

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
Master Plan Science Advisory Team
Thursday, April 3, 2008 Meeting Summary
(revised May 20, 2008)

Best Western Lighthouse Hotel
105 Rockaway Beach Avenue
Pacifica, CA 94044
9:30 a.m.

Note: Audio and video recordings of this meeting are available on the Internet at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/>. Please contact AGP Video Services at (805) 772-2715 to obtain DVD copies of these recordings.

SAT members attending: Sarah Allen, Eric Bjorkstedt, Mark Carr, Chris Costello, Steve Gaines, Dominic Gregorio, John Largier, Gerry McChesney, Karina Nielsen, Pete Raimondi, Astrid Scholz, John Ugoretz.

SAT members absent: Ray Hilborn, Steven Morgan and Carl Walters. It was announced that Caroline Hermans has resigned from the SAT to pursue a new job opportunity.

Executive Summary

The ninth Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) meeting took place at the Best Western Lighthouse Hotel in Pacifica on April 3, 2008.

- The SAT added barred surfperch to the list of species most likely to benefit from marine protected areas (MPAs).
- The SAT reviewed draft changes to the evaluation methods document concerning levels of protection and guidelines for evaluating MPAs with respect to the 50 meter isobath and the allowance of salmon trolling. The SAT approved the changes to the evaluation methods document with the caveat that it is a working document and will be revised in the future.
- SAT members presented evaluations for habitat representation, size and spacing, birds and mammals, and potential socioeconomic impacts of MPA proposals and voted to present the evaluations to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF).
- Modeling work group members presented model evaluations of draft MPA proposals and a draft document discussing the use of models in the MLPA process. The document and model evaluations were approved by the SAT for presentation to the BRTF, pending minor changes.
- A work group was formed to anticipate science questions related to the MLPA South Coast Study Region (SCSR) and to identify unique features of the SCSR.

I. Meeting Objectives and Materials

On April 3, 2008 the ninth SAT meeting for the north central coast study region was held. It was announced that Caroline Hermans had resigned from the SAT to pursue a new job opportunity.

The primary objectives of the meeting were to:

- Review and potentially approve revised evaluation methods for MPA proposals
- Review and discuss evaluations of MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSG) MPA proposals
- Review and discuss results of modeling NCCRSG MPA proposals
- Discuss and potentially make recommendations regarding the use of models for evaluation purposes
- Review, discuss, and potentially approve responses to science questions
- Identify potential science questions related to the MLPA SCSR
- Discuss and potentially add to the list of species likely to benefit from MPAs

The meeting agenda may be found on the MLPA website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/meetings.asp>

II. Meeting Summary

Species likely to benefit from MPAs

Members of the SAT reviewed information regarding the potential inclusion of barred surfperch, flat and northern abalone, and white sharks on the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region (NCCSR) species likely to benefit list. Members voted unanimously (with one abstention) to add barred surfperch to the species most likely to benefit list, since other surfperch species on that list had similar life histories and levels of take. No motion was made to add flat abalone, northern abalone, or white sharks to the species likely to benefit list.

Evaluation methods for the north central coast draft MPA proposals

A. Salmon Trolling

Salmon trolling in areas shallower than 50 meters (m) receives a moderate-high level of protection, while salmon trolling in areas deeper than 50m receives a high level of protection. SAT co-chair Mark Carr presented information concerning the evaluation of proposals that included boundaries along the 50m isobath. MPAs were evaluated as clusters, and MPAs that allowed salmon trolling in water deeper than 50m received a high level of protection if they included no more than 15% of the habitat shallower than 50m present in the entire cluster. This method was based on an estimate of error in effort of drawing a straight line along a curved isobath; the best-fit straight lines generally captured about 15% of the inshore area along the isobath.

B. Mariculture

SAT co-chair Mark Carr presented revisions to the document concerning potential impacts of mariculture activities that had been presented to the SAT at its January 23 meeting. Revisions were made by SAT co-chair Steven Morgan and SAT assistant Seth Miller in response to industry concerns that the document could be used in an adverse way by permitting agencies. Language was modified to remain more neutral rather than negative, and a disclaimer was added to the document describing what its purpose was and that it was not intended to be used outside of the immediate arena of the SAT. SAT members discussed how the extent of mariculture activities could impact the LOP, and how new mariculture techniques would be evaluated in the future.

C. Level of Protection Assignments

SAT members were presented with revised language in the table detailing level of protection assignments. Members discussed how the allowance of multiple types of fishing might create cumulative impacts and influence LOPs, but no changes were made.

D. Evaluation Methods Document

SAT members were presented with revised language in the evaluation methods document. Astrid Scholz noted that additional information on socioeconomic impacts would be included in the document. Based on the future revision of the methods document, the mariculture document, and the LOP table, SAT members voted to accept these documents as working drafts and recognized that future changes will be made and evaluated.

Evaluations of NCCRSR MPA proposals

Mary Gleason introduced the evaluations of NCCRSR MPA proposals. SAT co-chair Mark Carr presented the evaluations of habitat representation and replication, Steve Gaines presented the evaluations of size and spacing, and Gerry McChesney and Sarah Allen presented the evaluations for birds and mammals. Astrid Scholz presented the socioeconomic evaluations. After discussion among SAT members and hearing public comments on all aspects of the MLPA process, members unanimously voted to accept the evaluations of draft MPA proposals and present them at the next BRTF meeting.

Digestible modeling work group evaluations

SAT member Chris Costello presented the evaluations performed using the UC Davis and EDOM models. After discussing some changes to the modeling presentation, SAT members voted unanimously to have Chris Costello present the modeling evaluations to the BRTF. SAT members also discussed the use of models in this region and their potential use in the SCSR. The recommendation document prepared by the digestible modeling work group was evaluated and members commented on the utility of models as planning tools and evaluation tools. Members noted that these models could be especially useful for the planning process in the SCSR, since they have been so extensively developed and debated in the NCCSR. It was noted that other models (such as ROHMS) that have been developed by other agencies in southern California could be useful during the planning process. Members voted unanimously

to present a revised version of the recommendation document to the BRTF to indicate how models could be used in future study regions.

Science questions

SAT members voted unanimously to approve the draft response to a science question from the February NCCRSG meeting. Members then discussed a list of potential science questions for the SCSR and added new potential questions to the list. A work group was formed to review the list of questions and to identify new issues that are unique to the south coast. Work group members are Chris Costello, Sarah Allen, Dominic Gregorio, John Largier, and Steve Gaines. Additionally, Dominic Gregorio and John Largier formed a work group to discuss water quality and provide recommendations to the SAT on how to address this issue in future study regions at the next SAT meeting.

Summary of public comments

Members of the public commented on a variety of issues concerning the MLPA process. Several comments from oyster growers reiterating the need for language clarifying how documents created during the MLPA process are to be used. Members of the public also asked clarifying questions about the evaluation presentations and voiced support for the continued use and development of the models during future study regions. Clarifications were made by NCCRSG members regarding the use of special closures in their MPA proposals.

III. Next Steps

SAT members will present their evaluations at the next BRTF meeting. The next SAT meeting will be held May 30, 2008.

IV. Documents provided at April 3, 2008 meeting

- A. PowerPoint presentation: *Potential Additions to the List of Species Likely to Benefit from MPAs* (Jason Vasques, California Department of Fish and Game)
- B. PowerPoint presentation: *Evaluation of NCCRSG ("Round 3") Marine Protected Area Proposals* (Mary Gleason, MLPA Initiative)
- C. PowerPoint presentation: *Draft Habitat Evaluations of NCCRSG MPA Proposals* (Dr. Mark Carr, Master Plan Science Advisory Team)
- D. PowerPoint presentation: *Size and spacing evaluation - north central coast MPA proposals* (Dr. Steve Gaines, Master Plan Science Advisory Team)
- E. PowerPoint presentation: Bird and mammal evaluation (Gerry McChesney and Dr. Sarah Allen)
- F. *Evaluations of Benefits to Seabirds and Waterfowl from Proposed Marine Protected Areas and Special Closures in the North Central Coast Study Region, California (April 2, 2008)*

- G. *Evaluations of Benefits to Marine Mammals from Proposed Marine Protected Areas and Special Closures in the North Central Coast Study Region, California (April 2, 2008)*
- H. *PowerPoint presentation: Summary of Potential Impacts of March 2008 NCCRSO MPA proposals on Commercial and Recreational Fisheries (Dr. Astrid Scholz, Ecotrust)*
- I. *Spatially Explicit Models to Support Evaluation and Revision of Draft Marine Protected Area Proposals (April 2, 2008)*