

February 1, 2010

Mr. Ken Wiseman
Executive Director
Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Submittal of the North Coast Local Interest Marine Protected Area (MPA) Work Group MPA Array Proposal.

Dear Mr. Wiseman,

The North Coast Local Interest MPA Work Group (Work Group) was formed by a resolution of the Humboldt Bay Harbor District on February 26, 2009. Through a memorandum of agreement; the County of Humboldt, County of Del Norte, City of Fort Bragg, Crescent City Harbor District and Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District are now members of the Work Group, as are numerous individuals from Mendocino, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. Furthermore, the Bear River Tribe, Round Valley Tribe, Potter Valley Tribe, Trinidad Rancheria, and Resighini Tribe have formalized resolutions establishing partnerships with the Work Group. Other key partners in developing this array included the Mendocino Ocean Community Alliance, Del Norte MPA Workgroup, Trinidad Rancheria and Traditional Fisheries Coalition, Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Open Beaches and Trails Group, Albion Harbor Regional Alliance, and the Humboldt Bay Oyster Growers. We are proud to submit an array which will become an important part of the State's MPA System while minimizing social and economic impacts to our communities.

Sincerely, North Coast Local Interest MPA Work Group

Primary Contacts

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North Coast Local Interest MPA Work Group

External MPA Array Proposal Narrative

The North Coast Local Interest Marine Protected Area (MPA) Workgroup's external MPA array proposal was collaboratively developed by various interest groups from Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. A series of well attended "Tri-County" meetings were held to facilitate regional communication and to integrate MPA design ideas from 18 external MPA array proposal proponents. We were successful in our effort to engage the entire region and combine ideas to minimize the number of proposals submitted from the North Coast Study Region. The following assumptions were generally agreed upon by the Tri-County Group and are reflected in the North Coast Local Interest MPA proposal:

- Traditional Native American uses of coastal marine resources for ceremonial, customary, and subsistence purposes have occurred for thousands of years and are de minimis;
- MPA designations outside 10 mile "port safety zones" will reduce fuel consumption and hazards to fishermen and limit economic and social impacts to our communities;
- Levels of Protection afforded by fisheries involving smelt, surfperch, coonstripe shrimp and Pacific halibut should be considered "moderate high" or "high";
- Existing resource management regulations are effective;
- Current economic and social systems may be significantly impacted by the MLPA Initiative.

Based upon the above points, it is in the interest of the public to establish a MPA array which meets the goals of the MLPA, but does not pose economic or social risks to our communities. We recognize that the proposed array does not conform fully to existing science advisory guidelines. However, it will contribute substantially to the State's MPA system and Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) goals, while minimizing impacts to our communities. Scientists and fishermen on the North Coast are eager to conduct research which will provide information regarding the role of MPAs on the North Coast. Improved information will allow for more detailed conservation goals to be developed, which will be pursued through adaptive management.

In our current situation, the precautionary principle applies to the well-being of our already fragile economic and social systems, not our vibrant natural ecosystems. The proposed array will fully implement the goals of the MLPA, while creating ample research opportunities to allow for future MPA adaptive management. As such, the proposed array is an appropriate balance of conservation, economic and social interests and we are confident that the MLPA Initiative will recognize the need for this balance.