



5000 N. Harbor Drive, Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92106  
(619) 322-7421  
[www.californiasportfishing.org](http://www.californiasportfishing.org)

RECEIVED

**March 18, 2016**

**Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, Oregon  
97220**

MAR 24 2016

PFMC

**Re: Descending device usage by the Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel fleet**

Dear Ms. Lowman,

I am writing on behalf of the Sportfishing Association of California (SAC) with regard to our continued and significant efforts to promote and ensure the use of descending devices by the Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel (CPFV) fleet in southern California.

SAC is a non-profit organization that has spent the last four decades working to promote sustainable marine recreation in California. SAC frequently collaborates with several agencies and stakeholders, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the United States Coast Guard. Facilitating effective communication between industry members, managers, and researchers is our priority.

SAC strongly supports and encourages the use of descending devices to significantly reduce post-release mortality of rockfishes, and has engaged in several outreach efforts to communicate the importance of them to the CPFV fleet. For the past four years, SAC has organized annual "Warden Meetings" at each landing in southern California where CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Wardens, Captains, and crew are able to engage on a variety of topics. At these gatherings, SAC distributed descending devices to each Captain and reiterated the importance of using the tools. Additionally, the new electronic logbooks in use by the fleet allow for Captains to report when they use the devices. SAC also created, in conjunction with a notable sportfishing landing, a website dedicated to the promotion of descending devices (<http://www.descendyourfish.org> and <http://www.californiasportfishing.org>)

Furthermore, in November 2015, SAC and a NOAA post-doctoral researcher travelled



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to Vancouver, British Columbia to present at the Sport Fishing Institute of British Columbia's (SFI) annual policy meeting and gala on the use of descending devices in California and on NOAA's research regarding post-release survival of rockfish. Prior to the meeting, no descending devices were being used in BC. As a result of the presentation, multiple large fishing lodges and charters in BC have begun using them. SAC and NOAA have since been invited to present at the Sport Fishing Advisory Board meeting in April in British Columbia (an advisory body to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on recreational issues since 1964).

We will continue to keep you informed as we promote responsible access to marine resources.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alayna Siddall". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alayna Siddall  
Director of Science and Communications, SAC

