

California MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team
Summary of the December 16-17, 2009 Meeting
Revised January 10, 2010

Meeting Date, Time and Place

Wednesday, December 16, 2009

1:10 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.

and

Thursday, December 17, 2009

8:30 a.m. – 4:20 p.m.

Red Lion Hotel Eureka

1929 Fourth Street

Eureka, CA 95501

SAT members attending: Eric Bjorkstedt, Mark Carr, Kevin Fleming, Dawn Goley, Dominic Gregorio, David Hankin, Ron LeValley, Steve Murray, Karina Nielsen, Pete Raimondi, Steven Rumrill, Astrid Scholz, Craig Strong, Steve Wertz and Will White.

SAT members absent: Larry Allen, Chris Costello, Steve Gaines, John Largier, Phillip Levin and Steven Morgan.

Meeting Objectives

- *Receive update on the MLPA north coast regional profile*
- *Review and potentially approve the north coast bioregions*
- *Review and discuss marine protected area (MPA) habitat representation and replication guidelines*
- *Review and discuss MPA size and spacing guidelines*
- *Review and discuss levels of protection (LOPs) for the north coast study region*
- *Receive updates from SAT work groups*

The meeting agenda may be found on the MLPA website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/meetings.asp>

Executive Summary

The second meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team for the MLPA North Coast Study Region took place at the Red Lion Hotel in Eureka on December 16 and 17, 2009. The meeting focused on discussing the design guidelines and evaluation methods for marine protected areas (MPAs) in the north coast. SAT members approved briefing documents C.1, D.1, D.2, F.1, and I.1 (except the level of protection for sea urchin take), as well as the approaches to determining the habitat representation and replication criteria for evaluating MPA arrays.

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions and Review of Agenda

On December 16 and 17, 2009, the second meeting of the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) for the MLPA North Coast Study Region (NCSR) was held in Eureka.

Review of Agenda

Due to scheduling conflicts for some SAT members, certain agenda items were presented out of their original order. Agenda items I (Levels of Protection), L (Ecotrust Economic Impact Assessment Methods), and M (Species Likely to Benefit from MPAs) were discussed on December 16. Agenda items G (Habitat Representation) and H (Habitat Replication) were discussed on December 17. To ensure members of the public would have ample opportunity to provide comments, the SAT vote on agenda item I was postponed until December 17, the date the vote was originally scheduled to take place.

I. Updates

A. Update on the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force meeting

Ken Wiseman announced that a new BRTF has been formed for the NCSR, incorporating four returning members from the south coast and four new members. The next BRTF meeting will be January 13-14 in Crescent City.

B. Update on the North Coast Regional Profile

Jason Vasques notified the SAT that the draft regional profile has been completed and published. SAT members are requested to review the profile and send comments to staff for incorporation into the next draft of the profile.

C. Protocol for handling science guidance questions from the public and external array proponents

Mike Prall presented the SAT protocol for answering science questions. The SAT voted to approve this protocol.

D. Protocol for evaluating incoming data from sources external to the Science Advisory Team

Tom Mason presented the protocol for handling external data and the form used in this protocol. The SAT voted to approve the protocol and submission document.

II. MPA Design Guidelines and Evaluation Methods for the MLPA North Coast Study Region

E. SAT MPA evaluation methods update

Jason Vasques gave a brief introduction to the evaluation methods document; it is a record of the evaluation methods used by the SAT in each MLPA study region.

F. Review and discuss the proposed north coast bioregions

Seth Miller presented the proposed bioregions for the NCSR. The SAT approved two bioregions in the NCSR with a boundary between the two at the mouth of the Mattole River.

G. Discussion on habitat representation

This agenda item was discussed out of order (see note under “Review of Agenda” above).

Mark Carr presented the key and unique habitats in the NCSR. SAT members provided additional information about unique habitats in the region. The work group will now consider sunken rivers, dynamic beaches at river mouths, and sea stacks as unique habitats in the NCSR. SAT members are encouraged to provide information about where these habitats occur.

Emily Saarman presented the methods used to evaluate available habitat in the NCSR. She also presented the study region boundary and described how it was determined. SAT members voted to approve the approach to defining available habitat in the NCSR.

H. Discussion on habitat replication criteria within the north coast study region

This agenda item was discussed out of order (see note under “Review of Agenda” above).

Pete Raimondi presented the available data for determining the habitat replication criteria for the NCSR. Species area curves for the NCSR yielded habitat patch sizes similar to those from the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region. For sandy habitats, Pete recommended the SAT adopt a combined habitat size across all depths, as was done in the MLPA South Coast Study Region. The SAT voted to approve the approach to determining habitat replication criteria, including the combination of sandy habitats into one criterion. Steve Rumrill will help incorporate data from north coast estuaries into the habitat replication criteria.

I. Discussion on designating levels of protection

This agenda item was discussed out of order (see note under “Review of Agenda” above).

Mark Carr presented the level of protection (LOP) decision tree and the list of LOPs that have been recommended in the work group. SAT discussion focused on algal LOPs and the LOP assigned to urchins. Mark also clarified why the LOP for abalone is different in the north coast from the one assigned in the north central coast (differences in abalone maximum depth

distributions between the two regions and the increased detail of the decision tree that was unavailable in the NCC). There was initial discussion to hold the algae off the list for further review, but the existing regulations do not specify method of take for algae, so they were included in the SAT vote. The SAT voted to approve all LOPs recommended by the work group except sea urchins. The work group will revisit the sea urchin LOP and potentially consider the direction of ecosystem change when urchins are removed. External array proponents were asked to be as specific as possible when proposing a use in an MPA.

J. Discussion on size and spacing evaluation guidelines

Will White presented the current size and spacing guidelines, as well as new model outputs that might help the SAT visualize how different size and spacing guidelines might affect the percentage of dispersal/adult home range combinations that are protected in an MPA network. The SAT did not vote on these documents.

K. Review of modeling evaluation methods

Eric Bjorkstedt and Will White gave a presentation on the modeling evaluation methods and outputs. Eric discussed the history, inputs and outputs of the models, and received feedback from the SAT on what additional information would be useful for the modeling work group to incorporate. Will and Eric described new supplementary metrics that would provide additional information about where genetic breaks occur in the study region. The SAT advised the modeling work group to proceed with these supplementary metrics.

L. Review and discuss the methods used to estimate potential commercial and recreational fishery impacts

This agenda item was discussed out of order (see note under “Review of Agenda” above).

Astrid Scholz presented the Ecotrust data collection and evaluation methods. The data collection for the NCSR is completed and the data is being incorporated into MarineMap.

III. Update from SAT Work Groups

M. Species likely to benefit from MPAs in the north coast study region

This agenda item was discussed out of order (see note under “Review of Agenda” above).

Karina Nielsen presented the criteria document and draft species likely to benefit from MPAs list. SAT members discussed the criteria document, including whether or not the depressed population criterion should be part of a species’ score. The SAT also wanted to have an exhaustive list of all species that were evaluated for the list. The work group will continue to develop the list, keeping “depressed population” as a scored criterion, including all evaluated species on the list, and adding a column noting whether or not the species made the list.

N. Study region boundary

This agenda item was incorporated into Agenda Item G and presented by Emily Saarman.

O. Modeling work group integration of models with MarineMap

Jared Kibele and Will White informed the SAT that work is underway to incorporate the models into MarineMap. The end result will hopefully be that stakeholders will be able to run modeling results on any array they propose. May 1, 2010 is the proposed date of full integration of the models into MarineMap with user-friendly interfaces.

P. Tribal work group update

Steve Wertz and Ken Wiseman updated the SAT on the current status of the tribal work group. The team is still soliciting data from the tribes and would like more detailed information. The work group will meet with tribal representatives in January to discuss how to incorporate tribal uses into the MLPA process.

Next Steps

Q. NC SAT proposed meeting dates for 2010

Jason Vasques provided a summary of the meeting's proceedings and presented the next meeting dates. Future SAT meeting dates are January 20-21, 2010 (Eureka), February 11 (teleconference), March 16-17 (Eureka), May 12 (teleconference), June 29-30 (Eureka), July 28 (teleconference), October 13-14 (Eureka), and November 17 (teleconference).

Satie Airamé informed the SAT that staff would like SAT members to give science presentations at the next BRTF meeting. Steve Rumrill and Craig Strong have volunteered for the habitat presentation, John Largier will give the oceanography presentation with assistance from Ron LeValley, and Eric Bjorkstedt will give the movement, dispersal connectivity talk.

Public Comment

Both days of the meeting had public in attendance, and members of the public commented on all aspects of the MLPA process. Comments included opinions and questions about agenda items, discussion of tribal issues in the NCSR, policy questions, comments about the general MLPA process and timeline, and input on topics such as levels of protection and the quality of habitat data in the region. In addition to the public comment periods included during the meeting, a special question-and-answer session was held after the SAT recessed the evening of December 16. During this session, SAT members and staff were on hand to answer questions from external array proponents pertaining to the design of MPA arrays and the SAT evaluation process.

Briefing Documents

- B.1:** Regional Profile for the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT
- C.1:** Draft MLPA I-Team memo regarding science guidance questions (December 15, 2009 DRAFT)
- D.1:** Protocol for Evaluating Incoming Data from Sources External to the Master Plan Science Advisory Team (adopted February 24, 2009)

- D.2:** External Data Submission Form (adopted February 24, 2009)
- F.1:** Draft Methods Used to Evaluate MPA Proposals in the North Coast Study Region – Chapter 3 on Bioregions (revised December 15, 2009)
- F.2:** Bioregions in the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT
- G.1:** Approach to Habitat Data in the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT - Handout Placeholder
- G.2:** Draft Key and Unique Habitats for the MLPA North Coast Study Region (draft revised December 3, 2009)
- H.1:** Habitat Replication in the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT - Handout Placeholder
- I.1:** Draft List of Levels of Protection for the MLPA North Coast Study Region (draft revised December 10, 2009)
- I.2:** Levels of Protection in the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT
- I.3:** Draft Supporting Text for Proposed Levels of Protection in the MLPA North Coast Study Region (draft revised December 11, 2009)
- J.1:** MPA Size and Spacing Guidelines and Evaluation Methods for the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT
- K.1:** Spatial Bioeconomic Model Evaluation for the North Coast PPT
- L.1:** Overview of the North Coast Fisheries Uses and Values Project PPT
- M.1:** Species Likely to Benefit from MPAs in the MLPA North Coast Study Region PPT
- M.2:** Draft Criteria for List of Species Likely to Benefit from Marine Protected Areas in the MLPA North Coast Study Region (Draft revised December 10, 2009)
- M.3:** Draft List of Species Likely to Benefit from MPAs in the MLPA North Coast Study Region (Draft revised December 14, 2009)
- Q.1:** MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team Proposed Meeting Dates and Locations for 2010 (revised December 8, 2009)