

Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report  
Thursday, October 20, 2016  
Regional Water Board Office  
Santa Rosa, California

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: The Marine Life Protection Act and the Nexus with Water Quality Protection  
(*Becky Ota, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Erin Meyer, Ocean Science Trust*)

BOARD ACTION: This is an informational item only. No action will be taken by the Regional Water Board.

BACKGROUND: The following is excerpted from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Protected Areas (MPA) website; see link below.

The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) of 1999 directs the state to redesign California's system of marine protected areas (MPAs) to function as a network in order to: increase coherence and effectiveness in protecting the state's marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems, and marine natural heritage, as well as to improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems subject to minimal human disturbance. Six goals guided the development of MPAs in the MLPA planning process:

1. Protect the natural diversity and abundance of marine life, and the structure, function and integrity of marine ecosystems.
2. Help sustain, conserve and protect marine life populations, including those of economic value, and rebuild those that are depleted.
3. Improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbance, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity.
4. Protect marine natural heritage, including protection of representative and unique marine life habitats in CA waters for their intrinsic values.
5. Ensure California's MPAs have clearly defined objectives, effective management measures and adequate enforcement and are based on sound scientific guidelines.
6. Ensure the State's MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a network.

DISCUSSION: The watersheds characteristic that defines the North Coast Region is that all surface waters drain to the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the quality of the surface waters in the North Coast Region directly effect the quality of the coastal ocean waters in the region. The purpose of this information item is to: 1) provide an overview of the MLPA

and MPAs, 2) summarize the work by CDFW and the Ocean Science Trust to implement the Act, and 3) identify opportunities for the North Coast Regional Board to support these efforts and coordinate on ocean protection initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item. No action will be taken.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/FAQs#27582618-what-is-the-marine-life-protection-act-mlpa>