



CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

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Matt Rodriguez, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Betty Yee, State Controller, State Lands Commission Chair
Fran Pavley, State Senator
Bill Quirk, State Assemblymember
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Dear Council Chair,

On behalf of the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), I am respectfully writing to you to introduce myself and to share information about an opportunity to include regional tribal representatives on the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Statewide Leadership Team.

As the new Executive Director of the OPC, I am deeply committed to working with California tribes to protect and effectively manage ocean and coastal resources. As policy lead for MPAs, the OPC has a history of working to support the active engagement of tribes in the MPA Management process led by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Some examples of this include providing a separate tribal review of the MPA Partnership Plan and frequent in-person engagement with tribes across the state. I am committed to building on these efforts and continuing to strengthen an active and meaningful partnership with California tribes.

Last year, Secretary John Laird of the California Natural Resources Agency took steps to begin convening the MPA Statewide Leadership Team. This advisory body promotes active and engaged communication among entities with significant authority, mandates or interest in the MPA network, and informs regulatory bodies such as the Fish and Game Commission. The OPC recognizes the important role California tribes play in ocean management, use and stewardship, and welcomes tribal participation in the MPA Statewide Leadership Team. We would like to begin a dialogue with tribes on how to achieve tribal representation as an integral part of this team, and invite your guidance on this effort.

OPC staff will be reaching out in coming months to the Northern and Southern Tribal Chairmen's Association, Intertribal Councils and other Tribal Associations throughout the state to work with members to schedule to appear on an upcoming agenda to discuss this matter. OPC could also assist in convening regional tribal meetings to seek input if requested. If there is interest in selecting regional tribal representatives to the MPA Statewide Leadership Team, I envision the OPC supporting tribes to develop a process that will 1) outline the roles and responsibilities of the regional tribal representative; 2) clearly lay out how information will be conveyed and received from regional tribes to and from the representative; and 3) establish the term and election/appointment process.

I am hopeful we can begin a dialogue to gain your perspective and your thoughts about these and other ideas, so we can develop a path forward together. I would be most appreciative to receive your insights by **November 11, 2016**. Please feel free to contact me via email, phone, or mail to discuss this matter further or request a formal consultation. Also please find attached to this letter a document that further describes the advisory role of the MPA Statewide Leadership Team. Thank you for taking the time to consider my request and I look forward to continued progress together on ensuring the health of our coast and oceans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deborah Halberstadt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Deborah Halberstadt
Deputy Secretary for Oceans and Coastal Matters
Executive Director Ocean Protection Council

Marine Protected Area Statewide Leadership Team

The California legislature passed the [Marine Life Protection Act](#) (MLPA) in 1999, responding to the need to redesign California's marine protected areas (MPAs) and improve their effectiveness at supporting healthy and sustainable marine ecosystems. The fully redesigned MPA network was completed in 2012. Through the science-based and stakeholder-driven process to implement the MLPA, state resource managers realized a key component to success was strong active partnerships.

In April 2014, the MPA Statewide Leadership Team (Leadership Team) was convened as a standing body to ensure communication, collaboration and coordination among entities that have significant authority, mandates or interests that relate to the MPA network. The founding membership of the Leadership Team was guided by the [Marine Managed Area Improvement Act](#) (PRC 36800) which describes a State Interagency Coordination Committee to ensure coordinated management of marine managed areas and includes state, federal and key non-profit partners that are actively engaged in the MPA Management Program and are signatories on the [MLPA Implementation Memorandum of Understanding](#). The Leadership Team will continue to add members at the direction of the Secretary for Natural Resources to ensure a comprehensive representation of key partners in the MPA Management Program.

The founding members of the Leadership Team include state and federal agencies, departments, boards, and commissions with jurisdiction or management interests over marine managed areas. The California Department of Fish & Wildlife manages the statewide MPA Network, while the Ocean Protection Council serves as the state's MPA policy lead. The Fish and Game Commission is the regulatory authority which adopts the rules and regulations related to MPAs. The Department of Parks & Recreation and its Commission also are designated as a managing and regulatory authority for some types of MPAs. Other regulatory and trustee agencies (i.e. California Coastal Commission, State Lands Commission, and State Water Resources Control Board) have jurisdictions that overlap with MPA management activities, as does the West Coast Regional Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the National Parks Service. The California Ocean Science Trust, is a non-profit boundary organization that works in close partnership with these entities to support a science-based approach to ocean and coastal management, including helping to design and implement the [MPA Monitoring Program](#). The MPA Collaborative Network engages California's diverse coastal communities including nonprofits, fishermen, tribal representatives, local governments, scientists and others in MPA stewardship and management to enhance understanding and compliance of MPAs. Effective stewardship of the MPA network requires a coordinated approach among these organizations, as well as other partners.

Operationally, the Leadership Team is made up of two primary components, the Executive Committee and the Working Group. The Executive Committee, which includes the Secretary for Natural Resources and the Directors of member organizations, comes together twice a year in March and September at the MPA Milestones Meeting in Sacramento. These meetings provide opportunities for high level review of the work of the Working Group and for setting priority work areas for the coming months. The Working Group is comprised of a single representative from each member organization at a program manager (or higher level); the Working Group meets quarterly in Sacramento, and also more frequently via teleconference. The Working Group completes tasks and projects identified by the Executive Committee and identify priority work areas for approval by the Executive Committee. The Leadership Team is administered by OPC staff.

The Leadership Team has developed a [Work Plan](#) to guide the partnership-based [MPA Management Program](#), as capacity allows, over the next three years (2015 -2018). The Work Plan is comprised of strategic priorities, actions, and outcomes within the four focal areas which include outreach and education, enforcement and compliance, research and monitoring and policy and permitting