



THE BILLFISH FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION THROUGH RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

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Agenda Item J.2.b
Public Comment
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August 16, 2016

Chuck Tracy, Executive
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Transmitted Via Email
PFMC.comments@NOAA.gov

Dear Mr. Tracy,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer The Billfish Foundation's (TBF) comments in the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (PFMC) continuing consideration of testing deep-set buoy gear for swordfish. Assessing the number of buoys each vessel can efficiently monitor and manage is crucial. Excessive number of buoys can result in lost buoys and ghost fishing that indiscriminately kills sea turtles, billfish and other species. Based on feedback from seasoned commercial buoy gear fishermen, ten has been identified as a manageable number. Lost gear also means economic losses.

We continue to support a prohibition on the use of longlines in the west coast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or beyond. Uncertainty about the status of stocks and the long history of bycatch in longline fisheries in other parts of the world are strong reasons for not allowing this gear into our west coast HMS fisheries.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Peel
President