



City of Morro Bay

HARBOR DEPARTMENT
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AGENDA NO. B-6

Agenda Item B.6.c
Supplemental Public Comment
November 2006

November 17, 2006

BY HAND

Chairman Donald Hansen
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Re: California Sustainable Groundfish Plan

Dear Chairman Hansen and Members of the Council:

We urge you to agendize the Central California Sustainable Groundfish Plan for the Council's March 2007 meeting. We believe that this plan will provide additional regulatory stability, flexibility, and habitat protection that is needed to re-invigorate Central California fisheries and the ports and people that depend on them. The plan will result in greater regulatory stability without reducing accountability to the Council's and NOAA's performance standards and fishery objectives by creating no-trawl zones proactively, without waiting for the Sanctuary or other entities to enact habitat protection measures. Greater flexibility would be achieved through the plan's gear-switching provision, and will be key to our survival as a fishing community.

We know there has been some discussion this week at the PFMC about the approximate one month of increased landings we have had here in Morro Bay due to black cod open access. That activity has been wonderful after nine months of almost no landings here, but you know better than most that the current black cod phenomenon will not sustain our port into the future. We need to reestablish consistent slope rockfish and other groundfish landings to hold a workforce and support infrastructure on the waterfront.

Gear switching and low impact trawl or Scottish seine would allow us to transition from trawling (high volume, low value) to using improved gear to catch fish in ways that increase value and reduce discards. A lower volume, higher value fishery is the key to preserving our business and protecting the fishing heritage of the Central California coast. Please support and adopt this hopeful vision of the future and make it a reality.

Sincerely,

Rick Algert
Harbor Director

Agend Item B.6

November 14, 2006

Don Hansen
Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Re: Proposed Central California Sustainable Groundfish Plan

Dear Chairman Hansen:

I am specifically writing this letter to urge you to agendize the Central California Sustainable Groundfish Plan for the Council's March meeting. I believe that this proposed plan will provide the regulatory stability, flexibility, and habitat protection that is needed to re-invigorate central California fisheries, and the ports and people that depend on them.

It is my hope that the plan will result in greater regulatory stability, without reducing accountability to the Council's and NOAA's performance standards and fishery objectives, by creating no-trawl zones *proactively*, without waiting for the Sanctuary or other entities to enact habitat protection measures.

Greater flexibility for fishermen would be achieved through the plan's gear-switching provision, and this provision will be key to our survival as a fishery. It would allow many fisherman to transition from trawling (high volume, low value) to using fixed gear methods that would increase catch value and reduce discard.

I have been working on these waters for almost 3 decades now. I believe that a lower volume, higher value fishery is the key to preserving and protecting the fishing heritage of the central California coast. I urge the Council's consideration of this matter in March.

Sincerely,

Steve Fitz
Owner/Operator
F/V Mr. Morgan