that coastal pollution, urban run-off, sewage spills, and toxic waste are the real enemies affecting California's marine ecosystem health and biodiversity, and so CCA CAL supports efforts to remedy these major problems instead of trying to blame recreational fishing, according to Kotow.

CCA CAL is also launching a multi-media campaign to thank the OPC and make the public aware of the threats from outside special interest groups intent on hijacking the MPA Decadal Management Review with the goal of increasing the number of fishing closures. CCA CAL's campaign will launch in advance of the MRC's July 20, 2023, meeting in which it will begin considering recommendations for changes in California's MPA network.

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ABOUT CCA CAL: The Coastal Conservation Association of California was created in 2015 when recreational anglers and outdoor enthusiasts came together to work for the conservation and enhancement of our marine resources and coastal environments. Today, we are working to protect not only the health, habitat, and sustainability of our marine resources, as well as the interests of saltwater anglers. Our goal is to protect your access to the marine resources you cherish and enjoy every day. CCA CAL consists of members spread across several local chapters in California and growing every day.