

Good morning Council members

My name is Larry Collins and I am president of the Crab Boat Owners of San Francisco. My members have traditionally fished a portfolio of fisheries including Crab, Salmon and Rock Cod.

I am here this morning to comment on the Great Groundfish Give-away.

The fishermen at the San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf stood down along with everyone else. Because of over-fishing in the trawl sector my hook and line open-access guys were shut down. We have stood on the sidelines watching the shelf rock cod stocks rebuild expecting to fully participate when the stocks were healthy. Imagine our surprise when we learned that wasn't the plan at all. The draggers would be given ownership of the groundfish and the open access hook and line fishermen would be managed right out of existence.

First off, there are enough fish in the ocean for everyone to make a living. Fleet reduction has already happened. There are fewer boats working out of my harbor than there have ever been and more rock cod right out front than there's been in 40 years.

These amendments are going to be a disaster for every fishing town on the coast. These amendments will tear the fishing community apart. These amendments don't happen in a vacuum. You create wealth in one sector and poverty in another. It isn't equitable. And once you reduce the number of boats down lower, we'll lose what's left of our infrastructure. This 90/10 split is a dragger's wet dream and a hook and liner's nightmare. We need 50% of the shelf rock TAC saved for open access and community fishing associations which you can be sure will be increasing in number.

There's been a lot of new economic science saying that ITQs are not the cure-all they've been represented to be. This council needs to slow down and look at the new data.

If you're going to do this private ownership of public resources which I think is totally unnecessary and immoral then the initial allocations need to go to all sectors including community fishing associations at the same time. Everyone needs to start out with enough fish. Not windfall profits, but enough to make a living.

I know the salmon fleet is late to this discussion and I know you have put a lot of work into this plan. This plan may work well for dozens of draggers but doesn't work at all for hundreds of trollers.

It's Time to Ask a Fisherman

- 1) Proposals are being put forward to privatize fishery resources by dividing the total allowable catch into individual quotas or shares to a limited number of fishermen; the quotas would be based on an individual's catch sometime in the past. In New England fishermen are allowed a referendum to vote on whether they approve such a system, but the law does not require it elsewhere. These "catch share" programs will radically change our fisheries. Shouldn't fishermen be allowed a say about their future? Shouldn't they be allowed to vote in a referendum on such plans? **Ask a fisherman.**
- 2) Some fishermen and fish processors stand to make a substantial financial gain by being awarded publicly-held fishery resources giving these individuals a share each year in the total catch of a fishery; they can then fish these shares or simply lease or sell them profiting from this gift of a public resource. Should there not be transparency and a full disclosure of what how much these individuals will profit from being given shares to a fishery now and in the future as these stocks bounce back? How much do those being awarded quota, or shares, stand to gain from this gift of a public resource? **Ask a fisherman.**
- 3) Many fishermen will be cut out through a manipulative process to limit issuance of catch shares only to individuals or companies operating certain types of gear (unrelated to conservation) during a limited window period. Ask how many fishermen who participated in these fisheries will be cut-out. Ask how many young fishermen/women will be cut out of fisheries. Ask what this will do to these dispossessed fishermen. Will they be able to continue fishing? What will happen to their communities? **Ask a fisherman**
- 4) Catch shares or individual quotas typically lead to massive consolidation in a fishery, resulting in fewer boats, fewer fishermen with increased profits for those awarded quota shares, but lower pay for crew and massive debt loads for new entrants having to purchase or lease quota. In many instances publicly-funded programs have had to be created for individuals to buy quota to what once was a public resource. How do fishermen feel about this? **Ask a fisherman**
- 5) Proponents of "catch shares" or individual quotas claim these are needed for conservation. Yet these programs do not limit overall fish catch, all they do is divide up – virtually permanently – the total catch among a limited number of individuals. In New Zealand, Australia, even now in the U.S. with surf clams, these programs have overfished stocks. Ask how large firms, created by quota consolidation, have lobbied for less restrictive catches that have put fish stocks at risk. Where is the evidence – not the rhetoric from proponents – that these systems in themselves prevent overfishing? Where is the evidence that "catch shares" or individual quotas create any greater conservation incentives the community fisheries or simple limited entry programs? **Ask a fisherman**
- 6) "Catch shares" or individual quotas lead to consolidation and a migration of catch harvesting from ports. What affect will this have on processors in smaller ports? What affect will this have on consumers wanting to buy locally-caught seafood? **Ask a fisherman**