

Staff Summary for June 19-20, 2024

30B. Marine Resources Committee (MRC)**Today's Item**Information Action

Discuss referred topics and consider revisions to topics and timing. Consider approving draft agenda topics for the next committee meeting on July 17-18, 2024.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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|---|-------------------------|
| • Previous MRC meeting | March 19, 2024; MRC |
| • Today consider approving agenda topics | June 19-20, 2024 |
| • Next MRC Meeting | July 17-18, 2024; MRC |

Background

The MRC works under Commission direction to set and accomplish its work plan.

Committee Work Plan

Topics that have been referred by the Commission to MRC are displayed in a work plan for scheduling and tracking. The updated work plan is Exhibit 1, which includes updates to proposed timing of topics; potential new topics are summarized below.

New Topics

The Department proposes two new topics be referred to MRC:

- Electronic recreational fishing report cards rulemaking, for discussion and potential committee recommendation in July 2024
- Recreational take of barred sand bass, for discussion in July 2024 and potential committee recommendation in November 2024

Next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting is scheduled for July 17-18 in the Santa Rosa area, with webinar and teleconference options. The two-day MRC meeting is designed to provide focused time on July 17 (afternoon only) to discuss the initial phase of evaluating marine protected area (MPA) regulation petitions, while remaining agenda topics are proposed for July 18.

Following discussion with the Department regarding readiness of topics for either discussion/potential recommendation or update on progress, staff recommends the discussion topics and updates described below (in addition to standing agenda items).

Proposed Agenda Topics: July 17

Discussion

- Marine protected area (MPA) regulation change petition evaluation process (Phase 1) following the 2022 decadal management review of the MPA network and management program

Staff Summary for June 19-20, 2024

- Receive and discuss [Department-proposed binning of MPA petitions](#) into one of two “bins” – Bin 1 (*petitions ready to be evaluated in the near-term*) or Bin 2 (*petitions that require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources before evaluation*) – and potential committee recommendation (see Exhibit 2).

The Department posted the draft document on its website on May 31, to provide the public time to review prior to the committee meeting.

Proposed Agenda Topics: July 18

Discussion and Potential Recommendations

- California halibut bycatch evaluation for fishery management review – lessons learned from the set gill net evaluation
 - Discuss lessons learned to potentially apply in the trawl bycatch evaluation
- Market squid fishery management and fishery management plan review
 - Receive and discuss Department Squid Fishery Advisory Committee draft report and initial Department recommendations
- Commercial sea urchin fishing regulations, including consideration of petition 2023-04 for the fishery north of San Luis Obispo/Monterey county line
 - Receive and discuss draft regulatory options developed in collaboration with the California Sea Urchin Commission
- Recreational crab regulation options related to gear and entanglement concerns, and trap validation for commercial passenger fishing vessels
 - Receive and discuss Department overview of potential proposed regulation changes.
- Recreational take of barred sand bass
 - Receive and discuss Department evaluation and potential regulatory options to address management concerns
- Electronic recreational fishing report cards rulemaking
 - Receive and discuss Department overview of proposed rulemaking and potential committee recommendation

Proposed Updates from Staff and Other Agencies (generally in written format)

- Red abalone recovery plan (statewide)
- California halibut bycatch evaluation for fishery management review – trawl gear (tow times only)
- Kelp and algae commercial harvest – sea palm (*Postelsia*)
- Aquaculture state water bottom leases – applications for new leases
- Coastal Fishing Communities Project

Significant Public Comments (N/A)

Staff Summary for June 19-20, 2024

Recommendation

Commission staff: Approve the MRC work plan as reflected in Exhibit 1, including any changes identified during today's meeting, and approve the draft agenda topics for the July 17-18 MRC meeting.

Exhibits

1. [MRC work plan, updated June 7, 2024](#)
2. [Department blog post, *Seeking Your Feedback to Help Manage California's Marine Protected Area Network*, posted May 31, 2024](#)

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission approves the changes to the work plan and approves the topics for the July 17-18, 2024 Marine Resources Committee meeting, as discussed today.

California Fish and Game Commission Marine Resources Committee (MRC) Work Plan

Updated June 7, 2024

Note: Proposed changes to topics/timing are shown in blue underscore or strike-out font.

Topics	Category	Mar 2024	Jul 2024	Nov 2024
Planning Documents and Fishery Management Plans (FMPs)				
MLMA Master Plan for fisheries – implementation updates	Plan Implementation			
Red abalone recovery plan (statewide)	Management Plan		<u>*</u>	
California halibut fishery management review; trawl grounds review	Management Review	X		
California halibut bycatch evaluation for fishery management review – set gill net (lessons learned)	Management Review	X	X	
California halibut bycatch evaluation for fishery management review – trawl gear	Management Review		<u>*</u>	
Market squid fishery management and FMP review	Management/ FMP Review	X	X	X/R
Kelp recovery and management plan (KRMP) development	Management Plan			
Marine protected area (MPA) network 2022 decadal management review implementation: MPA petitions	Management Review	X	X/R	
Regulations				
Kelp and algae commercial harvest – sea palm (<i>Postelsia</i>)	Commercial Take		<u>*</u>	<u>X/R</u>
Commercial sea urchin fishing regulations, including consideration of Petition 2023-04 for the fishery north of San Luis Obispo/Monterey County line	Commercial Take	X	X/R	
Recreational crab trap gear options and trap validation for commercial passenger fishing vessels; RAMP regulations	Recreational Take	*	X	<u>X/R</u>
Commercial fisheries logbook forms and fishing block charts	Commercial Take	X		
Electronic recreational fishing report cards rulemaking	Recreational Take		<u>X/R</u>	
Recreational take of barred sand bass	Recreational Take		<u>X</u>	<u>X/R</u>
Marine Aquaculture				
Statewide aquaculture action plan	Planning Document			
Aquaculture state water bottom leases: Status of existing leaseholder requests	Current Leases	*		
Aquaculture state water bottom leases: Applications for new leases	Lease Applications		<u>X*</u>	<u>X</u>
Aquaculture lease best management practices plans (Hold, TBD)	Regulatory			
Informational Topics / Emerging Management Issues				
Kelp restoration and recovery tracking	Kelp			
Special Projects				
Coastal Fishing Communities Project	MRC Special Project		<u>*</u>	<u>X</u>
Box crab experimental fishing permit (EFP) research project	EFP			

Key: X = Discussion scheduled X/R = Recommendation may be developed and may move to Commission

* = Written or verbal agency update

Seeking Your Feedback to Help Manage California's Marine Protected Area Network

May 31, 2024

At its February 2024 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGF) referred 20 petitions with over 80 unique requests to amend marine protected area regulations to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation.

The CFGF has approved a [3-phase approach](#) to evaluate the petitions. CDFW has completed Phase 1 of the 3-phase approach and will present the [draft proposed binning \(sorting\) of petitions](#) to the CFGF at the Marine Resources Committee meeting on July 17, 2024 for further discussion.

The CFGF has requested public feedback on the [draft proposed binning of petitions](#). All petitions have been sorted into either Bin 1 (petitions ready to be evaluated in the near-term. Placement in Bin 1 does not guarantee the petition will be approved) or Bin 2 (petitions that require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources before evaluation).

Feedback on petition binning may be sent directly to the CFGF to inform the discussions scheduled for the July 17 Marine Resources Committee meeting. **For written comments to be included in the meeting materials, the CFGF must receive them by July 5.** [Instructions for how to submit written comments](#) and a [schedule of upcoming CFGF meetings](#) can be found on the CFGF website.

The draft Phase 1 document that outlines the proposed binning of petitions includes background information on binning criteria, tables that outline proposed Bin 1 and Bin 2 petitions, and justifications for why petitions are categorized into each bin.

It is anticipated the Marine Resources Committee will make a recommendation on the draft proposed binning for the CFGF's consideration at their August meeting. Following the CFGF's approval of petition binning, CDFW will move forward with the evaluation of Bin 1 petitions for subsequent discussion and consideration by the Marine Resources Committee and the CFGF.

post by Sara Worden, CDFW Environmental Scientist



Top left. Diver with MPA banner in Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area. CDFW Photo.

Top right. California MPA Network Map.

Bottom. Kelp forest and rockfish. Photo by S. Lonhart, NOAA