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PFMC

PO Box 816
Port Townsend, WA 98368
February 22, 1999

Mr Jerry Mallet, Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Mr. Mallet,

Under the current sablefish tier quota system, sablefish catches made by longline vessels while participating in the 1984-1985 experimental set-net fishery are not counted toward current sablefish tier quota placement. I feel that sablefish set-net landings by vessels qualifying for an "A" longline permit should be counted, and I am writing to request that this issue be discussed during the open comment period at the March 1999 Council meeting in Portland.

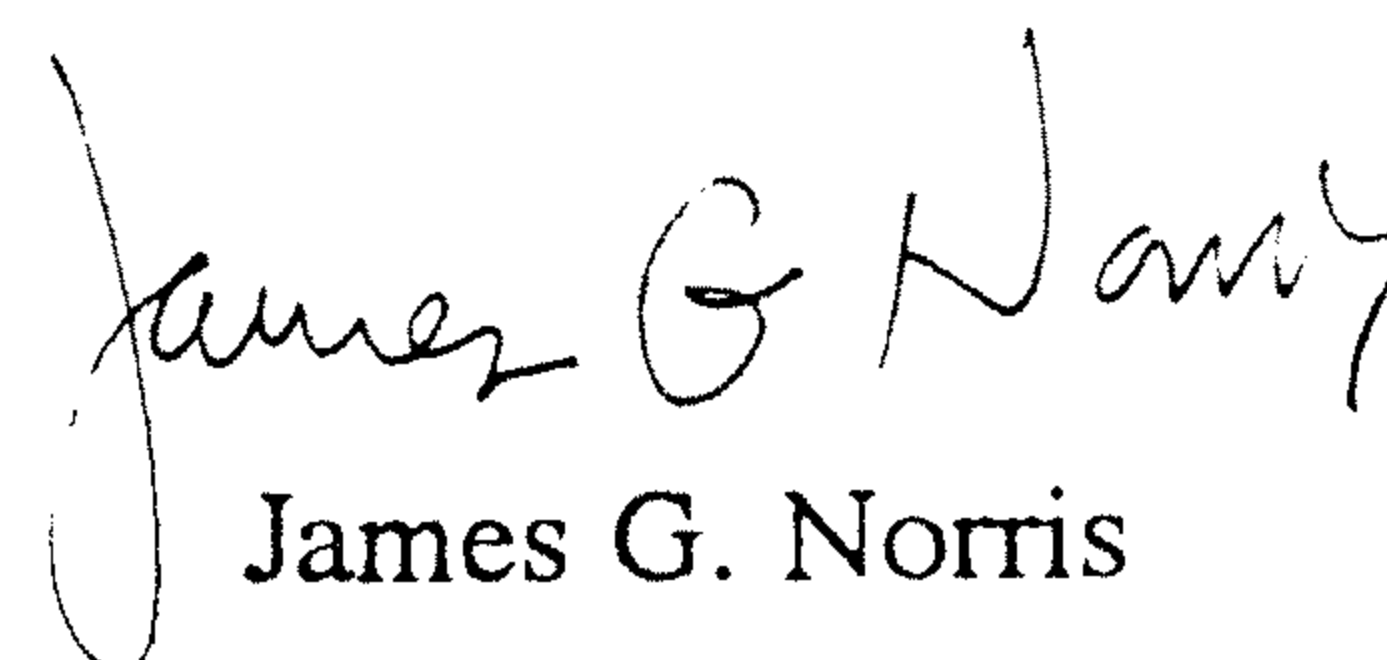
From 1979-1990 Charles C. Noggle and I were equal partners in a 47-foot longline vessel, *F/V Sea Angel*. During that time we fished extensively for halibut, sablefish, and rockfish off the Washington and Oregon coasts. In 1984 and 1985 the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) issued our vessel experimental fishing permits to use set-net gear to harvest sablefish. We attended and testified at many PFMC meetings during that period. For management purposes, the PFMC always grouped set-net fishing gear with other "fixed" gears—longlines and traps.

Although not specifically stated as PFMC policy, it has always been our impression (from PFMC discussions regarding limiting access to groundfish fisheries) that any sablefish captured with set-net gear would be treated as being caught by longline or trap gear for determining eligibility for limited access permits. Vessels involved in the experimental set-net fisheries should not be penalized for this experimentation.

Mr. Noggle and I are no longer partners, and we have agreed that all permits and IFQs issued to the *F/V Sea Angel* will be issued in his name only. Although the *F/V Sea Angel* and Mr. Noggle have been issued an A-permit, the set-net landings are not counted toward tier placement under current regulations. I feel strongly that they should.

I understand that the Council cannot take any action on this matter during the March meeting. However, I request that at the March meeting the Council direct its staff to determine what actions would be required to allow set-net catches to count toward tier placement. I hope that this issue can become an action item for the April or June meeting.

Sincerely,


James G. Norris

cc Larry Six
Charlie Noggle