

Key Outcomes Memorandum

Date: December 14, 2007

To: Members, MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSG)

From: Scott McCreary and Eric Poncelet, CONCUR, Inc.

Re: Key Outcomes Memorandum – November 28, 2007 NCCRSG Meeting

cc: MLPA Initiative Staff and California Department of Fish and Game MLPA Staff

Executive Summary – Key Outcomes

On November 28, 2007, the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSG) participated in its fifth meeting, in San Rafael, CA. **Key outcomes** from the meeting are as follows:

- The NCCRSG received and discussed the Science Advisory Team (SAT) evaluation, MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) guidance, and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) feasibility analysis on the set of 10 work group “draft options for MPA arrays” and “external MPA proposals”
- The NCCRSG received reports on the status of Ecotrust’s socioeconomic data collection. Final commercial data and draft recreational data should be available for the December NCCRSG meeting.
- NCCRSG members discussed possible approaches for moving toward convergence and winnowing the number of arrays to be advanced by the NCCRSG for the next round of evaluation. This included discussion of possible approaches for addressing the external MPA proposals.
- Each work group established a game plan to analyze the SAT, BRTF, and DFG guidance in advance of the December NCCRSG meeting.
- The NCCRSG received comment from members of the public.

Key **next steps** include (other next steps are listed in section III below):

- Work group members to work both individually and in sub-groups to prepare for the December NCCRSG meeting. Preparations will include reviewing and digesting the SAT evaluation, BRTF guidance, and DFG feasibility analysis, and developing suggested array revisions for specific geographic areas.
- Turquoise and emerald work group members to each schedule prep meetings to discuss SAT, BRTF, and DFG feedback and possible array revisions. Prep meetings to take place in advance of the December 11-12, 2007 NCCRSG meeting.
- I-Team to support work group preparations for the December NCCRSG meeting. This includes providing staff support for work group prep meetings and making available socioeconomic data.

I. Meeting Participants and Materials

Thirty-six NCCRSG primary and alternate members participated in the November 28, 2007 meeting.

MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team members participating in the meeting included Mark Carr and Steven Morgan.

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

Meeting materials, including copies of the PowerPoint presentations, may be found on the MLPA website at: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/meeting_112807.asp

II. Key Outcomes

A. NCCRSG received feedback and guidance on work group “draft options for MPA arrays” and external MPA proposals

1. SAT evaluation

Dr. Mark Carr presented the SAT’s evaluation of the six work group “draft options for MPA arrays” and four “external MPA proposals” with regard to the following criteria: habitat representation, MPA size and spacing, and replication. In his presentation, Dr. Carr explained the level of protection system developed by the SAT for evaluating the different arrays. Key points made include the following:

- Soft bottom habitats were less represented in high protection MPAs than rocky bottom habitats.
- Several MPAs received lower protection level designations because of insufficient specificity from NCCRSG work groups about allowed uses in the MPAs (e.g., salmon gear, fate of existing mariculture leases).
- Some habitats were better represented in the southern part of the study region (e.g., tidal flats, eelgrass, estuaries, shallow soft bottom), while others were better represented in the north (e.g., deep and shallow rocky reef).
- Few “draft options for MPA arrays” and “proposals external to the work groups” meet size, spacing, or replication guidelines at the very high and high levels of protection; many more arrays meet these guidelines at the moderately-high level of protection.
- The SAT could not discern whether array authors realized the focus for evaluation of spacing and replication is habitats, not MPAs.
- Modifications that meet size guidelines can increase the number of habitats meeting the spacing and replication guidelines.

Dr. Sarah Kruse (Ecotrust) presented Ecotrust’s socioeconomic analysis of the ten draft internal work group and external MPA arrays. The analysis examined the impacts of each draft array on a variety of fisheries. These impacts were defined by the percentage of fishing grounds and value affected for both the north central coast study area and in

total. Dr. Kruse noted that the ten draft arrays varied considerably in their net economic impact on the study region, ranging from just under 2% to over 14%.

2. BRTF guidance

Ken Wiseman (I-Team staff) summarized the guidance provided from the BRTF at its November 19-20, 2007 meeting. Key BRTF guidance included the following:

- The BRTF would like to see no more than 3-5 draft MPA proposals forwarded from the December NCCRSG meeting for the next round of SAT analysis.
- The next round of “draft MPA proposals” should all meet the SAT and DFG guidelines, while taking into account socioeconomic considerations and impacts.
- The focus of the MLPA is on marine ecosystems, not property ownership.

3. DFG feasibility analysis

Susan Ashcraft (I-Team staff) presented DFG’s analysis of the “draft options for MPA arrays” and “external MPA proposals” relative to DFG’s feasibility criteria. She reminded NCCRSG members that DFG is responsible for evaluating all of the MPA proposals that are eventually forwarded to the Fish and Game Commission for decision with respect to these criteria. She provided the following additional guidance to NCCRSG members:

- If NCCRSG members choose in certain cases not to meet DFG’s feasibility criteria, NCCRSG members should clearly document the reasons for not doing so. This will help inform future SAT and BRTF evaluations.
- NCCRSG members should be judicious when considering special closures. Special closures need to be enforceable. NCCRSG members also need to be specific in their proposals about which species are being protected and for what purposes.

4. NCCRSG comments and additional I-Team staff guidance

NCCRSG members posed clarifying questions regarding the SAT, BRTF, and DFG feedback, and received additional guidance from SAT members and I-Team staff. Key points included:

- NCCRSG members pointed out several areas where little data exist. For example, DFG landings data include little information on incidental catch, they do not take into account multi-species targets, and they do not distinguish between live and dead release. I-Team staff noted that these are all areas where staff and SAT members are interested to work with stakeholders to incorporate stakeholder information.
- NCCRSG members asked for guidance on the relative weight and importance of the respective design criteria (e.g., SAT, DFG feasibility, socioeconomic impact, etc.). I-Team staff responded that the SAT size and spacing guidelines and DFG feasibility guidance are generally the most important, but clarified that the most pertinent criteria may depend on the actual objectives of individual MPAs. For example, SAT size/spacing guidelines are less pertinent for MPAs having the goal 3 objectives of improving recreational, study, or educational experiences.
- I-Team staff clarified that replication of habitats within MPAs, as described in the MLPA, needs to be addressed at a biogeographic scale. As such, replication in the

north central coast study region should be additive with the central coast study region. However, given the diversity of ecosystems within the North Central Coast study region, stakeholders may also want to consider replication within the study region, such as for purposes of scientific study (MLPA Goal 3).

B. NCCRSG received status report on socioeconomic analyses

Dr. Sarah Kruse (Ecotrust) provided an update on the status of Ecotrust's socioeconomic data collection on commercial and recreational fishing.

1. **Commercial fishing data.** The maps presented to the NCCRSG at the October NCCRSG meeting have been revised and can be displayed by DFG and I-Team GIS staff.. The maps for ports now include fishermen who landed at those ports rather than just their home ports.
2. **Recreational fishing data.** Draft spatial and value data have been compiled and draft maps have been prepared. The draft maps can be displayed by DFG and I-Team GIS staff.. Data still need to be validated. The goal is to have final maps ready for the December NCCRSG meeting.

DFG staff noted that the commercial and recreational maps would be made available for stakeholder viewing at designative DFG offices in advance of the December NCCRSG meeting.

C. NCCRSG members discussed possible approaches for winnowing the number of arrays to be advanced by the NCCRSG for the next round of evaluation

NCCRSG members engaged in plenary and work group deliberations to discuss steps for winnowing the number of arrays to be reviewed in the next round of evaluation. Key outcomes from this discussion include:

- **NCCRSG members expressed broad support for additional opportunities to work in the work group setting.** NCCRSG members expressed a general desire to give the respective work groups more time to address the SAT/BRTF/DFG guidance and to try to come to convergence around single arrays.
- **NCCRSG members recognized the need for more plenary deliberation.** NCCRSG members expressed the general sentiment that the work groups have worked well so far, but that additional plenary discussions and feedback (i.e., across work groups) are needed at this stage. Several participants suggested that plenary discussion follow work group deliberations at the December NCCRSG meeting.
- **NCCRSG members suggested possible approaches for addressing the external MPA proposals.** Options identified included:
 - Each work group could be asked to integrate the external proposals into the next round of work group arrays.
 - Each work group could be assigned one or more external proposals and charged with winnowing their two internal proposals plus the one or more assigned external proposals down to a single array for evaluation in the next round.

- NCCRSG could use straw voting to winnow the number of external proposals to be carried to the next round of SAT/BRTF/DFG evaluation.
- **NCCRSG members identified possible process approaches for arriving at 3-5 draft MPA proposals by end of December meeting.** Potential Key approaches discussed included the following (note: NCCRSG members did not necessarily see these as mutually exclusive):
 - Work group convergence: Work groups would each strive to converge around a single array, resulting ideally in 3 draft MPA proposals. This could be informed by supplemental plenary discussions. Alternatively, each work group could send a couple of members to the other work groups to provide input.
 - Work for convergence in plenary: NCCRSG members would use plenary sessions to look across all draft arrays, find “partners”, make tradeoffs, and come up with a new set of proposals that would emerge out of these discussions.
 - Build on array similarities, and converge in the work group setting: Similar arrays from within the group of 10 draft options and external proposals would be grouped together. Grouped arrays would be assigned to individual work groups, which would be tasked with converging among the like arrays. Four groupings, for example, would result in four draft MPA proposals.
 - Assemble arrays out of options identified for key geographic areas: Cross-work group teams would first identify 3-4 MPA options for each of the main geographic areas. The plenary would then assemble these into 3-4 arrays (some more restrictive than others).

Note: NCCRSG members did not agree on a preferred process approach for producing 3-5 “draft MPA proposals” by the end of the December meeting.

- **Each work group established a game plan to analyze the SAT/BRTF/DFG feedback and prepare for the December meeting.** The turquoise and emerald groups organized sub-groups to address this feedback for the different SAT-identified sub-regions (north of Point Reyes, south of Point Reyes, and the Farallon Islands). The jade group decided that its members would conduct this analysis individually. All work groups recognized the need to come to the December meeting prepared with specific recommended changes in hand.

D. Public comment

The meeting included a designated public comment period. About 25 members of the public attended the meeting. Eight members of the public provided comments. Key comments included the following advice to NCCRSG members:

- Take local landowner stewardship actions and the current inaccessibility of much of the north central coast into account when designing MPAs. Some coastal residents expressed the sentiment that local private property owners practicing good stewardship may be more effective than a State-run program.
- Take socioeconomic impacts on local communities into account in the MPA design process.
- Continue to improve outreach to the public regarding MLPA, as much of the public is still unaware of the Act and its potential implications for local inhabitants and resource users.
- Address the potential for displaced fishing effort in the design of MPAs.

- Address water pollution issues, as these may be a bigger threat to marine resources along the north central coast than fishing.
- Ensure that the public has access to the same data being received by the NCCRSG, and that the public receives this information in a timely manner.

E. Next NCCRSG meeting

The next NCCRSG meeting is scheduled for December 11-12, 2007 in Pacifica, CA. Key objectives for the December meeting are to:

- Receive informational presentations: tribal use data, goal 3 evaluation, revised “external” MPA proposals
- Work in extended work group and plenary formats to respond to SAT, BRTF, and DFG feedback on arrays/proposals
- Use a mix of deliberation and straw voting to arrive at 3-5 “draft MPA proposals” for the next round of SAT and BRTF review and evaluation

III. Recap of Next Steps

A. Key next steps for NCCRSG members

1. Work group members to work both individually and in sub-groups focused on specific geographic regions to prepare for the December NCCRSG meeting by reviewing the SAT/BRTF/DFG guidance and developing suggested array revisions.
2. Turquoise and emerald work group members to schedule respective prep meetings in advance of the December 11-12, 2007 NCCRSG meeting to discuss SAT/BRTF/DFG feedback and possible array revisions.

B. Key next steps for I-Team staff

1. Support work group efforts to prepare for the December NCCRSG meeting, including the possible staffing of work group in-person prep meetings.
2. Prepare for the December NCCRSG meeting in Pacifica, CA.