

April 5, 2013

Agenda Item C.1

Mr. Dan Wolford
Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Wolford

I am writing on behalf of Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen's Association, a non-profit organization with 30 members. Today we request that for the next spec cycle 2015-2016 that 1). An increase in the allocation of Canary Rockfish for the Commercial Nearshore in California (directed open access). 2 A additional Management latitude line at Ano Nuevo for the Commercial Nearshore Fishery is added for analysis in the next spec cycle. This line is the dividing line between the commercial nearshore south central permit area and the Commercial North Central Nearshore area.

Our concern is that under the current fishery management specs we are catching under 50 % of the Harvest Guidelines for both deeper nearshore species and shallow nearshore species south of 40:10 degrees. At present we cannot raise the bi-monthly trip limits of "Deeper Nearshore" species because of recent observer data report estimating an increased catch of Canary Rockfish. This increase in catch of canary rockfish was not caused by the commercial nearshore fishermen in the Avila-Morro Bay area. A higher allocation of Canary Rockfish

in the next management cycle will allow for an increase in bi-monthly trip limits. This will allow for the Avila and Morro Bay commercial nearshore to catch a higher percentage of the harvest guideline of nearshore species.

The Avila-Morro Bay commercial nearshore fishermen have for years used gears and fishing techniques that result in lower catches and mortality of canary rockfish than anywhere in the rest of California. Adding a commercial nearshore management line for analysis in the next spec cycle will show that we have a very, very low catch canary rockfish.

Mr Chairman, I have personally fished in the Avila (south-central area) extensively in by boat and kayak and as a deckhand on many other commercial nearshore boats for the last 20 years. Before that I was a rec fishermen for 5 years. I was even listed in Western Outdoor News for my catches in the late 80,s. The nearshore commercial fishermen in the Avila Morro Bay area do not encounter canary rockfish while fishing for the nearshore species. It is a rarity when one is caught. Our "live fish" methods and depth of fishing keep us separated from where canary rockfish inhabit in our area. We should be rewarded not punished for our conservation minded fishing methods.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman please consider our two requests:

- 1). Analysis of a higher allocation of canary rockfish to the commercial nearshore in California for the next management cycle (2015-2016).
- 2). Analysis of an additional commercial nearshore management line of Ano Nuevo which separates the South-central commercial nearshore permit holders from the north-central commercial permit holders.

Sincerely, William James