

California Department of Fish and Game
Evaluation of the goals and objectives for the Marine Protected Area (MPA)
Proposals Advanced by the Blue Ribbon Task Force

June 11, 2008

The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) directs that marine protected areas (MPAs) have clearly identified objectives, as these are critical factors influencing design, selection of regulations and monitoring. In order to form a cohesive MPA network that achieves the goals of the MLPA, individual MPAs must support objectives that, when taken collectively, fulfill the network's objectives and the goals of the MLPA. This document summarizes the Department of Fish and Game's (Department's) evaluation of the goals and objectives for MPA proposals advanced by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force Meeting (BRTF) at their April 22-23, 2008 meeting. These include the BRTF Integrated Preferred Alternative (IPA) and North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (NCCRSG) proposals 1-3, 2-XA and 4, whose goals and objectives, at the request of the BRTF, were updated by the NCCRSG following the BRTF meeting.

The vast majority of concerns identified during the Department's initial evaluation¹ were addressed by the NCCRSG and the BRTF. All objectives which were inappropriately applied to individual MPAs when they were more applicable at the region or network scale were removed. In all cases but one, objectives and narratives which conflicted with take allowed in MPAs were also revised or deleted.

Concerns remain with a small number of proposed MPAs which allow most existing take to continue and are unlikely to meet the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines. As noted in the Department's memo to the NCCRSG on March 13, 2008², and in the memo to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force on April 18, 2008³, the Department opposes proposed MPAs of this nature. Suggested remedies are to either significantly reduce allowed take, or eliminate the proposed MPAs. These concerns are summarized below and options to remedy are provided.

Blue Ribbon Task Force Integrated Preferred Alternative

Salt Point SMP

Concern: The proposed allowed take in this state marine park (SMP, recreational take of all finfish and abalone) provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

¹ Department of Fish and Game evaluation of the goals and objectives of MPA proposals in the North Central Coast Region. April 17, 2008.

² Department Memo. Department guidance for final MPA proposal development. March 13, 2008.

³ Department Memo. Department of fish and Game Comments on Final Stakeholder Marine Protected Area Proposals for the Blue Ribbon Task Force Consideration. April 18, 2008.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.

Duxbury SMP

Concern: The small size and proposed take allowed (recreational take of all finfish and abalone) in this intertidal SMP provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.

Proposal 1-3

Saunders Reef SMCA

Concern: The proposed allowed take (salmon, urchin, abalone, and all finfish from shore) provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. This is inconsistent with the goals of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs, and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Del Mar Landing SMP

Concerns:

- Narrative rationale for selecting G3-O2 (keeping SMP as a heritage site) is not supported by the proposed take allowed (all recreational finfish) in this very small, nearshore SMP.
- The proposed take allowed in this small, nearshore MPA provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Delete G3-O2 and reduce allowed take, or eliminate the MPA.

Double Point SMCA

Concern: The proposed allowed take (salmon, crab, halibut, coastal pelagics) in this MPA provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.

Montara SMCA

Concern: The proposed allowed take (salmon, crab, wetfish, halibut) in this MPA provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines. An MPA in this location, however, is necessary to meet size and spacing guidelines, but to do so must have an increased level of protection.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take of benthic fish (halibut) to increase level of protection.

Proposal 2-XA

Duxbury SMP

Concern: The small size and proposed allowed take (recreational take of all finfish and abalone) in this intertidal SMP provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.

Proposal 4

Salt Point SMP

Concern: The proposed allowed take (recreational take of all finfish and abalone) provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the intent of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.

Duxbury SMCA

Concern: The proposed allowed take (salmon, crab, halibut, and all finfish from shore) provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the goals of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs, and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take to increase level of protection or eliminate the MPA.

Proposal 4 (Continued)

Agate Beach Intertidal SMCA

Concern: The proposed allowed take (salmon, crab, halibut, finfish) in this small, intertidal MPA provides minimal protection to the local ecosystem. The proposed MPA is inconsistent with the goals of the MLPA to improve the existing array of MPAs, and design them based on sound scientific guidelines.

Options to Remedy: Reduce allowed take or eliminate the MPA.