

March 26, 2001

Pacific Fisheries Management Council
2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, Oregon 97201

Exhibit C.1.d
Supplemental Public Comment
April 2001

Dear Council Members,

I am writing this letter concerning NOAA's intentions to establish harvest refugio around the Channel Islands in California. My wife and I have fished commercially around these islands for 18 years. Fishing is our sole source of income. This week the National Marine Sanctuary people introduced maps to close half our fishing grounds. We fish lobster and crab. These are good healthy fisheries. We take these shellfish using traps which have escape ports which allow the juveniles to escape. These fisheries will last hundreds of years if the government would just let us keep doing what we're doing. The concept of shutting down half the world's oceans has developed into an industry of commercial environmentalists who are essentially paid lobbyists supporting a position behind the shield of environmentalism. The amount of money being thrown at this issue is staggering. Commercial Fisheries are a valuable food resource which should be managed in a manner which provides renewability of the resource. Each fishery is different. To date fisheries management has taken the variations into account when regulating individual fisheries. And I think that in many cases regulators have done an excellent job. This concept of just randomly shutting down huge swaths of the ocean is an experiment which will cause great hardship to the fishing industry.

In California there are several harvest refugios which have already been established. None of which have undergone any truly scientific study to determine whether or not there are any real benefits. Every thing coming out of Marine Sanctuary people seems to be anecdotal. They talk a lot about the big fish they saw in the Anacapa Reserve. There are a lot of big fish around these Islands. You just have to know where to look.

The National Park Service studies an area in Johnson's Lee at Santa Rosa Island. We see them there usually around the month of August. They anchor their boat and send down divers. The divers record what they see. It turns out that they are using this particular spot as a study area to determine the undersea health of Santa Rosa Island. The problem is they are looking at a dead spot. The spot they're studying isn't a good spot for anything. I have set traps on that spot for both lobster and crab and never caught anything. I've also set nets there for halibut, angel shark, and white seabass and never caught anything. I've discussed this spot with urchin and abalone divers who tell me there's nothing down there. The National Park Service study is bogus. Certain areas are more attractive to undersea life than others. There are good spots and bad spots. In addition all fish migrate. There is a time and place for all species. That's what makes a good fisherman. He knows the migration patterns. Many marine biologists don't know this. And apparently neither does the National Park Service.

Last year the National Marine Sanctuary people convinced some of the fisherman to come to the table and work out a deal. The fisherman were led to believe that if we gave up 10% of our grounds, that that would be it. The government would leave us alone. At the eleventh hour the Sanctuary people declared that they would have to take 30 to 50%. In effect they reneged on their original proposal. The Sanctuary people bargained in bad faith. If the government closes down this much area these people will in effect be destroying healthy fisheries. These are not fisheries in crises. These are sustainable, renewable, healthy fisheries.

The Sanctuary people have not adequately addressed the economic impact of these closures. Even their economic analysis is anecdotal. They have also not adequately addressed the impact that these closures are going to have on the area's which are not closed. Frankly, I believe that these closures are going to have a devastating effect on fisheries which are healthy. The Sanctuary people have not told us what is wrong with the lobster and crab fisheries. If they're not broken why are they trying to fix it. The seafood resource is a valuable food resource. To go and destroy one of the healthiest fisheries out there is idiotic.

Council Members, I ask that you take no action to advance the formation of these harvest reserves. I also ask that you require, under the Magnuson Act, a complete detailed economic analysis of these closures. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin McCeney

PFMC Chairman Jim Lone
2130 SouthWest 5th, Suite 224
Portland, OR 97201

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Dear Chairman Lone,

As you are aware, a diverse group of ocean resource managers and stakeholders are currently reviewing options to establish a system of fully protected marine reserves within the boundaries of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. For the last 20 months I have followed the progress of this group, the Marine Reserve Working Group (MRWG). I believe the concept of community based consensus groups is commendable. In this case however, it has failed to adequately represent community interests and protect our public resources. I call upon you to support the immediate establishment of a network of Marine Reserves at the Channel Islands.

For decades resource managers have struggled with science and legal mandates to maximize yields from our fisheries yet ensure that those yields are sustainable. Our best efforts thus far have failed. However, over 150 of the world's leading scientists have recently concluded that systems of fully protected marine reserves are necessary to ensure healthy oceans. Notable, these scientists endorsed not only the conservation value of reserves, but stated that reserves can provide benefits in the form of higher yields from our fisheries and insurance against fishery collapses caused by over-fishing and catastrophic events. It is rare that one single measure can provide both economic and environmental benefits.

The MRWG process has cost taxpayers nearly a quarter of a million dollars (\$250,000). Early on in the process, the MRWG made a promise to the people of this community to base its decisions on the best available science. Under that assumption, the cost to the taxpayer was fully justified. However, in spite of the overwhelming local and international scientific support for reserves, certain special interests and agency representatives within the MRWG refuse to accept the science. Our tax dollars, and the natural resources of the Channel Islands, can not be subject to the whims of these individuals. Establishing a network of Marine Reserves that does not meet minimum scientific requirements, or makes exceptions for special interests, undermines the potential for success, inequitably distributes the benefits, and fails to account for the interests of the community.

Given what we know, there is no excuse for inaction. Again, I urge you to support science and establish 30-50% Marine Reserves at the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Thank you,

Greg Helms 120 W. Mission St. Santa Barbara, CA 93101



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6765 E Sabado Trench

Pala Vista, CA 93117

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Thank you,

Jenna Garmou

*332-A W. Figueroa St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101*

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L. L. L. L.

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Robert Sklen 3516 Brinkerhoff Santa Cruz CA 95060

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