



June 2010

Executive Director's Message

As I reflect on the past year since we embarked upon the north coast marine protected area (MPA) planning process, I am grateful for the dedication and countless hours put in by the regional stakeholder group, science advisory team, task force, staff and interested public. Every meeting serves as testament to the tremendous levels of preparation, effort and commitment demonstrated by all involved.

This resolve allowed us to recently reach an important milestone – the regional stakeholder group completed its Round 2 draft MPA proposals, which are now being evaluated. The proposals can be viewed on the MLPA website, as well as in MarineMap, and will be showcased at a series of open houses to be held throughout the study region in early July. To help ensure that these proposals honor and respect traditional tribal gathering activities, MLPA Initiative staff is also conducting targeted outreach to north coast tribes and tribal communities, thanks in great part to the coordination efforts of Dr. Satie Airame. Additionally, we continue to seek the perspective of statewide stakeholders with a variety of marine interests to provide advice regarding improvements to the process and to help spread the word so that different perspectives are being reached, heard and integrated.

I encourage all members of the north coast community to participate in reviewing the Round 2 draft MPA proposals. Your feedback is an essential part of the MPA planning process and I welcome each of you to attend an open house as one way to review the proposals and provide your input.

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

Meeting Highlights

Blue Ribbon Task Force

On May 17, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) held its fifth meeting via teleconference and webinar to discuss the decision-making context for tribal uses of marine resources in state waters. After considering proposed language for a motion, extensive discussion among task force members and input from the public, the BRTF adopted guidance to provide to the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group members as they completed their Round 2 draft MPA proposals.

The BRTF's next meeting will be held on July 21-22 in Fort Bragg. Public participation locations will also be available in Crescent City and Eureka.

Science Advisory Team

The MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) held its sixth meeting via teleconference and webinar on May 12, 2010. SAT members discussed a wide variety of issues and approved several items, including:

- a revised water quality guidance document,
- draft responses to science questions received from the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCRSG),
- new components of the marine birds and marine mammals evaluation methods, and
- replication thresholds for soft bottom habitats.

The SAT also voted to keep the level of protection (LOP) for redbtail surfperch at “moderate” LOP and to forward a draft document on adaptive management to the NCRSG to assist its planning efforts.

The SAT is currently conducting evaluations of the Round 2 draft MPA proposals. Each evaluation work group will present preliminary evaluation results during the June 29-30 SAT meeting in Eureka. In addition to presenting the preliminary evaluation results, SAT members will discuss responses to science questions, hear updates from work groups, and review additions to the evaluation methods document. SAT members will present evaluation results at the upcoming BRTF and NCRSG meetings.

The next SAT meeting will take place in Eureka on June 29-30. Public participation locations will also be available in Crescent City and Fort Bragg.

North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

On May 19, the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCRSG) participated in an all-day work session in Crescent City. During this work session, NCRSG members met in their respective work groups to continue designing cross-interest Round 2 draft MPA proposals.

On May 20, the NCRSG participated in its fourth meeting in Crescent City. After providing presentations to the full NCRSG on the interim status of draft MPA proposals, the work groups reconvened to incorporate NCRSG and public feedback and complete their Round 2 draft MPA proposals. Each work group developed two draft MPA proposals (along with Proposal 0), as well as separate recommendations for special closures:

- Proposal 0 (existing MPAs)
- Ruby Draft MPA Proposal 1
- Ruby Draft MPA Proposal 2
- Sapphire Draft MPA Proposal 1
- Sapphire Draft MPA Proposal 2

Key next steps in the Round 2 draft MPA proposal evaluation process include:

What are "special closures" and how do they differ from MPAs?

Special closures are designated by the California Fish and Game Commission to provide geographically-specific protection of marine resources from human activities that may not be provided by MPAs or existing law; examples include protecting marine birds and marine mammals disturbance at nesting, roosting and haul-out sites. Special closures are generally smaller than and may coincide with, overlay, or be separate from proposed MPAs.

The California Department of Fish and Game recommends that any proposed restrictions on access be proposed through special closures rather than MPAs. Generally, a distance-from-shore seaward boundary of 300 or 1000 feet is used and may be seasonal or year-round. Additionally, special closures generally should avoid areas that can be readily accessed from shore.

The MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force has indicated the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group may 'sparingly and selectively' include recommendations for special closures, so long as this does not detract from completing the primary task of developing alternative MPA proposals. Therefore, draft proposed special closures have been developed by the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group separately from draft MPA proposals, but are intended to link to a specific proposal.

- June 29-30: The science advisory team will meet in Eureka to review preliminary evaluation results.
- July 6-8: A series of public open houses will be held throughout the north coast study region to solicit community input.
- July 21-22: The MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) will receive the evaluations of Round 2 draft MPA proposals and supporting documents from the MLPA Master Science Plan Advisory Team, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and MLPA Initiative staff.

The NCRSG will hold its next meeting on July 29 in Fort Bragg to receive informational presentations on the review and evaluations of the Round 2 draft MPA proposals. Comments collected online and during the public open houses regarding will be distributed. The BRTF and MLPA Initiative staff will also provide guidance for how to approach Round 3 of the MPA design process. Public participation locations will be available in Crescent City and Eureka. On July 30, the NCRSG will meet in a work session to begin developing Round 3 draft MPA proposals.

Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

Public Meetings

All meetings are open to the public and are also simultaneously webcast on the day of the meeting (field trips not included); meeting details are available on the MLPA website. Open houses and workshops are generally not videotaped or webcast. Work sessions are not videotaped or webcast; click here to learn more about NCRSG work sessions.

To the extent possible, public participation locations are also set up in at least one other city within the study region (Crescent City, Eureka and/or Fort Bragg) to provide members of the public with a stable Internet connection for the webcast and the opportunity to provide comments during the public comment period(s).

Meeting agendas are posted to the MLPA website at least one week in advance of the meeting. Meeting materials are posted as soon as they become available. In addition to the simultaneous webcast of meetings, the video and audio archives are posted online within two days of each meeting.

Tuesday, June 29 – Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Master Plan Science Advisory Team
 Meeting Agenda and Materials
 Red Lion Hotel
 1929 Fourth Street
 Eureka, CA 95501

Wednesday, July 21 – Thursday, July 22, 2010

Blue Ribbon Task Force
 C.V. Starr Community Center
 300 S. Lincoln Street
 Fort Bragg, CA 95437

Thursday, July 29 (meeting) and Friday, July 30 (work session*)

Regional Stakeholder Group
C.V. Starr Community Center
300 S. Lincoln Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

* Work Sessions: Work sessions provide NCRSG members with focused, face-to-face opportunities to pursue their charge of developing alternative MPA proposals. NCRSG work sessions are not formal public meetings and are not videotaped or webcast. All work sessions are open to members of the public, who may attend as observers; while there is no formal public comment, there are informal opportunities for members of the public to share their perspectives with NCRSG members and MLPA Initiative staff. Accredited media interested in covering an NCRSG work session are asked to contact the MLPA Initiative media relations team prior to the session.

Community Events

Upcoming Public Workshops

Members of the public are invited to join us at the upcoming North Coast Summer Public Open Houses to review and provide feedback on Round 2 draft marine protected area proposals for the MLPA North Coast Study Region (informational flyer).

Attend the open houses to visit informational stations, review and comment on the Round 2 draft MPA proposals, provide input on particular areas of interest, and ask questions of staff and regional stakeholders.

Drop by anytime! Please note specific times associated with each location.

July 6, 2010

5:00-7:30 p.m.
C.V. Starr Community Center
300 South Lincoln Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

July 7, 2010

8:00-10:00 a.m.
The Octagon/Beginnings
5 Cemetery Road
Briceland, CA 95560

July 7, 2010

5:00-7:30 p.m.
Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center
921 Waterfront Drive, Room 211
Eureka, CA 95501

July 8, 2010

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Redwood National and State Parks

South Operations Center

121200 Hwy. 101

Orick, CA 95555

July 8, 2010

5:00-7:30 p.m.

Elk Valley Rancheria Community Center

2332 Howland Hill Road

Crescent City, CA 95531

What if I can't attend one of the public open houses in person?

If you are both able to attend, you may also provide your feedback on Round 2 draft MPA proposals by visiting http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/mpaproposals_nc.asp. Here, you can complete an online form expressing your comments, which will be shared with the NCRSG and BRTF. Additionally, print copies of the feedback forms are available at local libraries and government offices, which can be mailed or faxed to the MLPA Initiative office.

Your comments will be most helpful if received no later than July 14, 2010 so the information can be distributed to NCRSG and BRTF members prior to the start of Round 3.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will the success, or failure, of the MPAs designated under the MLPA be evaluated?

Determining success of an MPA and/or MPA network involves identifying and understanding changes to the ecosystem (including ecosystem function) and the role of MPAs in affecting those changes; measuring and understanding MPA effects (e.g., are there more fish inside versus outside MPAs?); and understanding changes in human uses (socioeconomics). Given the complexity of developing a monitoring program with such a focus and scale, a new entity, the MPA Monitoring Enterprise, was created to help the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) meet the monitoring requirements of the MLPA. In collaboration with DFG and various experts, the MPA Monitoring Enterprise is focused on developing regional and network-wide monitoring plans to deliver data essential for ensuring the long-term adaptive management of the new statewide system of MPAs designated through the MLPA. The MPA Monitoring Enterprise developed the MPA monitoring plan for the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region (downloadable at http://calost.org/North_Central.html#NCCplan) and is currently developing a monitoring plan for the MLPA South Coast Study Region.

How will baseline data be used to inform the assessment of the MPA network?

An important component of monitoring is establishing a baseline condition from which change over time can be measured and assessed. In developing the regional MPA monitoring plan for the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region (NCCSR), the MPA Monitoring Enterprise designed a comprehensive baseline program. This baseline program will provide a comprehensive integrated assessment of MPA and ecosystem conditions from which change over time can be evaluated and monitored. Baseline projects for the NCCSR include kelp and rocky intertidal surveys, high resolution aerial kelp and intertidal mapping surveys, ROV surveys, population monitoring of nearshore foraging seabirds and marine mammals, surveys of sandy beaches and adjacent surf zone communities and a baseline socioeconomic characterization focused on consumptive and non-consumptive private recreation, commercial fishing,

and commercial charter boats. More information on these projects can be found on the California Sea Grant website.

Similar baseline data collection efforts have been implemented for the central coast study region, and will be implemented for the south and north coast study regions.

How will baseline and future monitoring be funded?

Approximately \$12 million is available from the California Ocean Protection Council to collect baseline information for each of three coastal study regions including the north central coast, south coast, and the north coast study regions (approximately \$4 million per region). An additional \$4 million has already been utilized for baseline projects in the MLPA Central Coast Study Region. Baseline programs and regional MPA monitoring plans for the south coast and north coast will be developed sequentially as MPAs in each region are adopted.

The availability and level of funding for long-term management is unknown at this time and never certain. However, the north central coast MPA monitoring plan provides a scalable and tiered framework to implement monitoring at various funding levels to enhance MPA understanding and management. A scalable approach offers the opportunity to monitor multiple ecosystems and ecosystem components at high resolution when funding is strong. When funding is lean, this structure recommends monitoring specific components that will act as indicators.

Importantly, the NCCSR monitoring framework offers an example of how monitoring can be shared among numerous partners, including citizen-based monitoring programs. These partnerships will become very important for the success of long-term monitoring and MPA management because partnerships draw on the knowledge and resources from other government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and research institutions. This structure is repeated in natural resource management for California again and again and is particularly strong for ecosystem-based management because ecosystems are not easily managed by a single agency or organization.

How are socioeconomics considered during the MPA planning process?

Both potential positive and potential negative socioeconomic effects are considered in MPA planning through the MLPA Initiative, even though maximizing positive or minimizing negative socioeconomic impacts is not an explicit goal of the MLPA.

For example, enhanced ecosystems may have positive socioeconomic effects. Benefits derived from MPAs take many forms and include direct benefits to organisms (e.g., fish are protected from harvest and may achieve larger size) and indirect benefits such as ecosystem functioning (e.g., fish which are protected and grow to larger size achieve greater fecundity thus exhibiting greater reproductive output promoting population growth, ultimately affecting components of ecosystem functions, such as trophic relationships). Ecosystem services are services that functioning ecosystems offer and which often benefit people. An MPA designed to attract dive tourism is one example whereby a service (benefit) people gain is improved recreational opportunity through improved ecosystem structure (healthy and attractive habitats and large and abundant organisms). Another important example is food production, whereby a 'healthy' ecosystem provides resources that may be utilized in the seafood industry. Both of these examples are founded in ecological aims but also have clear economic benefits which may be considered while attempting to minimize negative economic impacts when designing MPAs.

Potential negative socioeconomic impacts are considered in MPA planning as well. It is important to recognize that consideration of socioeconomics as described above is functionally and fundamentally different from stating that a desired outcome of MPAs is to achieve healthy local economies. Economies are driven by numerous and complex factors mostly outside the capacity of the MLPA's influence. Further, the MLPA directs that socioeconomic factors be considered in MPA planning, but does not explicitly state minimizing negative (or maximizing positive) socioeconomic impacts as a goal. In recognition of the importance of marine resources to coastal communities, the MLPA Initiative has exceeded the requirements of the act and more fully integrated consideration of human use information in the MPA planning process (for example, the collection of spatial data indicating areas of stated importance for commercial and recreational fisheries by Ecotrust).

Get Involved

The success of the MLPA largely depends on the continued involvement of the public. There are a number of ways that members of the public can participate in this process:

Have you contacted your regional stakeholder group members?

Share your questions and concerns with the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCRSG) members. Composed of your local representatives, the NCRSG is charged with drafting marine protected area (MPA) recommendations for the north coast segment of California's statewide MPA network. Contact an NCRSG member today and ensure your voice is included in the MPA planning process.

Stay informed

- Attend meetings or view live webcasts or archived videos of meetings
- The MLPA Initiative is on Facebook! Join the MLPA Initiative group on Facebook for the latest MLPA news

Provide feedback

Providing feedback is one of the most important ways to get involved in the MLPA Initiative. Public comment provided at meetings should be concise and focused on specific ideas or suggestions (click [here](#) for suggested guidelines for providing public comment). While the time available for verbal comments at meetings is usually limited, there is no limit on the length of comments submitted in writing. All written comments can be submitted via email, mail or fax:

Email: AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov

Mail: Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax: 916.653.8102

All written comments are compiled on a weekly basis and distributed to the I-Team and MLPA Initiative groups (BRTF, NCRSG and SAT as appropriate). Please do not send comments to SAT or BRTF members directly.

Specific opportunities to provide input include:

- View current MPA arrays and proposals anytime by clicking http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/mpaproposals_nc.asp or visiting MarineMap
- Submitting feedback on documents open for public comment
- Participating in workshops, open houses and public information presentations
- Contacting a member of the north coast regional stakeholder group
- Submitting comments, ideas and suggestions to AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov

Spread the word

- Circulate North Coast News to help ensure others in your community are aware of the MLPA Initiative, upcoming meetings and opportunities for public involvement
- If you are a leader in your community and/or have access to a large number of constituents, become a “Key Communicator.” Contact the Public Outreach and Education Team via email or call (707) 832-4088 to learn more.

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