

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
CORDELL BANK, GULF OF FARALLONES, AND MONTEREY BAY
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) heard presentations from representatives of the Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries regarding individual proposals to amend designation documents to regulate fisheries:

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) proposed to amend its designation document to limit fishing gear to protect benthic habitat and invertebrates; and Monterey Bay NMS proposed a boundary expansion of approximately 500 square miles to encompass Davidson Seamount and prohibit fishing at depths below 3,000 feet.

Again reiterating prior recommendations to the Council, the CPSAS expresses concern over proposals to extend authority to the NMSs to manage fisheries. Existing authorities within the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act are able to protect ecosystems, including submerged lands and benthic invertebrates.

Based on presentations from NMS representatives, the CPSAS understands that new fishery management authorities are requested to protect against some possible future threat. Existing fishery management practices are not impacting these areas.

The CPSAS notes that any new authorities granted to the NMSs to regulate fisheries would be precedent setting and would lead to duplicate programs and costs. The CPSAS again encourages the NMSs to strengthen communications with the Council and defer to the Council process, including scientific expertise and oversight, on matters affecting regulation of fishery resources.

The CPSAS unanimously recommends the Council approve Option 2 – no change to designation documents.

PFMC
04/07/05