



ACTION ITEM

Staff Recommendation
October 25, 2018

Marine Protected Area Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: As directed by the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), staff has developed an updated triennial work plan to reflect shared priorities among the members of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Statewide Leadership Team. Staff recommends that OPC adopt the resolution in Exhibit B that endorses the “MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 – 20/21” pursuant to Sections 35500 *et. seq.* of the Public Resources Code.

“The California Ocean Protection Council hereby adopts the *MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 – 20/21* outlines shared strategic priorities among the members of the MPA Statewide Leadership Team and identifies key actions and outcomes related to the management of California’s statewide network of MPAs.”

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES: Science-Based Decision-Making, Sustainable Fisheries and Marine Ecosystems, Climate Change, Coast and Ocean Impacts from Land-Sources, Existing and Emerging Ocean Uses

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: “MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 – 20/21” including the Executive Summary

Exhibit B: Proposed Resolution of the California Ocean Protection Council regarding the “MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 – 20/21”

Exhibit C: Support Letter(s)

SUMMARY:

The proposed resolution in Exhibit B endorses the “MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 - 20/21 (Work Plan) and commits to supporting its implementation.

1. The Work Plan defines priority actions in the MPA Management Program in the four focal areas of: outreach and education; research and monitoring;

enforcement and compliance; and policy and permitting. The Work Plan outlines shared strategic priorities among the members of the MPA Statewide Leadership Team (Leadership Team) and identifies key actions and outcomes related to the management of California's statewide network of MPAs.

2. Upholds the commitment to a partnership-based approach as outlined in the California Collaborative Approach: Marine Protected Area Partnership Plan (Partnership Plan)¹ and the Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan 2016.²

PURPOSE:

On December 2, 2014, OPC endorsed the Partnership Plan and directed staff to return to the Council with a work plan to implement the partnership approach. OPC staff led the Leadership Team in the development of the "MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 15/16 – 17/18³," which was endorsed by OPC and Fish and Game Commission in September 2015. The FY 15/16 – 17/18 Work Plan successfully directed the priority actions of the MPA Management Program (Program) partners, leading to significant Program advances including but not limited to:

- Outreach and Education: Installation of 356 regulatory and interpretive signs; establishment of a small grants program for the MPA Collaborative Network⁴ focused on locally produced outreach products; and a comprehensive gap analysis to guide future work.
- Enforcement and Compliance: Use of MPA Watch human use data to help inform enforcement allocation; progress towards deployment of an electronic records management system; and piloting of new technologies to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Research and Monitoring: Completion of Phase 1 baseline monitoring to establish conditions of the MPAs at the time of implementation; regional public meetings to share results including open web access to all data and reports; and the launch of Phase 2 long-term monitoring to track performance of the MPAs.
- Policy and Permitting: Launch of a quantitative cumulative impact assessment tool to inform decision making about scientific collecting permits; multiple successful engagements working across regulatory

¹ http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/mpa/APPROVED_FINAL_MPA_Partnership_Plan_12022014.pdf

² <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Master-Plan>

³ http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20150922/Item5_Attach2_MPALeadershipTeam_Workplan_FINALv2.pdf

⁴ <http://www.mpacollaborative.org/>

jurisdictions to eliminate or significantly reduce impacts to MPAs; and ongoing discussion of policy needs regarding other uses of MPAs not related to consumptive take (e.g. habitat modifications within an MPA).

California's MPA network spans over 1,100 miles of coast and multiple agency jurisdictions and mandates. This requires a bold approach to management focused on developing active, effective partnerships that leverage resources and increase efficiencies. The updated MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan covers FY 18/19 – 20/21 and is a significant step in continuing to break down traditional silos and setting forth ambitious yet achievable outcomes. The Work Plan represents a shared vision of the members of Leadership Team as well as a wide range of other partners. To inform the development of the Work Plan, each of the Leadership Team members did significant scoping both among divisions and programs within their organizations, as well as with a wide range of outside partners. In addition to this internal and external scoping, the Director of the MPA Collaborative Network holds a seat on the Leadership Team and continues to provide a direct conduit by which information from stakeholders involved in the 14 local MPA Collaborative groups associated with coastal counties or coastal areas can inform the development of the Work Plan and future work of the Leadership Team.

The resolution for consideration recognizes the continued need for the MPA Statewide Leadership Team to serve as a standing body to coordinate MPA Management Program actions which often overlap between agency jurisdictions and mandates. In addition, the resolution recognizes the "MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 18/19 – 20/21" as being a foundational document that will guide the work and priorities of the Leadership Team on tasks related to MPA network management over the next three years.

BACKGROUND:

On April 13, 2015, Secretary for Natural Resources Laird convened an initial meeting of members of the Leadership Team primarily made up of state agency representatives. The Leadership Team has continued to expand since the initial convening. Currently the Leadership Team includes state and federal agencies, regional tribal representatives and key non-governmental partners, including the leadership of the MPA Collaborative Network, to ensure the membership reflects the diversity of interests along California's coast.

The expanded membership reflects an improved understanding, as expressed in the Partnership Plan, of the roles, processes and partners that are needed to adaptively manage the statewide MPA network. After the initial convening of the expanded Leadership Team, a working group was formed to create a work plan to guide MPA network management priorities over the next three years. This work plan was identified in the Partnership Plan as being needed for implementation. The Work Plan sets out a prioritized road map agreed upon among members of the Leadership Team that guides MPA related work for the three-year periods beginning in FY 15/16. OPC leads the Leadership Team with a focus on promoting and leveraging resources to increase agency efficiency and to ensure coordinated science-based decision making.

The Leadership Team has defined a bold new vision of partnering among state, federal, tribal and other non-governmental partners, with a focus on working together in innovative ways. The Leadership Team has formalized its membership and is committed to working collaboratively on a comprehensive range of topics to ensure active communication and collaboration regarding all aspects of MPA network management. The Leadership Team will continue to act as a standing body that meets regularly to work together to ensure the effective and efficient management of the statewide network of MPAs.

CONSISTENCY WITH CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION ACT:

As outlined in the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA), OPC is responsible for coordinating activities of state agencies that are related to the protection and conservation of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems, and is designated by SB 96 as the lead agency for guiding the policy direction of the network of MPAs. In this leadership capacity, OPC leads the MPA Statewide Leadership Team to address the existing and emerging management needs of the statewide network of MPAs designated under the Marine Life Protection Act. The Work Plan outlines roles and responsibilities of the primary agencies and groups involved in the MPA Management Program and defines opportunities for a continued partnership-based focus.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE OPC'S STRATEGIC PLAN:

Beyond its connection to OPC's legislative mandate, the proposed resolution regarding the MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan fulfills multiple elements of the OPC's Five-Year Strategic Plan 2012-2017, in which OPC has committed to:

- "Build on the foundation laid by the Marine Life Management Act and the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), and partner with the regulatory bodies charged with implementing these statutes to help advance sustainable ocean ecosystem management in the state." (Sustainable Fisheries and Marine Ecosystems Goal).
- "Work with partners to effectively advance MPA management, enforcement, monitoring, education, and outreach across a broad range of public and private entities that are engaged in marine resource protection and restoration activities." (Issue 8, Leveraging Investments and Realizing Benefits of the State's Marine Protected Areas).

The Leadership Team process to develop the Work Plan incorporates local stakeholders input through scoping conducted by members and representation of the MPA Collaborative Director. The Work Plan fulfills additional elements of OPC's Five-Year Strategic Plan outlined in Objective 8.1 which commit to:

- "Support effective implementation of MPAs consistent with the MLPA through strategic partnerships."

- “Support efforts to increase public awareness of MPAs by participating in a working group with appropriate local, state and federal agencies, tribal governments, private foundations, NGOs, educators, and other relevant entities to facilitate development and implementation of a coordinated public education strategy.”

The agency roles and responsibilities outlined in the Work Plan additionally fulfill Objective 8.2:

- “Support coordination of MLPA partners to facilitate communication, collaboration, and cost effective implementation of the MLPA”.