



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, California 93940

September 5, 2001

Secretary Mary Nichols
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Nichols:

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary protects about a quarter of the California coast in a federally-designated marine protected area. We, along with many others, have been participating in the public process for the Marine Life Protection Act. The complex process of designating marine reserves and otherwise strengthening the network of state marine protected areas will be most successful if partner regulatory agencies and public users of state marine resources have proper time to consider the issues associated with an improved network of marine protected areas. We are writing to ask that you and the staff from the Department of Fish and Game assist and support legislators in extending the timeline for designating the network of marine protected areas required in the MLPA.

We understand that AB 1673 has been submitted to extend the timelines for developing the reserve network. While that bill seeks to extend timelines for the MLPA by four to six months, we believe, along with others, that extending timelines by up to 12 months may be necessary to ensure Fish and Game staff can collect and share necessary science and socioeconomic information and can ensure an effective public participation process.

It is also clear that the Department of Fish and Game needs additional funds to effectively implement the MLPA, in particular to collect socioeconomic data about how particular reserve sites may affect fishers and other resource users, both positively and negatively. Much later, after new reserves are designated, the state will need to significantly augment marine science budgets to properly analyze and monitor the effectiveness of new reserves, conservation areas, and marine parks. The Sanctuary is attempting to help close the gap in both socioeconomic data and monitoring information, and you can consider us a partner with the state in central California on these fronts.

Thank you for your attention to the effective development and implementation of the MLPA.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. DOUROS, Superintendent

cc: Robert Hight, Director DFG

