

Grant Proposal

Submitted to Oregon Sea Grant on February 26, 2001
by Ecotrust and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council

Phase I:

Data collection for economic viability study of West Coast groundfish fleet

Submitted

Priority Issue:

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) has adopted its strategic plan titled "Transition to Sustainability". It is a multi-faceted, comprehensive plan for the orderly transition of the existing over-capitalized fleet into a smaller, more economically viable one. The PFMC plan calls for a coast-wide fleet reduction of 50%, and identifies the need to do so with sensitivity toward existing fleet composition by port and gear type. This thinking is far-reaching and worthy of support.

As coastal communities move towards the development of a conservation economy, one competent solution to long-term fishing sustainability, and the subsequent economic rewards, is changing fishing behaviors and gears. Three activities supporting sustainability include:

- Fish habitats must be identified and protected from being overfished or damaged by use of inappropriate gear.
- Fish stocks must be caught using the most selective gear possible, gear that either avoids non-target species, or that allows live escape of non-target species.
- Fishing behaviors must be modified to protect habitat, juvenile fish and reduce bycatch and discards.

Project:

Ecotrust and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council have entered into a collaborative project to pursue the development of information and analysis on the re-structuring of the groundfish fleet in Oregon, Washington, and California.

Ecotrust and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council have identified information that must be gathered and/or consolidated on what exists now in the fleet. That information would then be used to develop a more detailed analysis of how the fleet could be restructured, port by port, gear group by gear group. Using the data, incentives could be proposed for fleets that agree to take certain actions, or individual vessels that change to more sustainable practices. The analysis would be inserted into the PFMC decision-making process for consideration and use. As such, it could well be the single most significant tool for developing a fleet restructuring strategy and a valuable resource for fishing men and women, fish managers and fishing communities.

Process:

We are pursuing a two-phase process. Ecotrust has begun (Phase 1) to gather information used to document what now exists. We expect to complete this phase in about two months (May 2001).

The analytical process (Phase 2) would require greater resources to fully analyze phase one data. It would include utilizing economically based matrixes and other evaluative tools to develop a comprehensive set of options or solutions for fleet restructuring. This, by itself, would answer the first need of the PFMC in reaching its goals. However, an important second step would be taken when our analysis of fishing gear modifications and incentives was used as an overlay to produce a better match of the number and types of vessels leading to a sustainable yield fishery.

We estimate second phase activities would take a full year and would be supported by grant funding secured by both organizations. We feel the expertise and track record of sustainability research by Ecotrust and its financial partner Shorebank Enterprise Pacific combined with the respect and professionalism in management-change issues of PMCC would bring important credibility to the final product.

Information to be gathered will be revised in Phase 1, but is expected to include at least some of the following port by port data:

Infrastructure:

- Number of moorage slips
- Processing capacity
- Ice capacity
- Freezer space
- Critical mass for maintaining marina
- Critical mass for maintaining processing and freezer capacity
- Critical mass for maintaining recreational infrastructure
- Listing of potential future needs to infrastructure

Fisheries:

- Number of vessels by size and gear use; commercial, charter and recreational
- Landings by gear source – trawl, fixed gear, open access, recreational
- Landing by area fished – nearshore, shelf and slope
- Landings by species or complex of species
- Estimate of sustainable level of harvest

Fishing area/resources

- Local reefs, important habitat
- Blackcod spots
- Trawl spots
- Hook and line spots, nearshore and shelf
- Crab and/or shrimp spots

Expectations for the Fellowship:

Ecotrust and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council would assign the Fellow to work as a research and analytical assistant to the project for the Oregon sector. The Fellow would report to the Principal Investigator, a staff person and/or contractor at Ecotrust. The Fellow would also interact with staff at the Pacific Marine Conservation Council and

Shorebank Enterprise Pacific. We would expect the Fellow to contribute significant input to the Oregon sector of the project and be responsible for some reasonable portion of analysis and writing of the final product. Such work could easily contribute to the requirement for a graduate degree program or form the basis of graduate research. It is likely that limited travel to Oregon fishing ports will be required.

The Fellow would be based in the Portland headquarters office of Ecotrust where core infrastructure would include office space, telephone, full-time T1 internet access, and related office services (copying, etc.) Ecotrust expects to open its new office in the Portland River District, the Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center on August 1, 2001.

The Fellow will initially report to Edward H. Backus, Director of Community Programs at Ecotrust. Edward is the contact for this project.

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For organizational background information please visit the following websites:

Ecotrust
www.ecotrust.org
www.conservationeconomy.org
www.inforain.org
www.tidepool.org

Pacific Marine Conservation Council
www.pmcc.org

Shorebank Enterprise Pacific
www.sbpac.org