



*September 2009*

## **Executive Director's Message**

It has been quite a busy summer for all of us involved with the MLPA Initiative in the south coast study region. We are delighted to report that earlier this summer more than 900 people attended the eight evening open houses held over a period of two weeks. The open houses provided the public an opportunity to review and comment on the six different "Round 2" draft proposals, resulting in more than 800 comments, suggestions and ideas that will help guide the stakeholder group members as they move into the third and final round of MPA proposal development. This level of public interest (and passion) is exactly what we had hoped for, as it will help ensure we devise the best possible outcome for our shared coastal resources.

Within each MLPA Initiative group, the wheels continue to turn as well. The science advisory team has been diligently conducting scientific evaluations, the blue ribbon task force has provided guidance for the development of Round 3 proposals (see FAQ below for more details), and the members of the regional stakeholder group continue to demonstrate their dedication and willingness to collaborate, even when finding "middle ground" seems challenging.

In addition to all the activity in the south coast study region, the last few months also saw the beginning and ending of the planning process in two other study regions. In June, we began initial outreach efforts and collaborative data collection in the north coast study region. And on August 5, the California Fish and Game Commission adopted the blue ribbon task force's "Integrated Preferred Alternative" for the north central coast study region, bringing a two-and-a-half year, intensive, stakeholder process to conclusion.

As we prepare to move into the home stretch in the south coast, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Cathy Reheis-Boyd as the new chair of the task force. We are excited to continue the planning process under Cathy's leadership, and extend our most heartfelt thanks to former Chair Don Benninghoven for his tireless efforts.

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

## **Meeting Highlights**

A complete list of upcoming meeting dates through December 2009 can be found on the MLPA Initiative website.

## **Blue Ribbon Task Force**

On July 28-29, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) held its ninth public meeting at the Sheraton Delphina in Santa Monica. This meeting focused on the outcomes of the Round 2 marine protected area (MPA) proposals. The task force received the following:

- Evaluations of draft and revised MPA proposals from the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT), California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), California Department of Parks and Recreation and MLPA staff.
- An interactive stakeholder panel provided overviews of draft and revised MPA proposals and insights into specific geographies within the MLPA South Coast Study Region. This panel consisted of work groups of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) and from groups external to the SCRSG process.

The task force subsequently provided verbal guidance to the SCRSG for developing Round 3 MPA proposals. Lastly, the task force approved the revised 2008-2011 MLPA Initiative budget.

The task force will meet again October 20-22 in Long Beach to receive the final SCRSG MPA proposals and evaluations for the south coast and to develop recommendations to deliver to the California Fish and Game Commission in December.

## **Science Advisory Team**

The next SAT meeting is scheduled for October 6 to review, discuss, and potentially approve evaluations of Round 3 SCRSG MPA proposals. In the interim, DFG is reviewing nominations for potential SAT members in the north coast study region. An announcement of the new SAT membership is expected in late September or early October; following this announcement, a joint meeting will be held between SAT members for the south coast and north coast to share lessons learned and discuss preliminary work, such as defining bioregions and refining the list of species likely to benefit from MPAs.

## **South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group**

On August 3, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in its seventh meeting in Carlsbad, CA, marking the start of Round 3 of marine protected area (MPA) proposal development. During this meeting, SCRSG members were placed into three new work groups - work groups #1, #2 and #3 with each assigned a specific proposal (Topaz, External A and Lapis 1, respectively) - as a starting point for deliberations. This meeting also provided:

- Guidance from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force on Round 3 MPA proposal development. The task force emphasized the need to meet MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) and DFG feasibility guidelines where possible. In those rare exceptions where work groups chose not to meet SAT and DFG guidelines, SCRSG members should be explicit about the tradeoffs and the decisions reached on which guidelines or interests were intended to be met with the placement of a given MPA.
- SAT evaluations of each of the six Round 2 MPA proposals including: size and spacing, habitat representation and replication, bioeconomic modeling, marine birds and mammals, and results from the Ecotrust analysis of socioeconomic impacts to commercial and recreational fisheries.

- Evaluation of Round 2 MPA proposals with respect to DFG's feasibility guidelines for developing MPA designs, regulations and boundaries.
- Evaluation of Round 2 MPA proposals with respect to the California Department of Parks and Recreation's guidelines for developing MPAs as well as a staff evaluation for meeting goal 3 of the MLPA.

The SCRSG will hold its next work session in Los Angeles on September 9, 2009 to continue development of MPA proposals for each work group. The work session will be followed by a meeting in Los Angeles on September 9-10, 2009 where the SCRSG work groups will finalize their Round 3 MPA proposals.

## 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 on the MLPA Initiative website. Open houses, workshops and work sessions are not videotaped or webcast.

#### **Wednesday, September 9 & Thursday, September 10, 2009**

South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles

6101 West Century Blvd

Los Angeles, CA 90045

September 9: Work Session at 8:30 a.m. and meeting at 7:00 p.m.

September 10: Meeting at 8:00 a.m.

#### **Tuesday, October 6, 2009**

Science Advisory Team

Radisson Hotel at Los Angeles Airport

6225 West Century Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90045

9:30 a.m.

#### **Tuesday, October 20, Wednesday, October 21 & Thursday, October 22, 2009**

Blue Ribbon Task Force (will be joined by the members of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group)

Hilton Long Beach & Executive Meeting Center

701 West Ocean Blvd.

Long Beach, CA 90831

October 20: 1:30

October 21: 8:30 a.m.

October 22: 8:30 a.m.

\*Work sessions are not videotaped and do not include a formal public comment period; members of the public are welcome to attend as observers.

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

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How will the SCRSG work groups build upon their existing work to develop Round 3 draft proposals?**

On July 29, 2009, the MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) accepted a staff recommendation for identifying three of the Round 2 marine protected area (MPA) proposals to serve as "platforms" for developing MPA proposals development in Round 3. The staff recommendation further suggested that the SCRSG members be assigned to each of the three platforms based on a number of criteria, including stakeholder preference, creation of "safe harbor" for interests represented on the SCRSG, and responsiveness to BRTF guidance to generate MPA proposals that better meet the goals of the MLPA. Members of the three platforms received the following direction:

- All work groups: Directed to improve achievement of SAT guidelines, better conform to DFG feasibility criteria, and garner cross-interest support.
- Work group 1 direction: Continue to achieve a high level of cross-interest support and improve achievement of SAT guidelines. • Work group 2 direction: Continue to seek efficiency of MPA design and improve achievement of SAT guidelines.
- Work group 3 direction: Continue to address SAT guidelines and strive to achieve preferred SAT guidelines.

The three platforms (Topaz, External Proposal A and Lapis 1) will serve as the starting place for negotiations and refinement as each group strives to meet the goals of the MLPA and adhere to guidance from the BRTF. The BRTF encouraged members of the SCRSG to develop creative solutions and look across all proposals developed as part of the south coast process as these three platforms are refined.

## 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 webcasts of meetings
- 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 process. Public comment provided at meetings should be concise and focused on specific ideas or suggestions. 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 should be submitted via email, mail or fax.

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

Specific opportunities to provide input include:

- Submitting feedback on documents open for public comment
- Participating in workshops, open houses and public information presentations
- Contacting a member of the regional stakeholder group
- Submitting comments, ideas and suggestions to [AskMPA@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto: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 the MLPA Initiative brochure - 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) 738-2665 to learn more.

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