

Subject: [Fwd: Highly Migratory Species]

Date: Fri, 07 Jun 2002 11:47:33 -0700

From: Donald McIsaac <donald.mcisaac@noaa.gov>

Organization: Pacific Fishery Management Council

To: "Waldeck, Daniel" <Daniel.Waldeck@noaa.gov>,
"Seger, James" <James.Seger@noaa.gov>,
"Waters, Edward" <Edward.Waters@noaa.gov>

CC: "Coon, John" <John.Coon@noaa.gov>

fyi

----- Original Message -----
Subject: Highly Migratory Species
Date: Thu, 6 Jun 2002 19:27:27 -0700
From: "Tom Raftican" <refish@earthlink.net>
To: <donald.mcisaac@noaa.gov>

June 6, 2002
Dr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

United Anglers of Southern California (UASC) is the state's largest association of recreational anglers. We represent some 50,000 affiliated sportfishermen throughout California dedicated to ensuring quality fishing today and for the future. We are deeply concerned about the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (PFMC) inability to adequately assess the economic impacts of their actions on our members and on all California recreational anglers. It is unconscionable. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration California marine recreational anglers spend \$2,500,000,000 annually yet the PFMC has been remiss in addressing these dollars in either their groundfish or pelagics planning work. Groundfish and pelagics combined clearly represents the vast majority of recreational angler expenditures. In spite of this economic engine which dwarfs west coast commercial fishing revenues, the Council has yet to allocate hardly a single dollar to assess the impact of the recreational angler on the economy or the overall public interest. It is clear that we the public do not fit in your scheme to derive a net national benefit.

Specifically, the rockfish disaster will close out a huge amount of recreational angler participation in the coming years and cost our members' uncounted losses and all the recreational support industries untold financial hardship. This disaster could have been avoided with a minimal degree of forethought and planning. UASC has worked hard to help you avoid repeating this kind of negligence by providing data to the Highly

Migratory

Species (HMS) Plan Development Team (PDT). This data clearly demonstrates that recreational HMS opportunities have already been dramatically diminishing over the past century. The PDT ignored this information and failed to even look at the available underlying data much less exert any effort to understand the current socio-economics surrounding California recreational HMS fishing. This became even more evident when no data whatsoever for Orange County, California was included in the last plan draft while the PDT included every other county with a commercial port. Because Orange County does not have a commercial port it was excluded despite being one of the west coast's largest recreational fishing communities with expenditures for HMS fishing that almost certainly exceed the entire revenue stream of the west coast commercial HMS fishing fleet. Also, despite UASC giving the PDT extensive reference information to document the history of recreational HMS fishing no additional data from these sources was noted in the plan copy submitted for adoption in March of this year. Additionally, the remaining current values of the HMS recreational fishery both to the anglers and their support industries continue to be unquantified even while the PDT contemplates expanding budgets to commit additional expenditures to obtain more data on commercial fishing interests.

Clearly this is an unacceptable situation. It has undoubtedly been primarily brought about by a terrible lack of representation of recreational anglers on the PFMC and secondly, by a near complete disregard of recreational interests in fishery management plans brought forward by the PFMC. This disregard must end. It specifically must end prior to creation of any new fisheries by the PFMC, experimental, exploratory, or otherwise; in particular with regard to fisheries currently prohibited by the State of California based upon the State's analysis of the situation.

IT IS QUITE CLEAR TO US THAT IGNORANCE OF THESE ISSUES IS NO LONGER AN EXCUSE. THE DEPTH OF COSTS OF THIS IGNORANCE TO DATE IS STILL YET TO BE ADDED UP. RESOLUTION OF THE GROUND FISH DISASTER WILL HAVE CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES TO THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC. AS STEWARDS OF THE RESOURCE YOUR ACTIONS NEED TO BE BASED UPON A SOUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS OF THE CALIFORNIA CITIZENRY. BLYTHELY CONTINUING DOWN THE CURRENT PATH OF CREATING AND ENCOURAGING NEW FISHERIES WITHOUT ADEQUATE BIOLOGICAL OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFORMATION SIMPLY IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

WE DEMAND THAT THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF RECREATIONAL ANGLERS BE QUANTIFIED AND ADDRESSED BEFORE THE PFMC CONSIDERS ANY INCREASE IN EFFORT FOR HMS SPECIES.

We look forward to a response to this letter within 30 days.

Sincerely,

Tom Raftican
President, United Anglers of Southern California

cc, Honorable Donald Evans, Secretary of Commerce, USA, devans@doc.gov
Dr. William T. Hogarth, Director, National Marine Fisheries Service
Honorable Gray Davis, Governor, California
Robert Hight, Director, California Department of Fish and Game
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