

Key Outcomes Memorandum

Date: December 12, 2008

To: Members, MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

From: Scott McCreary and Rebecca Tuden, CONCUR, Inc.

Re: Key Outcomes Memorandum – November 18-19, 2008 Meeting

cc: MLPA Initiative staff and contractors, California Department of Fish and Game staff, and California Department of Parks and Recreation staff (collectively known as the I-Team)

Executive Summary – Key Outcomes

On November 18-19, 2008 the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in its second meeting in Ventura, CA. **Key outcomes** from the meeting are as follows:

- MLPA Initiative Executive Director Ken Wiseman announced the newly appointed members to the SCRSG and that the SCRSG was officially complete.
- SCRSG members discussed and worked to develop draft goals and regional objectives for the south coast study region. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) gave a presentation on the goals and objectives. The SCRSG then received a proposal from the CDFG and provided comments and revisions of the text. I-Team staff synthesized the comments and presented a revised proposal on Day 2. After more discussion, the SCRSG agreed to accept, in principle, the proposed I-Team revisions to the goals and regional objectives presented on Day 2 of the meeting with the understanding that staff would recommend further changes to the document to take account of remaining SCRSG comments. I-Team staff will make suggested changes and transmit the revised goals and regional objectives document to the SCRSG before the January meeting. Then the SCRSG will consider the revised text for adoption at its January 2009 meeting.
- SCRSG members received informational briefings on topics involving marine habitats and ecosystems, adult movement and larval dispersal, Ecotrust fisheries uses and values project, and commercial and recreational fisheries in the study region. SCRSG members raised thoughtful questions about these presentations and identified areas needing additional MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) guidance and I-Team follow-up.
- I-Team staff provided an overview of the guidelines for developing draft MPA arrays and an explanation of the evaluation methodology with the north central coast as an example.
- I-Team staff introduced the MarineMap tool to the SCRSG and provided an opportunity for SCRSG members and members of the public to view the tool during an evening session. SCRSG members were encouraged to sign up for a future MarineMap training session scheduled for December.
- I-Team staff summarized the comments received on the draft *Regional Profile of the MLPA South Coast Study Region (Point Conception to the California/Mexico border)* dated

Prepared by CONCUR, Inc. (December 1, 2008)1

This Key Outcomes Memorandum summarizes the results of the November 18-19, 2008 South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group meeting. It focuses on key issues discussed, decisions made, and next steps identified. It is not intended to be a transcript of the meetings.

September 15, 2008. A number of SCRSG members volunteered to assist in prioritizing the comments and updating the subregional summaries for preparation of the final draft of the regional profile, expected in January 2009.

- I-Team staff noted that the 2009 calendar of meetings was approved by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force and encouraged SCRSG members to update their individual calendars accordingly.

Key **next steps** are listed in section III below.

I. Meeting Objectives, Participants and Materials

On November 18-19, 2008, the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) participated in a meeting in Ventura, CA. This Key Outcomes Memorandum summarizes the meeting's main results.

The primary objectives of the meeting were to:

- 1) Complete introductions for all MLPA SCRSG members
- 2) Review comments on the draft regional profile
- 3) Discuss and develop goals and objectives for the south coast study region
- 4) Provide an introduction to MarineMap
- 5) Present informational briefings on south coast habitats, species movement and dispersal, Ecotrust fisheries uses and values, and commercial and recreational fishing
- 6) Present MPA proposal evaluation methodology and its application to the study region

Fifty-eight SCRSG members (primary and alternates) participated in the meeting.

MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force members Don Benninghoven (Chair) and William Anderson each attended portions of the meeting.

SAT member Larry Allen attended portions of the meeting.

MLPA Initiative, California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) staff—collectively known as the “I-Team”—staffed the meeting.

Meeting materials may be found on the MLPA website at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/meeting_111708.asp

II. Key Outcomes

A. Welcome and Introductions & Updates

Don Benninghoven, Chair of the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), provided opening remarks at the meeting. He thanked SCRSG members for participating in the field trip with the BRTF and gave his appreciation for their hard work on the review of the regional profile and their extensive outreach activities to their respective constituents. He noted the completion of the lessons learned report for the north central coast study region.

Prepared by CONCUR, Inc. (December 1, 2008)2

This Key Outcomes Memorandum summarizes the results of the November 18-19, 2008 South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group meeting. It focuses on key issues discussed, decisions made, and next steps identified. It is not intended to be a transcript of the meetings.

MLPA Initiative Executive Director Ken Wiseman announced the appointments of five additional SCRSG members, Lauren Czarnecki (alternate for Wayne Griffin), Josh Fisher (alternate to Philip Beguhl), Wayne Griffin, Kevin Ketchum, and Chugey Sepulveda. The appointments of Marc Mills as alternate for Chugey Sepulveda and Dave Rudie, as alternate for Kevin Ketchum, were also confirmed.

Kelly Sayce described the outreach activities underway in the study region including the recent completion of the MLPA brochure, ongoing bilingual outreach efforts and the preparations underway for a tribal forum. SCRSG members are encouraged to work with the I-Team's outreach staff to help inform the public of upcoming events or forums.

Evan Fox provided an update on the items discussed at the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) meeting including discussions underway on identifying the list of key and unique habitats, completion of the size and spacing guidelines, and criteria used to develop the species most likely to benefit.

Rebecca Tuden indicated the SCRSG list server is up and running and now has an I-Team member reviewing the messages before they are distributed to the entire SCRSG. Members are encouraged to reply to individuals rather than to the entire listserv membership where ever possible.

B. Informational Presentations on the MLPA South Coast Study Region

Marine Habitats and Ecosystems

Dr. Larry Allen, co-chair of the SAT, gave a presentation on the fish assemblages by biogeographical regions and key marine habitats in the study region. He noted that while this study region shared many of the same habitat types as the north central coast, the south coast study region had warmer water temperatures and a higher percentage of sandy bottom than the north central coast. Unique habitats currently under consideration by the SAT are surfgrass beds, eelgrass beds, oil seeps and shallow hydrothermal vents, and elk kelp beds.

SCRSG members raised questions about the cluster analysis used to define the size and extent of the habitat assemblages.

Adult Movement and Larval Dispersal of Fish and Invertebrates. Dr. Jenn Caselle gave a presentation explaining the basis of the size and spacing guidelines that the SAT uses to evaluate MPA proposals. She noted that the size of an MPA is a major determinant for how much of the adult's home range movement is protected. Scientists determine these adult movements by tracking adult fish. The larval dispersal assumptions are harder to calculate and are based upon assumptions about particle distribution in the water. The distance between MPAs determines whether the larvae can move from one MPA to the next. Dr. Caselle noted that there is considerable variation in the home range size of the fish in the study region and that one MPA will offer different levels of protection to the various species.

SCRSG members asked about the expected benefits of an MPA completely covering an adult's home range (or no spillover) versus the benefits of less protection, increased fishing yield, and density-dependent effects on reproduction and growth. A related question was posed asking about the opportunities for increased spillover leading to decreased habitat fragmentation.

Prepared by CONCUR, Inc. (December 1, 2008)3

Another member noted that the placement of an MPA can be more critical than the size of the MPA. It was suggested that the pros and cons of spillover effects be referred to the SAT for further review.

C. Introduction to MarineMap

I-Team staff gave an overview of the MarineMap tool and how it can be used in MPA planning. SCRSG members were asked to sign up for a training session in December that will provide greater detail on the use of MarineMap. All of the data layers in the draft regional profile are provided in MarineMap.

The SCRSG discussed that an individual MarineMap account is confidential. However, future use of MarineMap can include sending an MPA design to other individuals, in which case that information would then be available to be forwarded to other MarineMap users.

D. Draft Regional Profile

I-Team staff provided an overview of the comments received on the draft regional profile. Comments were received from over 70 multiple people, groups and organizations including comments from 27 SCRSG members. The comments/corrections focused on water quality, ecological setting, special status species and consumptive and non-consumptive uses. I-Team staff reiterated that the regional profile is a “living document” and that the goal is to complete revisions to the document by the January SCRSG meeting in time to support the SCRSG’s development of MPA proposals. An eight-member SCRSG work group was formed to guide revisions to the regional profile. Staff noted that the final draft of the regional profile will be completed in January 2009 and will include more discussion on the species likely to benefit from MPAs, sub regional summaries and additional information on substrate types, commercial and recreational fishing, and other human uses in the study region.

E. Regional Goals & Objectives (Part I and II)

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) staff gave a presentation describing the overall purpose and use of the regional objectives. SCRSG members received a draft of the goals and regional objectives that were based on those adopted in the north central coast (NCC) study region. The proposal included edits intended to make the objectives more measurable, remove the explanation of “how” the objective would be met, remove redundancy, and clarify terminology.

The SCRSG discussed each of the MLPA goals and their regional objectives and provided comments and suggestions to the proposal. I-Team staff synthesized the comments and presented a revised proposal to the SCRSG on Day 2 of the meeting. After more discussion, the SCRSG agreed to accept, in principle, the proposed I-Team revisions to the goals and regional objectives presented on Day 2 of the meeting with the understanding that staff would recommend further changes to the document to take account of remaining SCRSG comments. I-Team staff will make suggested changes and transmit the revised goals and regional

objectives document to the SCRSG before the January meeting. The SCRSG will then consider the revised text for adoption at its January 2009 meeting.

F. Guidelines for Developing MPA Proposals

I-Team staff provided an overview of the guidance provided by the SAT, CDFG, and State Parks to consider when designing MPA proposals. These guidelines, along with policy guidance from the BRTF and public input, will be used to guide the SCRSG in crafting MPA proposals. For the SAT guidelines, it was noted that the SAT is still clarifying how size and spacing guidelines will be applied in the study region. The intent of the SAT guidelines is to meet MLPA goals 1, 2, 4 and 6. These SAT guidelines include recommended size guidelines (roughly 5-10 kilometers of alongshore span of coastline, 3 miles of offshore extent, and minimum area of 9 square miles) and spacing guidelines (approximately 30-60 miles). The spacing guidelines will be evaluated for each habitat type, rather than for each MPA location.

CDFG staff gave a presentation outlining the three categories of advice they will provide on MPA design including: feasibility of MPAs, how the MPAs meet the regional goals and objectives and site-specific rationales, and how they meet the overall goals of the MLPA. More specificity on these categories will be forthcoming at the next SCRSG meeting.

Kevin Fleming of California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) discussed the Marine Managed Areas Improvement Act (MMAIA) and its relationship to the MLPA. Key guidelines provided by State Parks relate to cultural resources and opportunities for public experience and learning opportunities.

Ken Wiseman reiterated the key policy issues that the BRTF had provided guidance on in previous study regions; it is likely that the BRTF will provide similar guidance in the south coast study region.

G. Marine Protected Area Evaluation Methods

Evan Fox provided a presentation describing how the draft proposals will be evaluated by the SAT. All the draft proposals will be evaluated in relation to the existing MPAs (proposal 0) using the SAT evaluation methods. These evaluation methods for the south coast study region are currently under review.

H. Informational Presentations on the Study Region

Susan Ashcraft and Michelle Horeczko of CDFG provided informational briefings describing the commercial and recreational fisheries in the study region. The commercial fishing presentation described the major commercial fisheries in the study region, gear types, and depth and habitat used in the fishery. The commercial fisheries described were: red sea urchin, coastal pelagic (or wetfish), California halibut, lobster and crab, nearshore rockfish, and sea cucumber. The recreational fishing presentation focused on recreational fishing in state waters and discussed the modes of fishing (boat or shore) and the major recreational fish and bait used in the study region. The SCRSG members were complimentary of the presentations and provided clarifying comments to the presentations.

Charles Steinbeck of Ecotrust provided an overview of the methodology used to address maximum potential negative socioeconomic impacts of MPA designations in the study region. He described the methodology for collecting data from the fishermen, the quality assurance/quality control process for verifying the data with the fishermen, and aggregation of the data that will be used to calculate the maximum potential negative economic impact per MPA proposal. SCRSG members were generally appreciative of the study and including results into the MPA design process and acknowledged the Ecotrust research would be more useful and accurate than existing data sources. SCRSG members also noted concerns about the technical barriers encountered during the online survey and that the research efforts should go further to calculate economic impacts of recreational fishing and to capture the industry-wide impacts from MPA designations.

I. Questions and Clarifications

Throughout the meeting, SCRSG members posed a range of clarifying questions and provided comments regarding the process, science and policy aspects of the guidelines and informational presentations. I-Team staff responded to most of these issues during the meeting and will provide responses to the remaining policy and science questions that were not fully answered at the meeting. Key comments and questions from SCRSG members included the following:

- Will there be guidelines for protecting bird and mammals?
- How is the coastline measured (linear miles or actual coastline) and what are the units of measurement (nautical miles or statute miles)?
- For the size/spacing analysis, what is the logic behind the decision to focus on "sustaining and rebuilding" populations for goal 2?
- How is the condition of the habitat type (e.g. degraded) considered in the SAT guidelines? That is, are degraded habitats eligible for MPA designation?
- Where do key species of interest (such as California halibut) fall on the scale of dispersal distance?
- Is the survivorship of larvae within an MPA reduced due to increased biomass and therefore increased numbers of predators?
- How will spacing guidelines be applied between the Channel Islands?
- Should the level of protection for urchin harvest be higher, since this activity helps to maintain kelp forests which are important ecologically?
- How much scientific collection or "take" happens within the study region and what are the effects on marine ecosystems?
- A request was made to definitively clarify whether State Parks, as part of its planning process, could effectively overturn or revise MPA designations made as part of the MLPA implementation effort.
- How will the impacts of sea otters be included in the evaluation?
- Suggestion that salmon, striped bass, marlin and tuna be noted as southern California fisheries
- Include areas of grunion fishing in MPA planning
- Add information on cow cod conservation areas and note that all rockfish are protected in these areas
- How will catch and release fishing be addressed in evaluations, goals and objectives, etc.?
- Is it possible to expand the socioeconomic survey to cover ports/harbors?
- Is it possible to expand the socioeconomic survey to cover non-consumptive uses?
- How will cultural use areas (tribal and otherwise) be included in the process?

Prepared by CONCUR, Inc. (December 1, 2008)6

This Key Outcomes Memorandum summarizes the results of the November 18-19, 2008 South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group meeting. It focuses on key issues discussed, decisions made, and next steps identified. It is not intended to be a transcript of the meetings.

- How were subsistence fishermen captured in the Ecotrust survey?
- How were recreational fishermen in marinas captured in the Ecotrust survey?

J. Public comment

Members of the public provided comment and asked clarifying questions during two separate public comment periods. Comments on Day 1 included: appreciation to the SCRSG members for their hard work and reminding them of the importance of their task, concerns that the need for closures is only speculative and that more definitive studies are needed before action is taken that may negatively affect the fishing industry, and the importance of beach nourishment concerns in coastal planning. On Day 2 comments from the public included: recommendation to focus attention on protecting the squid population and noting its importance as a forage fish, and clarification that the legislation uses “improve”, not “expand” the use of MPAs. One speaker offered the recommendation to pay close attention to BRTF’s guidance in designing MPAs for optimal results, to follow SAT proceedings as they are the “user manual” for MPA design and to use state marine reserves as the core of their MPA design. Further comments discussed concerns that MPA designs consider accessibility for kayak fisherman and shore-based anglers, incorporate global climate change considerations into the MPA design, and comments that sea urchin fishery should be viewed as a successful, self-regulated and green industry and that excessive restrictions on urchin fishing will negatively affect the kelp forests and related fishing grounds.

K. Objectives for SCRSG Meeting #2

The next SCRSG meeting is scheduled for January 13 – 14, 2009 in the San Diego area (place to be determined). The main objectives for the meeting are to:

- Finalize and adopt goals and regional objectives for the south coast study region.
- Continue joint fact-finding and informational presentations on key issues in study region
- Continue to brief the SCRSG on CDFG feasibility criteria and design guidelines for MPA development
- Review and discuss the SAT’s evaluation of existing MPAs
- Assign SCRSG work groups and begin process for creating draft options for MPA arrays

III. Recap of Next Steps

A. Key next steps for SCRSG members

Review and consider proposed revisions to the regional goals and objectives for discussion at the January 13 – 14, 2009 SCRSG meeting.

B. Key next steps for I-Team staff

1. Transmit a copy of the proposed regional goals and objectives to the SCRSG before the next (January 2009) meeting.

2. Work with the SCRSG members to coordinate completion of the final draft of the regional profile.
3. Work with SCRSG members to provide training and support for understanding of MarineMap.
4. Prepare responses to outstanding process, policy and science questions raised by SCRSG members.