



Proposed Designation of Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary



Immediate Next Steps



- **Released on August 24; Comment Period Closes October 25, 2023**
 - PFMC comments from November meeting will be accepted
- **Public Information Workshops**
 - Sept. 11, 12 (in person) and Sept. 15 (virtual)
- **Public Comment Hearings/Meetings**
 - Sept. 25, 27 (in person) and Oct. 12 (virtual)
- **Designation Materials Consist of:**
 - Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which includes terms of designation (required by NMSA) and proposed regulations
 - Draft management plan
 - Draft environmental impact statement

CHNMS Designation Timeline



Step 1:

- Nov 2021: NOAA initiated designation process
- Dec 2021 – Jan 2022: Public scoping meetings were held (virtually)

Step 2:

- Feb 2022 – Present: Review of public comments, host workshops, meetings, and preparation and clearance of draft designation documents

Step 3: (Current Step)

- **August 24-25, 2023: NOAA releases draft designation documents, opens public comment period**
- **October 25, 2023: Public comment period ends**
- **Through ONMS consultation requirement, will accept PFMC comments in November**

Step 4:

- Throughout 2023 into 2024: NOAA will prepare responses to comments, and finalize designation documents

Step 5:

- Target – First half of 2024: If NOAA decides to complete the designation, will then publish final designation documents

Step 6:

- Target – Mid-2024: Designation complete

Purpose of the Proposed Action



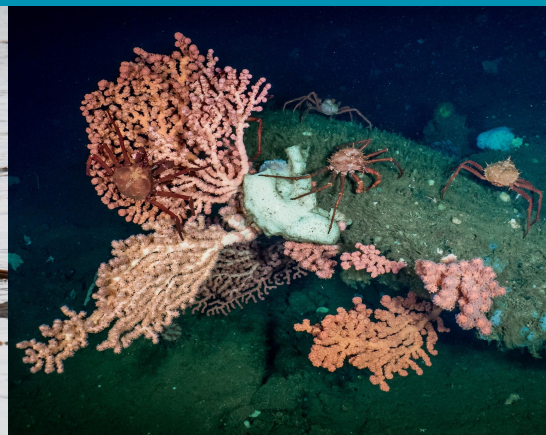
***Action:** Designate a national marine sanctuary in the coastal and offshore waters of central California*

- **Manage and increase protection of** nationally-significant biological, cultural, and historical resources through a regulatory and non-regulatory framework
- **Guide** comprehensive ecosystem-based, community-based management to address myriad threats to these resources
- **Recognize and aid** public awareness of Indigenous tribal heritage and culture in the area. **Incorporate** traditional knowledge and **facilitate** tribal collaborative management.

Need for the Proposed Action



- **Area is important ecological transition zone with high biological productivity; important habitat to many endangered species**
 - Supports dense aggregations of marine life, including nationally significant biodiversity of sea birds, marine mammals, invertebrates, and fishes
 - Upwelling that nourishes important ecosystems down current



Need for the Proposed Action



- Area contains hundreds of shipwrecks of historical importance
- Region has been home to coastal, ocean-going Indigenous tribes for tens of thousands of years
 - Submerged village sites may exist along paleoshorelines



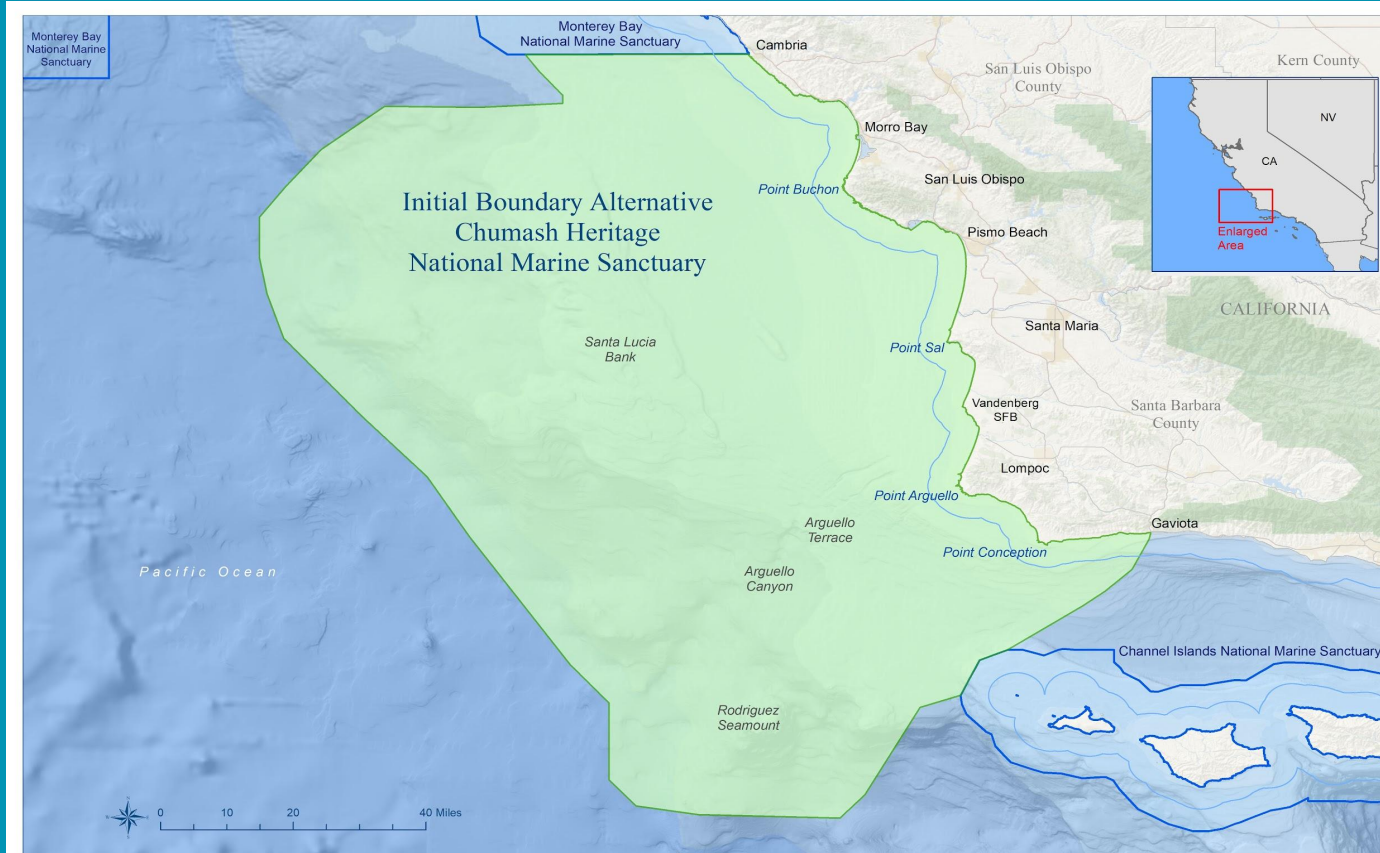
Need for the Proposed Action

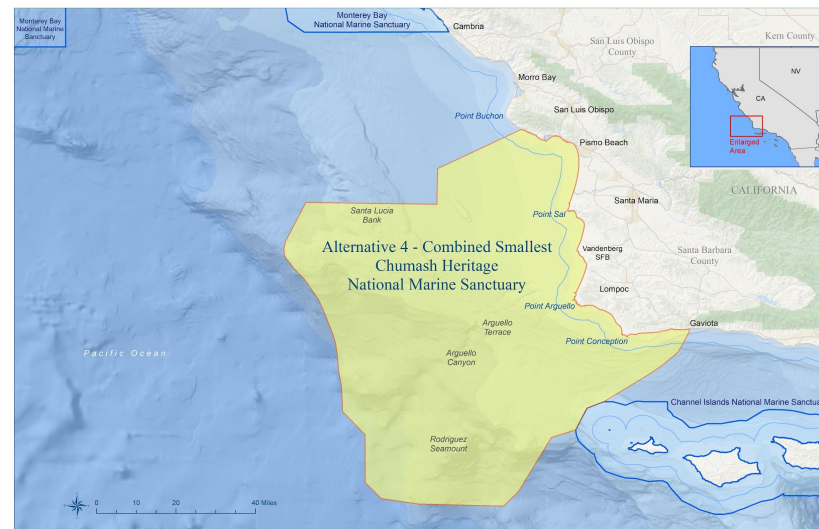
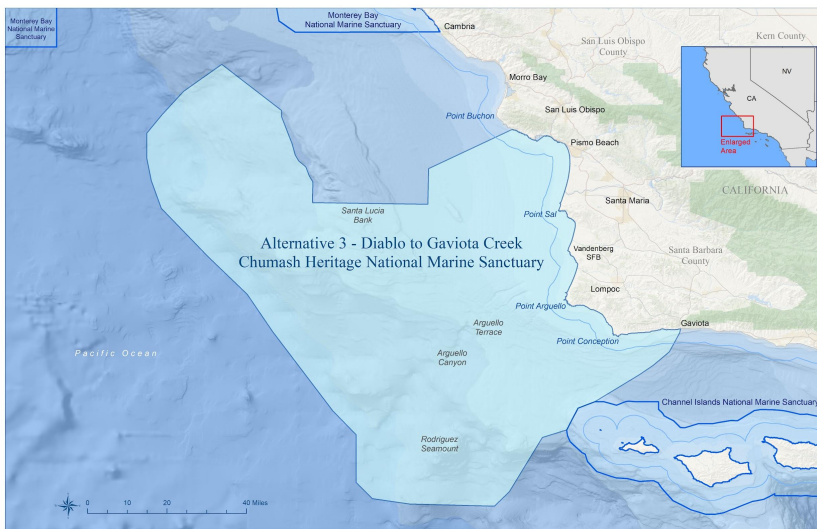
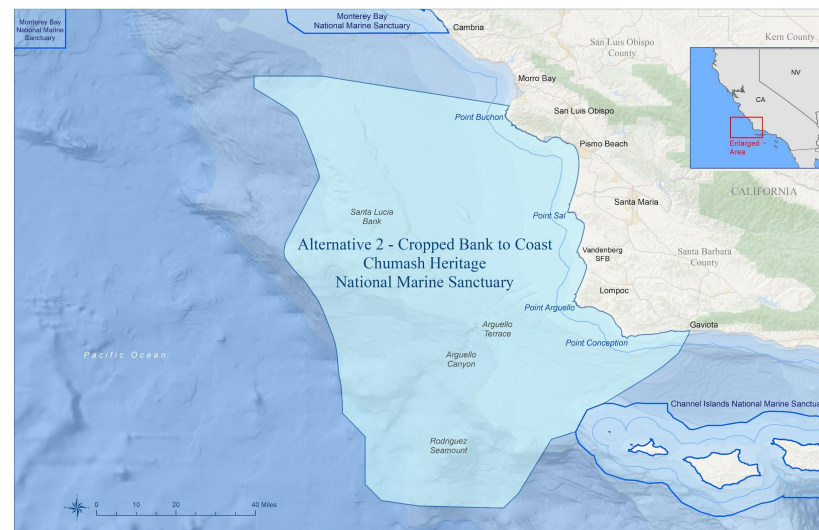
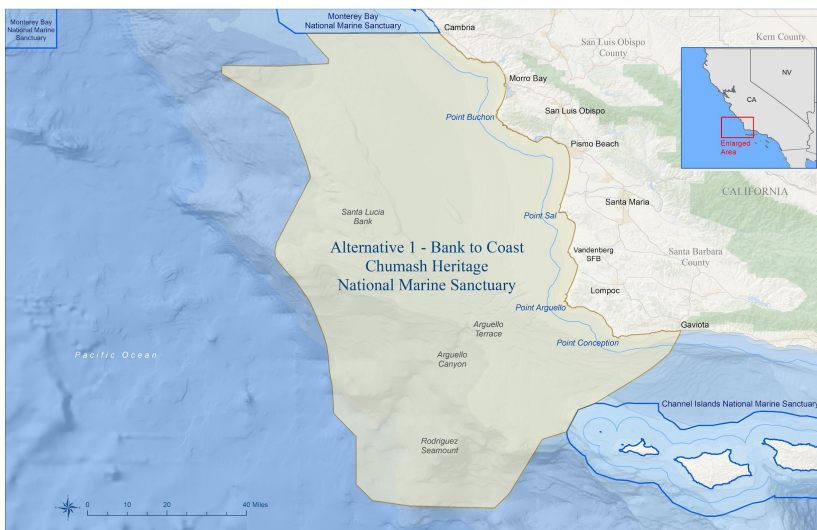


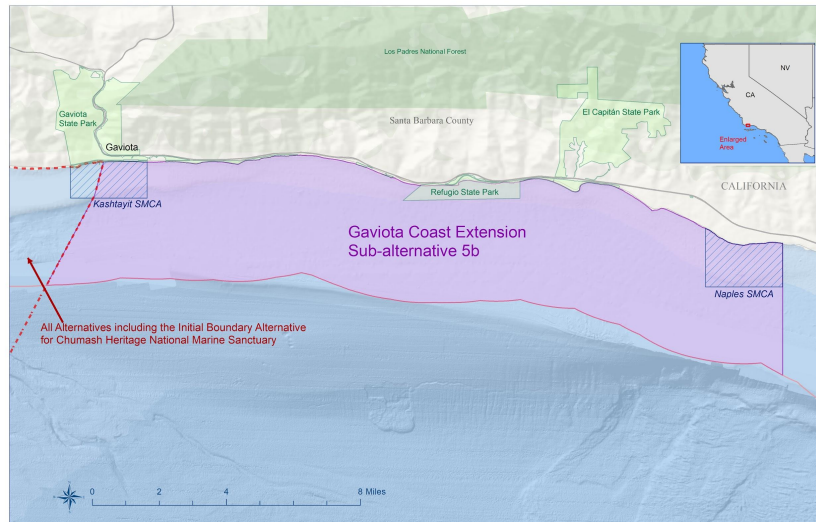
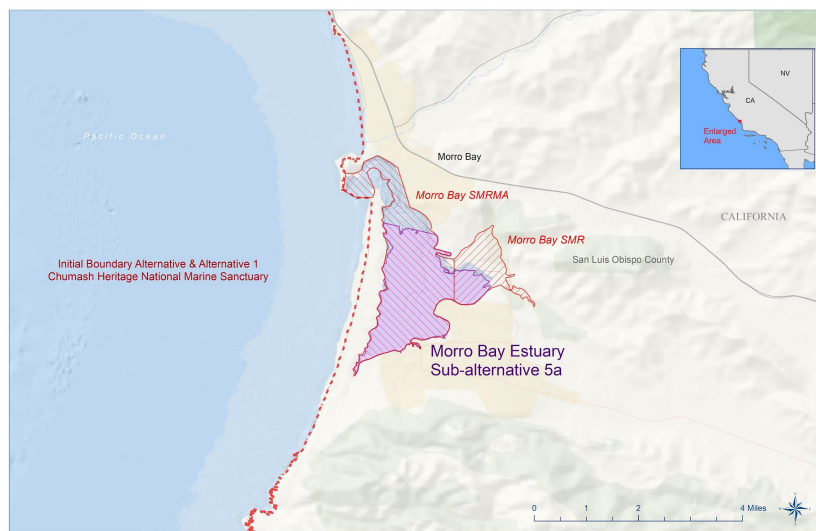
- **Additional protections are needed due to myriad ongoing and emerging threats to the area from human uses and climate change**
 - Offshore energy development
 - Oil and gas
 - Offshore wind
 - Pollution (offshore and onshore sources)
 - Increased vessel traffic and transportation
 - Increased coastal development
 - Climate change



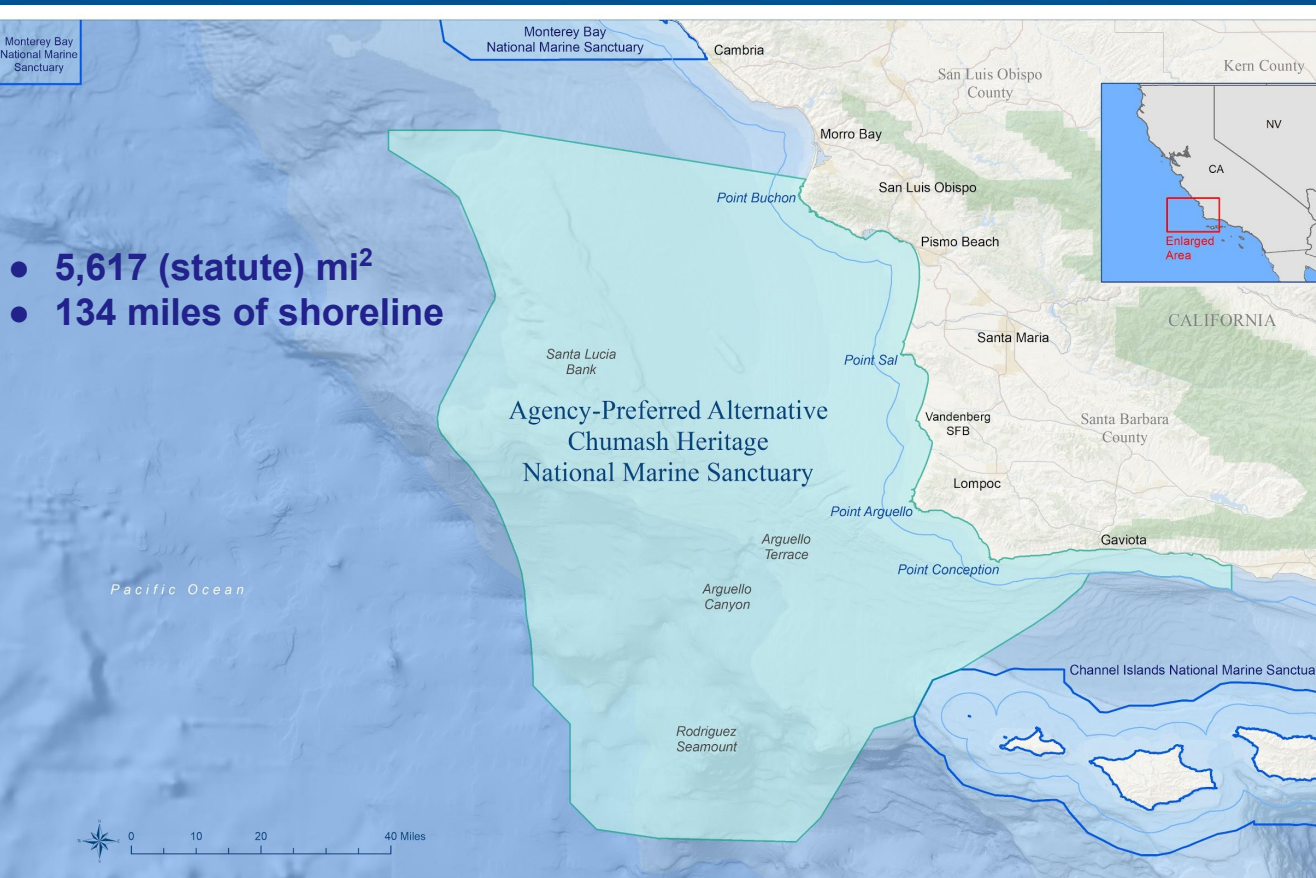
Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) Designation







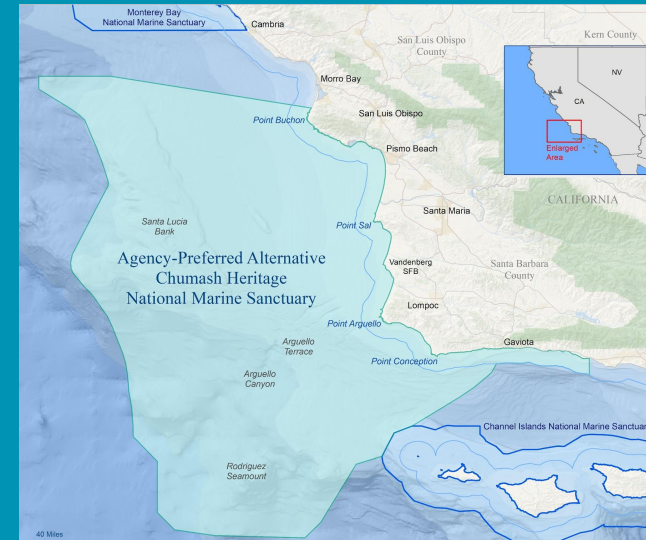
Boundary NOAA is Proposing to Designate



Reasons for Agency-Preferred Alternative



- Focus management on core areas and resources requiring conservation
 - Santa Lucia Bank (including Rodriguez Seamount & Arguello Canyon) to coast
 - Nearshore reefs, kelp forests, sandy and rocky shorelines, shipwrecks, potential paleoshorelines, resources important to tribes and Indigenous communities
 - Indigenous cultural resources along the Gaviota Coast
- Construction impacts from laying up to 30 subsea electrical transmission cables between wind leases and Morro Bay is anticipated to be too substantial to allow in a national marine sanctuary
- Ameliorates concerns raised by Salinan tribal bands regarding naming their shared historical areas “Chumash” (from Cambria to south of Morro Bay)



Proposed Regulations



- All activities are allowed, unless there are sanctuary regulations prohibiting them
- **Proposed prohibitions** (regulations) are similar to other California national marine sanctuaries including **exceptions** to prohibited activities; e.g., USCG discharges, or anchoring a vessel
- Standard **permit processes** would be included to allow NOAA to consider activities otherwise prohibited - via sanctuary general permit; special use permit; ONMS authorization; and certification
 - Would allow for permitting of subsea electrical transmission cables to shore in a manner consistent with how NOAA has permitted trans-oceanic fiber-optic cables
- **Exemption** for DoD's existing activities and a process to approve new activities
- Do not include any fishing regulations

Proposed Prohibited Activities



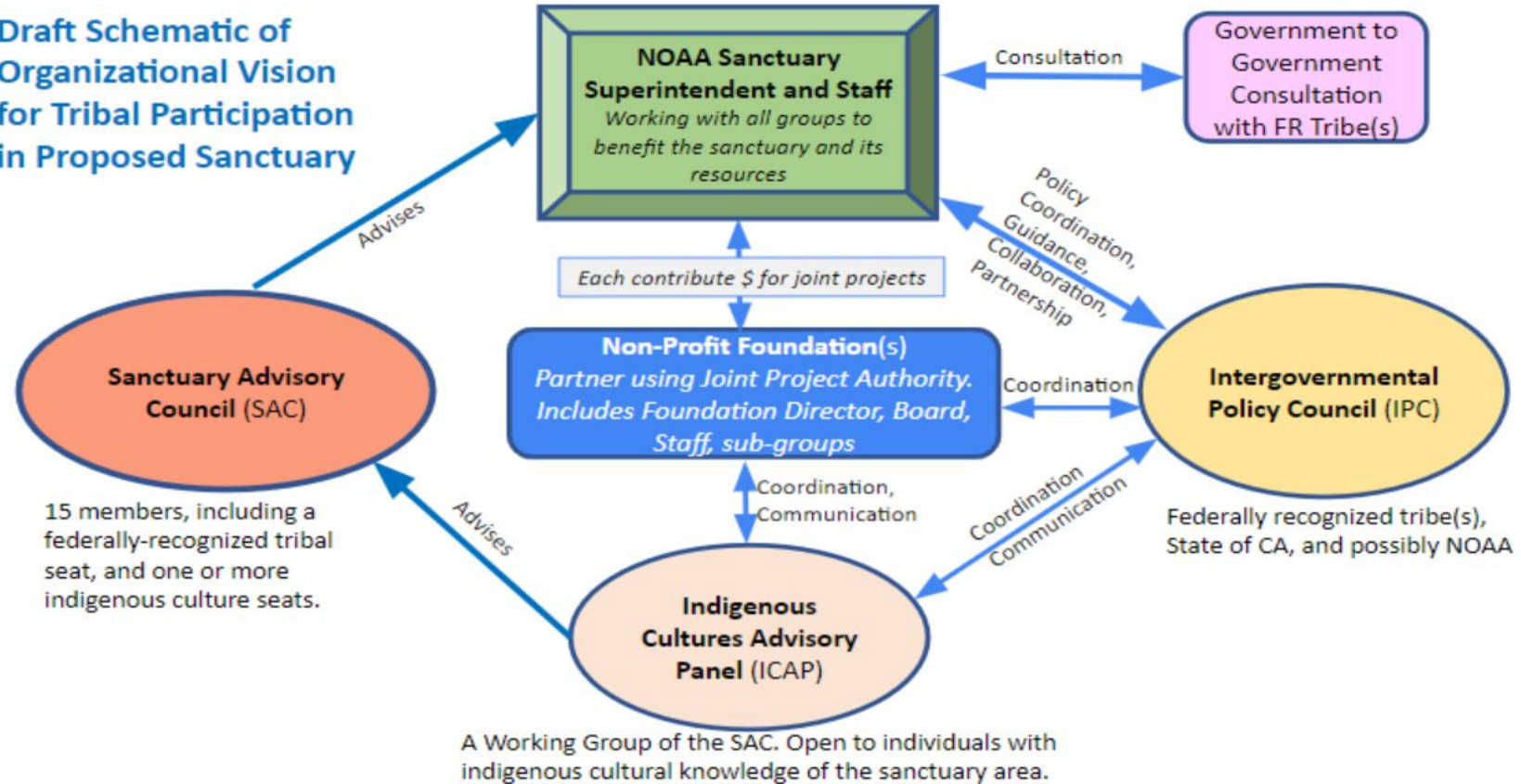
- Oil and gas development other than from existing platforms & reservoirs
- Discharges - within or into; beyond that enters and injures; from a cruise ship
- Disturbance of the submerged lands
- Take, disturbance, removal, or possession of a maritime heritage resource
- Take or possession of a marine mammal, sea turtle, or bird
- Deserting a vessel or leaving harmful matter aboard a deserted vessel
- Attracting a white shark
- Special protections for Rodriguez Seamount below 1,500 ft (other than fishing)
- Introducing an introduced species (other than striped bass catch and release)
- Interfering with an enforcement action



Map of Agency-Preferred Alternative and Existing National Marine Sanctuaries off California

Framework for Tribal Collaborative Management

Draft Schematic of
Organizational Vision
for Tribal Participation
in Proposed Sanctuary





Questions & Discussion

Proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary website
<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/chumash-heritage/>