

**Fisheries Information Committee**  
**Major Meeting Outcomes**  
**July 31, 2009**  
**Sheraton Four Points Hotel**  
**Los Angeles, California**

1. Meeting materials were distributed to Fishery Information Network (FIN) participants (RSG and FIC members) members before the meeting. The materials included minutes from the July 11, 2009 workshop with Dr. Carl Walters; the workshop's purpose was to review the Round 2 MPA proposals in EDOM modeling platform. Use of EDOM continues to demonstrate that establishing more MPAs in Southern California will have limited effect on building or increasing fish populations and biodiversity while causing a significant drop in fisheries related income (see 4. below for related information). Nevertheless, the FIN is committed to participating in the RSG process in a productive manner.
2. Fisheries Information Committee (FIC) and Fishing Interest South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG) members, FIC coordinators and guests introduced themselves.
3. FIC members approved the FIC meeting agenda and May 9, 2009 meeting minutes.
4. Merit McCrea and Joe Exline led a review of the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) June 4 and July 28-29 policy guidance and outcomes. Key points:
  - Initiative coordinators selected and the BRTF endorsed three of six Round 2 proposals for Round 3 of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative process.
  - FIC External Proposal A (XA) will be one of the proposals to be reviewed and revised by the RSG during Round 3. Selection of XA demonstrates the broad acceptance of the FIC proposal by MLPA stakeholders and agencies and is a notable and major achievement for the FIN. The Initiative coordinators assigned RSG members to work groups based on the members' stated preferences. XA is to be reviewed by Work Group 2; the other two proposals that moved to Round 3 were Topaz (Work Group 1) and Lapis 1 (Work Group 3).
  - RSG members were directed to revise each of the proposals to meet Science Advisory Team (SAT) guidelines, and conform to the CA Dept. of Fish and Game (DFG) feasibility guidelines and State Parks guidance, to the extent possible. Work Group 1 was further tasked to achieve cross-interest support, Work Group 2 was advised to achieve efficiency, and Work Group 3, to meet preferred guidelines.
  - It was noted that there is 1) continuing disagreement among scientists and policy makers over the expected effectiveness of the SAT size/ spacing guidelines and MPAs in general, especially in areas where effective fishery management exists, like areas off California and 2) that DFG and State Parks representatives disagreed over creation and enforcement of MPAs established to protect biological and cultural resources. Generally, neither agency has funding to enforce MPA regulations that would extend outside their current respective purviews.
  - DFG guidance includes the following: a) small MPAs (whether new or existing) provide almost no biological benefit, are difficult to enforce and therefore are discouraged, b) MPAs should have levels of protection of at least medium high to high, c) since "surface gear" is not defined in DFG regulations, use of such terminology should not be used when describing MPA allowable uses, and d) there are to be no new special closures in the MPA arrays.

5. The group proceeded in its review and refinement of XA, led by Joe Exline and Merit McCrea. In light of the BRTF and agency guidance, FIC recommended to RSG members deletions, additions or changes to several existing XA MPAs. The refined XA will serve as guidance and recommendations to RSG members in either Work Group 1 (Topaz), Work Group 2 (XA, as provided to the RSG on May 12, 2009), and possibly also to Work Group 3 (Lapis 1) as they revise the three proposals during the August 3-4 and the September 9-10 RSG meetings. Deadline for completing Round 3 proposals is September 10.
6. FIC and RSG members discussed strategies for the upcoming RSG meetings. Generally, FIC members agreed that fishing interest recommended changes to any of the three MPA arrays follow the logic and rationale used to create XA. Using that logic and rationale the FIN is to seek cross interest support in the work groups so that the results after the September RSG meeting are proposals to the BRTF that the fishing industry can live with. If a proposal does not have the fishing industry support, RSG members will strive to provide reasonable and professional explanations as to why that proposal should not proceed to the BRTF or Fish and Game Commission.
7. Next Steps:
  - Joe Exline will refine and forward the recommended XA changes to FIC and fishing interests prior to Monday, August 3 for final review and agreement. RSG members will be provided with the refined XA prior to RSG MPA proposal deliberations.
  - Discussions with key agencies and interest groups to gain opinions on the XA refinements should occur before the RSG August 4 work session.
  - The next FIC meeting will be scheduled via electronic communications after the August 3-4 RSG meeting.