

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311 Sacramento, CA 95814 916.653.5656

To: MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
From: MLPA Initiative Staff
Subject: Staff Recommendation for Considering Marine Protected Area Proposals Submitted External to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
Date: December 9, 2008

This memorandum outlines the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative staff recommendation for considering draft marine protected area (MPA) proposals submitted by individuals, organizations, or other entities external to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG).

Consistent with previous MLPA study regions, each of these "external proposals" must contain certain components and be submitted by February 18, 2009. Complete external proposals submitted by this deadline may be revised according to feedback from the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) and other advisory groups. External proposals that MLPA Initiative staff determine to meet the requirements below will be presented to the SCRSG to help inform the MPA planning process.

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were incorporated into MPA proposals generated by a regional stakeholder group; at least two external proposals were withdrawn once they had been incorporated in this way.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. As such, staff recommends that:

1. External proposals 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.

2. Complete external proposals must contain the same elements as proposals generated by the SCRSG (see attachment for general outline).
3. Complete external proposals be presented to the SCRSG in early March 2009 for consideration during MPA planning.
4. Complete external proposals submitted by February 18, 2009 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 have the opportunity to revise initial proposals according to feedback received.
6. External proposals for individuals MPAs or simple collections of MPAs with a specific geographic focus be made available to the SCRSG for potential consideration during the MPA planning process, though not be included in evaluations from the SAT, DFG, State Parks, or MLPA Initiative staff.

Attachment

Elements of Complete External MPA Proposals

As in previous study regions, staff recommends that external proposals 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:

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 BRTF, DFG, State Parks, and MLPA Initiative staff.