

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

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

Members chosen to represent diverse interests from Santa Barbara to San Diego

SACRAMENTO – The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) today announced the appointment of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. Under the guidance of a blue ribbon task force, this group of 30 primary members and 27 alternates (list below) is responsible for working with a science advisory team and MLPA staff to help California improve the design and management of the south coast portion of a statewide network of marine protected areas (MPAs).

"An outstanding group of individuals was nominated for the south coast study region, which underscores the public's commitment to making this process a success," said DFG Director Donald Koch. "Selecting the appointments from this group of highly qualified individuals was no easy task. We appreciate the willingness of each of these stakeholders to dedicate the next 14 months to working collaboratively to help protect the state's unparalleled coastline."

Group members 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 South Coast Study Region (from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County south to the California border with Mexico, including offshore islands). The stakeholder group will also develop recommendations for alternative MPA proposals. A team composed of DFG staff, California Department of Parks and Recreation staff, and 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 affecting the study region," said MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force Chair Don Benninghoven. "This knowledge is essential to successfully guide the recommendations for implementing the Marine Life Protection Act in this part of the state."

The stakeholder group includes, among others, representatives of recreational angling, diving, commercial fishing, ports and harbors, conservation, business and government agencies with MPA-related responsibilities.

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 a wide range of interests in the south coast. The members of the group are committed to taking a thoughtful look at the entire study region and have demonstrated experience in working collaboratively with multi-interest groups,” Wiseman said. “We believe these individuals have the ability to discuss and balance varied perspectives and communicate those to a broad constituency.”

The regional group’s first meeting will take place Oct. 6 and 7 in El Segundo where members will be introduced to one another and to the stakeholder process. Additional members may be named prior to the first meeting. Subsequent meetings of the group will be held every six to eight weeks, or as necessary, throughout the study region.

Discussions at group meetings will be carried out primarily by the stakeholder representatives with the assistance of professional facilitators. Meetings will be open to the public and will be videotaped for simultaneous Web casting and later viewing on the Internet. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the meetings as observers; they also will have opportunities to provide comments on evolving MPA proposals and other elements of the process.

The California Resources Agency and DFG have partnered with the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation and others 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 directs the state to design and manage a system of marine protected areas in order to, among other things, protect marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems, and marine natural heritage, as well as improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems.

The MLPA requires DFG to prepare and present to the California Fish and Game Commission a master plan that will guide the adoption and implementation of a Marine Life Protection Program within the department. The commission is then required to adopt a master plan, based on the best readily available science, which includes a statewide network of MPAs. After the south coast region, the commission will be presented with recommendations for alternative network components along the two remaining study regions (north coast and San Francisco Bay) between 2009 and 2011.

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

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Members of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
Revised September 29, 2008

Sarah Abramson, Coastal Resources Director, Heal the Bay

Calla Allison, Marine Protection Officer, City of Laguna Beach (alternate for Ken Kearsley)

John F. Ballotti, Senior Director, Global Procurement, Mattel, Inc.

Benjamin Beede, General Manager and Limited Partner, The Cultured Abalone

Philip Beguhl, commercial fishing representative, Santa Barbara County Fish and Game Commission

Steve Benevides, Co-founder, Kelp Forest Coalition

Bob Bertelli, President, California Sea Urchin Commission

Julie Bursek, Education Coordinator, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (alternate for Brent Scheiwe)

Roberta R. Cordero, Co-Founder and President, Chumash Maritime Association

Jim Dahl, Council Member, City of San Clemente (alternate for Leslie Daigle)

Leslie Daigle, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Newport Beach and Regional Council Member, Southern California Association of Governments

W. Scott Dunn, independent kayak guide and instructor

Dr. Jonna Engel, Staff Ecologist, California Coastal Commission

Dr. John M. "Jack" Engle, Associate Research Biologist, Marine Science Institute, University of California, Santa Barbara (alternate for Phyllis Grifman)

Roy "Buck" Everingham, Owner, Everingham Brothers Bait Company (alternate for Ciro Ferrigno)

Jenn Feinberg, Consultant, Natural Resources Defense Council (alternate for Greg Helms)

Ciro Ferrigno, Member of the Board, California Wetfish Producer's Association

Ray Fields, President, The Abalone Farm, Inc. (alternate for Benjamin Beede)

Robert C. Fletcher, President, Sportfishing Association of California (alternate for Mike Gauger)

Mary Jane Forster-Foley, President, MJF Consulting Inc. (alternate for David Weeshoff)

Russell E. Galipeau, Superintendent, Channel Islands National Park

Michael Gauger, Seaforth Sportfishing, Inc.

Tommy Gomes, Owner, Uni Goop Bait (alternate for Bruce Steele)

Joel Greenberg, Southern California Chapter Chairman, Recreational Fishing Alliance (alternate for John Balloti)

Phyllis Grifman, Associate Director, University of Southern California Sea Grant Program

Mervin "Louie" Guassac, Executive Director, Kumeyaay Diegueno Land Conservancy

Marcela Gutiérrez, Wildlife Conservation Program Manager, WILDCOAST (alternate for Sarah Abramson)

Kate Hanley, Director of Operations and Marine Conservation, San Diego Coastkeeper

Greg Helms, Southern California Program Manager, The Ocean Conservancy

Ray Hiemstra, Associate Director, Orange County Coastkeeper (alternate for Kate Hanley)

Mike Huber, Regional Environmental Coordinator Program Manager, U.S. Department of Defense Region IX

Ken Kearsley, former Mayor, City of Malibu

Michael J. Kennedy, Deputy Director, Kayak Fishing Association of California (alternate for Paul Lebowitz)

Eric Kett, Owner, Sea Zen Marine Consulting (alternate for Terry Maas)

Mick Kronman, Harbor Operations Manager, City of Santa Barbara
Paul Lebowitz, Director, Kayak Fishing Association of California
Dr. Terry Maas, Director, Underwater Society of America and Founding Member, Sea Watch
Jeff Maassen, Vice President, Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara, Inc. (alternate for Bob Bertelli)
Jenny Marshall, Consultant, U.S. Navy (alternate for Mike Huber)
Carl Mayhugh, President, Pacific Oceanworks, Inc. (alternate for Steve Benevides)
Mike McCorkle, President, Southern California Trawlers Association (alternate for Gerry Richter)
Dr. Michael McCoy, Member, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Authority (alternate for Dr. Vinod Sasidharan)
Merit McCrea, Captain, Condor Cruises and Research Technician, Marine Science Institute (alternate for Norris Tapp)
Garth Murphy, Founder, Surf Research (alternate for W. Scott Dunn)
Bob Osborn, Member, United Anglers of Southern California (alternate for Wendy Tochihara)
Jack Peveler, President, California Association of Port Captains and Harbormasters (alternate for Mick Kronman)
Dr. Benjamin Pister, Marine Ecologist, Cabrillo National Monument (alternate for Russell E. Galipeau)
Lia Protopapadakis, Marine Policy Specialist, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation (alternate for Dr. Anne Spacie)
Gerry D. Richter, Vice President, Point Conception Groundfishermen's Association
Dr. Vinod Sasidharan, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Recreation and Tourism Management Program, San Diego State University
Brent Scheiwe, Director, SEA Lab
Dr. Anne Spacie, Science Director and Member of the Board, Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation and Professor Emerita, Purdue University
Bruce Steele, Captain, F/V Halcyon
Norris Tapp, Captain, F/V Freelance
Cassidy Teufel, Coastal Program Analyst, California Coastal Commission (alternate for Jonna Engel)
Wendy Tochihara, National Sales Manager, Izorline International
David Weeshoff, Member of the Board, International Bird Rescue Research Center