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PFMC

CHARGER  
  
SPORTFISHING  
8655 Graves Ave. #30  
Santee, Ca. 92071

Exhibit C.2.d  
Supplemental Public Comment  
June 2002

June 5, 2002

Mr. Hans Radtke  
Chairman, Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Radtke and Council members,

It is unfortunate that I find myself unable to attend the Council Meeting of June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2002. The affordability of transportation and the time away from my business makes it impossible to attend. The issues concerning shelf rockfish and bocaccio are very important to all of us and I would appreciate it if you would except my testimony via this letter.

It is hard to believe that the scientific reports to this council are leading you to believe that bocaccio stocks of Southern California remain at dangerously low numbers. It has done no good in the past to question the scientific method used by the biologists to arrive at their stock assessments, so I'm not going to waste time by asking you to re-evaluate their methods now. What I am asking is, please consider the possibility that the biologist's evaluations could be wrong.

My charter business depends on the shelf rockfish eight months of the year. There are many months that the migratory species are not available to target due to the natural conditions of the Southern California fishery. For twenty-six years, twenty-one of them as a U.S.C.G. licensed captain, I have been on the fishing grounds from Point Conception to the Mexican border. It is my career. Thousands of days taking the citizens of this state out to the reefs to catch their fresh fish dinners should give me some credibility. What I have experienced in the past two years is the opposite of what you are asked to believe by the biologists. The amounts and the size of not only the bocaccio, but of all shelf rockfish has made for the easiest limit fishing I have seen in twenty years. My toughest task of the day is running from areas that are overloaded with bocaccio, which hold the two fish per person limit.

It is my belief that the greatest contributing factor to such a radical change for what I am witnessing is, better management of the resource. As a commercial passenger boat operation I have always had strictly enforced passenger limits with the method of catching being a fishing pole, reel, line, sinker and a hook. Finally, the commercial "fish for sale" operations have had a quantity limit and gear restriction imposed upon them for shelf rockfish. When a new crewman on a commercial boat asks the captain, what is our limit?

The answer is no longer "all we can catch", "all we can hold", "all we can sell". The placing of gill nets, use of drag nets, and set lines with up to 150 hooks were too effective for such a slow growing species. Allowing these types of gear that, in some cases, did not even require the commercial vessel, captain, or crew to be present for their destructive harvest was devastating to the resource, and criminal to allow.

Continued good management of our bocaccio and shelf rockfish is the answer to an eventual complete recovery and stability of this precious resource. A twelve-month emergency closure is not the necessary action to take for the continued rapid recovery that I declare witness to, and we all seek. This type of unnecessary action should be considered a reckless and spiteful blow to those of us that have always had enforced limitations set forth by this state. We have lived by all local, state, and federal regulations to maintain the privilege and pride of being a United States Coast Guard licensed and inspected passenger vessel, that engages in Sportfishing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard W. Craddick".

Richard W. Craddick

Owner/Captain C.P.F.V. CHARGER