



California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

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To: MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
From: MLPA Initiative Staff
Date: January 12, 2006

Subject: CENTRAL COAST PROJECT PLANNING PROCESS – FINAL STEPS

Summary

On December 6-7, 2005, the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (CCRSG) concluded its seventh and final meeting of stakeholder deliberations in Monterey, CA. This memo summarizes results of that meeting, in particular the CCRSG's evaluation, via straw votes, of alternative candidate MPA packages.

Meeting Objectives and Key Outcomes

The primary objectives for the meeting were to:

1. Report on Science Advisory Team (SAT) guidance, Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) review, and staff analysis on candidate Marine Protected Area (MPA) packages,
2. Invite presentation and discussion on revised candidate MPA packages,
3. Assess CCRSG support for respective candidate MPA packages,
4. Outline the presentation for the January 31 – February 1, 2006 BRTF meeting, and
5. Conclude plenary CCRSG work with thanks and appreciation.

Key outcomes from the meeting include:

- CCRSG members responded to the BRTF request to winnow and evaluate candidate MPA packages. Specifically, the CCRSG winnowed the number of packages under their active consideration from eight to three.
- CCRSG members ranked the candidate MPA packages and listed specific revisions to improve those packages that were not their preferred ones.
- CCRSG members continued the process of seeking to increase the areas of convergence and decrease areas of divergence among remaining packages.
- The CCRSG identified “point persons” from among their members for each of the three active candidate MPA packages to assist future coordination and consultation between stakeholders and staff.

- CCRSG members received guidance from MLPA Initiative staff on how to complete their candidate MPA packages, including the development of objectives for individual MPAs, by the December 15, 2005 deadline.
- CCRSG members received a briefing on next steps in the central coast process.
- The CCRSG concluded its work as a formal body.

Guidance from November 29-20, 2005 BRTF meeting

MLPA Initiative staff presented some of the outcomes of the November 9-10, 2005 CCRSG meeting. While the BTRF did not pass any formal motions regarding revision of the candidate MPA packages, BRTF members offered several pieces of advice and guidance in their deliberations.

- BRTF members encouraged CCRSG members, in revising their packages, to give considerable weight to the advice of the SAT.
- BRTF members urged candidate MPA package proponents to look seriously at areas of overlap and work to develop more unified approaches for some geographic areas.
- BRTF members urged package proponents to reduce the number of geographic areas for which alternate packages contain competing proposals.
- BRTF members expressed a preference to see the CCRSG advance a bounded number of packages (closer to 3 or 4 rather than 7 or 8) to the BRTF at its January 31 – February 1, 2006 meeting.
- BRTF members expressed the view that the CCRSG has a strong incentive to keep working and move closer to a convergence at its December meeting. After the December CCRSG meeting, the focus of policy advising and consultation will shift more to the BRTF, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the California Fish and Game Commission.
- BRTF members recognized that the MLPA process is dynamic and ongoing. They expressed interest to know the relative support for the respective candidate MPA packages as they stand at the December CCRSG meeting.
- As well, BRTF members expressed interest in learning about the distribution of support for different MPA packages. That is, they were interested in knowing not just CCRSG members' first choices but their second and third choices as well.

Areas of strong convergence among candidate MPA packages

Initiative staff listed areas of strong overlap among the candidate MPA packages (versions submitted November 18, 2005). These occurred in the following individual candidate MPAs:

- Ano Nuevo intertidal State Marine Reserve (SMR)
- Sandhill Bluff/Natural Bridges Intertidal SMR
- Elkhorn Slough and Morro Cojo Slough SMR

- Pacific Grove intertidal SMR
- Soquel Canyon State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)
- Carmel Pinnacles SMR
- Point Lobos nearshore SMR and off-shore SMCA
- Cambria SMP and SMCA
- Morro Bay SMCA

Key issues to resolve included specific MPA boundaries, allowable take in SMCAs, and “no take” components in some SMCAs.

Initial presentation of revised candidate MPA packages

At the December 2005 CCRSG meeting, proponents of candidate MPA packages #1, #2, and #3 presented revisions to their packages and described how these revisions addressed SAT comments and recommendations. They also described some of the intra- and cross-interest consultations and compromises upon which the revisions were based. MLPA Initiative staff provided CCRSG members with summaries of the updated packages. Key features of the updated packages included the following:

- Package 1 included two variants on the configuration of an MPA in the Julia Pfeiffer Burns area (option 1 and 1b), with identical outer boundaries. Package 1 proponents asked to carry both variants forward and seek the advice of the SAT before selecting between them.
- Package 2 and 2b were identical except for the boundaries and use restrictions in MPAs in the Monterey Peninsula area. Revisions to package 2 only concerned MPAs outside of the Monterey Peninsula area. (Note: a unified package 2 was announced on Day 2 that included a revision on the Monterey Peninsula.)
- Package 3 revisions were informed by general SAT guidance as well as SAT package-specific comments provided for the other packages.
- Packages 4, A, B, and C had received no revisions since the SAT review.

CCRSG members reiterated their intentions to continue revising their packages to meet future SAT guidance.

Assessment of CCRSG support for the candidate MPA packages – Straw voting and interim caucusing

Purpose of Straw Voting

MLPA Initiative staff led CCRSG members through a series of straw votes. Only primary CCRSG members, or their designated alternates, participated in the voting. The primary purposes of the straw voting were to:

- Respond to BRTF guidance

- Winnow the number of packages to a more manageable number that best reflects regional goals and objectives, design and implementation considerations, and CCRSG interests
- Create an opportunity for CCRSG members to express relative preferences on an array of evolving packages (for this particular moment in time)
- Provide an opportunity for CCRSG members to reflect on potential revisions that could make specific packages more acceptable

Structure and organization of straw voting (including interim caucusing)

The straw voting proceeded in three rounds plus an interim caucus period:

Round 1 straw voting

The purpose of round 1 (Day 1) was to winnow the number of packages to be moved on to round 2 and ultimately forwarded to the BRTF. Participants voted on the versions of the packages presented earlier on Day 1.

Round 2 straw voting

The purpose of round 2 (Day 1) was to rank the packages as a means of encouraging further convergence among the packages and informing future possible revisions.

Interim caucus period

Round 2 was followed by a caucus period that extended from late afternoon on Day 1 through lunch on Day 2. CCRSG members were invited to meet both within and across interest groups to discuss possible refinements to the candidate MPA packages and to look for ways to narrow areas of divergence.

Key outcomes of the caucus period include the following:

- Proponents of package 1 developed a list of possible future revisions based on discussions with proponents of package 3.
- Proponents of packages 2 and 2b consolidated their packages into a single revised “package 2” with a new MPA complex in the Monterey Peninsula area.
- Proponents of package 3 indicated their intent to revise their package based on discussions with proponents of packages 1 and 2.

Round 3 straw voting

The purpose of round 3 (Day 2) was to:

- rank the current packages in terms of preference,
- score the current packages in terms of level of acceptability, and

- provide CCRSG members with the opportunity, for each candidate MPA package that was not their preferred package, to identify up to three critical changes to specific MPAs that would make the package more acceptable.

CCRSG primary members who did not participate in a particular straw vote, and whose alternates did not participate in their stead, were invited to convey their views on the issues addressed in round 3 of the straw voting to MLPA Initiative staff (at MLPAcomments@resource.ca.gov). Staff is forwarding those comments, along with the straw voting results, to the BRTF. Note: unlike the straw voting results, these supplemental comments will not be confidential.

Results of straw voting

Round 1 Straw Vote (Day 1)

In Round 1, participants were asked to indicate their single-most preferred package. The results of round 1 are shown below. Packages needed to receive at least 3 votes (approximately 10% of the CCRSG primary members) to move on to the next round.

Package	Received more 3 or more votes
CCRSG package #1 – 1b	yes
CCRSG package #2	yes
CCRSG package #2b	yes
CCRSG package #3	yes
CCRSG package #4	no
External package A	no
External package B	no
External package C	no

Five CCRSG members were absent or chose to abstain on this straw voting round.

Round 2 (Day 1)

In Round 2, participants were asked to rank the four packages that moved on from round 1 (packages 1, 2, 2b, and 3). Participants were invited to designate up to one package as “unacceptable” (marked with a “U”). The results of round 2 are shown below.

Package	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Number of unacceptable rankings
CCRSG package #1 – 1b	13	2	1	11	9
CCRSG package #2	5	6	14	2	2

CCRSG package #2b	4	5	4	14	12
CCRSG package #3	5	14	8	0	0

Five CCRSG members were absent or chose to abstain on this straw voting round.

MLPA Initiative staff presented this summary and asked the CCRSG to use the results of this voting to inform their caucusing during the late afternoon and evening of Day 1 and morning of day 2.

Round 3 (Day 2)

Prior to round 3, CCRSG members reported back on the results of the caucusing. The only change to the packages was that package 2 and 2b had been consolidated into a new “package 2.”

In round 3, participants were asked to do the following:

- Rank order their preferences for all of the current packages (1 = first choice, 2 = second choice, 3 = third choice)
- Score each of the three current packages in terms of level of acceptability (A = acceptable, B = needs minor changes, C = needs moderate changes, D = needs major changes)
- For each candidate MPA package that was not their preferred package, identify up to three critical changes to specific MPAs that would make the package more acceptable

The quantitative results of round 3 (parts 1 and 2) are as follows:

Package	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	No. of A's	No. of B's	No. of C's	No. of D's
Package 1	15	2	10	12	4	1	10
Package 2	10	1	16	9	1	3	14
Package 3	2	24	1	2	4	15	6

Five CCRSG members were absent or chose to abstain on this straw voting round.

Staff committed to compile the comments made regarding improvements to specific MPAs (part 3) and forward these to CCRSG members within 2 days. The results can be seen in the attachment.

Designation of “point persons” for continuing correspondence and consultations

The following CCRSG members were designated as “point persons” for packages 1-3 respectively:

- Package 1: Steve Scheiblaue and Howard Egan

- Package 2: Kaitilin Gaffney and Ron Massengill
- Package 3: John Pearse and Michelle Knight

Request for submittal of final candidate MPA packages (by 8:00 AM December 15, 2005)

MLPA Initiative staff invited CCRSG members to make additional revisions to their candidate MPA packages and to inform them with BRTF guidance, SAT guidance, CCRSG caucusing, and the straw voting results from the December CCRSG meeting. MLPA Initiative staff reconfirmed the deadline as 8:00 AM on December 15, 2005 for submittal of final candidate MPA packages. Final packages were to be sent via email to MLPAcomments@resources.ca.gov.

Guidance on preparing final candidate MPA packages

General guidance on formulating regulations for MPAs

John Ugoretz (DFG staff) provided guidance to help package proponents refine potential restrictions for MPAs along the central coast. In particular, John provided guidance for establishing consistency of language and structure across packages.

Guidance on developing objectives for individual MPAs

Paul Reilly (DFG staff) presented guidance for preparing the objectives for individual MPAs in the packages being carried forward in the MLPA process. Paul presented the following guidance for assuring internal consistency within an MPA objective package:

- Link each MPA objective to a regional goal and objective using a letter and number symbol, e.g. G1O1 = regional goal 1, regional objective 1.
- To the extent possible, use the corresponding language in the linked regional objective for an MPA objective, with modifications as appropriate.
- Ensure that any habitats specifically identified in an MPA objective do in fact occur within the MPA.
- Ensure that any species likely to benefit that are identified in an MPA do in fact occur within the MPA. Consult with staff, SAT, fishermen, and/or divers for advice.

Paul reiterated that staff is available to provide additional assistance upon request.

Final objectives for individual MPAs were due on December 15, 2005, along with final versions of candidate MPA packages. Staff reviewed the MPA objectives for internal consistency, accuracy, and appropriateness, provide suggested revisions, and then returned them to the package contact designee for review. Staff also provided the packages of MPA objectives to the SAT for their review.

Information to report back to the BRTF

CCRSG members recommended that the report back to the BRTF for its January-February 2006 meeting include the following information:

- A review of the entire process by which CCRSG members developed the candidate MPA packages.
- A description of the process by which CCRSG assessment of the candidate MPA packages (i.e., the straw voting) took place. Be explicit about the version of each package that was the subject of each respective round of straw voting.
- A statement that CCRSG members have indicated their willingness to make additional changes to increase convergence of the candidate MPA packages and to meet SAT guidance.
- An emphasis that all of the candidate packages, regardless of the sponsors, are the results of intense negotiations among constituencies and across all of the interest groups represented at the CCRSG.
- A recognition that all of the candidate MPA packages are very different from the “wish lists” that stakeholders might have had in mind at the onset of the CCRSG process. As such, they reflect many discussions and compromises.
- An acknowledgement of the immense amount of learning that has taken place during the MLPA process for all CCRSG members.

Public comment

Eight members of the public provided comments. In general, they offered support for specific candidate MPA packages.

Closing remarks

Several CCRSG members and MLPA Initiative staff made closing remarks. Among the recurring themes were the high quality of engagement, the quality of discourse, and the level and professionalism of the work products and process. John Kirlin (MLPA Initiative staff) specifically praised the CCRSG’s contributions to public democracy. Scott McCreary (CCRSG co-facilitator) complimented the CCRSG members on their willingness to educate each other about their respective interests, their hard work and willingness to work with the aggressive timeline, their willingness to reach across traditional interest “boundaries”, and their capacity for reflection.

Appendix: Suggested Potential Changes to Candidate MPA Packages Identified During the Round 3 Straw Voting of the December 6-7, 2005 CCRSG Meeting

During their December 6-7, 2005 meeting, CCRSG members participated in three rounds of straw voting to clarify relative preferences for candidate MPA packages within the central coast study region. An objective of the third round of straw voting was to illuminate concerns with the December 2, 2005 versions of CCRSG packages 1, 2, and 3 and identify potential revisions to specific MPAs that would make the packages more acceptable. CCRSG members were asked, for each candidate MPA package that was not their preferred package, to identify up to three critical changes to specific MPAs that would make the package more acceptable.

The graphs and text in the next two pages summarize the frequencies with which specific MPAs in each package were mentioned in the round 3 comments. These MPAs are summarized both graphically and with descriptive text.

In both the graphs and charts, the MPAs identified are organized by package. Within each package, MPAs are grouped into two categories:

- expand the scale or scope; and
- reduce the scale or scope.

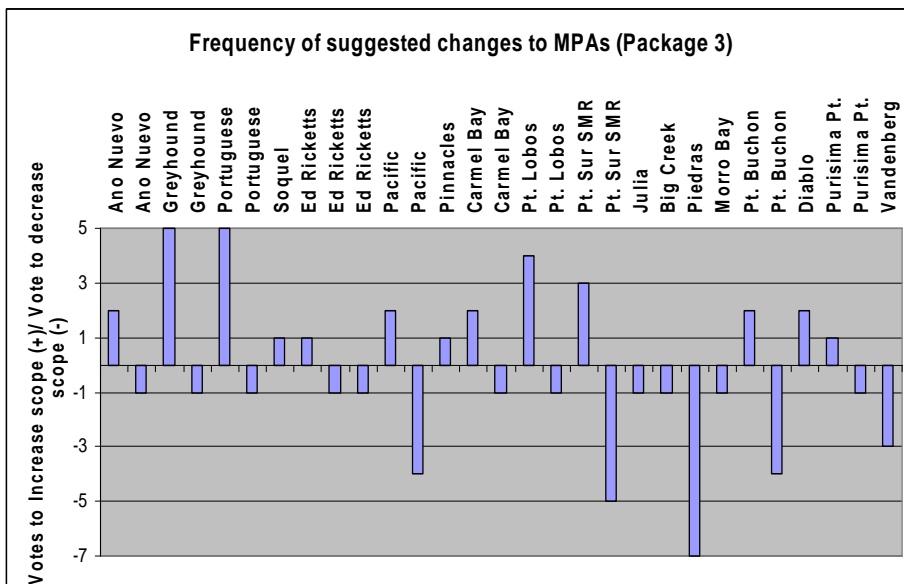
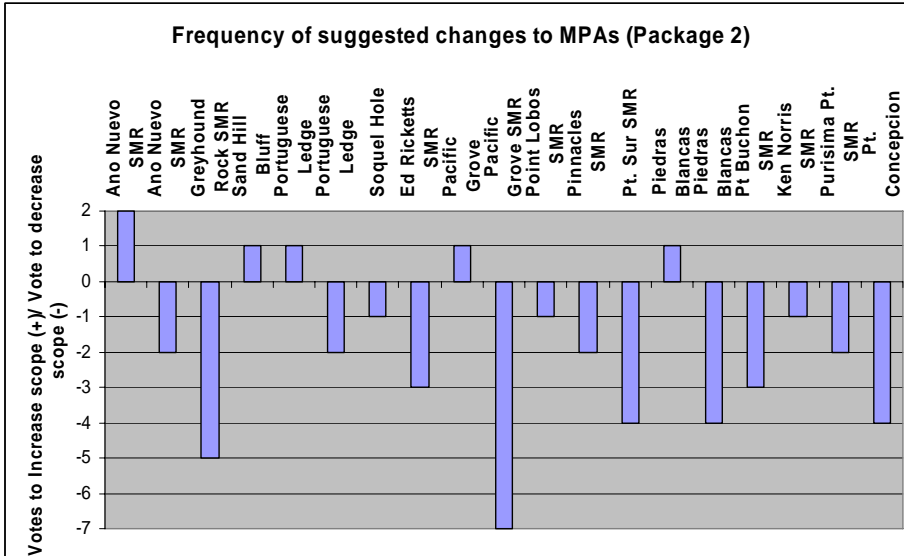
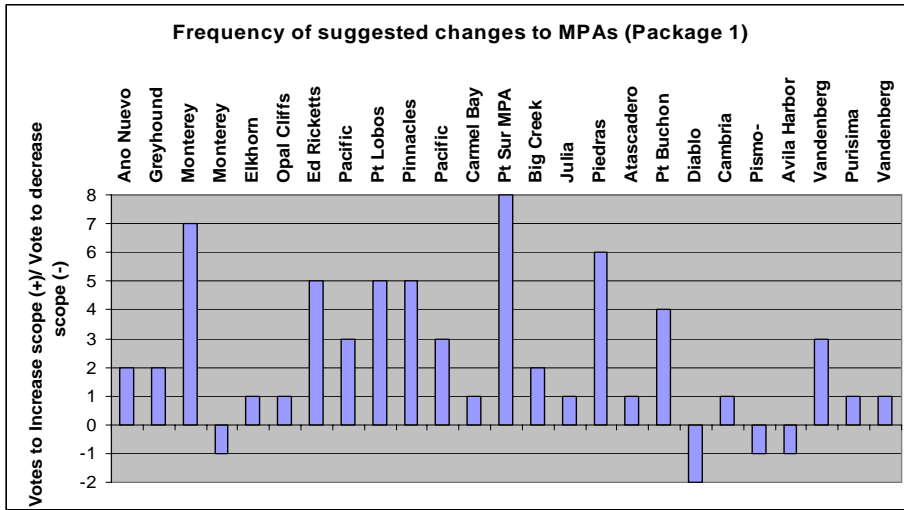
In the graphs, the number of suggestions to expand MPAs is displayed as a positive number in the bar graph, while the number of suggestions to reduce MPAs is displayed as a negative number.

In the descriptive text following the graphs, suggestions to expand or reduce MPAs are listed in separate columns; within each column, MPAs are listed in descending order of number of comments received (the number of suggestions for modification is listed in parentheses). For revisions that included adding an MPA that does not exist, the word "add" appears in parentheses.

This information may be useful in clarifying which MPAs were of most concern to the greatest number of CCRSG members.

Note that some of these MPAs have been modified since the straw votes were conducted. These modifications are reflected in the December 15, 2005 versions of candidate packages 1, 2, and 3.

Graphical Representations of Frequency of Suggested Changes to MPAs (12/07/05)



Frequency of Suggested Changes to MPAs (12/07/05)

Package 1		
<i>Increase scale or scope of MPA</i>		<i>Reduce scale or scope of MPA</i>
Pt Sur MPA (add) (8) Monterey Canyon No Trawl SMCA (7) Piedras Blancas MPA (add) (6) Ed Ricketts SMCA (5) Pt Lobos SMR (5) Pinnacles SMR (5) Pt Buchon SMR (add) (4) Vandenberg SMR (3) Pacific Grove SMR (3) Pacific Grove SMCA (3) Ano Nuevo SMR (2)	Greyhound Rock SMR (2) Big Creek SMR (2) Elkhorn Slough SMR (1) Opal Cliffs SMR (add) (1) Carmel Bay SMCA (1) Julia Pfeiffer Burns SMR (1) Atascadero SMCA (1) Cambria SMCA (1) Purisima SMR (add) (1) Vandenberg SMCA (1)	Diablo Canyon SMR (2) Monterey Canyon SMCA (1) Pismo-Oceano SMCA (1) Avila Harbor SMCA (1)

Package 2		
<i>Increase scale or scope of MPA</i>		<i>Reduce scale or scope of MPA</i>
Ano Nuevo SMR (2) Sand Hill Bluff (1) Portuguese Ledge (1) Pacific Grove SMCA (1) Piedras Blancas SMR (1)	Pacific Grove SMR (7) Greyhound Rock SMR (5) Pt. Sur SMR (4) Piedras Blancas SMR (4) Pt. Concepcion SMR (4) Ed Ricketts SMR (3) Pt Buchon SMR (3) Ano Nuevo SMR (2)	Portuguese Ledge (2) Pinnacles SMR (2) Pinnacles SMR (2) Purisima Pt. SMR (2) Soquel Hole (1) Point Lobos SMR (1) Ken Norris SMR (1)

Package 3			
<i>Increase scale or scope of MPA</i>		<i>Reduce scale or scope of MPA</i>	
Greyhound Rock SMR (5) Portuguese Ledge SMCA (5) Pt. Lobos SMR (4) Pt. Sur SMR (3) Ano Nuevo SMR (2) Pacific Grove SMCA (2) Carmel Bay SMCA (2)	Pt. Buchon SMR (2) Diablo Canyon SMR (2) Soquel Canyon SMCA (1) Ed Ricketts SMR (1) Pinnacles SMR (1) Purisima Pt. SMR (1)	Piedras Blancas SMR (7) Pt. Sur SMR (5) Pacific Grove SMR (4) Pt. Buchon SMR (4) Vandenberg SMR (3) Ano Nuevo SMR (1) Greyhound Rock SMR (1) Portuguese Ledge SMCA (1)	Ed Ricketts SMCA (1) Ed Ricketts SMR (1) Carmel Bay SMR (1) Pt. Lobos SMR (1) Julia Pfeiffer Burns SMR (1) Big Creek SMR (1) Morro Bay SMR (1) Purisima Pt. SMR (1)