

ELTON GALLEGLY  
23<sup>rd</sup> DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0523

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PUBLIC LANDS

June 10, 2002

The Honorable Donald Evans  
Secretary  
Department of Commerce  
14<sup>th</sup> Street and Constitution Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

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PFMC

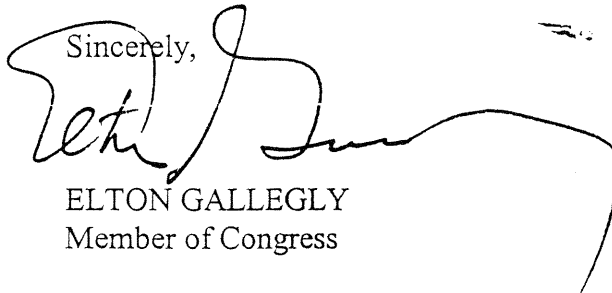
Dear Secretary Evans:

Enclosed, please find a letter from Bob Fletcher, President of the Sportfishing Association of California expressing his concern over a proposal to close or severely reduce the take of the bocaccio or salmon grouper off the coast of California.

Along with Mr. Fletcher, several of my constituents in the sportfishing industry have come to my office expressing their concerns regarding the latest "scientific" stock assessment of the bocaccio rockfish that will be discussed at the June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council. It is my understanding that no independent adult groundfish surveys have been conducted south of Point Conception in 25 years. In addition, the sport fisherman and commercial fisherman who have come to my office have indicated they are seeing more rockfish, including bocaccio, than they have seen in many years. Furthermore, the economic impact of the elimination of the rockfish fishery off the California coast will be devastating, and will surely lead to bankruptcy for many and to major dislocation for others.

Please review the concerns outlined in Mr. Fletcher's letter and provide a response. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please forward your reply to my Oxnard district office.

Sincerely,



ELTON GALLEGLY  
Member of Congress

cc: Chairman Radtke, PFMC



# SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

1084 BANGOR STREET  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92106  
(619) 226-6455 FAX (619) 226-0175

ROBERT C. FLETCHER  
PRESIDENT

June 8, 2002

W. A. NOTT  
PRESIDENT-EMERITUS

The Honorable Elton Gallegly  
U. S. House of Representatives  
2427 Russell House Office Building  
Independence Ave. & S. Capitol ST., SW  
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) Assessment of Bocaccio.

Dear Representative Gallegly:

The Sportfishing Association of California (SAC) has since 1972 represented the legitimate interests of the southern California commercial passenger fishing vessel (CPFV) fleet. Many of our members fish out of the ports of Oxnard, Ventura, Port Hueneme and Santa Barbara, and rely heavily on access to the rockfish complex; a large mixed stock assemblage of bottom fish. In its meeting during the week of June 17<sup>th</sup>, the PFMC will be receiving a 'stock assessment' report from one of its scientific advisory bodies showing that the bocaccio, or salmon grouper, populations are in need of much more protection, and the probable result of such protection will be a total closure of all shelf rockfishing in 2003, and perhaps even additional closures in 2002.

Congressman Gallegly, the closure, if it comes, will have a devastating effect on the small businesses operating charter and open party sportfishing boats in your district, and appears to be in direct conflict with the overwhelming view of the fishermen that the stocks are, in fact, in better shape than just three years ago! In addition ~~to~~ this unanimous opinion of skippers that the bocaccio are in better shape than they have been in decades, there has not been an fishery-independent adult bottomfish survey south of Point Conception in 25 years! Finally, the bocaccio stock distribution continues south into the waters off Baja California for 250 miles, and there is no indication that that portion of the population is in any trouble.

SAC requests that you contact the appropriate person in the Federal government, perhaps the Secretary of Commerce, and express your concern over the probable elimination of sportfishing opportunity for rockfishing in southern California, based on science that directly flies in the face of the fishermen's opinion of the bocaccio's status, and has no groundfish surveys from the area where the fish lives!

Sincerely,

  
Bob Fletcher, President