



CDFG, Marine Region

Mission Statement: To protect, maintain, enhance and restore California's marine ecosystems for their ecological values and their use and enjoyment by the public

AN EXAMPLE OF A "COMMUNICATION WORK PLAN"

Date: October 17, 2002

Project: Channel Islands MPAs

Project Description and Goal: Commission Decision Hearing Information

Key Facts: On October 23, 2002, in Santa Barbara, The California Fish and Game Commission will consider adoption of regulations establishing a new network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (Sanctuary). This action follows a joint DFG/Sanctuary recommendation for MPAs presented to the Commission in August, 2001. The recommendation was developed jointly with Sanctuary staff following two years of deliberations of the Marine Reserves Working Group (MRWG), a broad based constituent panel. The plan recommends instituting MPAs in two phases. First, a State phase would establish 10 State Marine Reserves and two State Marine Conservation Areas encompassing 132 square nautical miles. The move would set aside 19 percent of State waters as MPAs within the Sanctuary.

Problem the Communication Must Solve: Communication must clarify that the portion of the proposal before the Commission consists of only State waters. The public must understand that this proposal is intended to address both fisheries management and ecosystem biodiversity goals. The goals are consistent with both the MLPA and MLMA and recognize a new focus on ecosystem based management. Other goals of the project include minimizing potential short-term impacts to user groups. Because of the variety of goals, the Department's proposed project must balance a variety of needs. Even so, among all the alternatives, the proposed project best represents habitats at a scientifically supported level, while have a moderate potential impact. This shows the efforts taken to reduce impacts while still meeting ecological needs.

Communication Objective: To foster understanding of what the Commission will be doing and the long term effort that this decision follows.

Target Audience(s): This process seeks to target anyone with an interest in marine resources, including commercial fishermen, recreational anglers, and marine conservationists.

Principal Barriers to Understanding: Constituents may be unaware that this process is the result of nearly four years of planning efforts. There are widespread concerns that the intent of this process is to ban fishing in the Channel Islands. Conversely, many think that the proposed area is not enough to fully represent critical ecosystem functions.

Promise (Benefit): A complete network of MPAs will benefit the public through added resource protection leading to increased sustainability providing for future use. MPAs may help increase populations outside their boundaries, allowing for higher catches.

Reason Why (Features): This process began with a 1998 proposal to close 20% of the Channel Islands to all fishing. Following the proposal the Commission heard comments on Marine Protected Areas for nearly a year before endorsing a local constituent based panel (MRWG) to try to come to consensus on the topic. The current proposed MPAs are the direct result of that process.

Mandatories & Policy Limitations: The Commission has authority to establish new MPAs.

Activities: October 23 Commission meeting at the Earl Warren Showgrounds in Santa Barbara.

Resources Needed: Press releases and coordination

How Will We Enforce?

VMS

Island Watch (like neighborhood watch) – citizen involvement

MOU with Sanctuary and Parks

Involve fishermen, academics

How do these activities support the Marine Region Strategic Plan? The Channel Islands MPA activities support the Marine Region's strategic plan by supporting the DFG's new approach to managing marine resources; through an ecosystem approach and sound science.

How will DFG benefit? DFG will benefit by having a complete MPA network that can be used as a test case for other coast wide efforts.

What key messages will be delivered? That the Department supports the proposed project and feels it will lead to more sustainable resources and long-term benefits to user groups.

Contact Person(s):

Deputy Director David Bunn - Any contacts regarding Marine Resource or Department Policy

Marine Region Manager Patty Wolf - Any contacts regarding overall goals of the Marine Region or coordination with other management efforts

John Duffy - Any contacts regarding Commission action, meeting background, choice of date, etc.

Senior Biologist John Ugoretz - Any contacts regarding the specifics of the proposal or the science behind the planning effort.