

BLUE FOX FISHERIES

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September 5, 2005

Mr. Donald Hansen
Chairman
Pacific Fisheries Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Ste. 200
Portland, OR 97220
Fax: 503-820-2299

RECEIVED

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PFMC

Dr. William Hogarth
Administrator
NOAA Fisheries Service
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Fax: 301-713-1940

Dear Dr. Hogarth and Mr. Hansen:

I am writing to request your support and the support of the Pacific Fisheries management Council for US Senate Bill 1549 recently introduced by Oregon Senator Gordon Smith to establish cooperative harvest management for Pacific whiting.

I have participated in West Coast, Gulf of Alaska, and Bering Sea fisheries for 40 years. The F/V Blue Fox was one of the early participants in the whiting J/V (Joint Venture) with several foreign countries, and one of the first trawlers to bring whiting to shore for processing.

Shore side whiting began in 1990 and has become a major West Coast fishery in fifteen years, bringing direct benefits to the coastal fishing communities of Oregon, Washington, and California. Pacific whiting under the management of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council has been managed differently than other West coast fisheries. This management style has several labels, Olympic, derby, pulse, all meaning that fishermen must drive their vessels and crew as hard as they can for a short period of time to try and capture a share of the resource.

There is a better way to manage, harvest, and process Pacific whiting than the wasteful management style being used today. It's time to give harvesters and processors the ability to form cooperatives and harvest this resource in a responsible manner.

Fishermen and processor cooperatives have proven to be an effective management style in the Bering Sea pollock fishery under the American Fishery Act. Cooperatives have now moved into the Alaskan crab fishery and the new rock fish pilot program in the Gulf of Alaska. Cooperatives using rights based management gives harvesters and processors the ability to utilize the target species when recovery yield is highest, and incidental catch level is lowest.

The whiting fishery is a unique fish, soft fleshed and spoils rapidly unless handled in a cooperative manner between harvesters and processors. The cooperative nature in which this fishery is conducted makes it a perfect candidate for a rights based cooperative managed fishery. By eliminating the rush for fish and the haste and waste of having to process at a rapid pace, gives both fishermen and processors a chance to manage this fishery with economics, conservation and efficiency which will bring direct benefits to fishing communities and to the Nation.

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The at-sea factory trawler whiting fleet has been fishing in a cooperative style fishery for several years now with great success. Their incidental takes of non target species has dropped drastically, and their ability to fund their own monitoring system using Sea State as a means to collect fishery data has given them near real time reporting.

The three West coast states are now having difficulty in funding the management of their marine fishery divisions due to budget constraints.

Whiting is a fishery that by going to cooperative management would eliminate the majority of these costs, placing the cost of management at the participant level.

The largest volume of Pacific whiting is harvested by members of Midwater Trawlers Cooperative, this cooperative was formed in 1982 by Barry Fisher, all members were whiting fishermen looking for ways to better utilize the whiting resource. After Barry's death, I took his place as Director of M.T.C, and yes, like Barry I also dislike the waste of a National resource when I know it can be corrected. I have tremendous respect for the Council process and the men and women that put their time into it. I have also spent years attending and participating in this process, and will continue to do so in the future.

I know that with Council support and the support of NOAA we can make this legislation into a management tool that will show what cooperation between harvesters, processors, and management can accomplish when working together to eliminate the largest West coast derby fishery.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if further information is required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Jincks", written in a cursive style.

David Jincks
Midwater Trawlers Cooperative

August 30, 2005

Mr. Donald Hansen, Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 N. E. Ambassador Place, Ste. 200
Portland, OR 97220

Dr. William Hogarth, Admin.
NOAA Fisheries Service
1315 East West Highway
Silver Springs, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Hogarth and Mr. Hansen:

I am writing to request your support of U.S. Senate Bill 1549. This bill would establish cooperatives for shore-side whiting. I would think you would be in favor of this bill because it would rationalize the shore-side sector. You have already one cooperative in the whiting fishery, the catcher-processor sector and it is working quite well.

I am the owner of two shore-side whiting vessels. They have been involved in the shore-side whiting fishery from 1992 to the present. It has not always been easy to find markets and make it pay. I believe that his legislation will help smooth the bumps in the road that we have experienced in the past.

Rationalization of the whiting fishery is way overdue. We need to put an end to the race for fish, which causes waste, encourages bycatch of nontargeted species. Coops will be able to keep track of catch on a real-time basis and be able to implement plans to reduce bycatch and use their bycatch that is now wasted. Coops in the Alaska pollock fishery have been able to solve problems the council could not tackle.

Cooperatives will allow businesses to do a better job of managing their resources allowing them to be more profitable.

I look forward to working with the council to get this legislation implemented. I would look forward to discussing this with you. My phone number is 541-336-0244.

Sincerely,

Mark Cooper, Pres.
Cooper Fishing, Inc.
Patience Fisheries, Inc.
1119 Olalla Rd.
Toledo, OR 97391

Cc: Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, Senator RonWyden, Senator Gordon Smith

