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2008

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## Executive Director's Message

On behalf of the MLPA Initiative, I am proud to introduce the first issue of the MLPA Initiative South Coast News. We will be distributing this newsletter on a regular basis to help keep you informed and actively involved in the south coast planning process. The newsletter includes a summary of recent MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT), and South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) meetings. We will highlight answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), documents available for public comment as well as upcoming meetings and events. As with all components of the MLPA Initiative, we welcome your feedback and comments to help make this a more effective tool for remaining engaged in the process.

As you will read in the updates, we are off and running in the MLPA Initiative South Coast Study Region! Your active involvement is what helps make the MLPA Initiative successful and we look forward to your comments and participation.

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

## Meeting Highlights

### ***Blue Ribbon Task Force***

In August 2008, Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman announced the seven-member [MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force](#) for the MLPA South Coast Study Region and selected former League of California Cities Executive Director Don Benninghoven as chair. The charge of the task force is to oversee the development of marine protected area (MPA) proposals for presentation to the California Fish & Game Commission, provide recommendations for coordinated MPA management with federal agencies, and provide direction for expenditure of MLPA Initiative funds.

On September 8, 2008, the task force held its first public meeting in San Diego. Key outcomes included:

- A review of the draft lessons learned report for the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region and recommendations for the south coast
- An introduction to the MLPA South Coast Study Region, including existing MPAs and a draft regional profile
- A review of methods for stakeholder involvement at both the statewide and regional levels
- Adoption of the 2008-2009 budget
- Adoption of the task force operating procedures and policies

The next task force meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 4 in Los Angeles.

#### Science Advisory Team

In September 2008, Donald Koch, director of the California Department of Fish and Game, appointed the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT). The SAT provides the scientific knowledge to assist the California Department of Fish and Game with meeting the objectives of the MLPA, provides scientific input to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force, and advises and assists in preparing a master plan for marine protected areas (MPAs).

On September 15, 2008, a joint meeting was held between the north central coast and south coast SATs. Key outcomes of this meeting include:

- Adopted the north central coast list of species likely to benefit from MPAs and the document describing the methods used to evaluate MPA proposals
- Introduced the south coast SAT to the MLPA process, including SAT operating principles and MPA evaluation criteria and methods
- Received background information about the south coast study region; north central coast SAT members presented information for consideration in the south coast process, including evaluation models and water quality information
- Formed work groups for the south coast SAT and chose SAT co-chairs

The next SAT meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12 in Los Angeles.

## Regional Stakeholder Group

In October 2008, the chair of the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force and director of the California Department of Fish and Game appointed the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG). Approximately 60 individuals will provide local expertise and stakeholder legitimacy as they develop marine protected area (MPA) proposals for the south coast study region.

On October 6 & 7, the SCRSG had its kickoff meeting, providing members with a fuller description of their charge and work plan, background materials as well as the draft regional profile for the south coast study region. SCRSG members also participated in two breakout sessions focusing on their areas of interest and expertise and identifying hopes and challenges for the south coast process.

Key outcomes included:

- Modified the proposed ground rules and unanimously adopted the revised ground rules
- Received introduction to the draft regional profile, which is expected to be the basis for joint fact-finding between the SCRSG, MLPA staff and the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team

The next SCRSG meeting will be held on November 18 & 19 in Ventura and will focus on developing regional goals and discuss the guidelines for evaluating existing MPAs.

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## Documents for Public Comment

South Coast Regional Profile

Comments on the Draft Regional Profile for the South Coast Study Region are due on October 31, 2008. We invite you to share your knowledge about the south coast study region to make certain the best readily available information is provided to stakeholders and decision-makers within the MLPA process.

Comments can be submitted the following ways:

- Email to [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)
- Mail to:  
Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

c/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
• Fax to 916.653.8102, Attn: MLPA Initiative

The profile is available [online](#) or on CD by contacting [Kathie Magnuson](#) (916.653.9486). Print forms of the profile are also available at libraries throughout the south coast study region. Contact Kathie for a list of libraries.

## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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](#).

Tuesday, November 4, 2008  
Blue Ribbon Task Force  
Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel  
6101 West Century Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Wednesday, November 12, 2008  
Science Advisory Team  
Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel  
6101 West Century Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Tuesday, November 18, 2008 and Wednesday, November 19, 2008  
South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
Crowne Plaza  
450 East Harbor Boulevard  
Ventura, CA 93001

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

MLPA Initiative materials will be available at the following public events:

[Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival](#) - Oct 22-24, Santa Barbara

[H2O Conference](#) - October 28-30, Long Beach

[Autumn Festival](#) - November 1 & 2, Aquarium of the Pacific

[NOAA and Our Planet Day](#) - November 15, Aquarium of the Pacific

Suggestions for other 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 310-928-1537.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

***How will smaller groups have a say in the process and not be overshadowed by larger, more connected interest groups? Will regular citizens be able to provide meaningful input during the entire process?***

The MLPA Initiative is designed as an open and transparent process to ensure all stakeholders, including members of the general public, have an equal opportunity to have their voices heard. There are a number of opportunities built into the process to help individuals and/or groups public become involved. The south coast regional stakeholder group (SCRSG) represents a diversity of interests and perspectives including, but not limited, recreational and commercial fishing, conservation, education and local and tribal governments. We encourage you to [contact](#) a member of the SCRSG to be sure your concerns are voiced in the process.

There are also public workshops held before and midway through regional planning processes. All meetings of the SCRSG, science advisory team (SAT), and task force (BRTF) are open to the public and include a specific agenda item devoted to public comments. Comments can be made on all planning documents which are available on the MLPA Initiative website, [www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa), and general comments can be submitted at any time throughout the process via [email](#) or [print copy mail](#).

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## 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

- Sign up for the [MLPA email list](#)
- [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 [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.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
- 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.

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Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.654.2506 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
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## 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  
[Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

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 Agenda & Meeting Materials

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 Agenda & Meeting Materials

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.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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.

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## 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.

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### 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

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Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.654.1885 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
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## Executive Director's Message

After a much deserved holiday break, the MLPA Initiative team was renewed and inspired to accomplish the many goals that lie ahead in 2009. Just two weeks into the New Year, the dedicated members of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) met in San Diego to focus their efforts on the important work at hand. Among other things, the SCRSG members fine-tuned their skills with our new planning tool, MarineMap, and reached a shared vision of what their hopes are for the study region's MPAs by adopting a set of south coast regional goals and objectives.

A custom designed web-based marine protected area (MPA) decision support tool, MarineMap allows stakeholder group members to draw prospective MPAs, share them with others and assemble MPAs into arrays. MarineMap can then be used to generate reports on the resources captured within individual MPAs to help determine the extent to which MPA proposals meet evaluation guidelines. This tool also allows members of the public to view the MPA proposals developed by the SCRSG and query information about California's marine environment. I encourage you all to visit MarineMap at <http://marinemap.org/marinemap/> and become familiar with this incredible tool.

Thank you, once again, for being an integral part of this process by informing others about the MLPA Initiative and encouraging their involvement. I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming public meetings.

~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 [Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

On December 10, 2008, the task force held its third public meeting at the Clarion Hotel Mansion Inn in Sacramento. The task force adopted the following:

- A summary of previous task force policy guidance
- A memo describing the requirements of completing and submitting external MPA proposals

In addition, the task force directed MLPA staff to:

- Provide a written report indicating the status of implementing recommendations from the lesson learned report for the north central coast
- Provide a written report on the status of federal and state coordination recommendations for MPA management
- Provide a list of all MLPA contractors and their scopes of work

The task force met again on [December 11, 2008](#) in a special joint meeting with the California Fish and Game Commission in Sacramento. The commission adopted language regarding how the regional stakeholders should include the existing northern Channel Islands and Santa Barbara Island MPAs in their MPA array proposals for the south coast study region. [Click here](#) to view this memo.

On [Thursday, January 22, 2009](#) the task force held a meeting by conference call, which was audiotaped. The meeting was primarily intended to gather information and no actions were taken, including postponement of a decision on how to address active military use areas for MPA planning purposes. A summary of this meeting will be available online in the coming weeks. The next task force meeting will be held on [February 26](#) in the Santa Barbara/Ventura area.

## Science Advisory Team [Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

The fourth meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) took place at the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel on December 17, 2008. At this meeting, SAT members:

- Adopted the criteria used to evaluate species on the "Species Likely to Benefit" list
- Reviewed the methods for evaluating MPA proposals in the south coast study region
- Delineated five bioregions in the study region
- Approved the current approach to identifying unique habitats
- Reviewed science presentations to be given to the SCSR Regional Stakeholder Group
- Assigned work groups to address new questions from the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

The first half of a SAT meeting was held via conference call on Friday, January 23, which was audiotaped. The second half of the meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 27 in Los Angeles.

#### South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group [Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

The third meeting of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) was held in San Diego on January 13 & 14, 2009. During this meeting, the SCRSG:

- Unanimously adopted a set of regional goals and objectives for the south coast study region
- Launched the three SCRSG work groups (lapis, opal and topaz) that will create draft proposals for marine protected areas
- Received informational presentations on issues related to oceanography, birds and mammals, and water quality, as well as MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) evaluation methods
- Received guidance on preferred boundaries and MPA designs that meet the California Department of Fish and Game's feasibility guidelines

SCRSG members requested additional information about a preliminary recommendation to avoid placing MPAs in certain areas actively utilized by the U.S. Department of Defense.

The SCRSG also requested further guidance from the SAT on water quality concerns, retention zones and ecological features of San Clemente and San Nicolas islands including the connectivity between the mainland, the northern Channel Islands and Santa Barbara Island. Feedback from the SAT on these issues will be presented at the next SCRSG meeting in Oceanside on [March 3 & 4](#). Before then, two SCRSG work sessions will be held on [January 29 \(Los Angeles\)](#) and [February 10 \(Huntington Beach\)](#).

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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](#).

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Science Advisory Team

9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel

6101 West Century Boulevard

Los Angeles, CA 90045

Thursday, January 29, 2009

Regional Stakeholder Group

Work Session 1\*

9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Embassy Suites Hotel North

9801 Airport Boulevard

Los Angeles, CA 90254

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Regional Stakeholder Group

Work Session 2\*

9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Huntington Beach (Location TBD)

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Science Advisory Team

9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Conference Call

Thursday, February 26, 2009

## Blue Ribbon Task Force

### Santa Barbara/Ventura area (Location TBD)

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.

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

## Events & Activities

### MLPA South Coast Tribal Forum

A two-day South Coast Tribal Forum will be held in the Los Angeles area on [Friday, February 27 & Saturday, February 28](#). This forum will assist Native Americans within the south coast study region to become informed of the MLPA Initiative process and offer opportunities for tribes to be involved. For more details, please contact [Kelly Sayce](#), MLPA Initiative Public Outreach and Education Coordinator.

Sunday, January 25, 2009

Tribal Informational Meeting

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Santa Ynez Tribal Hall

100 Via Juana Ln

Santa Ynez, CA 93460

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association Meeting

10:00 a.m.

Cocina Del Charro

525 N. Quince Street

Escondido, CA 92025

Sunday, February 1, 2009

Tribal Informational Meeting

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Aquarium of the Pacific

100 Aquarium Way

Long Beach, CA 90802

Friday, February 27 & Saturday, February 28, 2009  
MLPA South Coast Tribal Forum  
Day 1: 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. (overnight accommodations provided)  
Day 2: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
Temescal Gateway Park  
15601 Sunset Blvd.  
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

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.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

***What is the difference between a biogeographical region, a bioregion and a subregion?***

Biogeographical region - is a term used in the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) and the *California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas* to describe large-scale geographic areas that contain substantially distinct species compositions. These biogeographical regions reflect collections of species that share similar geographic ranges that are largely limited to each region. In the south coast, a single biogeographical region exists and it is identical to the MLPA South Coast Study Region (Point Conception to the California/Mexico border, including the eight Channel Islands in the Southern California Bight). The other biogeographical region for MLPA planning purposes is the California/Oregon border to Point Conception.

Bioregion - is a term used by the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) to describe biogeographically relevant subregions (hereafter referred to as bioregions) within each study region. Five bioregions have been identified in the south coast study region by SAT and include:

- North Mainland (Point Conception to Marina del Rey)
- South Mainland (Marina del Rey to California/Mexico border)
- West Channel Islands (San Miguel, Santa Rosa and San Nicolas islands)
- Mid Channel Islands (Santa Cruz, Anacapa, Santa Barbara islands)

- East Channel Islands (Santa Catalina and San Clemente islands)

Bioregions will be used by the SAT in evaluating MPA proposals for the MLPA South Coast Study Region. For a map of south coast bioregions, [click here](#).

Subregion - is a term used when representing information in the regional profile and/or displaying study region maps for planning purposes: it has no relationship to biological or ecological characteristics. Subregions were identified by staff early in the process for the ease of displaying information on maps. There are seven subregions:

- Subregion 1 (Government Point to Rincon Point)
- Subregion 2 (Rincon Point to Point Dume)
- Subregion 3 (Point Dume to Newport Beach)
- Subregion 4 (Newport Beach to Agua Hedionda)
- Subregion 5 (Agua Hedionda to California/Mexico Border)
- Subregion 6 (Northern Channel Islands)
- Subregion 7 (Santa Catalina and Santa Barbara Islands)

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c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.654.1885 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
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## Executive Director's Message

As bleak as many parts of the state's economy appear, we are fortunate that the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative's planning budget has not been directly impacted by the state's fiscal crisis. Thankfully, the MLPA Initiative public-private partnership remains strong, enabling us to supplement state resources and to continue redesigning California's system of marine protected areas. This commitment was recently confirmed by Secretary for Natural Resources Mike Chrisman in a letter dated January 29, 2009. [View the secretary's letter.](#)

Our public-private partnership has helped the MLPA Initiative weather the surrounding financial storm, allowing us to move forward with the planning process in the south coast study region. I wish to commend our stakeholders, scientists and members of the public for their resolve and fortitude to complete our process during these challenging times. I also want to recognize the tremendous efforts of those MLPA staff members subject to the state work furlough who continue to meet the needs of the MLPA Initiative process despite their reduced hours and pay.

All of us hope our economy is on the mend. Thanks to each of you for your support and continuing involvement.

~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

## Agenda & Meeting Materials

On January 22, 2009, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) held its fourth public meeting via webinar and conference call. The BRTF directed the MLPA staff to:

- Continue discussions regarding military use areas and a proposal to avoid designating marine protected areas (MPAs) in those areas.
  - The task force requested that a full discussion of this issue take place at its February 26 meeting, including presentations from the U.S. Department of Defense and the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team, as well as input from stakeholders and members of the public.
  - The task force requested additional information prior to providing any guidance to the stakeholders regarding how military use areas will be considered in the MPA planning process.
- Continue the agenda item regarding MLPA contractors and their scopes of work. Task force members will review the document staff prepared for discussion in February.
- Provide a written report on the status of federal and state coordination recommendations for review in February.

The BRTF will meet again on Thursday February 26, 2009 in Santa Barbara: a public meeting will be held in the morning and a tour will be taken in the afternoon (public is invited, but must provide own transportation).

## Science Advisory Team Agenda & Meeting Materials

The fifth meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) took place via teleconference and webinar on January 23, 2009 and at the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel on January 27, 2009. During this incredibly productive meeting, SAT members:

- Reviewed and approved evaluation methods for habitat representation and habitat replication, birds and mammals, modeling outputs, MPA spacing guidelines and some levels of protection. Evaluation work groups were created for each evaluation method. Finalizing evaluation methods for habitat quality and MPA sizing were tabled to the February 24, 2009 SAT meeting.

- Proposed a revised set of water quality maps to show additional information on issues such as stormwater outflow, power plant intakes and sediment toxicity. The SAT approved the water quality guidance document and maps, however water quality evaluation methods have not yet been finalized.
- Requested that the species likely to benefit work group draft a new list of species for the February 24 SAT meeting.
- Formed a work group to provide additional information about the ecology and connectivity patterns of the military use areas of the MPLA South Coast Study Region (including San Nicholas, San Clemente and the Camp Pendleton shore).

SAT members also addressed questions from the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG), including halibut movement, and assigned other questions dealing with water quality concerns, retention zones and ecological features of San Clemente and San Nicolas to specific work groups. In the future, MLPA Initiative staff will assign SCRSG questions to SAT members or work groups without waiting until the next SAT meeting to help expedite answers to SCRSG questions.

The most recent SAT meeting took place on [February 24, 2009](#) via teleconference and webinar. The next SAT meeting will be held on [April 1](#) in the Los Angeles area and [April 3](#) via teleconference and webinar.

### South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

[January 29 Agenda & Work Session Materials](#)

[February 10 Agenda & Work Session Materials](#)

On Thursday, January 29, 2009 and Tuesday, February 10, 2009, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) initiated the process of developing marine protected area (MPA) arrays in the south coast study region. The SCRSG was organized into three cross-interest work groups ([see FAQ](#)) and began generating ideas and options for potential MPAs in the south coast study region. During these initial discussions, SCRSG members considered how/whether proposed MPAs contribute to the MLPA goals and regional objectives as well as socioeconomic factors. MLPA Initiative staff used a GIS tool, MarineMap, to capture suggested MPA shapes, rationales and other considerations. Key questions were also noted and referred for review by the science advisory team and/or blue ribbon task force, as needed.

These initial workgroup discussions were made in the spirit of "inventing

without committing," giving SCRSG members the flexibility to introduce ideas for MPA shapes and allowed uses in a constructive manner.

The work groups will report back to the full SCRSG at its next meeting on [March 3-4, 2009](#) meeting in Long Beach. This will mark the first of three iterative rounds of MPA planning by the SCRSG. Work group presentations at the March SCRSG meeting will be an opportune time for the public to learn about the initial suggestions from the workgroups and provide comment to the SCRSG on its efforts.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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](#).

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Blue Ribbon Task Force

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (meeting)

12:35 – 5:30 p.m. (offsite tour)

Hotel Mar Monte

1111 East Cabrillo Blvd.

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Tuesday, March 3 & Wednesday, March 4\*, 2009

South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

Hilton Long Beach & Executive Meeting Center

701 West Ocean Blvd.

Long Beach, CA 90831

Wednesday, April 1 and Friday, April 3, 2009

Science Advisory Team

April 1: 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Location TBD in the Los Angeles area)

April 3: 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Conference call and webinar)

*\*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 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

### MLPA South Coast Tribal Forum

Two one-day MLPA South Coast Tribal Forums will be held in the Los Angeles area on [Friday, February 27](#) & [Saturday, February 28](#). These forums will assist Native Americans within the south coast study region to become more informed about the MLPA Initiative process and offer opportunities for tribes to be involved. For more details, please contact [Kelly Sayce](#), MLPA Initiative Public Outreach and Education Coordinator.

Friday, February 27 & Saturday, February 28, 2009

### MLPA South Coast Tribal Forum

Day 1: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Day 2: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

[Temescal Gateway Park](#)

15601 Sunset Blvd.

Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

***Registration will take place between 8 and 9 a.m. on both days.***

Suggestions for upcoming community events to inform the public about 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.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

***What are the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder (SCRSG) work groups (also known as "gem groups")?***

In an effort to promote creative thinking, maximum participation and efficient deliberations amongst SCRSG members, the SCRSG is organized into three cross-interest work groups known as "gem groups." Named after semi-precious stones – lapis, opal and topaz – the intent of these smaller work groups is to foster effective discussion and information exchange about possible MPA options. The work group sessions are designed to provide SCRSG members a space to share ideas and foster honest and

open dialogue to develop marine protected area concepts, which would be more difficult in a larger group setting.

All discussions in the work groups are currently preliminary and any recommendations coming out of the work groups will be formally presented at plenary sessions of the SCRSG for public input. While the public is welcome to observe all work group sessions, the first opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the SCRSG's initial efforts will be at the [March 3-4](#) meeting in Long Beach.

***To help the public gain a greater understanding of the marine protected area planning and design process, the MLPA Initiative will be circulating a special supplement to South Coast News focusing entirely on this topic. Keep your eye out for this additional issue coming soon!***

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## 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:

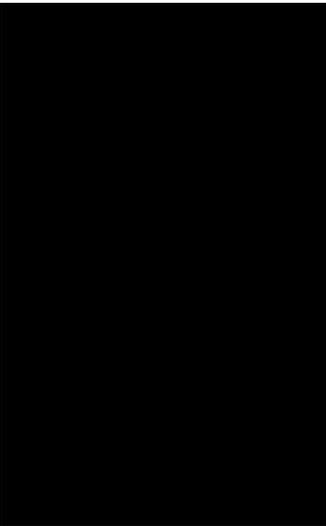
### Stay informed

- Sign up for the [MLPA email list](#)
- [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 on meeting and mixers in your area

### 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 [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.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 310-738-2665 to learn more.

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Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.654.1885 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa>

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May  
2009

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Director's  
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Highlights

BRTF  
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• FAQs

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## Executive Director's Message

Recently, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) began developing Round 2 draft marine protected area (MPA) proposals. Equipped with the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team's evaluation of "Round 1" draft arrays/proposals, along with important guidance from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force and feedback from the California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation, as well as feedback from MLPA Initiative staff, the SCRSG has been charged with integrating multiple interests – including the public's input – during this phase of MPA proposal development. SCRSG members are encouraged to "reach toward the middle" to begin balancing important tradeoffs and achieve broad, cross-interest support.

This cross-interest deliberation began at the SCRSG's last meeting on April 28, 2009 and work session on April 29 (both in Oxnard) and will continue during its next [work sessions and meeting May 19-20](#) in Santa Ana. In response to requests from the SCRSG and the public, an additional half day work session has scheduled that evening beginning at 7:00 p.m. I encourage you to provide the SCRSG with specific feedback – [whether in person or via email, mail or fax](#) – on the components of the arrays that you support or do not support, and why. Please also consider how the proposed arrays, and your comments, help meet the goals of the MLPA. This valuable public input will assist the SCRSG during Round 2 to develop strong cross-interest draft proposals.

~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

### Agenda & Meeting Materials

The MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) held its sixth public meeting in Dana Point on April 15 & 16, 2009. During this day and a half meeting the task force reviewed 10 "Round 1" draft MPA arrays/proposals (six draft arrays submitted by the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG), three draft external proposals, and proposal 0 with existing MPAs) and received the first round analyses by the SAT, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), State Parks and MLPA Initiative staff. The BRTF provided specific guidance to the SCRSG for developing "Round 2" draft MPA proposals:

- Reduction of the overall number of draft proposals in Round 2 to no more than five to six alternative proposals.
- Building Round 2 draft proposals that have significant cross-interest support.
- Scientific evaluations are important, including evaluations of habitat, size, spacing, and bioeconomic modeling, as well as water quality issues and use of best readily available substrate data.
- Importance of DFG feasibility criteria.
- How to consider military use areas and pending military closures.
- Reiterating and updating guidance provided in previous study regions.

In addition, the task force directed the MLPA staff to provide a written memo to the SCRSG that clarifies BRTF guidance regarding developing draft MPA proposals in Round 2, and it postponed the agenda item regarding recommendations for improved MPA management coordination with federal agencies.

During the afternoon of April 16, the task force participated in a field trip to Treasure Island in Laguna Beach and Crystal Cove State Park. This tour provided task force members an opportunity to interact with public educators, commercial and recreational fishermen, resource managers and fisheries-dependent business operators. The BRTF will meet again on May 18 & 19 via teleconference and webinar.

Science Advisory Team\_  
April 1 & 6- Agenda & Meeting Materials

The sixth meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) took place at the Embassy Suites Hotel North in Los Angeles on April 1, 2009 and via teleconference and webinar on April 6, 2009. During this meeting, SAT members:

- Reviewed and approved evaluation results for habitat representation and replication, MPA size and spacing and the bioeconomic modeling. Additional review of the water quality evaluation methods was required and was scheduled for the next SAT meeting.
- Conditionally approved evaluation results for birds and mammals and potential commercial and recreational fishery impacts, as well a revised response to the BRTF regarding the ecology of military use areas. All documents were scheduled for review at the next SAT meeting.
- Approved all new levels of protection (LOP) designations, the beach manipulation activities document, responses to questions from the last SCRSG meeting and text associated with previously-approved LOP designation.
- Determined additional discussion is required to develop guidance on how to include natural and restored wetlands in MPA proposals. The work group will revisit this issue and discuss how to provide guidance to the SCRSG for discussion at a SAT meeting.

May 5 - Agenda & Meeting Materials

On Tuesday, May 5 the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) held their seventh meeting met via teleconference and webinar. During this meeting a number of documents were approved, including:

- Evaluation methods for marine birds and mammals and water quality, as well as information guidance on wetlands restoration activities and artificial reefs.
- Draft response to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force's request for a description of how the SAT uses the status of fish stocks information.

Also during this meeting, a new committee was formed to further review, comment and evaluate how best to integrate new data proposed for addressing habitat data gaps.

The next SAT meeting will be held on [Friday, May 15](#) via teleconference and webinar. This meeting will solely focus on the SAT's analysis of military use areas proposed for the south coast study region.

### South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

#### March 3 & 4 - Agenda & Meeting Materials

On March 3 & 4, 2009, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in its fourth meeting and work session in Long Beach. On March 3, general meeting, SCRSG members received an update of evaluation methods as well as guidelines for developing draft MPA arrays including:

- An interim decision from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) on how to address the pending military closures in the workgroups' draft arrays;
- Answers to some key feasibility questions for developing MPA designs, regulations and boundaries; and
- Description of the methods used in evaluating the draft arrays.

Also on March 3, three external MPA proposals from the Fisherman's Information Network, United Anglers of Southern California, and the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper and Santa Monica Baykeeper were presented to the SCRSG for consideration as it moved forward to finalize draft MPA arrays.

On March 4, each of the three SCRSG work groups completed two draft arrays, including MPA shapes, designations and rationales. These draft arrays were forwarded to the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team, DFG and MLPA Initiative staff for evaluation and to the BRTF and public for review.

#### April 28 - Agenda & Meeting Materials

On April 28, 2009, the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in its fifth meeting in Oxnard, CA. This meeting marked the start of "Round 2" marine protected areas (MPA) proposal development. SCRSG members received guidance and feedback from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), the MLPA Master Science Plan Advisory Team (SAT), California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) and MLPA Initiative staff (I-Team), including:

- Key BRTF guidance to create cross-interest proposals in each of the gems groups, defining cross-interest as “a broad range of consumptive and non-consumptive interests as represented through the SCRSG”. SCRSG members were instructed to develop a single cross-interest proposal in each work group.
- SAT evaluations of each of the ten Round 1 MPA arrays/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. Areas of convergence and a summary of key evaluation points for each array/proposal were also provided.
- DFG and State Parks’ evaluations relative to DFG feasibility guidelines and conformed with State Parks guidance.

On April 29, the SCRSG members met in their respective gem groups for an all-day work session to begin designing their cross-interest draft proposals. On April 30, SCRSG and I-Team members, along with members of the public, participated in a field trip from Oxnard to Malibu.

In response to SCRSG member requests for additional time to accommodate new guidance and gain more input from the general public, a supplemental work session and evening public comments session will take place on [May 19](#). The SCRSG work groups will continue in work sessions on [May 20](#). An SCRSG meeting will be held on [May 21](#), during which SCRSG members will have the opportunity to determine which proposals, including the external proposals, will be forwarded to the SAT, BRTF, DFG, State Parks and I-Team for Round 2 evaluation.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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](#).

Friday, May 15, 2009  
Science Advisory Team  
2:30 p.m.  
Teleconference/webinar

Meeting Agenda

Monday, May 18 & Tuesday, May 19, 2009  
Blue Ribbon Task Force  
9:00 a.m. each day  
Teleconference/webinar

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, May 19\* & Wednesday, May 20\*, 2009  
South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
Doubletree Hotel Santa Ana  
201 East MacArthur Blvd.  
Santa Ana, CA 92707  
Tuesday, May 19 - 1:30 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.; Public comment 7:00-9:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, May 20- 8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 21, 2009  
South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
Doubletree Hotel Santa Ana  
201 East MacArthur Blvd.  
Santa Ana, CA 92707  
9:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 4, 2009  
Blue Ribbon Task Force  
Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel  
6101 West Century Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

*\*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 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

Upcoming Public Workshops

Save the date! Public workshops will be held June 29 & 30 and July 1, 6, 7, 8 & 9, 2009 in various locations (TBD) throughout the south coast study.

These workshops are an opportunity for the public to review and comment on Round 2 draft proposals. Please check the [website](#) for updates on location information.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why is fisheries management not directly addressed in the MLPA planning process?***

Marine protected areas (MPAs) and the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) are intended to complement existing fishery regulations and are not intended to replace existing regulations. The MLPA is designed to improve our system of MPAs in order to protect marine life, habitat and ecosystems. MPAs address a broad array of ecosystem needs and, in particular, allow for interactions between both fished and unfished species to occur in a more natural setting. If any changes to fisheries regulations were required in response to MPAs, this would occur through existing systems established in fisheries management plans and other regulatory frameworks.

### ***How does the ecosystem management requirement in the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) differ from the MLPA?***

California's primary state fisheries management statute, the MLMA, acknowledges that conservation and management programs (such as that being developed under the MLPA) help ensure conservation and facilitate long-term protection of fishery resources. The purpose of habitat protection in the MLMA is to advance the "primary fishery management goal" of sustainability and so may only provide limited protection of a particular habitat. Conversely, although the MLPA considers fishery habitat, it also encompasses broader, ecosystem-based objectives that are not limited to *only* managing fisheries. Some goals of the MLPA simply cannot be achieved with traditional fisheries management.

A lessons-learned evaluation of the MLMA is currently underway as a joint venture between the California Ocean Protection Council, California Fish and Game Commission, and DFG. This project is intended to evaluate the performance to date of the MLMA to date and provide recommendations to improve future MLMA efforts. Please visit the "[MLMA Lessons Learned Project](#)" website for more information.

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## Get Involved

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### Stay informed

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- MLPA Initiative is on Facebook! Join the [MLPA Initiative group](#) on Facebook for the latest MLPA news on meeting and mixers in your area

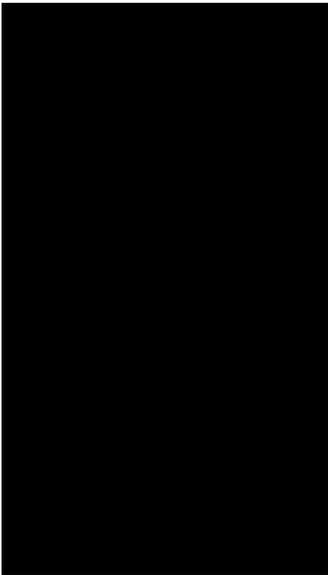
### Provide feedback

Providing feedback is one of the most important ways to get involved in the MLPA Initiative process. All written comments should be submitted via [email](#), [mail](#) or [fax](#). All comments received are compiled on a weekly basis and distributed to the I-Team and MLPA Initiative groups (BRTF, SCRSG and SAT). It is not appropriate to send comments to SAT or BRTF members directly.

Public comment at MLPA Initiative meetings is another important opportunity to provide input and feedback. Public comments should be succinct, concise and focused on specific ideas or suggestions. While the time available for public comments at meetings is limited to a couple of minutes per individual, there is an essentially unlimited opportunity for written public comment.

### Other opportunities to provide input include:

- 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 [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.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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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  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa>

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## Executive Director's Message

This special edition of South Coast News is intended to answer many of your important questions regarding the MLPA Initiative's marine protected area (MPA) planning process. This newsletter explores (1) differences between the brainstorming steps of inventing draft MPA ideas and preliminary draft arrays during work sessions of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG), (2) completing and presentating three different rounds of MPA concepts over the next seven months, and (3) key opportunities for the public to weigh in on MPA ideas.

As we explore the details of the MPA planning process, it is important to recognize one of the pillars of our process – a set of commitments (which are termed “groundrules”) that all SCRSG members unanimously made to the process and to each other. I want to commend the members of the SCRSG for their support of the MLPA Initiative process and for their continued resolution to maintain personal respect, avoid prejudging outcomes and refrain from questioning individual motives. The SCRSG members' dedication to creating a productive and safe space by containing the initial ideas and discussion themes to within the work groups and the MLPA Initiative process have helped uphold the collaborative nature of this stakeholder-driven process. To review the SCRSG groundrules, [click here](#).

I hope this special edition of South Coast News is informative and helpful as you navigate the MPA planning process. If you have any further questions on this topic, please don't hesitate to ask.

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

### Key Questions About the MPA Planning Process

[What is the difference between a MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group \(SCRSG\) general meeting and a SCRSG work session?](#)

[What is the process for developing marine protected area \(MPA\) proposals within the south coast study region?](#)

What stage is the SCRSG in the MPA development process for the south coast study region?

Can the public submit MPA proposals?

What is the timeline for developing MPA proposals in the south coast study region?

When is the public encouraged to provide input on MPA proposals?

Definition of "array" and other key terms

What is the difference between a MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) general meeting and a SCRSG work session?

SCRSG members participate in two different forums:

**General meetings.** Meetings include all members of the SCRSG and contain updates on the MLPA Initiative process, scientific and informational presentations and SCRSG discussions and decisions. Meetings are also when SCRSG members present their suggested MPA arrays and proposals. Meetings are webcast and videotaped, and include opportunities for public comment.

**Work sessions.** Work sessions include subsets, or "work groups," of the full SCRSG membership and are an opportunity to apply information shared during meetings. Often work sessions are focused on developing MPA concepts and arrays, but may also cover special topics (such as birds and mammals or goals and objectives). All discussions in work groups are preliminary and developed under the guidance of the agreed upon ground rules that commit to keeping initial ideas within the work groups until they can be refined.

Once ideas are discussed within work groups and suggestions or recommendations are ready to be shared, the work groups make a presentation to the full SCRSG in a meeting. Work sessions are not webcast or videotaped in an effort to promote open dialogue and creative thinking. While members of the public are welcome to observe these initial discussions, there is no public comment period.

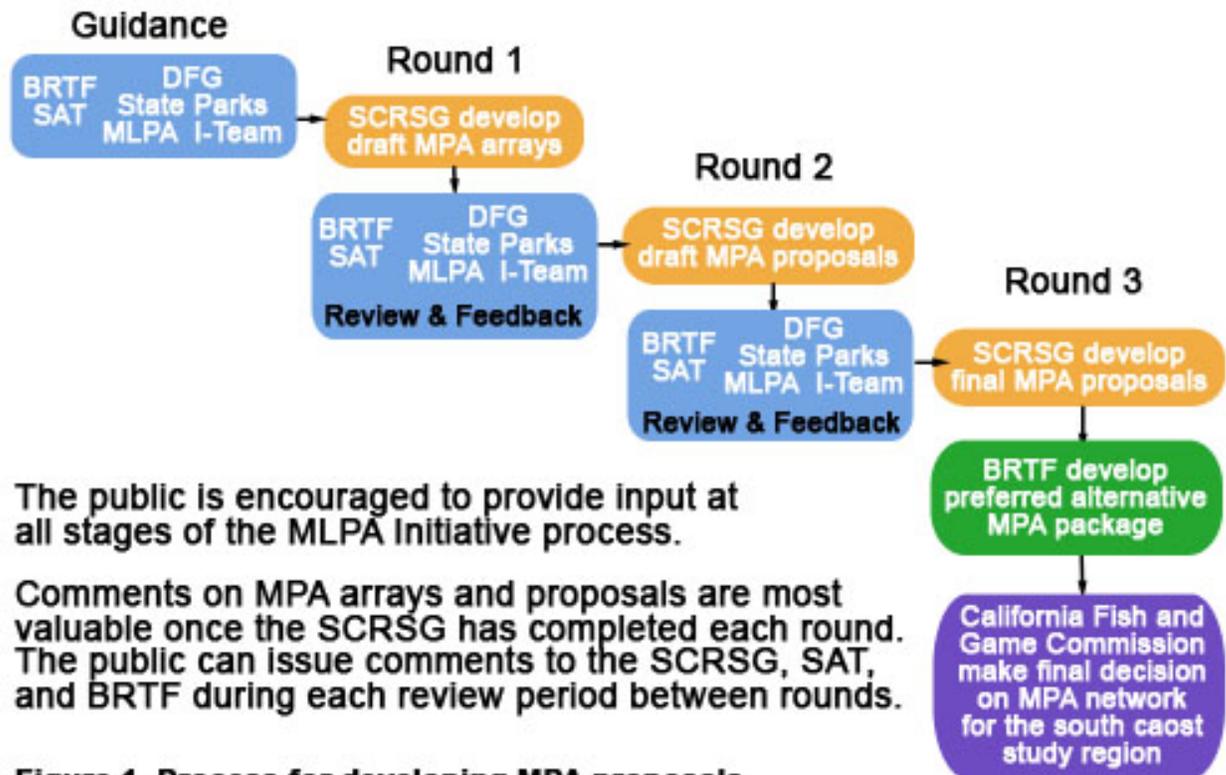
The first opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the SCRSG's discussions on MPA concepts is the March 3-4 meeting in Long Beach and at subsequent meetings and workshops each month from April through September.

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What is the process for developing marine protected area (MPA)

proposals within the south coast study region?

The MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) makes MPA design recommendations during three “rounds” of MPA proposal development and feedback. During each round of planning, draft MPAs proposed by the SCRSG, which are then evaluated by the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT). In addition, feedback is provided by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) and MLPA Initiative staff. The public also has an opportunity to provide input during each round.



**The public is encouraged to provide input at all stages of the MLPA Initiative process.**

**Comments on MPA arrays and proposals are most valuable once the SCRSG has completed each round. The public can issue comments to the SCRSG, SAT, and BRTF during each review period between rounds.**

**Figure 1. Process for developing MPA proposals**

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Where is the SCRSG in the MPA development process for the south coast study region?

On January 29 and February 10, 2009, the SCRSG work groups began Round 1 by generating ideas and options for MPAs in the south coast. The work groups will complete their first “draft MPA arrays” (which are not fully formed proposals) at the SCRSG’s March 3-4 meeting in Long Beach. At the end of the March meeting, these completed draft MPA arrays are submitted for their first round of evaluations; the results of these evaluations will be presented to the SCRSG at its next full meeting on April 28, 2009, and the SCRSG will begin revising MPA arrays for Round 2.

We expect that Round 2 “draft MPA proposals” will be completed at the May 21 SCRSG meeting and evaluations of those draft proposals will be submitted back to the SCRSG in

August. This will start Round 3, which involves the SCRSG developing “final SCRSG MPA proposals.” Round 3 will conclude with a joint meeting of the SCRSG and MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) in October 2009, where the final SCRSG MPA proposals are presented and the BRTF develops its recommendations to advance to the California Fish and Game Commission during a joint meeting in December 2009.

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Can the public submit MPA proposals?

Full external MPA proposals (for the entire study region) are solicited from members of the public during Round 1 and evaluated alongside those MPA proposals created by the SCRSG. The deadline for submitting full external proposals was February 17, 2009; these external proposals will be first presented to the SCRSG at its [March 3-4](#) meeting in Long Beach. Proposals for individual MPAs may be submitted at any time to [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov).

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What is the timeline for developing MPA proposals in the south coast study region?

*(NOTE: all dates or tentative and subject to change)*

Round 1 (draft MPA arrays): January – March 2009

Round 2 (draft MPA proposals): March – May 2009

Round 3 (final SCRSG MPA proposals): June – September 2009

Develop BRTF recommendation(s) : October 2009

Presentation of BRTF recommendation(s) to the California Fish and Game Commission: December 2009

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When is the public encouraged to provide input on MPA proposals?

MPA design options developed by the SCRSG over the next seven months will be viewable by the public at the end of each of the three rounds once the MPA design has been completed. The public is encouraged to comment on MPA draft arrays (Round 1), draft proposals (Round 2) and final SCRSG draft proposals (Round 3) at any time by email at [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov) and in person at the following meetings and public workshops:

Round 1  
March 3-4 - South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
Hilton Long Beach & Executive Meeting Center  
701 West Ocean Blvd.  
Long Beach, CA 90831

April 15 & 16 - Blue Ribbon Task Force  
*Dana Point/San Clemente area*

Round 2  
April 28 - South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
*Oxnard area*

May 21, South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
*Huntington Beach*

Public Workshops – Review of Round 2 draft proposals  
June 29, 30 & July 1, 7, 8, 9  
*Locations TBD throughout south coast study region*

July 28-29 - Blue Ribbon Task Force  
*Santa Monica area*

Round 3  
August 4 - South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
*Oceanside/Carlsbad area*

September 10 - South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
*Santa Monica/Los Angeles area*

For a complete detail of all upcoming MLPA Initiative meetings, [click here](#).

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Definition of "array."

In the MLPA Initiative process, "array" is used in two different ways:

1. In the MPA planning process, the first effort to draft MPA concepts for the entire study region (referred to as Round 1) are deemed "MPA draft arrays" – suggesting that these initial ideas are not full proposals. Whereas in Round 2, these refined arrays become "draft proposals," showing the progress the SCRSG has made in the MPA development process.
2. Within the statewide network of MPAs, an array also refers to the subset of MPAs within any given study region (e.g. The south coast study region *array* or group of

MPAs that connects to the larger MPA network, sometimes also referred to as a regional component of the statewide network).

[For additional commonly used definitions and acronyms, click here.](#)

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Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
c/o California Resources Agency,  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.654.1885 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa>

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2009

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BRTF

SAT

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## Executive Director's Message

It has been a full year since we embarked upon the south coast marine protected area (MPA) planning process, where we have made tremendous progress and learned a great amount as we journey forward together. We have seen countless hours put in by members of the regional stakeholder group, science advisory team, task force, staff, and interested public. Together we have produced volumes of guidance, scientific evaluations and suggestions that serve to both document where we've been and provide guidance for the future.

Though we may not always agree, and sometimes we take missteps, every meeting serves as testament to the tremendous levels of preparation, effort and commitment demonstrated by all involved. This dedication allowed us to recently reach an important milestone – the regional stakeholder group and external proponents completed their [Round 2 draft and revised 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 over the next two weeks.

Reflecting on the commitment of everyone involved in the south coast process, I am reminded of a quote from Phil Jackson, coach of the Los Angeles Lakers, who said, "Once you've done the mental work, there comes a point you have to throw yourself into the action and put your heart on the line. That means not only being brave, but being compassionate towards yourself, your teammates and your opponents." As we move forward with the upcoming open houses and then into Round 3, this quote reminds us all to focus on our shared passion for California's marine resources and to treat each other with compassion and respect.

For those of you in the study region, I encourage each of you to attend an

open house to review the proposals and provide your input. We want to know what you think!

~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

#### [June 4, 2009 Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

On June 4, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) held its ninth public meeting in Los Angeles. The task force unanimously adopted:

- Modified staff recommendations regarding the evaluation of Round 2 draft and revised marine protected area proposals, as well as preliminary guidance for Round 3; and
- MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team water quality evaluation method.

The task force also reviewed the status report on recommendations to improve coordination among state and federal agencies with MPA management responsibilities and directed MLPA Initiative staff to assist the state with implementing the first two recommendations outlines in the report.

The BRTF will meet again on [July 28 and 29 in the Santa Monica area](#). It is anticipated that additional guidance will be provided at that time to the regional stakeholder group regarding developing marine protected area proposals in Round 3.

### Science Advisory Team

#### [May 15, 2009- Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

On May 15, the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) held its seventh meeting via teleconference and webinar. During this meeting, the SAT approved the draft evaluation of ecological contributions of pending military closures and proposed MPAs at San Nicolas Island, Begg Rock and San Clemente Island.

June 18, 2009- Agenda & Meeting Materials

On June 18, the SAT held its eighth meeting. During this meeting, SAT:

- Approved all evaluation results for MPA size and spacing, habitat representation and replication, benefits to birds and mammals, potential fishery impacts, bioeconomic modeling and water quality for Round 2 draft proposals. These results will be presented to the MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force and MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) at their next meetings.
- Approved supporting text for previously approved 'levels of protection' (LOP) and approved a new 'low' LOP for take of ghost shrimp.

The water quality work group presented information on the White's Point Superfund site and the Portuguese Bend landslide and made recommendations as to how the SCRSG should consider integrating this information into Round 3. The spacing guidelines work group will continue to work on that subject over the summer.

The next SAT meeting is currently scheduled for October 6 as a joint meeting with the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team for the north coast study region.

South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

May 21, 2009 Agenda & Meeting Materials

On May 21, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in its sixth general meeting in Santa Ana, preceded by one and a half days of work sessions. SCRSG members received:

- Guidance from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) on pending military closures and military use areas, and how such areas should be treated in developing Round 2 MPA proposals.

Each of the SCRSG work groups, "Lapis," "Opal" and "Topaz," completed their Round 2 draft MPA proposals and, in doing so, pursued its own proposal development process:

- Opal and Topaz each submitted a single draft MPA proposal to be automatically moved forward for evaluation, and the Lapis workgroup submitted two proposals (Lapis 1 and Lapis 2).
- The gems groups then presented these proposals to the full SCRSG for review and discussion.

Based on the BRTF's guidance to forward no more than six proposals for Round 2 evaluation, a straw vote was conducted to select four proposals from among the five remaining proposals including: the three external proposals (External A, External B and External C) and the two non-converged Lapis proposals (Lapis 1 and Lapis 2). All SCRSG members (including those not present at the meeting) were given the opportunity to vote, and were required to vote for four of the five proposals.

The SCRSG will meet again on August 3 and 4 in the Oceanside/Carlsbad area to receive informational presentations on the review and evaluations of the Round 2 proposals conducted by the the MLPA Master Science Plan Advisory Team, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation and MLPA Initiative staff. Comments collected during the public open houses regarding Round 2 proposals will also be presented. The BRTF is expected to provide further guidance on how the draft proposals will create a framework for further negotiations in Round 3 of the MPA design process.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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 and work sessions are not videotaped or webcast.

Tuesday, July 28 & Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Blue Ribbon Task Force

July 28: 9:30 a.m.

July 29: 8:30 a.m.

Santa Monica area

Monday, August 3 (meeting) &  
Tuesday, August 4 (work session)\*, 2009  
South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group  
Oceanside/Carlsbad area

*\*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.

## Events & Activities

### South Coast Summer Public Open Houses

June 29 and 30, and July 1, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 13

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

The MLPA Initiative South Coast Summer Open Houses provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on "Round 2" draft MPA proposals developed for the south coast study region. All are welcome\* to visit informational stations and interact with staff and south coast regional stakeholders any time between 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. [Click here to download informational flier.](#)

Monday, June 29

Hilton Garden Inn

6450 Carlsbad Blvd.

Carlsbad, CA 92011

(760) 476-0800

Tuesday, June 30

Marina Village Conference Center

1936 Quivira Way

San Diego, CA 92109

(619) 222-1620

Wednesday, July 1

Aliso Creek Inn

31106 South Coast Highway

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

(949) 499-2271

Monday, July 6

Simons Banquet Center

Ports O Call Village, Berth 80

1050 Nagoya Way

San Pedro, CA 90731

(310) 514-1050

Tuesday, July 7

Marina del Rey Hotel

13534 Bali Way

Marina del Rey, CA 90292  
(310) 301-1000

Wednesday, July 8  
Residence Inn  
2101 W Vineyard Ave.  
Oxnard, CA 93036  
(805) 278-2200

Thursday, July 9  
Fess Parker's Doubletree  
633 East Cabrillo Blvd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103  
(805) 564-4333

Monday, July 13  
Catalina Island  
Avalon City Hall  
410 Avalon Canyon Rd,  
Avalon, CA 90704  
(310) 510-0220

What if I can't attend one of the public open houses?  
If you are not able to attend, you may also provide your feedback via email by sending a message to [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov) or by mail to MLPA Initiative, c/o California Natural Resources Agency, 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311, Sacramento, CA 95814. Comments should be received no later than July 19, 2009 so that SCRSG and BRTF members have time for review prior to the start of Round 3.

*\*Opportunities for the non-English speaking public to provide input will also be made available*

Upcoming North Coast Study Region Public Open Houses  
Save the dates! Open houses are scheduled to introduce the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative's North Coast Project. Attendees are welcome to walk through informational stations at their leisure any time between 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. The open house goals are to introduce people to the MLPA Initiative and its North Coast Project (state waters from the California border with Oregon to Alder Creek near Point Arena in Mendocino County), invite questions, and solicit input on the process.

Monday, July 20  
Wharfinger Building  
#1 Marina Way

Eureka, CA 95501

Tuesday, July 21  
Dana Gray Elementary School  
1197 Chestnut Street  
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

Wednesday, July 22  
Cultural Center  
1001 Front Street  
Crescent City, CA 95531

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## Frequently Asked Questions

What does best readily-available science mean and how is it used in the MLPA planning process?

Best readily-available science is the best data that is accessible in a format where it can be readily incorporated into the MPA planning process. Marine systems are highly complex and better information is constantly being generated by ongoing research. Recognizing this, and that complete information and knowledge will never exist to fully inform management decisions, under the MLPA the California State Legislature requires the use of best readily available science in decisions regarding the siting of new MPAs and any major modifications of existing MPAs (California Fish and Game Code §2855(a)).

In the south coast, the MLPA Initiative worked to identify readily-available science and information by hosting a data outreach workshop and undertaking joint fact-finding with stakeholders and members of the public, as well as creating with the science advisory team a process for data to be submitted and considered in the process. While there will always be additional information that may further inform MPA planning, a large amount already exists to help California redesign its system of MPAs to achieve the goals of the MLPA. Current information is based on a long history of scientific research and data gathering, not only in California, but also around the world on species distribution, spawning areas, life history characteristics and habitat relationships, among other topics.

Data are used in a variety of ways in the MLPA Initiative process. Information about the south coast study region is provided to stakeholders in a regional profile as well as an online decision support tool called MarineMap (<http://www.marinemap.org/marinemap/>). The MLPA Master

Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) uses data to create guidelines and conduct evaluations of MPA proposals.

Scientific guidelines for MPA planning are provided in the text of the Marine Life Protection Act; further details are outlined in the *California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*, as adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission after substantial public input and scientific peer review. The methods and application of the guidelines in the master plan have been peer reviewed and found to be scientifically sound. In keeping up with the best, readily-available science, the science guidance is reviewed, refined and improved in each study region as the planning process proceeds.

In the MLPA South Coast Study Region, the SAT tailored the science guidelines and evaluations to the unique conditions of the study region, based upon the best, readily-available science. Results of the science evaluations are provided to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group and MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force, who incorporate the results into their planning and decisions. After the MLPA planning process is completed, new science will continue to help improve California's network of MPAs by informing an adaptive management process.

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## 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

- Sign up for the [MLPA email list](#)
- [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. All written comments should be submitted via [email](#), [mail](#) or [fax](#). All comments received are compiled on a weekly basis

and distributed to the I-Team and MLPA Initiative groups (BRTF, SCRSG and SAT). Please do not send comments to SAT or BRTF members directly.

Public comment at MLPA Initiative meetings is another important opportunity to provide input and feedback. Public comments should be concise and focused on specific ideas or suggestions. While the time available for verbal comments at meetings is limited, there is an no limit on the length of comments submitted in writing.

Other opportunities to provide input include:

- Submit feedback on [documents](#) open for public comment
- Provide comment at [meetings](#)
- Submit [formal letters or written](#) comment
- Participate in [workshops, open houses and public information presentations](#)
- Contact a member of the [regional stakeholder group](#)
- Submit comments, ideas and suggestions to [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.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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September  
2009

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## 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

#### [July 28 & 29, 2009 Agenda & Meeting Materials](#)

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

### August 3 , 2009 Agenda & Meeting Materials

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.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings & 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.*

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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.

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## 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.

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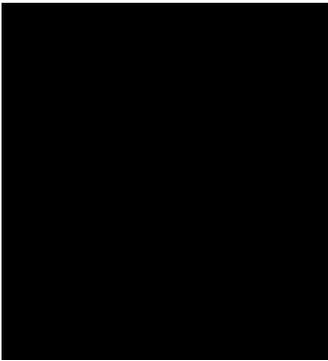
All comments received (both verbally and in writing) are compiled on a weekly basis and distributed to the I-Team and MLPA Initiative groups (BRTF, SCRSG and SAT as appropriate). Please do not send comments to SAT or BRTF members directly.

### 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](#)
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916.654.1885 office  
916.653.8102 fax  
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## Executive Director's Message

October 2009

Nearly 18 months after our initial outreach in the region, we are in the final stages of the MLPA Initiative planning process in southern California. We have learned a tremendous amount over the past year and half – not only about marine habitats, ocean currents, human uses and levels of protection, but about ourselves and how we respond to bumps in the road with open minds and collaborative spirits.

The MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG), science advisory team and MLPA Initiative staff are busy preparing for next week's MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force meeting. At this meeting, the task force will review the SCRSG's three marine protected area (MPA) proposals to arrive at a "preferred alternative." Just as it has been throughout the process, public comment will be an important component at this meeting. When preparing your comments, I encourage you to review the memo from task force Chair Reheis-Boyd, the "MLPA Guidelines for Public Comment," and the frequently asked questions detailed below. Your review of these documents will help ensure you are informed, prepared and able to maximize the effectiveness of your input to the task force. We look forward to seeing many of you next week!

~Ken Wiseman, Executive Director

### Key Questions About the MPA Planning Process

Where are we in the south coast planning process? Is it too late to provide input?

Is there a minimum (or maximum) percentage of area that will be contained within MPAs?

Is it true that all human uses are restricted in MPAs?

Is it illegal to travel through or anchor in an MPA with catch on-board?

What about if I am kayak fishing or spearfishing?

Is fishing permitted in MPAs?

Why prohibit all fishing when fishery management tools are working well? Why not allow catch-and-release or implement slot limits if added protection is needed?

What science exists to support MPAs?

Are economic costs to local communities considered in the planning process? If so, how?

How is California going to pay for the long-term monitoring, management and enforcement of the new MPAs?

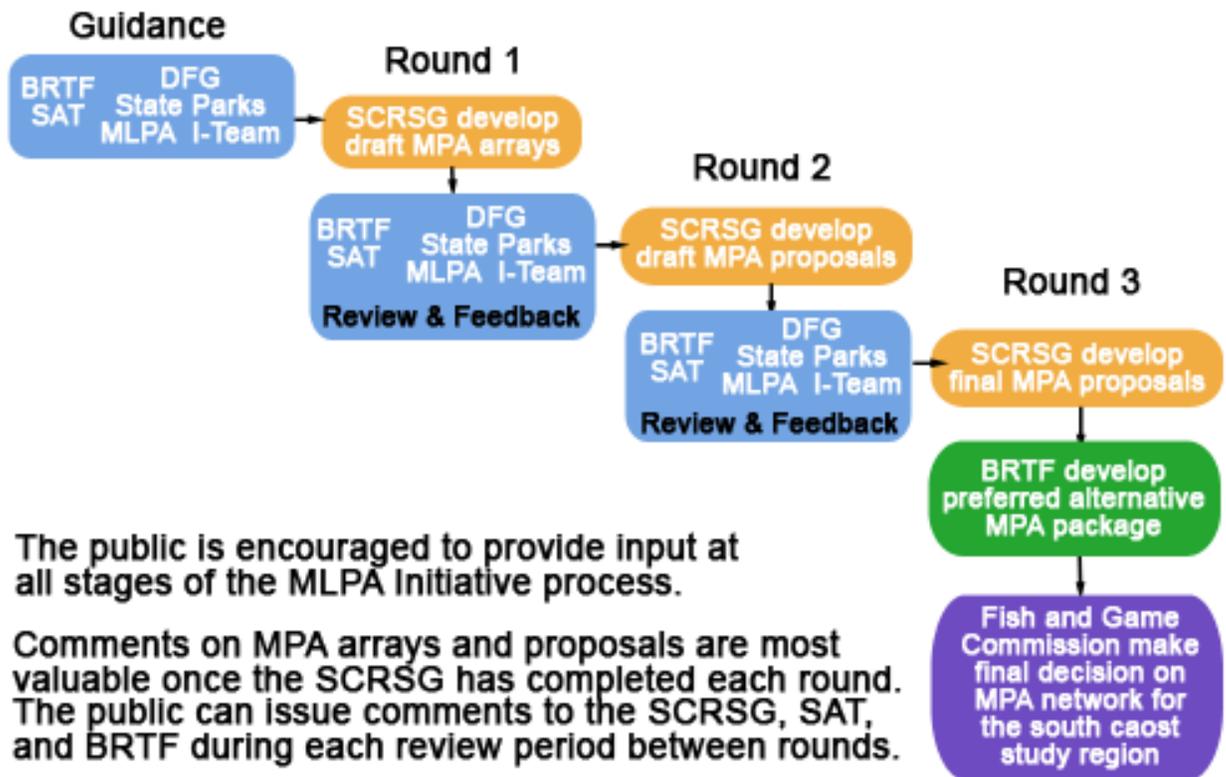
If an area is closed as an MPA, will it always be closed?

Who funds the MLPA Initiative and do they influence the outcome of the process?

Where are we in the south coast planning process? Is it too late to provide input?

The MLPA Initiative began the marine protected area (MPA) planning process in the south coast study region in June 2008 and is now in the final stages.

At its October 20–22 meeting, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) will receive three MPA proposals developed by the south coast regional stakeholder group. The BRTF will review science evaluations conducted by the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) and staff analyses conducted by MLPA Initiative staff, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), along with public comments, and will select a “preferred alternative” MPA proposal. The preferred alternative, along with any other proposals the BRTF identifies, will be forwarded to the California Fish and Game Commission on December 9-10, 2009. The commission will then begin regulatory and environmental review processes that are expected to last several months.



The public has been instrumental in developing the MPA proposals by the regional stakeholder group and will continue to play an important role in the process. Time has been set aside for public comment at the BRTF meeting in October; anyone wishing to provide input at this meeting are strongly encouraged to refer to the [guidelines for public comment](#) and [memo from BRTF Chair Reheis-Boyd](#) in order to maximize the effectiveness of their comments. A 90-day public comment period will also be held as part of the commission’s regulatory process.

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Is there a minimum (or maximum) percentage of area that will be designated as MPAs?

No. There is no total or specific area percentage designated to be set aside for MPAs in any study region. The MPA design process is based on the goals and objectives of the MLPA as well as 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 and distance between MPAs, and information on key habitats and species likely to benefit from MPAs.

As part of the planning process, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) recommends the boundaries, classification type, goals and objectives and types of uses that should be allowed in the proposed MPAs. The RSG has been guided, among other things, by size and spacing criteria established by the science advisory team, but there are no absolute requirements for a predetermined percentage of area that must be

contained within MPAs. For example, the central coast study region (Point Conception to Pigeon Point) includes MPAs encompassing approximately 18% of state waters within the study region. Of the area set aside in MPAs, approximately half is contained in state marine reserves (7.5% of the study region). The MPA network adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission for the north central coast study region represents approximately 20% of state waters within the region and about half is contained within state marine reserves (11% of the study region).

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Is it true that all human uses are restricted in MPAs?

No, non-extractive human uses such as swimming, wading, boating, diving and surfing are generally allowed in MPAs. The MLPA relies upon the Marine Managed Area Improvement Act (MMAIA) to define the types of MPAs and uses that are allowed within those MPAs. The MMAIA indicates that, to the extent possible, marine protected areas should be open to the public for managed enjoyment and study. One of the goals of the MLPA is to improve the recreational, educational and study opportunities within MPAs, subject to minimal human disturbance. At its July 2009 meeting, the task force clarified that it is not the intent to prevent access to MPAs for non-extractive activities including swimming, wading, diving and boating. [Click here](#) to view a recent advice letter from the California Attorney General's office regarding marine protected areas and the MMAIA.

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Is it legal to travel through or anchor in an MPA with catch on-board? What about if I am kayak fishing or spearfishing?

Yes, transit and anchoring are generally allowed. The relevant language is found in *Title 14 Section 632 subsections (a)(7) and (8)*, which are cited below. A few areas may restrict or prohibit transit and anchoring to protect a particularly vulnerable habitat or species, though all have allowances for anchoring or transit in emergencies.

(7)Anchoring. Vessels shall be allowed to anchor in any marine protected area or marine managed area with catch onboard unless otherwise specified in subsection 632(b), areas and special regulations for use. Fishing gear shall not be deployed in the water while anchored in a state marine reserve. Fishing gear, except legal fishing gear used to take species identified as allowed for take in subsection 632(b), shall not be deployed in the water while anchored in a state marine recreational management area, state marine park or state marine conservation area. Anchoring regulations shall be consistent with federal law and allowances made for anchoring required by emergency or severe weather.

(8)Transit or Drifting. Vessels shall be allowed to transit through marine protected areas and marine managed areas with catch onboard. Fishing gear shall not be deployed in the water while transiting through a state marine reserve. Fishing gear, except legal fishing gear used to take species identified as allowed for take in subsection 632(b), shall

not be deployed in the water while transiting through a state marine recreational management area, state marine park or state marine conservation area.

Kayaks may transit a state marine reserve (SMR) with catch on board, as long as gear is properly stowed. Similarly, individuals who have been spearfishing may transit an SMR with a speargun with or without catch, as long as the gun is not charged.

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Is fishing is prohibited in MPAs?

No, not all MPAs exclude all types of fishing. The three types of MPAs that can be established through the MLPA are state marine conservation area (SMCA), state marine park (SMP), and state marine reserve (SMR). Each classification has different rules about allowable activities within its boundaries. In general, state marine reserves do not allow any type of extractive activities (including fishing or kelp harvesting), with the exception of scientific collecting under a permit. Marine parks do not allow any commercial extraction but may allow some forms of recreational fishing. Marine conservation areas may allow some combination of commercial and/or recreational extraction.

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Why prohibit all fishing when fishery management tools are working well? Why not allow catch-and-release or implement slot limits if added protection is needed?

MPAs established under the MLPA are intended to complement existing fishery regulations and are not intended to replace existing or future regulations. MPAs address a broad array of ecosystem needs and are designed to allow both fished and unfished species to exist in a more natural setting.

The Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) is currently California's primary fishery management tool. The MLMA acknowledges that other conservation and management programs such as those being developed under the MLPA help facilitate long-term protection of fishery resources. The purpose of habitat protection under the MLMA is to advance the "primary fishery management goal" of sustainability, and so it may only provide for limited protection of a particular habitat. Conversely, although the MLPA considers fishery habitat, it also encompasses broader, ecosystem-based objectives that are not limited to *only* managing fisheries. Some goals of the MLPA simply cannot be achieved with traditional fisheries management. A lessons-learned evaluation of the MLMA is currently underway as a joint venture between the California Ocean Protection Council, California Fish and Game Commission, and DFG. This project is intended to evaluate the performance to date of the MLMA and provide recommendations to improve future MLMA efforts. Please visit the "[MLMA Lessons Learned Project](#)" website for more information.

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## What science exists to support MPAs?

Best readily-available science is the best data that is accessible in a format where it can be readily incorporated into the MPA planning process. Marine systems are highly complex and better information is constantly being generated by ongoing research. Recognizing this, and that complete information and knowledge will never exist to fully inform management decisions, under the MLPA the California State Legislature requires the use of best readily available science in decisions regarding the siting of new MPAs and any major modifications of existing MPAs (California Fish and Game Code §2855(a)).

In the south coast, the MLPA Initiative worked to identify readily-available science and information by hosting a data outreach workshop, undertaking joint fact-finding with stakeholders and members of the public, and working with the science advisory team to create a process for data submission and consideration. While additional information may surface later in the MPA planning process, a large amount of useful data already exists to help California redesign its system of MPAs to achieve the goals of the MLPA. Current information is based on decades of scientific research and data gathering on species distribution, spawning areas, life history characteristics and habitat relationships, not only in California but also around the world.

Scientific guidelines for MPA planning are provided in the text of the Marine Life Protection Act; further details are outlined in the *California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*, as adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission after substantial public input and scientific peer review. The methods and application of the guidelines in the master plan have been peer reviewed and found to be scientifically sound. The science guidance is reviewed, refined, updated and improved in each study region as the planning process proceeds.

In the MLPA South Coast Study Region, the SAT tailored the science guidelines and evaluations to the unique conditions of the study region, based upon the best, readily-available science. Results of the science evaluations are provided to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group and MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force, who incorporate the results into their planning and decisions. After the MLPA planning process is completed, new science will continue to help improve California's network of MPAs by informing an adaptive management process.

A sampling of the abundant peer-reviewed scientific information on the design, management and effectiveness of MPAs is available on the MLPA website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/science1.asp>. In addition, some of the spatial data layers made available to stakeholders for MPA planning can be viewed online using the MLPA Initiative's decision support system, [MarineMap](#).

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## Are economic costs to local communities considered in the

planning process? If so, how?

Yes. Early in the MLPA Initiative planning process, the BRTF and the California Fish and Game Commission indicated that the best, readily available socioeconomic science was insufficient to fully inform the process. While not required or mandated by MLPA, the MLPA Initiative funded Ecotrust to gather basic commercial and recreational fishing data in the south coast study region.

Over the past 18 months, Ecotrust has conducted an extensive survey process to compile knowledge from recreational and commercial fishermen in an effort to create a comprehensive picture of fishing patterns along California's south coast; this same method was used in the central coast and the north central coast study regions. These data were used by the SCRSG to refine boundaries and make choices between different areas while helping to minimize the socioeconomic impacts. Ecotrust data are also used by the BRTF to help inform their guidance to the SCRSG throughout the process.

In addition to the data collected by Ecotrust, information from the California Department of Fish and Game, including data from commercial landing receipts and logbooks and information from the California Recreational Fisheries Survey, is made available to stakeholders for reference. Baseline economic information about coastal communities is also included in the regional profile compiled for each study region. Supplemental socioeconomic information is brought into the MPA planning process through the local knowledge of SCRSG members and through extensive public input received via written and verbal comments.

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How is California going to pay for the long-term monitoring, management and enforcement of the new MPAs?

In a recent letter, Secretary for Natural Resource Mike Chrisman provides details related to this question:

"I share your concerns about whether California has the resources necessary to ensure effective enforcement, public outreach and education, and scientific research and monitoring. The truth of the matter is that we do not and never will have adequate funding to alone manage all of California's natural resources in the most effective manner, which makes public-private partnerships like the MLPA Initiative so important, not only for planning purposes, but also for long-term management.

"California already has numerous partners engaged in the long-term management of our natural resources, and those essential relationships will continue to be the foundation of our management strategy. In ocean resource management we will continue to work with our government and not-for-profit partners, such as local government agencies, the National Marine Sanctuary Program, the National Marine Protected Areas Center, and the National Park Service, to help ensure long-term stewardship for current and future generations.

"While I agree that there are questions we are still addressing about how we will fund various aspects of the program, moving forward is entirely consistent with the MLPA; the Governor and California State Legislature anticipated uncertainty when the MLPA was signed into law, directing that the state '... shall implement the program, to the extent funds are available.' This mandate has not been forgotten and we will continue to forge partnerships to ensure a robust program.

"Note also that there are currently over 60 MPAs along the California coast (outside of central California) that were not established with any coherent plan or based on sound scientific guidelines. Many of these MPAs even lack clearly defined purposes. As a result, the existing array of MPAs falls far short of its potential to protect and conserve living marine resources. The Legislature passed the MLPA noting that marine protected areas were one of many tools that may be used to sustain marine life. Modifying the existing collection of MPAs to ensure that they are designed according to clear, ecosystem-based goals and guidelines allows us to take greater advantage of the multiple benefits that can be derived from a system of marine protected areas. The intent of the MLPA is that protected areas become a part of a scientifically designed network that, along with other management, will provide for long-term resource sustainability."

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If an area is closed as an MPA will it always be closed?

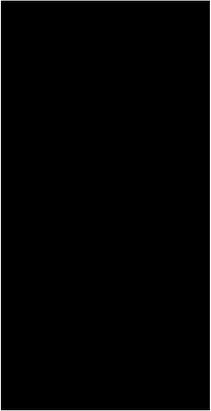
Not necessarily. The MLPA specifically requires monitoring, research and evaluation at selected sites to facilitate adaptive management of MPAs and ensure the system meets its goals and objectives. Within the MLPA master plan, it is recommended that the MPA network be evaluated approximately every five years. As MPAs are re-assessed for effectiveness, changes may be necessary, either to individual MPAs or the network as a whole. This may mean changing boundaries and/or allowances for extractive activities depending on how well MPAs are meeting goals. Just because an area is closed to one type of use or another does not mean that it will always be that way.

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Who funds the MLPA Initiative and do they influence the outcome of the process?

The MLPA Initiative is funded both by state monies (the California Ocean Protection Council, California Natural Resources Agency, California Department of Fish and Game and California Department of Parks and Recreation) and by donations from five private foundations (the Annenberg Foundation, Campbell Foundation, Marisla Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and David and Lucile Packard Foundation).

MLPA Initiative staff has no interaction with the five contributing foundations (though they do interact with the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, which is the organization that acts as a fiscal agent for the MLPA Initiative). The five contributing foundations have committed financial support to the process without seeking a specific geographic outcome



(i.e., where to place marine protected areas), just that there be an outcome within a specified time frame that includes an open and transparent public process and is based on the best, readily-available science.

A memorandum of understanding outlines the initiative process and can be found at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/highlights.asp>.

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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  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa>

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