



December 2008

Executive Director's Message

The most recent meeting of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group put me in a festive mood – just in time for the holidays – as we introduced a new product to help with our outreach efforts. Our recently unveiled new brochure to help encourage public participation. We will be using our Key Communicator and regional stakeholder group networks to help distribute the brochure far and wide.

On behalf of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, I would like to wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season. Your comments and participation continue to be a vital part of the process – keep it up!

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

Meeting Highlights

Blue Ribbon Task Force

On November 4, 2008 in Los Angeles, the task force held its second public meeting. The task force kicked off the morning with a field trip to various sites in San Pedro to provide an opportunity for task force members to interact with public educators, commercial and recreational fishermen, resource managers and fisheries-dependent business operators. The task force visited Tri-Marine Fish Company, Fish Harbor, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Point Fermin State Marine Park and L.A. Harbor Sportfishing.

In the afternoon the task force met at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel and adopted:

- A revised strategy for stakeholder and interested public participation
- The 2009 calendar of meetings for the MLPA South Coast Study Region
- A modification to the task force operating procedures to clarify decision making in the absence of consensus

In addition, the task force directed MLPA staff to:

- Provide a written report indicating the status of implementing recommendations from the north central coast lessons learned report
- Develop a memo summarizing key policy guidance provided by the task force in previous study regions.

The task force will meet again on Wednesday, December 10 and will have a special meeting with the California Fish and Game Commission on December 11, both in Sacramento.

Science Advisory Team

On November 12, 2008, the third meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) took place in Los Angeles. During this meeting, the SAT approved:

- A presentation on the existing northern Channel Islands to be delivered to the California Fish and Game Commission
- Two presentations - fish movement and habitats - specific to the south coast study region to be presented to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
- Five distinct bioregions within the south coast study region
- A list of proposed key and unique habitats

The SAT also heard updates from SAT work groups that are developing guidance and criteria to better describe levels of protection, size and spacing, species likely to benefit and restored habitats

The next SAT meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 17 in Los Angeles.

Regional Stakeholder Group

The second meeting of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) was held in Ventura on November 18 & 19, 2008. The SCRSG received informational briefings on:

- Key regional topics including: marine habitats and ecosystems, adult movement and larval dispersal, Ecotrust fisheries uses and values project and commercial and recreational fisheries in the study region
- Guidelines used by the Science advisory team, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation and the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force to review draft proposals for marine protected areas
- MarineMap, a new tool to be used in assisting with creating of marine protected area proposals

The SCRSG was also presented with a draft document outlining goals and objectives for the study region. After discussion and deliberation by the SCRSG, the goals and objectives were revised to account for SCRSG comments. Further revisions will be made to incorporate remaining comments and transmitted to the SCRSG in advance of the January 13 & 14 meeting in San Diego.

Upcoming Public Meetings and Events

Public Meetings

All meetings are open to the public and are also simultaneously webcast on the day of the meeting at the MLPA Initiative website.

Wednesday, December 10, 2008 @ 1:30 p.m.

Blue Ribbon Task Force
Clarion Hotel and Mansion Inn
700 - 16th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Thursday, December 11, 2008 @ 9:00 a.m.

Special joint meeting with the California Fish and Game Commission
Blue Ribbon Task Force
Resources Building Auditorium
1416 Ninth Street, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 @ 9:30 a.m.

Science Advisory Team
Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel
6101 West Century Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Tuesday, January 13, 2009 & Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Regional Stakeholder Group
San Diego
Location to be determined

All meeting agendas are posted to the MLPA website at least a week in advance of the meeting and 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 to the website within two days of each meeting.

Events & Activities

Suggestions for upcoming community events to inform the public on the south coast process are welcome! A special thank you to those Key Communicators who have been distributing MLPA Initiative information to a wider public. To learn how you can become a Key Communicator, contact the MLPA Initiative Public Outreach and Education Team via email or call (310) 738-2665.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who designs MPAs in the MLPA Initiative process?

Alternative MPA proposals are developed by a regional stakeholder group (RSG) in a collaborative public process. MPA proposals are based on the MLPA-mandated "best readily available science," as outlined in a master plan for marine protected areas and guided by the input and scientific evaluations of a science advisory team. Both the California Department of Fish and Game and California Department of Parks and Recreation provide advice and guidance to the RSG throughout the process. Development of MPA proposals is overseen by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force, which provides policy guidance and ultimately, based on the proposals developed by the RSG, forwards a final recommendation to the California Fish and Game Commission. Public comments and participation are encouraged during the entire MLPA process.

Is there a minimum total area or pre-determined percentage of how much of each study region needs to be put into marine protected areas (MPAs)?

There is no total area or minimum percentages designated to be set aside for MPAs in each study region. The MPA design process is based on the goals and objectives of the MLPA and a set of scientific guidelines, outlined in a master plan for MPAs, for achieving a sound network. These guidelines do not

set a specific percentage to include in MPAs; rather they provide a range of guidance for individual MPA size, distance between MPAs and information on key habitats and species likely to benefit from MPAs.

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:

Stay informed

- Attend meetings or view live or archived web-casts of meetings

Provide feedback

- Submit feedback on documents open for public comment
- Provide comment at meetings
- Submit formal letters or written comment
- Participate in workshops and public information presentations
- Contact a member of the regional stakeholder group
- Submit comments, ideas and suggestions to AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov

Spread the word

- Circulate South Coast News far and wide to help ensure others in your community are aware of the MLPA Initiative, upcoming meetings and opportunities for public involvement
- Distribute our new brochure (attached) - post it on your website, circulate it via listservs and/or print it for distribution at community events
- 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 (310) 928-1537 to learn more

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Natural Resources Agency,
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.654.1885 office
916.653.8102 fax
AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/>