Executive Order 13158: MPAs

- Develop and implement a scientifically based, comprehensive national system of MPAs representing diverse U.S. marine ecosystems, and the Nation’s natural and cultural resources
- Improve MPA coordination, stewardship and effectiveness
- This national system framework and the work of the MPA Center are intended to support, not interfere with, agencies’ independent exercise of their own existing authorities.
Step 1 – Identify Existing MPAs

- MPA Inventory provides GIS and tabular information on all US MPAs
  - Name
  - Size
  - Management agency
  - Level of protection
  - Conservation Focus
  - Focal species v. ecosystem
  - etc
Step 2 – Develop National System Framework

- Road map for developing national system
  - Goals & objectives
  - Entry criteria
  - Coordination
  - Avoid Harm
National System Goals

Natural Heritage  Cultural Heritage  Sustainable Production
National System of MPAs

- 254 MPAs
- Federal MPA Programs in 28 states/territories
- Federal/State Partnership sites
- MPAs of 11 States/Territories (AS, CA, FL, HI, MD, MA, NJ, PR, USVI, VA, WA)

Pelican Island, NWR
The National System Does:

• Recognize the conservation role of participating MPA programs
• Provide mechanism for cross-program collaboration
• Provide access to technical assistance and training
• Provide competitive MPA Grants
The National System Does NOT:

• Create new MPAs
• Impose new restrictions on use or access
• Require NOAA approval of management changes to participating sites
• Bring non-federal sites under federal authority
Marine Protected Areas established by U.S. Fishery Management Councils

PROTECT OUR OCEANS

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are designated areas where human activity is restricted or prohibited for the purpose of conserving marine life and the resources they depend on. MPAs help protect and manage marine ecosystems, which are vital to the health of our oceans and the well-being of coastal communities. By establishing MPAs, we ensure the sustainability of our marine resources and promote biodiversity.
National System Benefit To Councils

• Recognizes contribution of Councils to marine conservation
• Potential leadership role for Councils in “sustainable production” goal of National System
• Provides Councils with the opportunity to participate in shaping the developing National MPA System partnership
• Provides framework for linkages to
  – Federal, state, territorial & international MPA programs
  – Emerging marine spatial planning initiatives
• Provides information on MPA management and planning at regional scale
• Enhances connectivity
Removing Sites from the System

• Sites may be removed at any time by written request of the managing agency for reasons including:
  – MPA ceases to exist
  – MPA no longer meets national system criteria
  – Managing agency requests removal
• Will be public notice in Federal Register
• Managing agency makes final determination
Defining “Avoid Harm”

• Executive Order calls for federal agencies to avoid harm to the resources protected by national system MPAs to the maximum extent practicable
• Requirement will be defined and implemented by each federal agency
• NOAA developing “avoid harm” policy; possible model for other agencies
  – NOAA role, definitions, operations, documentation
• Timeline: Fall 2010
Refocusing the Gap Analysis

• Partnering within NOAA to gather and analyze ecological information as proof of concept
  – Mapping ecological resources
  – Linking those resources to the national system’s priority conservation objectives
  – Assessing the spatial coverage of those resources inside and outside existing MPAs
  – Focus on California 1st; then expand to W. Coast

• Working within broader CMSP context to align ecological gap analysis with CMSP needs
Definition of MPA

- **Area:** Legally defined geographic boundaries, may be of any size except that site must be a subset of the U.S. federal, state, local or tribal marine environment in which it is located.
- **Marine environment:** Ocean, coastal or estuarine waters, including intertidal areas (between mean low water and mean high water). Includes areas up to 0.5 ppt. Includes Great Lakes and estuarine-like sites in 8-digit watersheds adjacent to Great Lakes.
- **Reserved:** established by and currently subject to federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation.
- **Lasting:** Established with the intent to provide permanent protection. For sustainable production sites, of a duration to achieve the mandated long term sustainable production objectives of the site.
- **Protection:** Existing laws or regulations that afford the site with increased protection for the conservation of part or all of the natural or submerged cultural resources.
Priority Conservation Objectives: Sustainable Production Goal

**Goal 3:** Advance comprehensive conservation and management of the nation’s renewable living resources and their habitats, including, but not limited to, spawning, mating, and nursery grounds, and areas established to minimize incidental by-catch of species, that are important to the nation’s social, economic, and cultural well-being through ecosystem-based MPA approaches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Conservation Objectives for Goal 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve and manage key reproduction areas, including larval sources and nursery grounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve key areas that sustain or restore high priority fishing grounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve and manage key areas for maintaining natural age/sex structure of important harvestable species</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve key foraging grounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve and manage key areas that mitigate the impacts of bycatch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve key areas that provide compatible opportunities for education and research</td>
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- **Near Term**
- **Mid Term**
- **Long Term**

National Marine Protected Areas Center
Nomination Process:
Coordination with Councils

MPA Center identifies potentially eligible sites and invites entities to nominate

Managing entities nominate potential sites

Public notice and comment

Entities review comments

Submit final nominations

Accepted MPAs placed on official National System List

Regional Administrators consult with Councils regarding final nominations

NOAA Fisheries and Councils consultation process

NOAA Regions review for corrections

NOAA Fisheries Sends Letter to Council with List Attached

NMFS request recommendations and Council takes public comment at meeting (1st Council Meeting)

Council votes on which sites to recommend (2nd Council Meeting if Necessary)

NMFS nominates potential sites
Criteria for Entry to the National System

• Meets the definition of an MPA
  – Key terms: area, marine, reserved, lasting, protection
• Has a management plan
  – Includes site specific information; can be part of a broader fisheries management plan
  – Must include goals and objectives; call for monitoring and evaluation
• Contributes to a priority conservation objective of the nation system
• Additional criteria for cultural resources
3rd Round of Nominations
(Pending - Fall 2010)

- Four sites nominated by NMFS under Tilefish management plan
- Close coordination with Mid Atlantic Council
  - Norfolk Canyon
  - Lydonia Canyon
  - Oceanographer Canyon
  - Veach Canyon
- Timeline: Fall 2010
The US National System of MPAs: Origins and Status

- **Late 1990s** – scientific consensus on importance of MPAs and marine reserves as a conservation tool
- **Feb 2000** – CEQ + MCBI workshop on national system of MPAs
- **May 2000** – Executive Order signed by President Clinton
- **July 2001** – Executive Order endorsed by President Bush
- **November 2008** - System Final Framework Published
- **April 2009** – 225 federal, state/territorial MPAs join system