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Fish and Game Commission



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MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Committee Chairs: Commissioner Rogers and Commissioner Sutton

Meeting Summary

March 20, 2013

California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1320
Sacramento, CA 95814

Summary of MRC Recommendations:

MRC Rules of Order and Procedures

- Recommend the Commission consider adoption of the draft MRC Rules of Order and Procedures dated 3/11/13.

MRC Priorities

- Recommend that the Commission request the Department to prioritize the development and implementation of electronic data reporting systems for commercial fisheries.
- Recommend the Commission direct staff to work with the Department and stakeholders to develop an approach to revise the Marine Life Management Act Master Plan.
- Request stakeholders work with the MRC to continue to explore options to implement the Commission's policy on forage species and mechanism to constrain the uncontrolled development of new or emerging fisheries.
- Request staff to develop a work plan for review at the next MRC meeting that will address items previously referred to the MRC and existing Commission Policies.

Meeting Summary

1. Introductions

Commissioners Rogers and Sutton convened the meeting with self-introductions from staff and attendees and an explanation of the meeting ground rules.

2. Informational updates

a. California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Acting Marine Regional Manager Paul Hamdorf informed the MRC of pending personnel changes within the Marine Region and the expectation that a new structure will emerge within the coming months.

State Managed Marine Fisheries Program Manager Tom Barnes thanked the MRC for its time and energy to review the proposal for a red abalone fishery at San Miguel Island and its guidance for the pending review of the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan (ARMP). The Department is engaged in discussion with the Ocean Science Trust (OST) to develop a process to evaluate the density methodology that is used to manage California's abalone fishery. OST would be the lead for an independent peer review focused on survey methods, research protocols, density results, and interpretation of results as the basis for management. This would be the first step which would inform a subsequent full review of the ARMP. Discussion focused on concerns regarding the pending closure of the fishery at Fort Ross and the need to more effectively manage California's abalone resources.

Captain Robert Puccinelli from the Department's Law Enforcement Division provided an update on enforcement activities highlighting the recent citations of recreational fishers for fishing within MPAs and the Cowcod Conservation Area. Discussion focused on the need to understand the level of compliance with MPA regulations so that outreach and education efforts can be focused in the appropriate areas.

b. California Ocean Protection Council

Deputy Secretary for Ocean & Coastal Matters Cat Kuhlman provided an update on activities of the Ocean Protection Council (OPC). The OPC will be meeting Wednesday, March 27 in Sacramento. The meeting will focus on climate change and ocean acidification. Visit www.opc.ca.gov for more details.

The State of the Central Coast Symposium in Monterey at the end of February resulted in great discussions as the State transitions from the planning process to implementation of the MLPA. OPC is working in partnership with the Department, Commission, the MPA Monitoring Enterprise, and other agencies to develop a network implementation plan that includes regional plans and is focused on how to deliver the program in a real and meaningful way.

Work is continuing on the California Sustainable Seafood Initiative, a voluntary seafood certification and marketing assistance program. OPC is working in conjunction with OST to conduct rapid fisheries assessments to identify which fisheries may be eligible for the program. One goal is for this effort to support the Department's and Commission's management efforts. Discussion focused on

how best to integrate the rapid assessment into fisheries management and the standards that are being used for the assessment.

In the upcoming report "*Potential Impacts of Climate Change on California's Fish and Fisheries*," Dr. William Sydeman (OPC SAT member) and collaborator, Sarah Ann Thompson (Farallon Institute Advanced Ecosystem Research) reviewed the scientific literature on the impacts of climate variability and changes on California's fish and fisheries, including coverage of northern California fisheries resources, particularly salmonids. The report is being coordinated by the Ocean Science Trust, and is currently in peer review. The report is expected to be released in May 2013.

Discussion focused on the role that OPC can play to help facilitate dialog and increased communication among different agencies.

3. Update: California Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan

Project Supervisor Kristine Barsky provided an update on the development of the California Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Lobster Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting scheduled for February was canceled in favor of caucus meetings with representatives of different interest groups. The Commission's Executive Director Sonke Mastrup facilitated the conversation between stakeholders and representatives from Marine Region and Law Enforcement Division. The conversations focused on opportunities to keep the lobster fishery healthy and develop harvest control rules that could be implemented should it be necessary down the road. A draft of the FMP is on schedule to be completed in 2014 for peer review. The MRC was thanked for their support of the recently adopted changes to the lobster report card, an effort that was undertaken at the request of the LAC and other stakeholders.

4. Discussion: MRC Rules of Order and Procedures

Commission Marine Advisor Dr. Craig Shuman presented the draft MRC Rules of Order and Procedures. Following discussion, the MRC decided to recommend that the Commission adopt the Rules of Order and Procedures as drafted and use them as a guide for similar rules that will guide the work of the Wildlife Resources Committee. The MRC also asked staff to explore the feasibility of holding MRC meetings six times a year, since the Committee anticipates more work than can be accomplished in four meetings.

5. Discussion: MRC Priorities—seeking input on prioritization of issues the MRC should consider in 2013-14

Dr. Shuman opened the agenda item with a presentation on the approach to the discussion, conceptual approach to prioritization, and a list of current MRC priorities and issues that have previously been referred to the MRC. Among the concepts discussed was the subject of venue and what topics would be appropriate for MRC or full Commission engagement and what topics would be

better suited being addressed in a different venue. The importance of clear expectations and deliverables as well taking workload into account was also stressed. The MRC then solicited input from the Department, OPC, NMFS, and stakeholders on priorities

Discussion focused on areas of overlap and opportunities/processes to address identified priorities.

Primary areas of overlap included:

- The need to develop electronic reporting systems for fisheries.
- Need to streamline the FMP development and review processes and update the Master Plan for Fisheries.
- Implementation of the MLPA and the need to develop an implementation plan, update the Master Plan, and address incompatible uses.
- Restricted access fisheries and the need to review and update the Commission's Policy on Restricted Access Fisheries
- The need to develop a proactive approach to pending state legislation
- Implementation of the Commission's Policy on Forage Species

Following discussion, the MRC developed the following recommendations and courses of action:

- Recommend that the Commission request the Department to prioritize the development and implementation of electronic data reporting systems for commercial fisheries.
- Recommend the Commission direct staff to work with the Department and stakeholders to develop an approach to revise the Marine Life Management Act Master Plan.
- Request stakeholders work with the MRC to continue to explore options to implement the Commission's policy on forage species and mechanism to constrain the uncontrolled development of new or emerging fisheries.
- Request staff to develop a work plan for review at the next MRC meeting that will address items previously referred to the MRC and existing Commission Policies.

6. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.