October 24, 2011

Don Wolford, Chairman

Pacific Fishery Management Council

Re: Public Comments

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council,

I am captain and half owner of the F/V Ossian. I am writing with regard to Agenda Item E-7 Attachment 1; particularly item #18, concerning processing sablefish at sea.

We started freezing dressed sablefish in 1993. In 1992, we fished Cobb and Brown Bear Seamounts for sablefish with pots and iced our dressed fish. Due to the long (300 plus miles) and two days and nights of running each way, we decided the only way to be profitable was to start freezing our dressed sablefish so we could make longer trips. In 1993, we installed freezing equipment and have frozen sablefish ever since, except for a few of the derby fisheries prior to tier limits. The F/V Keltie and subsequently the F/V Ossian continuously fished the seamounts up to 2005; thereafter it was prohibited. Many of the trips lasted up to a month. In addition to the benefit of longer trips, we received higher prices for frozen at sea sablefish. We would like to see the Council allow us to simultaneously stack a trawl permit with our fixed gear permits. Also, we request the ability to freeze trawl quota shares. As I understand the present rule, we cannot fish any trawl sablefish without losing our exemption to freeze sablefish at sea. Lastly, we would like to be able to freeze our allowable limit of ling cod, plus any other incidental bottom fish that we can keep.

I hope you will consider this testimony when rendering your decision in this matter.

Scott Hartzell

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