

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

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MLPA Initiative, California Department of Fish and Game Announce North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

MLPA Initiative Also Announces North Central Coast Project Manager

SACRAMENTO –The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) today appointed the MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (see attached list). Under the guidance of a blue ribbon task force, this group is responsible for working with a science advisory team and MLPA staff to help California improve the design and management of the north central coast portion of a statewide network of marine protected areas (MPA).

"We are pleased with the makeup of this group and believe its members can constructively engage in a collaborative planning process," said DFG Director Ryan Brodrick. "It is a significant time commitment these individuals are making over the next 12 to 14 months and we appreciate their willingness to participate. We'd also like to thank those who nominated prospective members of the group."

Group members will bring an in-depth knowledge about local resources and uses to help complete a regional profile, including an evaluation of existing MPAs within the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region (bounded by Alder Creek in Mendocino County, just north of Point Arena, and Pigeon Point in San Mateo County). The stakeholder group will also develop recommendations for alternative MPA packages; a team composed of DFG staff, MLPA Initiative staff and contractors will work closely with the stakeholder group throughout the process.

"The regional stakeholder group represents a broad range of interests in the area, and all members have knowledge of marine issues in the study region and of the MLPA," said MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force Chair Susan Golding. "Their recommendations will be significant in forging the best possible recommendation for implementing the act in this part of the state."

The stakeholder group consists of 23 primary members and 13 alternate members. The marine interests they represent include recreational angling and diving, commercial fishing, ports and harbors, conservation, business, and government agencies with MPA responsibilities, among others. Several additional alternates will be added to the group.

MLPA Initiative Executive Director Ken Wiseman said that a large number of talented people were nominated for the regional stakeholder group. "We selected a manageable-sized group that represents the range of interests in the north central coast. The members of the group are committed to taking a thoughtful look at the entire north central coast and have demonstrated experience in working collaboratively with multi-interest stakeholder groups," Wiseman said. "We believe these individuals have the ability to discuss and balance varied interests and communicate those interests to a broad constituency."

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The first regional stakeholder group meeting is scheduled for May 22 and 23 in San Rafael, when members will be introduced to one another and the process. Subsequent meetings of the group will be held every six to eight weeks, or as necessary, throughout the study region.

DeLapa Named North Central Coast Project Manager

Wiseman also announced the selection of Michael DeLapa of Palo Alto as the north central coast project manager for the effort.

“Michael DeLapa will work with DFG and MLPA Initiative staff to help guide the north central coast process,” Wiseman said. “His skills and background will be a tremendous asset to the team, not to mention his experience in the central coast process.”

DeLapa previously served as project manager for the successful MLPA Central Coast Project and the MLPA Baseline Science-Management Panel. As the owner of DeLapa Consulting, he has more than 20 years' experience in launching and managing new ventures in the public and private sectors. His past experiences include co-founder and chief operating officer of Arena Solutions; vice president of Web site publishing, Beyond.com; co-founder and general manager of Sea Studios Foundation and; co-founder and executive director of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.

Discussions at regional stakeholder group meetings will be carried out primarily by the stakeholder representatives with the assistance of professional facilitators from CONCUR, Inc., a Berkeley-based national consulting firm. Meetings will be open to the general public and simultaneously webcast, and archived for later viewing on the Internet. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the regional stakeholder group meetings as observers; they also will have opportunities to provide comments on evolving proposals and other elements of the process. Members of the science advisory team will also play a key role in evaluating MPA packages as they are developed.

Next spring, based upon the work of the regional stakeholder group, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force is expected to present to the California Fish and Game Commission a recommendation for alternative MPA packages in the north central coast. The commission is the final decision-making body under the MLPA.

The MLPA directs the state to redesign California's system of MPAs to increase its coherence and effectiveness in protecting the state's marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems, and marine natural heritage, as well as to improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems. MPAs include state marine conservation areas, state marine parks, and state marine reserves.

The California Resources Agency and DFG have partnered with the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation in an initiative to achieve the MLPA goals. This public-private partnership is guided by the advice of scientists, resource managers, experts, stakeholders and members of the public.

The MLPA North Central Coast Study Region is the second of several regions where MPAs will be redesigned along the California coast and in San Francisco Bay. In March 2006, following extensive public input, a blue ribbon task force delivered recommendations on the first MLPA study region (bounded by Pigeon Point in San Mateo County and Point Conception in Santa Barbara County, called the MLPA Central Coast Study Region) to DFG and the California Fish and Game Commission. In April 2007, the commission adopted regulations to implement MPAs for California's central coast.

For more information about the MLPA Initiative, please visit the initiative Web site at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa>.

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
Members of the North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
May 15, 2007

Dr. Sarah Allen, Science Advisor, Point Reyes National Seashore (alternate for Don Neubacher)
Dirk Ammerman, Owner, Pacific Rim Seafoods
Bill Bernard, Member, Abalone Advisory Group
Bob Breen, marine biology teacher
Richard Charter, Defenders of Wildlife Marine Program (alternate for Karen Garrison)
Josh Churchman, commercial fisherman, Bolinas
Neal Desai, Bay Area Program Manager, National Parks Conservation Association (alternate for Frederick Smith)
Tom Estes, commercial fisherman, Fort Bragg (alternate for Michael McHenry)
Ellen Faurot-Daniels, Oil Spill Supervisor, California Coastal Commission
Dr. Henry C. Fastenau, Diving and Boating Safety Officer, Bodega Marine Laboratory, UC Davis
Karen Garrison, Co-Director, Natural Resources Defense Council Ocean Program
Peter Grenell, General Manager, San Mateo County Harbor District
Bud James, President, Dive Club of Silicon Valley (alternate for Francesca Koe)
Rick Johnson, docent and trip leader (alternate for Bob Breen)
Ken Jones, President, United Pier and Shore Anglers of California
Francesca Koe, diving instructor
Irina Kogan, Resource Protection Specialist, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
Tom Mattusch, Captain, Huli Cat, (alternate for Jay Yokomizo)
Michael McHenry, Captain, Merva W
John Mellor, Captain, High Hopes (alternate for Josh Churchman)
Craig Merrilees, recreational fisherman
Dr. Lance E. Morgan, Chief Scientist, Marine Conservation Biology Institute (alternate for Dr. Henry Fastenau)
Samantha Murray, Ecosystem Program Manager, The Ocean Conservancy
Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director, San Mateo County Resource Conservation District
Don Neubacher, Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore
Paul Pierce, Member, Coastside Fishing Club (alternate for Ben Sleeter)
Karen Reyna, Resource Protection Specialist, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (alternate for Irina Kogan)
Santi Roberts, California Project Manager, Oceana
Dave Schaub, Natural Resources Program Manager, California Department of Parks and Recreation (alternate for Craig Swolgaard)
Ben Sleeter, Political Advocate/Scientist, Coastside Fishing Club
Craig Swolgaard, Environmental Scientist, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Frederick Smith, Executive Director, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Ed Travasieff, Owner, California Fresh Fish and Secretary, Pacific Fisheries Enhancement Foundation
Sean K. White, Owner, Great White Kayak Company and Fisheries Biologist, Sonoma County Water Agency
Robert J. Wilson, Policy Liaison, The Marine Mammal Center (alternate for Santi Roberts)
Jay Yokomizo, Captain, Emeryville Sportfishing