

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
CORDELL BANK, GULF OF FARALLONES, AND MONTEREY BAY
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the summaries of possible Council recommendations for the Cordell Bank, Gulf of Farallones, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries (NMSs). The GAP received a brief presentation from NMS personnel and - after concluding its deliberations - received a copy of a letter to Dr. Don McIsaac from Dr. Daniel Basta, Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program. The letter did not change the recommendations made by the GAP, as the general substance of the letter was described in the presentation from NMS personnel.

CORDELL BANK

In regard to designation document changes, the GAP supports Option 2, recommending the designation document not be changed. As we have stated before, we believe the protections desired by the NMS can be accomplished through the more open and inclusive public process used by the Council under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). Further, the Council, its advisory bodies, and NMFS have a greater degree of expertise in fisheries management than we believe is available to the NMS program.

In regard to proposed fishing regulations, we support a modified Option 4, which would provide that - *if necessary* - regulations be prepared through the fishery management plan process, including the ongoing process to identify and protect habitat areas of particular concern within designated essential fish habitat.

MONTEREY BAY

Similar to Cordell Bank, and for the same reasons, the GAP supports Option 2 (no change in the designation document) and a modified Option 4 (*if necessary*, prepare regulations through the fishery management plan process).

GULF OF FARALLONES

Again, similar to Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay, and for the same reasons, the GAP supports Option 2, recommending the designation document not be changed.

Finally, in response to Mr. Basta's concern about understanding the time-line and processes involved in fisheries regulation and designation of essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern, we suggest Mr. Basta consult with his colleagues in the National Marine Fisheries Service who are co-located in Silver Spring, Maryland; peruse the Council's website (<http://www.pcouncil.org>), which contains a number of excellent explanatory documents on these issues, and perhaps even attend a Council meeting. If he does so - as the local NMS Program staff has done - we are confident that all of Mr. Basta's questions and concerns will be answered.

PFMC
04/07/05