

# California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

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## Southern California MLPA Science Advisory Team Announced

Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Director Donald Koch today named a panel of science advisors to assist in redesigning marine protected areas (MPAs) in Southern California. The 20-member Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) will provide scientific support for the MLPA Initiative in the south coast study region, which spans from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County south to the California border with Mexico, including offshore islands.

“Appointing this team of highly regarded scientists is the next step in protecting the south coast and securing its resources for Californians for years to come,” said Koch. “The collaboration of experience and expertise on this team will ensure the actions taken to implement the MLPA will continue to be science-based.”

The newly appointed members of the SAT are:

- Dr. Larry Allen, California State University, Northridge
- Dr. Richard Ambrose, UCLA, Department of Environmental Health Sciences
- Dr. Eric Bjorkstedt, Humboldt State University/NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center
- Dr. Mark Carr, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Dr. Susan Chivers, NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center
- Dr. Christopher Costello, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Dr. Paul Dayton, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego
- Dr. Steve Gaines, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Mr. Dominic Gregorio, State Water Resources Control Board
- Dr. Ray Hilborn, University of Washington
- Dr. John Largier, Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis
- Dr. Steven Morgan, Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis
- Dr. Steven Murray, California State University, Fullerton
- Dr. Daniel Pondella, Occidental College
- Dr. Peter Raimondi, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Mr. Dan Robinette, Point Reyes Bird Observatory/Vandenberg Field Station
- Dr. Astrid Scholz, Ecotrust
- Dr. Stephen Stohs, NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center
- Dr. Stephen Weisberg, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
- Mr. Stephen Wertz, California Department of Fish and Game

Members of the SAT are charged with assisting DFG and the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force by reviewing and commenting on science relevant to implementing the MLPA, reviewing alternative MPA proposals and addressing scientific questions raised by the task force or the regional stakeholder group.

The first meeting of the newly appointed SAT will convene on Sept. 15 in El Segundo, Calif., in a joint gathering with outgoing SAT members who provided scientific advice for the MLPA process in the north central coast. More information on this meeting can be found at [www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/meetings\\_sc.asp](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/meetings_sc.asp).

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

The California Fish and Game Commission is the ultimate decision-making authority for implementing the MLPA. The principal mission of the task force, SAT and regional stakeholder group is to provide information and recommendations to the commission to facilitate sound policy decisions in implementing the MLPA. The commission will be asked to adopt redesigned MPAs in each of five study region along California's coast.

Recommendations for the south coast study region will be developed between now and early 2010. Recommendations for the north central coast are currently under consideration by the commission and redesigned MPAs for the central coast became effective in September 2007. Recommendations for the remaining two study regions (north coast and San Francisco Bay) will be developed in 2010 and 2011.

For more information about the MLPA, please visit [www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa).

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