



June 1, 2009

Cindy Gustafson
President
California Fish and Game Commission
1416 9th Street, Room 1320
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear President ~~Gustafson~~, *Cindy*

I am writing to clarify the Schwarzenegger Administration's position on the implementation of California's Marine Life Protection Act. Commentary among California Fish and Game Commission members during your May 14 meeting suggests that some commissioners may not be clear on their charge to adopt a Marine Life Protection Program network of marine protected areas.

During the meeting, two commissioners suggested a delay in further implementation of the law that is the MLPA. This was apparently based upon concern for the state's budget situation and, specifically, a perceived lack of funding for MLPA implementation. The discussion also included a request to send a letter to the Governor expressing their concerns.

On behalf of the Governor, I want to let you and your fellow commissioners know that California's process for adopting an improved system of marine protected areas is well funded. Moreover, there is no reason, funding or otherwise, for the process supporting the law to be postponed.

The Governor's budgets have consistently provided support for MLPA. This funding is but a small part of the more than \$34.2 million that has been allocated statewide for MLPA by a partnership of state agencies, and foundations. Although we share the concerns expressed by commissioners regarding California's difficult economic constraints, the public-private partnership established to help fund the MLPA process will help ensure its success.

While I respect the commission's opinion that there are questions moving forward about how we will fund various aspects of monitoring and enforcement for MPAs, this was part of what the Legislature and Governor anticipated when the act was

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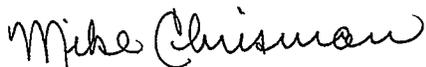
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signed into law. The Legislature was clear that the Fish and Game Commission's charge is to adopt a final master plan and network of marine protected areas to be managed through the Marine Life Protection Program within the California Department of Fish and Game. The issue of MLPA funding is beyond the commission's scope and is more appropriately the purview of the Governor and Legislature, where budgeting decisions are made. These roles and responsibilities are distinctly separate.

The MLPA Initiative is a science-based, stakeholder driven process, where every voice can be heard and all interests are invited to the table to discuss implementation of the law in an open and transparent manner. Hundreds of people have directly participated, tens of thousands of hours have been dedicated, and dozens of groups are committed to making this process a success. Ultimately, those who will most directly benefit in the long term from a healthy ocean, namely recreational and commercial fishermen, are being hurt by those few who seem opposed to the MLPA Initiative.

As a former member of the California Fish and Game Commission, I am proud of the work that has been done thus far to adopt an improved system of marine protected areas. I would encourage you to continue to move forward, empowered by a science-based, stakeholder-driven process that fosters inclusiveness and progress.

Sincerely,



Mike Chrisman
Secretary for Natural Resources

cc: Mr. Jim Kellogg, Vice President, California Fish and Game Commission
Mr. Daniel W. Richards, Member, California Fish and Game Commission
Mr. Richard B. Rogers, Member, California Fish and Game Commission
Mr. Michael Sutton, Member, California Fish and Game Commission
Mr. John Carlson, Executive Director, California Fish and Game Commission