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Secretary for Natural Resources Announces Local Proposal Extension for MLPA North Coast Process

Sacramento – Secretary for Natural Resources Mike Chrisman said today the MLPA Initiative will extend the local proposal deadline for marine protected areas on the north coast. Under the Marine Life Protection Act’s north coast process, local groups will now have until February 1, 2010 to submit “external arrays,” or alternative proposals.

“While MLPA is a state law and the Schwarzenegger administration is committed to its implementation, it is also critically important that we have broad local participation,” said Secretary for Natural Resources Mike Chrisman. “Granting an extension will afford local folks more time to prepare their proposals.” He added, “I would especially like to thank Assemblymember Wes Chesbro for the many constructive conversations we’ve had to help make this happen for his constituents.”

Chrisman said that MLPA Initiative Executive Director Ken Wiseman worked with Assemblymember Chesbro (D-North Coast) and Senator Patricia Wiggins (D-Santa Rosa) to help determine the specific length of the extension. It will address the needs of north coast interests and still meet the objectives of the memorandum of understanding that guides the MLPA Initiative.

The Marine Life Protection Act directs the state to reevaluate and redesign California’s system of marine protected areas (MPAs) to increase coherence and effectiveness in protecting the state’s marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems and marine natural heritage, as well as to improve recreational, educational and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems subject to minimal human disturbance. MLPA also requires that the best readily available science be used in the redesign process, as well as the advice and assistance of scientists, resource managers, experts, stakeholders and members of the public.

California is taking a regional approach to redesigning MPAs along its 1,100 mile coastline, and has divided the state into five study regions; the MLPA North Coast Study Region extends from the California border with Oregon to Alder Creek near Point Arena in Mendocino County.

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