

**Fisheries Information Committee
Draft Major Meeting Outcomes
October 17, 2009
Sheraton Four Points Hotel
Los Angeles, California**

1. FIC Coordinators Charles Steinbeck, Diane Pleschner-Steele, Vern Goehring, and Eugenia Laychak welcomed members to the final FIC meeting under the Ecotrust/Resources Legacy Fund Foundation contract. Eugenia noted that the FIC had exceeded the member expectations expressed at the first meeting on December 8, 2008. Vern thanked the members for their contributions and support for the Fisheries Information Network (FIN) and California Fisheries Coalition (CFC). Diane led the group in thanking Joe Exline for his tireless expertise and diplomacy. Charles led the discussion on lessons learned:
 - A FIC-like group organized before Ecotrust initiates port/fishing interest interviews would facilitate information transfer to the fleet.
 - Issues related to the recreational fishing on-line survey were rectified on the north coast with in-person interviews.
 - Fishing interest honesty when reporting fishing areas/effort to Ecotrust assists later in the process with Marine Protected Areas (MPA) designs/designations and accurate socio-economic impacts assessments.
 - Ecotrust assistance with outreach to communities regarding possible effects of proposed MPA arrays would help lend credibility to the reported expectations, as Ecotrust is perceived by the public as more objective than fishing interests.
2. Members approved the FIC meeting agenda and July 31, 2009 meeting minutes.
3. Joe Exline led a review of the Science Advisory Team (SAT) analysis of the three Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG) proposed MPA arrays being forwarded to the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) for the BRTF/RSG October 20-21, 2009 meeting. The BRTF is scheduled to forward recommendations to the CA Fish and Game Commission on the preferred South coast region MPA proposal. Key points:
 - The Marine Life Protection Act Initiative (MLPA-I) staff provided the following instructions to the three RSG workgroups (WGs) for refining three alternative proposals; all groups were directed to improve SAT guidelines where possible and: WG1 – seek cross-interest support, WG2 – improve efficiency of their array, WG3 – refine to best meet SAT preferred size guidelines.
 - The SAT favored the WG 3 array as best meeting SAT guidelines, WG 1 and WG 2 arrays consistently ranked as the second and third, respectively, except Map 2 showed most improvement between Rounds 2 and 3.
 - The WG 2 array captures all open-coast habitat replicates available at a high level of protection. WG 1 and 2 arrays picked up deep-rock habitats [at Del Mar], while the WG 3 array did not. It was also noted that the SAT acknowledged that non-consumptive users can also harass birds and marine mammals; disturbance is not restricted only to fishing activities.
 - The WG 2 proposal ranked best in reducing economic impact in the bioeconomic modeling, in all situations except for the scenario depicting total fisheries management failure in areas outside the MPAs. The modeling also showed: a) that in the highly unlikely event of total management failure, the WG 3 array performed the best in protecting fisheries and b) fisheries management, outside the MPAs was key to protecting fisheries and more important than prohibiting fishing within the MPA boundaries. The “no

- action” (existing MPAs, only) proposal provided better protection than the WG 3 proposal when successful fisheries management is assumed.
- CA Dept. of Fish and Game and SAT representatives noted that small MPAs that do not meet the size and spacing guidelines and allow take of most species within the boundaries makes the MPA designations nearly useless.
 - Although the differences in the amount of area in the study region proposed to be set aside for new MPAs is less than 1.5% among the three proposed arrays (WG 1=16.9%, WG 2=16.2%, WG 3=17.6%), the differences in net economic impacts is far greater. Annual reductions in profit, for the south coast region as a whole, are estimated as follows: commercial fisheries, WG 1= \$2.6 million (11.6%), WG 2=\$2.3 million (10.3%), WG 3=\$4.3 million (18.9%); commercial passenger fishing vessels (CPFV), WG 1=16.2%, WG 2=12.6%, WG 3= 20.4%. Reductions in recreational fishing opportunities depend on the fishery and are similar to or worse than the commercial and CPFV reductions. Impacts on recreational anglers are generally less with the WG 2 array, greater with the WG 1 package and greatest with the WG 3 array.
 - It was noted that individual port profit reductions range higher and lower than the aggregate profit reductions for the region, as a whole. Commercial fisheries reductions range from 5.6% (Ventura, WG 2) to 28.4% (Oceanside, WG 1). CPFV reductions range from 2.7% (Santa Monica, WG 2) to 39.6% (San Diego, WG 1).
4. In developing a strategy for communicating to the BRTF, the group focused discussion on options for responding to the MLPA-I team survey circulated on October 16, 2009. Members were concerned that the survey was another attempt to divide the RSG (especially fishing interest RSG members) and provide information for tweaking the arrays or creating a new array from the responses provided by the RSG. Discussion highlighted group concerns that: a) the BRTF would favor the WG 3 and/or WG 1 proposal(s) over the WG 2 proposal and b) the WG 1 proposal would be perceived as the best “cross-interest” proposal and as the “middle ground” by decision-makers when compared with proposals perceived as representative of fishing industry interests and their allies (WG 2), and the environmental community and its allies (WG 3). Members discussed and voiced concern over post hoc negotiations between WG 1 fish reps and ENGOs after the RSG received the SAT analysis. Fishing representatives in WG 1 stated they could not support the WG 1 proposal unless changes were made, particularly reducing the 43% socio-economic impact to recreational fishing in San Diego, according to the Ecotrust analysis.

Members discussed strategies to debunk the perception that the WG 1 proposal best reflects a broad cross-section of interests (environmental/fishing), and noted that the group did not include recreational fishing representation from the southern part of the study region. Consequently the WG1 Map had the greatest economic impact on San Diego recreational and Oceanside commercial fishing interests, when compared to impacts from the WG 2 and WG 3 proposals.

- It was noted that Map 0 is one bookend and Map 3 is the other, with Map 2 the true ‘middle’ map with real cross-interest support from coastal communities beyond fishermen [middle-ground interests excluding ENGOs]. Members also acknowledged that their strategies might not change decision-maker perceptions.
5. Advice to RSG members:
- All RSG members should respond to the survey and provide their responses at the BRTF meeting; not before the meeting. [However, the deadline for notifying I-team of interest in participating in panel discussion of a specific study region should be done by the deadline on Monday Oct. 19, per I-team guidance memo received:

- ***Please call or send an email message by 5 p.m. on Monday, October 19 to Kathie Magnuson (Kathie.Magnuson@resources.ca.gov or 916.653.9486) indicating your geography preference for the panel discussions.***
 - The options of using the form provided or developing a different format were left to the individual.
 - In using the form it was suggested to either: a) circle all six regions, b) add the entire south coast region as a seventh option, c) strike out the phrase (“please circle one”).
 - If members choose to discuss specific geographies, provide detailed MPA-specific examples of how WG2 MPAs are better, but also discuss them in the context of MPAs in the other geographies, south coast region, and related economics, as a whole.
 - Emphasize in the responses that the WG 2 proposal best meets FIN interests. Emphasize how the WG 2 proposal is science-based and that it represents the “middle ground” when compared to all four options (including the “existing MPAs” only option) Use the points made in the Executive Summary of Joe Exline’s testimony as a guide:
 - Forward Proposal 2 as your preferred alternative to the Commission.
 - Proposal 2 captures all open-coast habitat replicates at high LOP.
 - Proposal 2 captures estuary replicates except for eelgrass, which is poorly mapped in the region.
 - Proposal 2 meets spacing guidelines for all habitats where it was possible except for two missed in the contentious Laguna area. Local knowledge was provided for one habitat (30 meter rock proxy) and rationale provided for the other.
 - Proposal 2 has comparable spacing and coverage for rare habitats where spacing could not be met except for kelp and 30-100 meter rock. This was due to excessive economic/recreational impacts, other interests’ concerns, and limited availability of the habitat in the bioregion.
 - Proposal 2 considered multiple interests including harbor masters, wastewater districts, city councils, research agencies/facilities, national parks, city parks, tide-pool research/protection, local enforcement officials, and **all** of the numerous fisheries in the south coast study region.
 - Proposal 2 has the lowest overall social-economic impacts in all sectors commercial, CPFV, and recreational values for divers, kayakers, and boaters.
 - Proposal 2 performs the best under MSY and conservative management; the most probable future management schemes in the modeling.
6. The group wrapped up the meeting by discussing FIN/CFC next steps. Diane Pleschner-Steele summarized the FIN’s successes. Vern Goehring summarized the CFC history, framework and budget. The group brainstormed approaches for building on the successes of the CFC/FIN. Interest was expressed in expanding the south coast regional collaboration/dialogue statewide and to create/continue/reenergize and link regional fishing interest collaboratives along the north, central and south coasts of California. Meeting handouts “FIC/FIN and California fisheries Coalition NEXT STEPS” and “California Fisheries Coalition” provided background for discussion on approaches for structure, leadership, funding.

The purposes for expanding the FIN concept, expressed by FIN members, are to continue finding common ground between the recreational and commercial fishing industries and to address current and future threats to fishing ground access. Examples of such threats:

- Continuation of the MLPA process in the south coast region by the Fish and Game Commission.
- The MLPA-I process in northern California and San Francisco Bay.
- The renewed Peripheral Canal effort.
- Results of the MLPA-I process and other programs on the central and north central coasts, as well as other areas, re: long-term monitoring and adaptive management, among issues.
- Policies/implementation of initiatives sponsored by the President's Ocean Policy Task Force, the Pew and other foundation/philanthropic funders.
- Marine Spatial Planning programs and their "fall out", such as concentrating marine resources consumptive/industrial activities, including fishing, desalination, wind and wave energy projects, into the same areas.

Organizational structural approaches for creating regional collaboratives and expanding to a statewide network or coalition:

- Tweak CFC structure to continue and expand an organized tiered structure for communications, decision-making and developing goals/objectives, for example: Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries -> regional groups such as PSO, CFC, Wetfish Producers, fish processors -> ports coordinators who work with ports/harbors groups, fisheries marketing associations, local processors -> fisheries coordinators.
- Communication/public outreach – movie documentary of the south coast process.

Leadership approaches:

- Volunteer directors or trustees at regional level under ACSF umbrella.
- Southern California FIN members can be advisors to other regions. For example, Joe Exline will be traveling to and assisting/guiding north coast fisheries interests during that MLPA-I process.
- Ensure that approaches encourage and incorporate consultation/inclusion of representatives of all fisheries who wish to participate.

Fundraising approaches:

- Use the CFC/FIN budgets as examples and frame a reasonable budget for expansion.
- Take advantage of and seek "in-kind" donations, such as meeting space and meals.
- Major community fundraising events, such as "Take a Stand" concert and wine tasting event in northern California.
- A coalition of southern California attorneys may donate funds.
- Engage media in fundraising outreach.

7. Immediate next steps:

- The following members agreed to continue discussion on expanding CFC/FIN: Rick Gutierrez, Gary Burke, John Law, Wendy Tochihara, Bob Bertelli, Mark Wisch.
- Consult with lobster and other fisheries representatives not in attendance.