

Jerry Thon, Director  
Northwest Sardine Survey

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair  
Members of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
700 NE Ambassador Place # 200  
Portland, OR 97220

March 17, 2014

Dear Ms. Lowman and Council Members,

The Northwest Sardine Survey will not ask for an EFP in 2014. The reduced sardine quota for 2014 will be dramatically less than in previous years. This will leave fewer sardines for the fishermen and industry participants to conduct a successful fishery. An EFP would further reduce the available sardine quota creating an even more difficult situation.

The Northwest Sardine Survey participants want to thank the Council Members for their support of the Aerial Survey. From the beginning, you have supported and encouraged us to provide additional data for the stock assessment of pacific sardine. As industry participants, we have very much appreciated the opportunity to participate in the collection of data that directly affect our sardine fishery.

It was our hope that photographic evidence of sardine would be used to help calibrate the current NOAA surveys to better reflect reality. As it turned out, the Aerial Survey showed abundances of sardine far greater than what was predicted by the NOAA surveys. And reconciling the data from all of the surveys has been difficult. The biomass estimate difference has been too extreme.

But even with this difference, we believe that actual photographs of sardine are the best way to determine a minimum sardine biomass. It is our position that NOAA and the fishing community would be best served if we were to continue to use the data from the Aerial Survey. And with that, we hope to consider an EFP in the future.

Sincerely,

Jerry Thon, Director  
Northwest Sardine Survey