

California Department of Fish and Game
Summary of Feasibility Analysis of Draft MPA Arrays and Revised External MPA
Proposals for the South Coast Study Region
Revised 15 July, 2009

Background

A feasibility evaluation was completed by the Department of Fish and Game (Department) for all Marine Protected Area (MPA) proposals advanced by the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG) for Round 2 evaluation. The feasibility evaluations provide detailed feedback on how effectively each of the Round 2 proposals meets Department feasibility criteria. The criteria used for this evaluation, outlined in the document titled, *Feasibility Criteria and Evaluation Components for Marine Protected Area Proposals* (CDFG, November 12, 2008), will be used by the Department to make recommendations to the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) with respect to final MPA proposals.

The purpose of the summary provided here is to reflect a broad overview of how each proposal fared relative to various measures of feasibility. The complete feasibility evaluations provide detailed MPA-by-MPA comments at a scale useful for application by stakeholders during refinement of proposals through Round 3 final MPA proposal development. The evaluations also provide input on stated goals and objectives for all MPAs, and the prospects for the MPA proposals as a whole to meet the goals of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). These detailed evaluations will be provided to the SCRSG at their August 3-4, 2009 meeting.

Overview of Round 2 Proposals Analysis

The Department expected improvements in the feasibility of Round 2 proposals as compared to Round 1 based on Department guidelines. While some improvements were noted, substantial improvements are still needed to contemplate a suite of final proposals that would meet the Department's management needs. The evaluation provided for this iteration will serve to focus the SCRSG on the elements that need refinement in order to meet the Department's feasibility guidelines in the final round. A summary of the evaluated draft MPA proposals is provided in Tables 1 and 2.

Elements of MPAs in Round 2 proposals that do not meet guidelines:

- Include highly complex boundaries;
- Include highly complex take regulations and multiple allowances;
- Establish new fishery management regulations;
- Provide little protection ecologically due to the allowed take;
- Propose inadequate improvements to existing MPAs; and
- Propose MPAs that would add to the management burden for the Department without contributing sufficient protections.

Evaluations were prepared utilizing the Department's feasibility guidelines with input from Department enforcement personnel, especially from wardens who patrol these areas. Feasibility guidelines were developed to provide feedback to stakeholders and the Commission regarding design qualities that may pose a risk to MPA success, or that may

create a management burden for enforcement or monitoring and are in excess of MLPA goals or science guidelines. Simply put, MPAs that follow the feasibility guidelines will help to ensure that these areas are readily enforceable and ease public understanding. The Department appreciates the importance that the Blue Ribbon Task Force and the SCRSG have placed on the Department’s feasibility guidelines and input to date, and looks forward to further consideration and application of these guidelines in the final round of stakeholder proposals.

Table 1. Summary of the Round 2 Department of Fish and Game feasibility evaluation of draft MPA arrays and revised external proposals.

MPA Proposal	Total # of MPAs¹	# of New, Modified, or Retained MPAs²	Goals, Objectives and Rationale Included (%)	Regulations Meet Guidelines (%)	Boundaries Meet Guidelines (%)
External A	45	32	100%	66%	34%
External B	48	35	100%	40%	20%
Lapis 1	52	39	100%	66%	46%
Lapis 2	53	40	93%	68%	48%
Opal	54	41	39%	61%	39%
Topaz	64	51	100%	61%	37%

¹ Includes the 13 Northern Channel Island MPAs (does not include the military closures).

² Number used for calculating percentages.

Table 2. Summary of the Round 2 Department of Fish and Game evaluation of prospects of MPA proposals to meet the goals of the MLPA.

MPA Proposal	Total # of MPAs¹	# of New, Modified, or Retained MPAs²	MPAs that Don't Meet All Feasibility Guidelines³ (%)	MPAs Below Moderate-High LOP (%)	# of Existing MPAs Retained with Inadequate Improvement
External A	45	32	69%	28%	12
External B	48	35	86%	37%	15
Lapis 1	52	39	67%	26%	13
Lapis 2	53	40	60%	25%	16
Opal	54	41	88%	27%	13
Topaz	64	51	78%	31%	14

¹ Includes the 13 Northern Channel Island MPAs (does not include the military closures).

² Number used for calculating percentages.

³ Meets feasibility guidelines including: boundaries, regulations and includes goals, regional objectives and site-specific rationales.