



Public Information & Comment Meetings

Oxnard and Carlsbad, April 18 & 19, 2012

Planning Process Talk

Kai Lampson

*Marine Biologist, California Dept. of Fish and Game
Lobster Fishery Management Plan Project Assistant*

I'm Kai Lampson, a marine biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). I want to begin today by discussing the contents of the Lobster Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and how the process is going to work. The contents of the FMP will be broken down into three main chapters: the Fishery Overview chapter, the Fishery Research and Protocol chapter, and the Fishery Management and Conservation chapter.

As Kristine mentioned earlier, DFG has received grant funds from the Ocean Protection Council to help complete specific tasks. These tasks include hiring contractors to work with DFG staff to jointly produce draft chapters of the FMP. The contractors that we have hired are scientists and experts in their fields.

The first chapter is the Fishery Overview chapter. On this slide you will see a general list of the areas that will be covered. The chapter will describe the natural history of lobster as a species, along with population dynamics, including a report on the recent DFG Lobster Stock Assessment. It will provide a history of the fishery and associated regulations. It will describe the different components of the fishery (both sport and commercial). This chapter will also look at any issues associated with bycatch and fishing gear. It will also include a report on the economic factors related to the fishery.

At this time, I would like to talk a little more about the economic report. The report will evaluate the economic structure and contribution of the fisheries (both sport and commercial) to the State of California, and various coastal counties. This report will use existing economic data, but it will also incorporate information from a telephone survey of recreational lobster fishery participants. The survey pool will include adult fisherman who purchased a 2011 Spiny Lobster Report Card. This survey will be conducted in the next few months, so if you receive a call I urge you to please participate.

The next chapter is the Fishery Research Protocol chapter. It will identify essential fishery information required to manage the lobster stock. Building upon this information, the chapter will also include a research plan that describes how DFG will resolve existing gaps in essential fishery information. Such a plan might include collaboration with university experts and with fishermen.

The last chapter that I want to discuss is the Fishery Management and Conservation chapter. This chapter describes the tools needed for conservation and management of the fishery, while allowing for sustainable harvest. It will evaluate the effectiveness of current and

proposed management measures. Lastly, this chapter will also establish a method for review and amendment of the Lobster FMP as may be necessary due to changes in the future.

The creation and review of draft chapters will be an ongoing, multi-year process. The draft chapters will be reviewed by the Lobster Advisory Committee, and will also be made available for public review and comment. The request for comments on individual draft chapters is an informal process with a designated time period per chapter. Individual draft chapters will be posted on the Lobster FMP website.

The draft Lobster FMP must undergo formal review as a completed document. The formal review process will involve academic scientists, the Lobster Advisory Committee, and members of the public.

Now we come to the Lobster Advisory Committee. The primary responsibility of a Committee member is to represent the interests and concerns of their constituency group. The Lobster Advisory Committee will give guidance on FMP objectives and end products, as well as provide ideas for management options that address the key issues put forth by their constituents. As I mentioned earlier, Committee members are also tasked with reviewing and providing feedback on draft documents, including the individual draft chapters of the FMP.

Constituents must have the ability to communicate with their Committee members. DFG will supply Committee members with email accounts for Lobster FMP related business (personal email accounts will not be used). Committee members will also be required to provide a contact phone number that will be available to the public. Mailing address information is considered private, and will not be publicly listed. Meetings of the Lobster Advisory Committee will be open to the general public for observation, and brief public comment period will be permitted at the beginning of each meeting.

I would like to introduce the composition of the Lobster Advisory Committee. In accordance with the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) the composition of the Committee must reflect the diversity and the complexity of California's lobster fishery.

For the purpose of balance, the Committee will be made up of 12 members, and five alternates.

There will be:

- Two marine science members and one alternate, representing biological and environmental interests.
- Three recreational members and one alternate, representing recreational fishing (hoop net anglers and divers).
- Three commercial members and one alternate, representing commercial fishing (harvesters and buyers).
- Two non-consumptive recreational members and one alternate, representing non-consumptive recreational users (cultural and wildlife interests)
- One environmental organization member and one alternate, representing environmental NGOs.

- One federal agency member.

The application to become a Committee member is available on the Lobster FMP website. Applicants can either fill out an electronic application online, or they can print and mail in their application to DFG.

As you can see from this slide (Timeline), the lobster FMP process is very lengthy with lots of meetings, and there will be plenty of opportunity for the public to provide comment and feedback. All of these meetings will be open to the public and people are invited to attend. We have this timeline printed on a poster here today, so if you have questions please ask during the workshop portion of the meeting later on.

DFG is committed to making this process transparent, objective, and accessible. A huge part of accessibility is public input. In addition to representation through Lobster Advisory Committee members, we also want to hear from you, our constituents. You can send us comments through email, or U.S. Mail to the address above.