

State of California
Fish and Game
Commission

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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Fish and Game Commission to Receive Proposals for
Marine Protected Areas on California's South Coast**

SACRAMENTO – The Fish and Game Commission (Commission) announced that it will hold a joint session with the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) on Dec. 9 at the Radisson Hotel at the Los Angeles Airport.

Over the past 18 months, the BRTF has been working with the Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG), Science Advisory Team (SAT), and the public to develop proposals for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) between Point Conception and the California/Mexico border. The five proposal packages are available on the MLPA Web site <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/southcoastipa.asp>.

At the Dec. 9 meeting, the Commission will receive public testimony from approximately 10:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Those wishing to speak at this meeting must submit a speaker card which will be available at the meeting location beginning at 9 a.m. Cards must be submitted prior to 10:10 a.m. The total time allotted per speaker will be based on the number of speaker cards received. Speakers with a shared message or from the same organization are encouraged to combine speaking points. Additional time for comment will be given to these 'spokespeople' and those who have ceded their time can stand to show support.

Following public testimony, the Commission will receive presentations from the BRTF, SAT, RSG, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

At this meeting, the Commission is expected to provide guidance to its staff concerning preparation of the regulatory and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents.

No decisions will be made on the merits of any of the proposals at this meeting. Pursuant to CEQA and the Administrative Procedure Act, the Commission will not adopt any regulations for MPAs in the south coast at this meeting.

Vice President Richard Rogers, who will be chairman at this meeting, stated, "The Commission may need to take additional time to consider all the information it has already received and information it will receive at the meeting in order to make an informed decision on its preferred alternative."

Following the Dec. 9 meeting, staff will initiate the development of the appropriate CEQA and regulatory documents. Preparation of these documents is expected to take several months. After the documents are prepared, the CEQA document will be available for public review and comment and the Commission will formally publish notice of its intent to adopt the regulations. The Commission will hold a minimum of two additional meetings to receive public testimony on the CEQA document and the proposed MPA regulations.

The Dec. 9 meeting agenda is posted at <http://www.fgc.ca.gov/meetings/2009/120909agd.asp>.