

*Rachelle Schaaf - Chair*  
*Lucie La Bonté - Vice Chair*  
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(541) 247-3296 \* P.O. Box 746, Gold Beach, OR. 97444 \* (541) 247-2718 (FAX)

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MAY 9 2002

PFMC

Dr. Don McIsaac, Director  
Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, OR 972201384

RE: Mitchell Act Comments

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

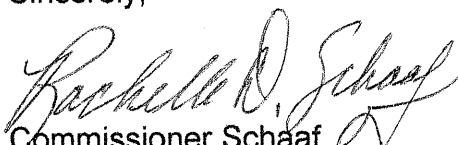
April 30, 2002

The Curry County Board of Commissioners would like to state its support for increased funding through the Mitchell Act. Without increased funding there could be a dramatic impact to Oregon and Washington fisheries. Salmon fisheries within Oregon have already suffered declines. Recently we are starting to see positive signs of salmon populations rebounding. In Curry County we believe that there will be further declines without the majority of the catch coming from fin clipped Coho originating from the Lower Columbia River Hatcheries. The funding provided by the federal government for these activities is critical to the future of continued fishing of these populations. Without continued fishing there will be a direct impact on local coastal economies such as ours.

The Mitchell Act funding for hatchery operations has only increased slightly from FY 93 to FY 02. As a result of inadequate funding increases significant production cuts started occurring in 1995. Continued inflation without funding increases translates to hatchery closures and a zero rate of return from past federal funding investments. Local economies will be impacted further. Long-term budget declines will also impact National Marine Fisheries Service's ability to mitigate the impacts to stocks for the Columbia River Dams and complete many other important tasks it is charged with.

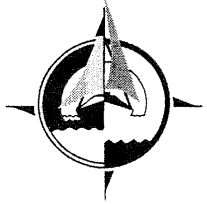
The President's budget includes a total of \$16,522,000 for the Mitchell Act Program. We are in concurrence with the cooperating fishery agencies that a base program funding level of at least \$24,554,000 is needed. Therefore we strongly support all efforts to increase the level of funding for this program in order for our fishery agencies to continue their important work of keeping our fisheries and communities sustainable.

Sincerely;

  
Commissioner Schaaf  
Chair

  
Commissioner La Bonté  
Vice-Chair

  
Commissioner Schafer



**PORT  
of BROOKINGS  
HARBOR**

**America's  
Wild Rivers  
Coast**  
101 MILES OF NATURE'S BEST

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MAY 7 2002

April 29, 2002

PFMC

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Greg T. Chandler

RV Park Host:  
Pat Chesterman

Mr. Don McIsaac, Director  
Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Re: Mitchell Act Comments

Dear Mr. McIsaac:

The Port of Brookings Harbor and the Port Fisheries Committee would like to state, for the record, our support for increased funding through the Mitchell Act. It is well known in our area that without increased funding the result could be a dramatic impact to Oregon and Washington Fisheries, both troll and recreational. Our coastal salmon fisheries have already suffered severe declines and just recently is starting to see some positive signs of rebounding but will decline further without the bulk of the catch coming from fin clipped Coho originating from the Lower Columbia Hatcheries. This makes funding provided by the federal government critical if future fishing is not to be heavily curtailed further and coastal economics are to not continue on their downward spiral.

The Mitchell Act funding for hatchery operations has only increased slightly from FY 93 to FY 02. Consideration should be given to the significant production cuts starting in 1995, which are a result of inadequate funding levels and it can only create the inability for fishery managers to keep up with inflation and cost of living increases. This translates to hatchery closures and a zero rate of return for past investments and degrading of coastal economies, not to mention decline of production of 33 million fish including fall Chinook, spring Chinook, and Coho as well as both summer and winter steelhead.

Mr. Don McIsaac, Director  
April 29, 2002

Above all else, fisheries decline, coastal economies are impacted and National Marine Fisheries Service, by these long-term budget declines, cannot do their job, which is to mitigate the impacts to stocks for the Columbia River Dams. This agency is charged with numerous tasks that include, but are not limited to the following: 1. Conduct investigations, engineering, biological surveys and experiments as may be necessary to direct and facilitate conservation of the fishery resources. 2. Construct and install devices in the Columbia River Basin for the improvement of feeding and spawning conditions for fish, for the protection of migratory fish from irrigation projects, and for facilitating free migration of fish over obstructions. 3. To perform all other activities necessary for the conservation of fish in the Columbia River Basin in accordance with the law.

As with any federal authorized program, the previous funding levels are the starting point for an administration. The President's budget includes a total of \$16.522 M for the Mitchell Act program. The cooperating state fishery agencies believe that a base program of at least \$24.554 M is needed. After our review and knowing the importance of the Mitchell Act program funding to our state, we collectively, as a Port District and Fisheries Organization, strongly support all efforts to increase the level of funding in order for our fishery agencies to continue to do an extraordinary job as has been done in the past.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and please see that our comments are sent forward to the appropriate federal agencies.

Sincerely,



Russ Crabtree  
Executive Director

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