STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY

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July 17, 2008

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attention: Melissa Miller-Henson

**Re: Nominations to the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group**

Dear Ms. ~~Miller-Henson~~,

I am writing to nominate two members of the California Coastal Commission staff to participate in the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative's Southcoast Regional Stakeholder Group. These staff members are Dr. Jonna Engel and Mr. Cassidy Teufel.

As the Coastal Commission's Staff Ecologist located in Ventura, Dr. Engel has a wealth of research experience and local knowledge of the south coast region. She grew up in Santa Barbara and upon earning her bachelor of arts degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, she worked for Island Packers Company (IPCO), Channel Islands National Park Concessionaire. While at IPCO Dr. Engel became a SCUBA diver, obtained her Captain's License, and gained knowledge of southern California marine systems including the Channel Islands. Following IPCO, Dr. Engel worked for the Sea Center of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History where her familiarity with southern California marine systems and the marine science community grew. Her work with the Sea Center inspired her to pursue higher education in the field of marine science and she earned a Master's of Marine Science degree from Moss Landing Marine Labs where her thesis involved examining the impact of commercial trawling on benthic communities. She went on to obtain a doctorate from the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she concentrated on biogeography and population genetics and her dissertation examined the population structure of the California sea mussel, *Mytilus californianus.*

While in graduate school Dr. Engel was supported by PISCO (Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans) as a research diver and intertidal biologist. Her dissertation research and her work with PISCO and other graduate students, organizations, and agencies including MARINe and Channel Islands National Park involved marine sampling and research across the coast of California and beyond.

Following graduate school Dr. Engel worked for Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary linking marine education and research and producing a review and needs assessment report on West Coast Sanctuary research programs. Dr. Engel was hired as an ecologist for the Commission in 2006. She is one of two ecologists on staff and is responsible for projects that occur anywhere between San Luis Obispo County and the Mexican border. Her familiarity with the southern California coastal region has been invaluable to her work with the Commission.

As a Commission ecologist, Dr. Engel reviews coastal development permit applications with the potential to impact coastal resources. Her Coastal Act compliance analysis of environmental impact reports and statements, biological opinions, and biological reports often requires collaboration with state and federal agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and concerned citizens. Collaborative work requires patience, cooperation, and effective communication; all skills that Dr. Engel demonstrates and employees. Dr. Engel is a member of several working groups and advisory panels and she has a large and diverse array of academic and agency contacts.

Dr. Engel has expressed her willingness and enthusiasm to be a member of the MLPA South-Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. She is extremely well qualified to sit on this panel and I believe she will contribute much to the goals and success of the Stakeholder Group.

As a Coastal Program Analyst in the Coastal Commission's Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division, Mr. Teufel also possesses intimate first-hand knowledge of the south coast region and a well rounded perspective on the unique coastal and marine resources of this area. This knowledge and perspective has been gained through several decades of living, working and exploring in the coastal and offshore areas south of Point Conception. In addition, over much of his nearly three years with the Coastal Commission, Mr. Teufel has further increased his knowledge and familiarity with the south coast marine region through work on a variety of projects in this area including the development of state and federal marine protected areas around the Channel Islands National Park, the update of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary management plan and regulations, the review of several coastal power plants in San Diego County, the development of experimental fisheries enhancement aquaculture facilities throughout the region, and the CEQA, NEPA and coastal development permit review phases for a variety of offshore marine terminals, oil and gas pipelines, and drilling platforms within the state and federal waters of the Southern California Bight. Work on these projects has required detailed knowledge of the region's unique biological, socio-economic and fisheries resources as well as a strong willingness and ability to engage in dialogue and collaborate with a wide variety of diverse stakeholders.

During his time with the Coastal Commission Mr. Teufel has also participated in several working groups and committees including the California Department of Fish and Game's Aquaculture Development Committee and the North-Central Coast MLPA Regional Stakeholder Group's Marine Mammal Disturbance Working Group, and has been called upon to represent the fundamental interests of the Coastal Commission and convey the policies of the Coastal Act in a collaborative environment in which a reliance on fixed positions would not have been appropriate.

In his work reviewing coastal development permit applications and analyzing the consistency of proposed developments with the policies of the Coastal Act, Mr. Teufel is often required to work collaboratively with a diverse range of state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations and focused interest groups to help ensure that their specific concerns and interests are considered along with those of the coastal recreation communities, fishermen, farmers, tourists and California residents considered under the Coastal Act. As a state employee integrated into both the state and Coastal Commission communication networks, Mr. Teufel is also very accessible to the general public and is able to draw on these resources to reach stakeholders that may not be able to attend the public MLPA meetings.

Mr. Teufel is very happy to have been able to participate in the MLPA North-Central Regional Stakeholder Group and is looking forward to continuing to contribute his skills and experience to help ensure that the charge of the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group is successfully met. Although based out of the Coastal Commission's headquarters office in San Francisco, Mr. Teufel is committed to being able to fully participate in the South Coast MPLA process and will be able to take advantage of the regional Coastal Commission offices in Ventura, Long Beach and San Diego to do so.

In conclusion, I feel that both Dr. Engel and Mr. Teufel will be valuable additions to the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group and I appreciate your consideration of their nominations.

Sincerely,

Peter Douglas
Executive Director

cc: Alison Dettmer, Deputy Director, California Coastal Commission
Jonna Engel, Ecologist, California Coastal Commission
Cassidy Teufel, Coastal Program Analyst, California Coastal Commission