



**California Marine Life  
Protection Act Initiative**  
c/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

August 2, 2005

To: Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (CCRSG)  
From: Michael DeLapa, Central Coast Project Manager  
Re: Adoption of Provisional Regional Objectives

**MLPA Initiative Staff Recommendation**

Following our deliberations on Aug 9-10, the MLPA Initiative staff recommends that the CCRSG adopt the following provisional regional objectives in support of the application of the Marine Life Protection Act to the central coast study region.

**Introduction**

A major goal for the upcoming August 9-10 CCRSG meeting is to review and adopt a set of provisional regional objectives, building on the regional goals adopted at our July meeting. This memo sets the context for these regional objectives, describes how this set of provisional objectives came together, and lists the key considerations to bear in mind as you prepare for the August meeting. Additionally, this memo includes key supporting documents, including a complete brainstormed list of potential objectives with cross references to provisional objectives, and a description of the rationale for each objective, organized in matrix format

**Context for the Regional Objectives**

The regional objectives are intended to establish essential rationale for the marine protected areas (MPAs) to be delineated in the central coast region. Establishing these objectives up front, before MPAs are delineated, is consistent with the advice we heard from Charlie Wahle at the July meeting and, as he indicated, is a step that has often been missed in the designation of MPAs worldwide. Much like the MLPA Master Plan Framework establishes a structure for implementation of the overall MLPA, these objectives create a logic and structure for MPA delineations for the central coast.

As important as this structure is, we also want caution against attaching too much weight to the objectives. Several points are important here. First, the objectives are not intended to establish a relative hierarchy of marine uses region-wide. In that respect, they are not on par with, say, the policies of the California Coastal Act. Moreover, the objectives are not intended to pre-ordain the management regime for any particular site: that task is left to the actual MPA delineation. Second, the objectives are a package that needs to be met collectively throughout the region, and not in a single MPA. Third, the objectives themselves are expected to evolve in an iterative fashion after initial adoption, as spelled out below.

## **Considerations to Bear in Mind in Reviewing the Provisional Regional Objectives**

Following are the provisional regional objectives, accompanied by key supporting materials. We would like to focus your review and our August discussion on whether the objectives meet the requirements of the Marine Life Protection Act. Specifically, we ask you to bear these questions in mind:

- Are the objectives consistent with the spirit and intent of the MLPA?
- Are the objectives complete, that is, do they incorporate the major concepts of the MLPA?
- Are the objectives clear?
- Can the objectives be measured?

## **Components of this Memorandum**

This memo includes the following components:

1. Provisional regional objectives organized by regional goal.
2. A matrix which describes for each objective:
  - a. Rationale - the logic behind each objective, how it implements the regional goals, and what major concepts are incorporated into the objective.
  - b. References to regional profile - the link between the objective and the data/analysis available for the region. You can go to specific sections of the regional profile to see how the data supports the objectives.
  - c. Design considerations (preliminary) - objective-specific design considerations that are logically derived from the objectives.
  - d. Indicators (preliminary) - this demonstrates how the objectives will be measured and provides a preliminary link to monitoring/evaluation plan.
3. A complete list of all objectives offered by the CCRSG Regional Goals and Objectives Work Team during and subsequent to the brain-storming session on July 8, 2005 in Morro Bay. This includes a reference to each provisional objective(s) that incorporated the concept of the original idea. If the original idea was not incorporated into any of the provisional objectives, a short explanation is offered.

## **Explanation of the Term "Provisional"**

The regional objectives adopted by the CCRSG on August 10-11 should be considered "provisional" for several reasons:

- We will likely ask the CCRSG to work with us to revise the objectives over the next few months as we develop and collect further information. This is an iterative process and the objectives need to remain somewhat flexible until we come closer to developing alternative MPA proposals. As the group moves into evaluating existing MPAs and proposing new or revised MPAs, we expect that the provisionally adopted regional objectives will be re-evaluated and revised as appropriate. We will also anticipate making them more specific and measurable with input from the MLPA Science Advisory Team. Finally, it may not be possible or practical to have a sufficient number or spatial distribution of MPAs to meet every objective.

- We plan to present the regional goals and provisional objectives to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force at its September meeting. The task force may wish to offer feedback and suggestions for revising the provisional objectives. It is reasonable to forecast that the CCRSG may wish to revise the suite of objectives in consideration of this feedback.
- The Fish and Game Commission is the final decision-maker with regard to all policy matters; everything will be provisional until final approval by the commission.

### **Process for Developing Provisional Regional Objectives**

The provisional objectives have evolved through several steps. These included (1) a work team meeting at the July 8 CCRSG meeting and subsequent discussion that generated approximately 100 brainstormed objectives; (2) MLPA Initiative staff review and synthesis of these suggestions; (3) a follow up 3-hour work team conference call with 16 members and alternates from the CCRSG on July 26<sup>th</sup>; and (4) additional MLPA Initiative staff review and synthesis.

The following factors were used by the MLPA Initiative staff to refine the objectives:

- Relevance to the MLPA and the adopted regional goals (relevance)
- Incorporation of key concepts of each goal into something that can be measured (key concepts)
- Development of pragmatic indicators for the objectives (measurability)
- Value of the objective in evaluating the effectiveness of the adopted regional goals (effectiveness)
- Ability to achieve the objective in a realistic timeframe (achievability)
- Minimization of overlap between objectives
- Relevance of the concept as an objective rather than, for example, as a design consideration or an action or process required by the MLPA

### **Design Considerations**

During the July 26 conference call, the discussion of several objectives led to the suggestion to create a category of "Design Considerations" to accommodate several cross-cutting concepts. If this option was approved, these would be part of the document listing of objectives and would carry equal weight. The design criteria, or overarching considerations, focus on two major concepts and are best expressed by the draft objectives in which they are now incorporated

Goal 2, objective 4. Minimize negative socio-economic impacts to recreational and commercial fishermen, to the extent possible, while following the MLPA Master Plan Framework design guidelines for the establishment of regional MPA network components.

Goal 2, objective 5. Incorporate existing state and federal fishery management areas, to the extent possible, when designing new MPAs or modifying existing ones.

Goal 2, objective 7. To the extent possible, site MPAs to prevent fishing effort shifts to relatively unfished areas and to help prevent serial depletion of fished species.

Staff will request input from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force on the preferred way to incorporate these concepts.

**California Marine Protection Act Initiative  
Central Coast Study Region Provisional Goals and Objectives  
August 2, 2004**

**Goal 1. To protect the natural diversity and abundance of marine life, and the structure, function, and integrity of marine ecosystems.**

1. Protect areas of high species diversity and maintain species diversity, consistent with natural fluctuations, of populations in representative habitats.
2. Protect areas with diverse habitat types in close proximity to each other.
3. Maintain natural size and age structure and genetic diversity of populations in representative habitats.
4. Maintain natural trophic structure and food webs in representative habitats.
5. Maintain ecosystem integrity and ecological processes to facilitate recovery of natural communities from perturbations.

**Goal 2. To help sustain, conserve, and protect marine life populations, including those of economic value, and rebuild those that are depleted.**

1. Help protect or rebuild populations of rare, threatened, endangered, depleted, or over fished species, where identified, and the habitats and ecosystem functions upon which they depend.
2. Protect larval sources and enhance reproductive capacity of species most likely to benefit from MPAs through retention of large, mature individuals.
3. Through the use of state marine conservation areas, allow harvest of migratory, highly mobile, or other selected species where appropriate, while protecting the remainder of species and the habitats on which they all depend.
4. Minimize negative socio-economic impacts to recreational and commercial fishermen, to the extent possible, while following the MLPA Master Plan Framework design guidelines for the establishment of regional MPA network components. \*(see option identified below)
5. Incorporate existing state and federal fishery management areas, to the extent possible, when designing new MPAs or modifying existing ones. \*(see option identified below)
6. Protect populations of 19 finfish species identified per the objectives of the state's Nearshore Fishery Management Plan<sup>1</sup>.
7. To the extent possible, site MPAs to prevent fishing effort shifts to relatively unfished areas and to help prevent serial depletion of fished species. \*(see option identified below)
8. Protect populations of red and black abalone in order to assist in their recovery per the objectives of the state's draft Abalone Recovery and Management Plan<sup>2</sup>.

Option: remove objectives 4, 5, and 7 from this goal and place in "Design Considerations".

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<sup>11</sup> Nearshore Fishery Management Plan Objectives mentioning MPAs include:

1. Restrict take in any MPA [intended to meet the NFMP goals] so that the directed fishing or significant bycatch of the 19 NFMP species is prohibited.
2. Include some areas that have been productive fishing grounds for the 19 NFMP species in the past but are no longer heavily used by the fishery.
3. Include some areas known to enhance distribution or retain larvae of NFMP species (NFMP objective)
4. Consist of an area large enough to address biological characteristics such as movement patterns and home range. There is an expectation that some portion of NFMP stocks will spend the majority of their life cycle within the boundaries of the MPA.
5. Consist of areas that replicate various habitat types within each region including areas that exhibit representative productivity.

<sup>2</sup> Abalone Recovery and Management Plan. Proposed MPA sites should satisfy at least four of the previous criteria.

1. Include within MPAs suitable rocky habitat containing abundant kelp and/or foliose algae
2. Insure presence of sufficient populations to facilitate reproduction.
3. Include within MPAs suitable nursery areas, in particular crustose coralline rock habitats in shallow waters that include microhabitats of moveable rock, rock crevices, urchin spine canopy, and kelp holdfasts.
4. Include within MPAs the protected lee of major headlands that may act as collection points for water and larvae.
5. Include MPAs large enough to include large numbers of abalone and for research regarding population dynamics.
6. Include MPAs that are accessible to researchers, enforcement personnel, and others with a legitimate interest in resource protection.

**Goal 3. To improve recreational, educational, and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbances, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity.**

1. Ensure some MPAs, including state marine reserves, are close to population centers, research and education institutions, and harbors, and are accessible for recreational, educational, and study opportunities.
1. (option: Ensure some MPAs, including state marine reserves, are accessible for recreational, educational, and study opportunities)
2. To the extent possible, provide replicate state marine reserves to function as reference areas for research and monitoring to assess impacts of human use activities and natural events.
3. Develop collaborative scientific monitoring and research projects evaluating MPAs that link with classroom science curricula, volunteer dive programs, and fishermen of all ages, and identify participants.
4. Protect or enhance recreational experience by ensuring natural size and age structure of marine populations for observation, photography, and other non-consumptive uses.
5. Improve public outreach related to MPAs through the use of docents, improved signage, and production of an educational brochure for central coast MPAs.

Note on the debate about “proximity” vs. “access”. They are overlapping, but not identical concepts. “Proximity” may incorporate attributes of small scale, access, safety, visibility (as an education tool), ease of monitoring, and incorporation in community identity. “Access” incorporates the attributes of physical access, permission to gain access to, and implies at least some of the attributes of proximity.

**Goal 4. To protect marine natural heritage, including protection of representative and unique marine life habitats in California waters, for their intrinsic value.**

1. Identify and protect unique habitats, such as estuaries, heads of submarine canyons, pinnacles, upwelling centers, and larval retention areas for their intrinsic value.
2. Protect representatives of all marine habitats identified in the MLPA or the MLPA Master Plan Framework across a range of depths for their intrinsic value.

**Goal 5. To ensure that California's MPAs have clearly defined objectives, effective management measures, and adequate enforcement, and are based on sound scientific guidelines.**

1. For each MPA, develop objectives, a long-term monitoring plan that includes standardized biological and socioeconomic monitoring protocols, and a strategy for MPA evaluation, and ensure that each MPA-specific objective is linked to one or more regional objectives.
2. In developing alternative MPA proposals, consider existing state and federal programs, including but not limited to those related to water quality, fisheries management, species recovery, and those of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
3. To the extent possible, site MPAs adjacent to terrestrial federal, state, county, or city parks, marine laboratories, or other "eyes on the water" to facilitate management, enforcement, and monitoring.
4. If necessary, phase the implementation of central coast MPAs to ensure their effective management, monitoring, and enforcement.
5. To the extent possible, site MPAs to facilitate use of trained volunteers to assist in monitoring and management.
6. To the extent possible, site MPAs to take advantage of existing long-term monitoring programs.
7. Develop regional management and enforcement measures including cooperative enforcement agreements, adaptive management, and jurisdictional maps, which can be effectively used, adopted statewide, and periodically reviewed.
8. To the extent possible, design MPAs boundaries that facilitate ease of public recognition and enforcement.
9. To the extent possible, effectively apply scientific guidelines in the MLPA Master Plan Framework, including size and spacing of MPAs, in the overall design of individual MPAs
10. Secure adequate funding for monitoring, management, and enforcement before implementing any new MPAs.



**Goal 6. To ensure that the central coast's MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a component of a statewide network.**

1. To the extent possible, effectively apply scientific guidelines in the MLPA Master Plan Framework, including those related to size and spacing of MPAs, in the overall design of the central coast MPA network component.
2. Develop a regional review and evaluation of implementation effectiveness to determine if central coast MPAs are an effective component of a statewide network.
3. Develop a mechanism to coordinate with future MLPA regional stakeholder groups established in other regions to ensure that the statewide MPA network meets the goals of the MLPA.

## How These Provisional Regional Objectives Were Prepared

Explanatory text for changes made in provisional draft objectives based on CCRSG Work Team conference call July 26, 2005.

### Goal 1

**August 1 objective 1:** species diversity elements of July 26 objectives 1 and 3 were combined, the phrase “consistent with natural fluctuations” was added, and the habitat portion of July 26 objective 1 became **August 1 objective 2**.

**August 1 objective 2:** see above

**August 1 objective 3:** The genetic diversity portion of July 26 objective 3 was combined with July 26 objective 2.

**Objectives 4 and 5** are unchanged.

### Goal 2

**Objective 1** is unchanged.

**August 1 objective 2:** The phrase “and reproductive success” was deleted. The concept of protection of larval sources from July 26 objective 3 was incorporated.

July 26 objective 3 was deleted: the concept of protecting larval sources was added to **August 1 objective 3**. The concept of protecting larval retention areas is already contained in Goal 4, Objective 1.

**August 1 objective 3** was July 26 objective 4, with the following changes: the use of state marine conservation areas was added for clarification, and the phrase “where appropriate” was added.

**July 26 objectives 5 and 6** are now **August 1 objectives 4 and 5**, with a note stating that these may be moved to a new section called “Design Considerations” to better reflect their intent.

**July 26 objective 7** became **August 1 objective 6** and is unchanged.

**August 1 objective 7** was added, with a note stating that this may be moved to a new section called “Design Considerations” to better reflect its intent.

**Objective 8** is unchanged. Deletion was suggested because the harvest of abalone is prohibited throughout the central coast study region and the presence of the sea otter will likely prohibit the human take of abalone within the otter’s range. However, there is a portion of the red abalone population within the study region (Pigeon Pt. to Pt. Año Nuevo) that was formerly open to harvest and did provide such a harvest. This portion may recover and possibly be open to harvest in the future. Thus the objectives of the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan are appropriate for a portion of the central coast study region.

### Goal 3

**Objective 1:** the phrase “are close to population centers, research and education institutions, and harbors,” received considerable discussion. No consensus was reached regarding leaving it in or deleting it. An option reflecting the latter is included. The phrase “including state marine reserves,” was added.

**Objective 2:** the phrase, “To the extent possible” was added at the beginning.

**Objective 3:** the target audience for collaborative efforts was broadened and the intent to identify participants was added.

July 26 objective 4 was deleted because it is already incorporated in goal 5, objectives 1 and 7.

July 26 objective 5 became **August 1 objective 4** and is unchanged. Staff felt that the concept of other aquatic and terrestrial uses suggested was covered under the broader umbrella of “other nonconsumptive uses. Staff felt that the inclusion of the phrase “consumptive uses” was inappropriate for this goal.

July 26 objective 6 became **August 1 objective 5** and is unchanged.

**Goal 4**

**Objective 1:** the word “unique” was placed in bold to emphasize the distinction between this objective and objective 2. The phrase “such as” replaced the word “including”.

**Objective 2:** the word “representatives” was placed in bold to emphasize the distinction between this objective and objective 1.

**Goal 5**

**Objective 1:** the phrase “biological and socioeconomic” was added for clarify and to emphasize that identifying changes in human use patterns is one of the goals of the monitoring program.

**Objective 2:** “National Marine Sanctuaries” was changed to “the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary” to recognize that this is the only sanctuary in the region and acknowledge its ongoing programs related to resource protection and potential federal MPAs.

**Objective 3** is unchanged.

**Objective 4:** the phrase “If necessary” was added. The phrase “acquire the resources to manage, evaluate, and enforce them” was changed to “ensure their effective management, monitoring, and enforcement.”

**Objectives 5 and 6** are unchanged.

**Objective 7:** the concept of jurisdictional maps was added.

**Objectives 8 and 9** are unchanged

**Objective 10** was added for consideration which links adequate funding to implementation.

**Goal 6**

**Objectives 1 and 2** are unchanged.

**Objective 3** was modified to be more general and flexible; the phrase “Maintain a central coast stakeholder committee” was replaced with “Develop a mechanism”. In addition, the phrase “to ensure consistency of network integrity” was replaced with “to ensure that the statewide MPA network meets the goals of the MLPA.”