

The California Collaborative Approach: Marine Protected Areas Partnership Plan—Executive Summary DRAFT

A Shared Vision: Collaborative Management of California’s Marine Protected Areas

California is committed to healthy and productive ocean ecosystems and sustainable resource management, and the state has demonstrated this commitment in broad, forward-looking legislation and policy directions. Among the legislation that specifically calls out the integrity of ecosystems and sustaining marine life, including that of commercial relevance, is the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA).¹ The MLPA required California to designate a network of marine protected areas (MPAs), resulting in the establishment of 124 MPAs that make up 16% of its state waters.² Demonstrating national and international leadership, California is taking the initiative to invest in sustainable marine resource management so that future generations of Californians and visitors can realize the environmental, economic, and cultural benefits that our marine and coastal ecosystems have to offer.

California is a global leader for sustainable resource management. The California Collaborative is a progressive and innovative approach for local to network scale MPA management. The State and its partners are taking bold steps to build a strong and effective marine protected area network that draws upon the resources and commitment of our state’s energized citizenry.

-- Secretary John Laird, Natural Resources Agency and Chair of the Ocean Protection Council

Building on the momentum from the public design and designation phase, California now is turning its attention to the management of the network of MPAs—that is, identifying an interagency, public, and science-informed governance structure that provides for the best, most cost-effective, and fairest approach to understanding the efficacy of the network. To this end, under the leadership of the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), California’s MPA Leadership Team—consisting of OPC, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Fish and Game Commission, the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Ocean Science Trust (OST)—has agreed on a partnership-based model, the *California Collaborative* approach, that takes advantage of overlapping government mandates, public interest, and science, to provide support and create opportunities for the governance of this new network of MPAs across geographic and political scales.

Guiding Principles of the California Collaborative

- ❖ Leveraging Resources
- ❖ Ensuring Transparency
- ❖ Engaging in Partnerships

Partnership is key to California’s vision for effective management of the MPA network, and the State is encouraging participation. There is a role for all who care about our ocean’s future in the stewardship of

California’s MPA network. The first step in implementing this vision is the *California Collaborative Approach: Marine Protected Areas Partnership Plan*, which provides a framework for the collaborative management of the newly designated network of MPAs of California. The Partnership Plan, which was written to be incorporated into the State’s *Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*, will serve as a detailed companion document to this Executive Summary.

¹ California. Legislature. *Marine Life Protection Act*. CA Codes (FGC 2850-2863) 2004.

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/mlpa_language.pdf.

² California Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Regional MPA Statistics*. 2012. Web. 16 Sept. 2013.

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/mpa/statistics.asp>

Overview of California Collaborative Approach

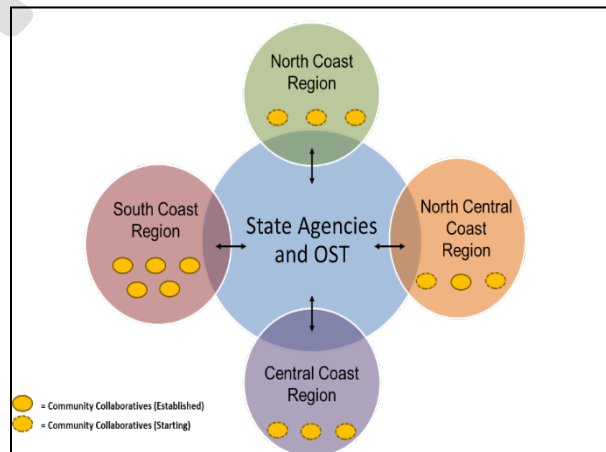
From world-renowned scientists to its energized local governments and citizenry, California has significant resources to learn from and leverage to support the ongoing management of the MPA network. The State seeks to encourage this energy through the California Collaborative, a bold new initiative that offers an opportunity for local partners to engage with and have an active voice and participation in MPA management. This approach will bring together the State, federal, local, and tribal governments along with non-profits, resource users, academics, foundations, and the private sector to support the various elements of MPA management.

Bringing these different perspectives together requires a core set of objectives to guide participation. The MPA Leadership Team has developed a set of common objectives for the MPA network that will help focus those who participate in the California Collaborative:

1. ***Governance and management process is effective and adaptive.***
2. ***Objective, reliable, and timely scientific information is used in management decisions for stewardship of the statewide network.***
3. ***Compliance with the regulations and participation in management and stewardship of the statewide network.***
4. ***Statewide network is effectively financed.***

The California Collaborative is implemented at the local, community scale through the *Community Collaboratives*. This localized approach to MPA management is intended to organize participation that reflects the communities. As of 2014, a total of 14 Community Collaboratives have been established throughout the state, under OPC's leadership. Community Collaboratives bring together local and national government representatives, experts in various disciplines, and state agency staff operating at a regional or sub-regional level (e.g., CDFW game wardens or State Park managers or district superintendents) to meet with local citizens, NGOs, and others interested in supporting MPA network management, particularly in the areas of education and outreach, enforcement and compliance, and research and monitoring.³

One key to the success of the California Collaboratives is effective communication, coordination, and learning across political and geographical scales. To demonstrate the State's commitment and to help foster and streamline communication across the network, the OPC will organize and host regular State and Regional Community Collaborative Forums within the four MLPA designation regions. These meetings will bring together the MPA Leadership Team with Community Collaborative participants, providing an opportunity for state agencies to communicate, listen, and learn from local entities supporting MPA management. In addition, the Forums will provide a platform for regional partners to come together to network, share best practices and lessons learned, and foster greater collaboration.



³ Department of Fish and Wildlife. "Marine Protected Area Collaborative Implementation Project Handout." 2013. Print.

This new approach is an experiment that the State and local communities are embarking on together, and they will work to improve and adapt as needed to promote their ongoing success.

A Call to Action: Participating in the California Collaborative

Managing a network that spans California's 1,100-mile coastline is a significant task, and leveraging partnerships is a viable way to ensure cost-effective management that serves local constituents. The State prioritizes efficiency, transparency, and participation. Thus this is a call to action to join in supporting this ambitious effort. Each agency, organization, and individual has an opportunity to participate in achieving our collective MPA management objectives. The MPA Leadership Team welcomes new partners and will work with each interested agency and organization to identify the most efficient and appropriate role to ensure that their contribution enhances MPA management, regardless of scale.

A Need for Continued Support

California has invested in the designation and implementation of the MPA network and is committed to ongoing support for core management functions. Stabilizing the fundamental resources that provide for these core functions is paramount. The State has identified four management priorities that will require adequate funding to support the MPA network:

- Scientific monitoring;
- Compliance and enforcement;
- Engagement with Community Collaboratives; and
- Tribal consultation.

Providing a diversified portfolio of revenue streams is critical to ensure long-term funding stability that can withstand shifts in funding availability that may occur. The State and its partners will continuously seek and assess new revenue streams and opportunities to complement State sources, but there is a need for continued commitment and support through partnership to fill the gaps.

A Path to Success

Success for the California Collaborative would be an MPA network that has strong oversight and processes for implementing the legal mandate, comprehensive management planning, effective on-the-ground operations (including surveillance and enforcement, monitoring and evaluation, and outreach and education), strong social capital, and long-term sustainable financing in place that is enhanced by partnership across sectors and scales and through the ability to leverage human and financial resources. California is poised to learn lessons and identify best practices related to governance and cost-effective management of the MPA network and can apply them to other resource management issues in the state as well as sharing them worldwide, solidifying its place as a global leader in sustainable ocean and coastal resource management.