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Comment on new 399 sq mi Morro Bay Call Area

The effect of moving the Morro Bay Call area from 28 miles to 17 miles from shore will be significant.

It will be closer to shallow water fisheries that include salmon, crab, rockfish, hagfish, halibut, squid, and sea bass

It will bring shipping lanes closer to shore, increasing the issues with ship strikes on whales, cutting off our fishing gear, and pushing us into a smaller area to navigate with an increased density of shipping between the Piedras Blancas MPA and the Wind Farms.

There will be more issues with radar interference and possibly with the weather buoy located at Cape San Martin.

We think that it would be safer for the fishermen and the marine life if the Call Area remains 28 miles off shore.

Also -

It is important that all Wind farm companies awarded a lease from BOEM are required to sign an MOU with the fishing community mitigating us for the impacts of OSW on our livelihoods. We are protected by the Coastal Protection Act and Coastal Zone Management Act as the primary users of the ocean and so are legally supported to be mitigated for the lost fishing area.

Besides the enormous area of lost fishing grounds, there will also be several safety concerns, unknown impacts on marine life behaviour, and a decreased overall value of our local fishing industry due to the likely decrease in the desire of future fishermen to invest in the area.

The MBCFO has been working for the last 5 years with Castle Wind, the only OSW company to approach us and talk to us. Over a series of several meetings with Castle Wind and the local fishermen, a Memorandum of Understanding was negotiated to mitigate our impacts. We think that this MOU should be used as a Template for other Wind Companies as well. We feel that if the State does not mandate this as part of the permit requirement, that the fishing community will be ignored and unmitigated for its impacts.