

**WINCHESTER BAY MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION
C/O COYNE
20 Eighth Street
P. O. Box 1663
Winchester Bay, Oregon 97467
541-271-2103**

RECEIVED

AUG 29 2003

PFMC

August 22 2003

**Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97467 FAX Number 503-820-2299**

Re: Groundfish Fisheries - Winchester Bay Area

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is written in support of a waiver of the current pending rules prohibiting fishing for groundfish inside of the 50 fathom line because of its unique geological makeup. Winchester Bay is located in the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area and has some of the highest dunes in the state. The dune structure does not stop at the ocean's edge but continues for miles offshore. The area within the 50 fathom line does not have any coastal reefs which support groundfish. The closest reefs to Winchester Bay are beyond the 50 fathom line both North and South of the mouth of the Umpqua River. These reefs, one offshore of Ten Mile Creek to the South, the other off the Takenitch Creek area to the North, provide our recreational fishermen opportunities to fish for groundfish.

If areas outside of the 50 fathom line are closed to recreational anglers, we would not have any opportunity to

fish for groundfish.

Recreational angling provides a great economic stimulus for Winchester Bay and the surrounding area. If recreational angling for groundfish were stopped, we would experience the ripple effect from the another loss of fishing species. We experienced this in the 80's and 90's with the closure of coho salmon fishing along the Oregon coast. Many fishing related businesses closed and this area lost all our charter fishing businesses. We currently have only four charter offices providing offshore angling opportunities for our visitors.

Recreational angling for groundfish in the Winchester Bay area has not had a detrimental effect on the groundfish population. Recent ODFW statistics show that the port of Winchester Bay has about a 1% impact on all the sport groundfish caught in Oregon.

If Winchester Bay were allowed to be able to land fish similar to the "bubble salmon fisheries" allowed for Tillamook Bay or Port Orford, it would restore some fairness in the allocation of the groundfish quota. Winchester Bay would not be handicapped because of the unique geologic conditions of the area.

We would ask the PFMC to consider the economic and geologic conditions of the port of Winchester Bay and allow this port to have a sport groundfish season.

Sincerely,


**Joe Coyne, President
Wincheater Bay Merchants**

Faint, illegible text, possibly a stamp or secondary signature.

Subject: [Fwd: Pot by catch]
From: PFMC Comments <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 27 Aug 2003 10:50:42 -0700
To: John.Devore@noaa.gov
CC: Mike Burner <Mike.Burner@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Pot by catch
Date: Tue, 26 Aug 2003 18:04:00 -0700
From: larry demmert <larrynbrenda@comcast.net>
To: <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>

I am proposing that pots fishing for sablefish not have a depth restriction, as there is little or no roskfish bycatch. The observer data should back this up as I have an observer on board and any bycatch usually comes up alive and would live if thrown back, but the observer keeps them for data so they die. I would also like to propose an increase to 6(six) licenses on a vessel, as this would help for stacking lower tiered permits.

Larry Demmert

