

## **Recreation Fishing Alliance of NSW**

### **News Bulletin 16 7<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

#### **NEW MARINE PARK MODEL THREATENS LOCAL ECONOMIES**

The Marine Park Authority (National Parks and Fisheries) have released a report into the Manning Shelf Bioregion in 2004 that was based upon a broadscale biodiversity assessment of the region that stretches from the Hunter River in Newcastle to Nambucca Heads on the QLD border. The Recreational Fishing Alliance has identified 2 major implications within the subsequent recommendations;

1. A candidate for a MP is an area from Port Stephens to Forster, including Port Stephens and the Karuah River estuary, the Myall Lakes, Smiths Lake, Wallis Lake and the adjacent and exposed coast and ocean to 3nm offshore.
2. The following locations could also be used to develop MPA proposals that aim to include neighboring habitats to increase the range of biodiversity represented and accommodate the movement of organisms amongst these areas including Khappinghat Creek, Lakes Innes, Lake Cathie, Camden Haven estuary, Korogoro Creek and adjacent beach, South West Rocks Creek, Saltwater Creek and Saltwater Lagoon, Limeburners Creek and Saltwater Lake in the Hastings River, Kooragang Island and Fullerton Cove in the Hunter River, Macleay River delta and the Macleay Arm in the Macleay River, Warrell Creek in the Nambucca River, Farquhar Inlet and the Manning River Channel in the Manning River, intertidal rocky shores, beaches and inshore reefs, inc 19 rock platforms in the Manning Shelf Bioregion for protection that have been previously identified, offshore reefs and islands at Fish Rock and Green Island near South West Rocks, the Cod Grounds near Laurieton, the Pinnacles and Latitude Rock near Forster, Big Seal and Little Seal Rocks near Sugar Loaf Point, Broughton Island near Port Stephens, extensive areas of subtidal reef were also mapped offshore of the coast between Crowdy Head and Diamond Head, Hallidays Point, Khappinghat Creek and the Manning River. There may be many areas in deeper water with significant conservation values and these require further investigation.

The Recreational Fishing Alliance considers recommendation 1 a major threat to access and the local economies and the Marine Parks Authority's failure to consult with the community when defining the area encompassed by the proposed marine park should be investigated.

The Recreational Fishing Alliance considers recommendation 2 as a larger threat. The following lines are from recommendation 2;

*"Accommodate the movement of organisms amongst these areas...many areas in deeper water require further investigation."*

**The RFA believes that the impact of the grey nurse shark has on the whole bioregion is significant, both economically and socially. It will give the extreme green lobby and reports authors an excuse to significantly increase the no fishing zones. The GNS has a unidirectional range of 800km.**

**The risk of having a MP from Port Stephens to Forster is significant, and with the possibility of having upto 30% of the park totally closed to fishing a reality. However it is these other significant locations that could potentially lead to more lockouts, via critical habitat zones, threats to wading birds, mangroves, salt marshes, just about anything is a potential candidate.**

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At this stage the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW recommends that each club and individual:

1. Gets a hold of a printed copy of the document from [mpa.nsw.gov.au](http://mpa.nsw.gov.au)
2. Write to the MPA and ask who are the MPA representatives on the Council, especially the recreational fishers, include an expression of interest for inclusion on the distribution list of any discussion papers in the future. Ask if a local advisory committee that provides advice to the Marine Parks Authority on the day-to-day management of each marine park has been selected for the possible MP in the Manning Shelf Bioregion and include an expression of interest in participating in the process.
3. Write to the Premier insisting that the community be properly consulted on any decisions relating to the Manning Shelf Bioregion and that adequate time be allocated for the consultation process.
4. Write to the Premier and insist that an alternative 'peoples' model for a MP within the area from Port Stephens to Forster is considered following thorough consultation with the community.

Any inquiries and correspondence concerning Marine Parks in NSW should be directed to the Marine Parks Authority Executive Officer.

**Marine Parks Authority**

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**Point 4 is being further developed following talks with the local fishing clubs, Tourist boards, Chambers of Commerce and Commercial anglers within the area and with the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW.**

**The Recreational Fishing Alliance requires feedback from the other clubs and bodies on any suggestions for a 'peoples model for a Marine Park'. The real risk is that the proposed 30% lock out in the Marine Park includes 90% of the fishing spots from Port Stephens to Forster.**

**The Recreational Fishing Alliance insists that the economic consequences must be investigated when selecting the site of the proposed Marine Park in light of the recent results highlighting the significant economic contribution recreational angling has on tourism and the local communities.**

Regards

Joe Garufi

Publicity Officer

Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW

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