

HABITAT COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON  
MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY  
KRILL HARVEST BAN PROPOSAL

In June 2003, the Council charged the Habitat Committee (HC) with tracking a krill harvest ban being proposed in the central California national marine sanctuaries. At this meeting, the HC heard a presentation from Huff McGonigal of the National Marine Sanctuary Program on a proposal to prohibit krill harvest in three national marine sanctuaries: Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank.

Krill is an important forage component of many Council-managed species such as market squid, rockfish, salmon, sardines, as well as marine mammals and seabirds. Prey species are defined as an important component of essential fish habitat (EFH).

The HC supports protecting this key prey species by preventing commercial harvest in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and further recommends that the Council begin the scoping process for a plan amendment to the coastal pelagic species or the groundfish Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) to affect this prohibition. We also suggest the Council include a broader range of non-managed prey species in a harvest prohibition (as was done by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council in 1997).

This proposal represents a proactive opportunity to engage in the type of ecosystem-based management proposed by the Pew Commission, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, and the NMFS Ecosystem Advisory Panel, while preserving the health of regional fisheries.

PFMC  
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