

## PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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February 15, 2001

Mr. Randy Fisher, Executive Director  
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
45 SE 82nd Dr., Ste 100  
Gladstone, OR 97027-2522

### Re: Fiscal Year 2002 Congressional Funding Needs for the Pacific Council

Dear Randy,

It is well known that three years of level funding for the Council has resulted in an untenable situation whereby essential, core responsibilities and obligations cannot be accomplished. Please find following a description of the direct Congressional funding needs for the Pacific Fishery Management Council. These funding initiatives are presented separately for needs to conduct fundamental Council responsibilities and for additional strategic measures associated with the Council's recently adopted Groundfish Fishery Strategic Plan.

#### CORE COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

##### **Funding for all Regional Councils      \$19,047,00**

The line item request for the collective eight Regional Councils for FY 02 is \$19,047,000. This request level was developed as an eight Council consensus, and the Pacific Council remains fully supportive of this amount. Each Council is allocated a specific share of this amount; the Pacific Council share is **\$2,642,800**, which amounts to an increase of **\$713,000** over current funding. This is our best estimate of the funding needed to conduct existing core Council responsibilities and obligations under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

##### **Urgent Needs for Serious Shortfalls      \$500,000**

If it is not possible to receive the additional \$713,000 described above, there is a minimum need of \$500,000 to cover critical shortfalls in the ability of the Pacific Council to conduct the core business required under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The specific basis of this \$500,000 shortfall need is described below.

1. Two new Staff Officer positions are needed: one for groundfish fishery management and one for socioeconomic analytical necessities. The additional groundfish position is needed to address the tremendous increase in workload caused by the current crisis in the groundfish fishery<sup>1/</sup> and new requirements from the 1996 reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The socioeconomic position is needed for groundfish fishery related analyses, but would also work on other fisheries. Providing for these two positions and associated ancillary costs requires adding **\$300,000** to the base Council budget. Absent additional funding, the workload of existing staff will be managed for the highest priority core obligations, and a significant number of critical responsibilities will be left undone, with consequent lack of compliance with Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements and continued vulnerability to lawsuit.
2. Funding is needed to implement the new Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Highly Migratory Species. This important FMP is scheduled for adoption in September 2001. Outside funding from NMFS SWR has provided for development of the FMP, and there is currently no funding in the Council budget for FMP implementation. An additional **\$150,000** is needed to the base Council budget to

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1/ The secretary of Commerce designated the West Coast groundfish fishery as disaster on January 19, 2000 and Disaster Relief funding was appropriated in June 2000.

providing for the necessary Management Team, Advisory Subpanel, and Council staffing functions. Absent additional funding, the FMP will not be implemented, or some marginal implementation will occur at the cost of further attrition to already underfunded Council programs; either of these two options represent serious inadequacy relative to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

3. An addition **\$50,000** is needed to ameliorate the administrative cost shortfall caused by three consecutive years of level funding. A variety of base expenses have increased as general cost-of-living costs have increased, such as office rent, travel, and printing costs. Absent additional funding to cover such fixed costs, there will be continued attrition to elements of public participation in the Council process (such as advisory panel meetings, public hearings, etc.).

### GROUND FISH FISHERY STRATEGIC PLAN

**\$ 50.250 M for a Capacity Buyback Program**

**\$ 6.8 M for other priority Strategic Plan Initiatives**

After substantial public process and an investment of about \$100,000, the Council adopted the ***Pacific Fishery Management Council Groundfish Fishery Strategic Plan "Transition to Sustainability"*** in September 2000. This Plan contains strategic initiatives designed to solve the existing crisis and provide for a stable, sustainable fishery in the long term. The following initiatives are high priority elements that require additional funding to implement; the attached table provides additional itemized amounts and specific information related to this request. Absent funding to implement the Groundfish Strategic Plan, the initial investment and current momentum will be largely lost, and existing fishery problems and economic hardship will accrue negative national consequences.

1. The amount of \$500,000 is needed for the Council to administer implementation of the Strategic Plan and accomplish several high priority objectives that don't warrant itemized cost requests due to the low whole dollar amount. Functionally, this money would fund public participation, committee work and staffing coordination necessary to achieve the objectives detailed in the following Table.
2. Capacity reduction is a key feature of the Strategic Plan, in addition to a NMFS priority for all national marine fisheries. The Council supports the current effort from the regional industry representatives advocating a \$50 M plan, half in Congressional funding and half from industry sources; \$250,000 would also be needed to administer the program. Absent this funding, about \$100,000 is needed to provide for trawl permit stacking alternatives, \$400,000 for a limited entry system for the current open access fishery, and \$50,000 for permit stacking in the non-sablefish fixed gear fishery.
3. An additional amount of \$2.8 M is needed for at-sea observers, to complete existing funding of \$2.2 M for a pilot program for groundfish vessels, so as to address the important issues of by-catch and discards.
4. An amount of \$1.4 M is needed to fund establishing Marine Reserves on the West Coast. The Council can take the lead in securing biological security for future groundfish fisheries in this region, including coordination with other federal initiatives such as the recent Executive Order on Marine Protected Areas and regional State initiatives.
5. The Groundfish Strategic Plan calls for the delegation of near-shore rockfish to the three regional States, at a cost of \$1.575 M.

Should you have any questions about Council funding needs, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,



Donald O. McIsaac, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

- c: Jim Lone  
Council Members  
Rebecca Lent  
Donna Darm  
West Coast Congressional Delegations  
Regional Fishery Management Council Executive Directors  
Ad Hoc Marine Reserve Process Design Committee  
Bob Fletcher  
Karen Garrison  
Suzanne Udicello

**Table 1. PFMC Groundfish Strategic Plan Implementation Costs**  
 (all items will require some level of continued funding beyond FY02 except for Buyback)

| OBJECTIVE                                | COSTS (in million \$) |              |                            |        |        |                         |       | Grand Total |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------|--------|-------------------------|-------|-------------|
|  | Council               | Natl. direct | Mar. Fish. Serv. pass-thru | States | Tribes | Cong. request sub-total | Other |             |
| Administration Buyback                   | 0.5                   |              | 25                         |        |        | 0.5                     |       | 50.25       |
| Trawl permit stacking                    | *                     | 0.1          |                            |        |        | 0.1                     |       | 0.1         |
| Observers                                |                       | 2.8          |                            |        |        | 2.8                     |       | 2.8         |
| Improve Groundfish Fishery Mgmt Process  | *                     |              |                            |        |        | *                       |       | *           |
| Sablefish Fixed Gear permit stacking     | *                     |              |                            |        |        | *                       |       | *           |
| Open Access Limited Entry Allocation     | 0.25                  | 0.15         |                            |        |        | 0.4                     |       | 0.4         |
| Marine Reserves                          |                       |              |                            | 0.198  | 0.066  | 1.394                   | 0.25  | 1.644       |
| Near shore rockfish delegation to States |                       | 0.832        |                            | 1.5    | 0.075  | 1.575                   |       | 1.575       |
| Non-sablefish fixed gear permit stacking |                       |              |                            |        |        | 0.05                    |       | 0.05        |
| New harvest policy recommendations       | *                     | 0.05         |                            |        |        | *                       |       | *           |
| Targeted Reg. Impr. (2)                  | *                     |              |                            |        |        | *                       |       | *           |
| TOTAL                                    | 1.048                 | 4.182        | 25                         | 1.698  | 0.141  | 32.09                   | 25.25 | 57.319      |
| TOTAL WITHOUT BUYBACK                    | 1.048                 | 3.932        | 0                          | 1.698  | 0.141  | 6.8                     | 0.25  | 7.069       |

\* The implementation costs of these objectives is included in the \$ 0.5 M for the Plan Administration objective

(+ 2.1/already)

