

# California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative Announcement

**Who:** MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force

**What:** Marine Protected Area Proposals Submitted External to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group Process

**When:** Submission deadline is February 18, 2009

**Where:** See details below

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Marine protected area (MPA) proposals for the MLPA South Coast Study Region are largely crafted by a regional stakeholder group in a collaborative, public process, and are based on the Marine Life Protection Act mandate to use "best readily available science" as outlined in a master plan for MPAs. To help ensure an open, transparent, public process where maximum information is made available to the regional stakeholder group for its deliberations, MPA proposals will be accepted from outside the regional stakeholder group process.

At its December 10, 2008 meeting, the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force approved a staff recommendation for how MPA proposals submitted by individuals, organizations, or other entities external to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) would be considered in the MLPA Initiative planning process.

Consistent with previous MLPA study regions, each "external proposal" must contain certain components to be considered complete. Complete external proposals must be *submitted no later than February 18, 2009* and may be revised according to feedback from the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force and other advisory groups. External proposals that MLPA Initiative staff determine to meet the requirements for complete proposals will be presented to the SCRSG to help inform the MPA planning process and evaluated with SCRSG proposals.

## Consideration of External Proposals in Previous MLPA Study Regions

In the MLPA Central Coast Study Region and MLPA North Central Coast Study Region, groups and individuals outside of the regional stakeholder groups submitted proposals for MPA network components. Proposals with broad geographic coverage that outlined details of MPAs, including specific boundaries and proposed regulations, were forwarded by MLPA Initiative staff to the regional stakeholder group for consideration in MPA planning. Proposals that lacked detailed information, had a narrow geographic focus, or were inconsistent with the goals of the MLPA were not as directly integrated into the regional stakeholder group process, though they still informed MPA planning in the study regions.

Complete external MPA proposals were included in the MPA planning process in a variety of ways. In some cases, elements of the external proposals were incorporated into MPA proposals generated by a regional stakeholder group; at least two external proposals were withdrawn once they had been incorporated in this way. Other external proposals continued as separate MPA proposals and were revised according to feedback from the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT), the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), and staff.

## Considering External Proposals in the MLPA South Coast Study Region

As in previous study regions, external MPA proposals can be valuable for informing the MPA design and planning process. In recognition of this enhancement of the process:

1. External proposals will be solicited in early January for submission *no later than Wednesday, February 18, 2009* to help inform the SCRSG's development of draft alternative MPA proposals; new external proposals will not be accepted after February 18, 2009.
2. Complete external proposals must contain the same elements as proposals generated by the SCRSG and must present an integrated array of individual MPA's throughout the MLPA South Coast Study Region.
3. Complete external proposals will be presented March 3-4, 2009 to the SCRSG for consideration during MPA planning.
4. Complete external proposals submitted by February 18, 2009 will receive evaluations or feedback from the SAT, BRTF, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and MLPA Initiative staff.
5. Proponents of complete external proposals submitted by February 18, 2009 will have the opportunity to revise initial proposals at least once according to feedback received. Additional opportunities for revisions are at the discretion of the BRTF.
6. External proposals for individual MPAs or simple collections of MPAs with a specific geographic focus will be made available to the SCRSG for potential consideration during the MPA planning process, though will not be included in evaluations from the SAT, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, or MLPA Initiative staff.

Similar to other study regions, the SCRSG may incorporate individual MPA concepts from external proposals into draft proposals. Alternatively, SCRSG members may use entire external proposals as a starting place for developing draft proposals. SCRSG members may also choose to use boundary designs or particular regulations from external proposals.

### Elements of Complete MPA Proposals

As in previous study regions, external proposals must include several elements to be considered "complete." Consistent with previous study regions, complete external proposals must be presented as an integrated array of MPA's throughout the MLPA South Coast Study Region; thus, proposals for individual MPA's or collections of individual MPAs that focus only on a particular geographic area do not constitute a complete MPA proposal.

Required elements of a complete external MPA proposal are:

1. A one page cover sheet that includes a proposal name, list of contributors, and contact information.
2. A no more than two page narrative that describes the general approach to developing the complete MPA proposal, including a description of how the proposal helps meet the goals of the MLPA, as well as general rationale for MPA design.
3. Specific information for each MPA within the proposal, including:
  - a. MPA name.
  - b. Specific MPA boundaries. MLPA Initiative staff prefers that MPA boundaries be submitted online via MarineMap (see description below), though other ways of identifying specific boundaries are acceptable.
  - c. Proposed classification. MPA designations include state marine reserve (SMR), state marine conservation area (SMCA), or state marine park (SMP). Proposals may also include state marine recreational management areas (SMRMAs) or special closures.
  - d. Specific regulations, outlining the forms of commercial and/or recreational extraction that are allowed within the MPA.
  - e. Site-specific rationale for the MPA. This consists of one or two sentences that state the reason for placing an MPA in a particular location with particular regulations.
  - f. Identified goals and regional objectives for each MPA. Each proposed MPA should contribute to one or more MLPA goals and regional objectives. If goals and regional objectives are not adopted by February 18, 2009, this element may be added at a later date.
4. A one page document outlining the fate of existing MPAs. For each MPA that currently exists within the MLPA South Coast Study Region, proponents of external proposals must specify whether the proposal *retains* the MPA without change, *modifies* the boundaries and/or regulations of the MPA, or *removes* the MPA.

As with complete MPA proposals generated by the SCRSG, complete external MPA proposals should be designed consistent with the Marine Life Protection Act and guidelines in the *California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*. In addition, external proposals should consider additional guidance provided by the SAT, BRTF, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and MLPA Initiative staff.

#### Other Suggestions for MPA Design

While proposals for individual MPAs and simple collections of MPAs that focus on a particular geographic area will not be considered complete MPA proposals, these concepts may still inform MPA planning. Suggestions for MPA designs that do not constitute complete proposals may be submitted via email to [MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov) and will be provided to the SCRSG, though they will not be included in evaluations and feedback from the SAT, BRTF, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, or MLPA Initiative staff.

#### Submitting External Proposals

External proposals must be received *no later than Wednesday, February 18, 2009*. It is preferable that all components of external proposals be submitted via an online tool called MarineMap (<http://www.marinemap.org/marinemap>) to facilitate evaluation and feedback. A user name and password is required to develop MPA proposals using this tool; thus, individuals or organizations that are interested in submitting an MPA proposal using MarineMap should contact MLPA Initiative staff at [help@lists.marinemap.org](mailto:help@lists.marinemap.org).

For those who are unfamiliar with how to use MarineMap, online public training sessions have been scheduled for Thursday, January 15 at 7:00 p.m. and Monday, January 19 at 7:00 p.m., both via conference call and GoToMeeting. To obtain details about these public training sessions, please contact the MLPA Initiative office at [MLPAOffice@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAOffice@resources.ca.gov) or 916.654.1885. Additional training opportunities may be arranged at other times for in person or online sessions upon request to the MLPA Initiative office.

While not preferred, MPA proposals that include all of the components listed above, but are not created using the MarineMap tool, will also be accepted. Proposals submitted in this manner may be sent via email, fax, or standard mail to the addresses provided below.

*E-mail*

[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)

*Fax*

916.653.8102

Attn: MLPA Initiative

*Mail*

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