

UPDATE AND FURTHER REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS:

At its September 2009 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) considered a proposed list of 52 west coast sites for possible nomination to the National System of Marine Protected Areas (national system) (Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 1). The National Marine Protected Area (MPA) Center has been developing the national system and recently opened a fourth round of nominations ending November 19th, 2010.

The Council expressed concern about the implications of including Council-managed sites in the national system and deferred a decision until several issues were addressed. The Council directed staff to develop a white paper to: evaluate whether the sites identified by the MPA Center meet national criteria for MPAs; identify the pros and cons of including sites in the national system; address questions raised by the Scientific and Statistical Committee; describe the MPA Center's gap analysis, describe a straw Council procedure for adding, removing, or modifying a site in the national system; and provide a legal review of the phrase "avoid harm" as stated in Executive Order 13158. The white paper is attached as Agenda Item F.1.a Attachment 2.

Ms. Lauren Wenzel, from the MPA Center will be present to answer any further questions that the Council may have pertaining to the national system. Her understanding of the issues, in addition to the information in the staff white paper may help the Council in its decision whether or not to nominate sites to the national system.

Presidential Executive Order 13158 created the national system of MPAs (May 26, 2000), which is designed to create overarching goals and priority conservation objectives, improve regional and ecosystem-based coordination between existing MPAs managed by state, tribal, and Federal entities, and to establish a science-based process for identifying gaps. Agenda Items F.1.a Attachment 3 through F.1.a Attachment 11 provide additional information and background on the national system and previous Council-related correspondence.

Council Action:

Consider updated information and plan further actions as appropriate.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 1; August 14, 2009 letter and list of potential MPA sites from Mr. Barry Thom to the Council.
2. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 2; Staff white paper on the National System of MPAs.
3. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 3; *Benefits of a National System of Marine Protected Areas*.
4. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 4; *Joining the National System of MPAs, FAQs*.
5. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 5; *Implementing the National System, Nomination Process*.
6. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 6; *Priority Conservation Objectives*
7. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 7; NMFS Policy Directive 01-114, *Regional Fishery Management Council Consultation in MPA Nomination Process*.

8. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 8; Executive Order 13158 on Marine Protected Areas.
9. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 9; *Framework for the National System of Marine Protected Areas of the United States of America* (**Executive Summary only**, the full document is available in electronic format on the Briefing Book CD and at <http://www.mpa.gov>).
10. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 10; February 13, 2007 letter from Dr. Donald McIsaac to Mr. Joseph Uravitch re: Council comments on the Draft Framework.
11. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 11; April 30, 2009 letter from Dr. Mark Hixon, providing FAC recommendations on assessing ecological resilience and conservation gaps.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview **Kerry Griffin and Lauren Wenzel**
- b. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Consider updated information and plan further actions as appropriate

PFMC
08/26/10