



Figure 1. Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes, California; photo by A. Pickart.

Potential National Natural Landmark Brief

Name:

Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes

Location:

Humboldt County, California

Description:

Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes, located three miles west of Arcata in Humboldt County, California, is a remarkably undisturbed, yet easily accessible site with an outstanding variety of dune habitats and associated wetlands. These habitats, which are in excellent condition, contain virtually all the species of vascular plants typical of dune systems in northern California and southern Oregon, plus a number of rare species. Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes is part of the system of dunes associated with Humboldt Bay in northern California, which is situated within the largest system of dunes between Point Reyes National Seashore and the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area. The site contains particularly good examples of dune plant communities and related dune landforms. Many of these features are now very rare, because dunes within this range have been extensively transformed by human activity and the spread of introduced plants. In addition to the characteristic dune vegetation and open sand, Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes supports a number of threatened plants and animals and affords a special opportunity to study the natural relationships among dune organisms and physical processes.

Significance:

Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes represents one of the most diverse and highest quality remnants of coastal dunes habitat in the North Pacific Border physiographic province. This site includes a diverse array of natural, native vegetation, in contrast to most of the other dune systems north of central California. The site also is known for rare flora, including one of the best remaining populations of the endangered Menzies wallflower (*Erysimum menziesii*) and beach tidy-tips (*Layia carnosa*). The site is very scenic and affords the public an inspiring view of a natural coastal ecosystem that was once common along the western coast and is now nearly lost.

Ownership:

The Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Evaluation:

May 2019, Peter Alpert, University of Massachusetts – Amherst, and James S. Kagan, Portland State University.



General Location:



Figure 2. General location of the proposed Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes NNL in northwestern California.

Proposed NNL Boundary:

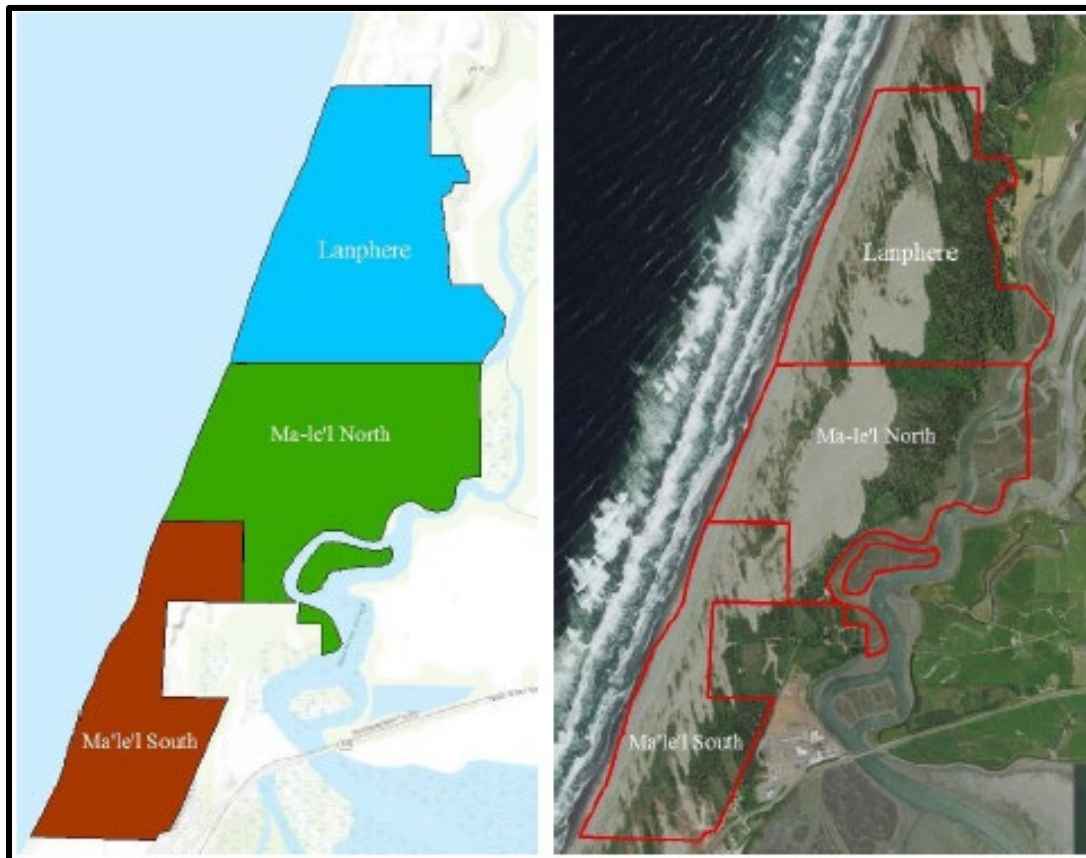


Figure 3. Proposed 834-acre NNL boundary for Lanphere and Ma-le'l Dunes, California.