

Note: Much of the public comment addressed both the Council action on the drift gillnet fishery, Agenda Item J.3, and review of exempted fishing permit applications (including an application for longline), Agenda Item J.4. Therefore, additional supplemental public comment relevant to this agenda item may be found under Agenda Item J.3.

The following public comment is representative of 15 emails, faxes, and letters received by the supplemental public comment deadline (including 12 received by the February 15th briefing book deadline).

Subject: Longline Exempted Fishing Permit Request

From: "Chris Halliday"

Date: Sun, 19 Feb 2006 14:08:18 -0800

To:

To: Council Members, Pacific Fisheries Management Council

Subject: Longline Exempted Fishing Permit Request

I am a concerned conservationist and angler and would like to take this opportunity to, again, voice my opposition to any attempts to develop a longline fishery off the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington. You have in the past acted prudently to keep this destructive gear out of our Pacific EEZ. Current attempts to open the door to as many as 131 new longline vessels in these waters would be disastrous for HMS stocks, both targeted and taken as bycatch. I support The Billfish Foundation in their opposition to this new source of fishing mortality. Given the current excess of fishing effort and fishing mortality applied to Pacific bigeye, yellowfin and albacore stocks there is no rational reason to even consider expanding existing fisheries. Do not recommend issuance of the proposed EFP for longline gear.

Chris Halliday
5372 Doverton Dr
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
(714) 903-0608

February 13, 2006

RECEIVED

FEB 16 2006

PFMC

Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97220-1384

RE: Longline Exempted Fishing Permit Request

Dear Council Members and Pacific Fisheries Management Council,

I am a concerned conservationist and angler and would like to take this opportunity to, again, voice my opposition to any attempts to develop a longline fishery off the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington. You have in the past acted prudently to keep this destructive gear out of our Pacific EEZ. Current attempts to open the door to as many as 131 new longline vessels in these waters would be disastrous for HMS stocks, both targeted and taken as bycatch. I support The Billfish Foundation in their opposition to this new source of fishing mortality. Given the current excess of fishing effort and fishing mortality applied to Pacific bigeye, yellowfin and albacore stocks there are no rational reason to even consider expanding existing fisheries.

Do not recommend issuance of the proposed EFP for longline gear. The future of healthy and sustainable pelagic fish stocks is in your hands. Please think to the future and what legacy you will leave based on the decisions you are making. I know my two young kids will look back and either say you made the right decision to protect the fishery and or were a major factor in destroying allowing it to be destroyed. The future is in your hands.

Thank you,



David Brackmann
West Coast Advisory Chairman for The Billfish Foundation
Pro Staff member for ESPN / Inside Sportfishing and West Coast Sportfishing Show



February 23, 2006

Dr. Donald McIsaac
Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Ste. 200
Portland, OR 97220-1384

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FEB 27 2006
PFMC

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

I am writing on behalf of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to support Mr. Pete Dupuy's application for an Experimental Fishing Permit (EFP) to conduct a longline fishery in Council waters.

The current ban on longline fishing in Californian and PFMC waters is similar to the situation that existed in Hawaiian waters just a few years ago. Because of interactions with sea turtles and their declining populations, the swordfish longlining industry was closed in 2001. By working together, the industry, the Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NOAA, were able to adopt measures that enabled the longline fisheries to be reopened. These measures included set limits, mandatory observers, a cap on turtle interactions, the use of circle hooks, and selective use of bait species. These measures had previously been trialed in the North Atlantic, with NOAA and fishermen conducting three years of research testing these changes in gear and techniques. Turtle bycatch was reduced by as much as 90 percent in some cases, without significantly reducing the catch of target species of the fishery.

As outlined in his EFP application and in further discussions, Mr. Pete Dupuy has assured WWF that he plans to operate under similar restrictions to those implemented in Hawaii, as well as undertaking trials of gear sets and gear modifications to further reduce possible bycatch of non-target species. Approval of this EFP would provide further means of testing gear improvements, with funding already being appropriated by NOAA Southwest Fisheries Center to support this EFP. This would be used to place observers on board, create an experimental design, and perform data analysis. This is a move towards bringing consistency among the Hawaiian and West Coast fleets in this fishery.

The Hawaiian example has shown that a longline fishery can be substantially improved with gear and management modifications, rather than simply being shut down. The initiative in Hawaii is an important component of a larger international effort to eliminate the threat of longline fishing to sea turtles. World Wildlife Fund believes that the U.S. needs to lead by example. Improvements adopted and refined in the Hawaii fishery will

World Wildlife Fund

California Marine Office
171 Forest Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301-1615 USA
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Affiliated with World Wide Fund for Nature



be instrumental in transforming other fleets. Given the trajectory of Pacific leatherbacks and loggerheads, it is essential that we reduce bycatch not only in the U.S. fleet, but in all fishing fleets fishing in the Pacific. International fishery management bodies have recognized this need and called on all fleets to improve fishing gear and techniques to reduce turtle bycatch. The problem is one of international dimension.

In contrast, World Wildlife Fund does not support the application for the issue of an EFP for the drift gillnet fishery. The time and area closure currently in place was originally imposed because of the fishery's turtle interactions, and, indeed, since the closure was put in place the fishery's interactions with turtles has decreased. The proposed EFP application does not reflect any gear modifications or techniques to attempt to overcome this problem. A reduction in the size of the fleet is not an experimental design and we believe the lack of effort in this proposal to attempt to make this a cleaner fishery cannot justify the issue of an EFP. This application simply appears to be an attempt to recreate the original situation, which necessitated the restrictions in the first place.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these applications.

Sincerely,



Mike Osmond
Senior Program Officer
World Wildlife Fund

Subject: Proposed EFP for longline and gillnet operations in the West coast EEZ
From: "Kevin Beddoe" <klbeddoe@hotmail.com>
Date: Sat, 25 Feb 2006 05:43:13 -0800
To: Sandra.Krause@noaa.gov

Dear Ms Krause:

I am writing to voice my opposition to any and all efforts by the commercial fishing industry to open the West Coast EEZ to longline and gillnet operations. I respectfully ask that you do not issue any "Exempted Fishing Permits for Highly Migratory Species" that would endanger our fisheries and leave them open to exploitation by commercial fishing interests.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Beddoe
7130 Surfbird Circle
Carlsbad, Ca 92011

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<http://search.msn.click-url.com/go/onm00200636ave/direct/01/>

Subject: Proposal for the testing of longline and gillnet operations off the coast of California

From: "Beddoe, Kevin" <kbeddoe@circortech.com>

Date: Mon, 27 Feb 2006 08:17:06 -0800

To: <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to voice my opposition to any and all efforts by the commercial fishing industry to open the West Coast EEZ to longline and gillnet operations. Please do not issue any "Exempted Fishing Permits for Highly Migratory Species" that would endanger our fisheries and leave them open to exploitation by commercial fishing interests.

Best regards:

Kevin Beddoe
7130 Surfbird Circle
Carlsbad, Ca 92011

DEAR CHAIRMAN HANSEN

I am a recreational fisherman. The availability of migratory fish is extremely important to me. Please fund implementation of the West Coast Highly Migratory Species Plan. I and the other hundreds of thousands of recreational anglers spend in excess of a billion dollars a year for HMS on the West Coast. I also oppose allowing the use of unsustainable fishing gears such as pelagic longlines and drift gillnets. At risk HMS fisheries should not be unfairly targeted to serve the narrow financial interests of a few.

Signed Don A. Crocker

Date: 2-25-06

Address 2829 EUROPA DR.

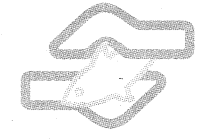
City COSTA MESA

State CALIF Zip 92626-3525

Or send the above to United Anglers of Southern California and we will ensure each of the above gets a copy of your note.

United Anglers of Southern California
5948 Warner Ave.
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
(714) 840-0227

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UNITED ANGLERS
of Southern California

2-24-06