

Topic: 43\*2o.83N 42\*40.50N closure. For Canary catch reduction.

RECEIVED

MAY 21 2007

Dear Council chair;

PFMC

We request that the Humbug Mountain line to be moved north to the 43\*04.00 latitude. For those boats that do not or cannot fish outside of 200 fathoms, the present boundary line eliminates the only area to catch shallow water Dover from Florence Oregon to the California border. It also eliminates a Petrale area that was fished with a low discard rate. The observer data in 2005 for this area was not representative of what the fleet was doing in this area. We caught four pounds of Canary rockfish for 10,000 pounds of marketable fish. The other boats in this area did just as good or better.

The area below the 43,04.00 line is wide open and has no Canary hot spots with the 75-fathom boundary line. There is no way, from our experience, that the 1000 pounds of Canaries recorded by the observer program in fifteen tows came from this area. The fishing area above the 43,04 are slots around rocks and therefore have a higher Canary by-catch rate.

The selective flatfish trawl does a good job reducing Canary by-catch. If this net is fished in an area where a high rise net catches 5000 pounds of Canary and it only catches five hundred pounds, it has done its job. The problem is that the fisherman did not do his. Our job is to drag this where the Canary catch rate is low.

Those of us who are doing our job are penalized for the one who is not. Therefore, we request you look at the area where the 1000 pounds of Canaries were caught and close that area only down. We will then all be fishing in low Canary catch areas. We know the Humbug Mountain line is random, because we are the only boat fishing that area.

This larger than necessary area closure will push boats into areas they are not familiar with and thus will increase the number of boats in these other areas and will increase bottom times and discard rates. When you fish area you are not familiar with the Canary catch rate can increase. There are no maps showing fishermen the Canary hot spots and therefore will have to be learned thru experience.

We request therefore that the closure area be as small as possible to accomplish the same goal. This closure would then have no effect on those of us who have to fish inside of 200 fathoms. A smaller closure area would only cause the fishermen who are not doing their job to join the ones who are. We can then supply quality shallow water Dover and Petrale sole economically with minimal Canary by-catch.

Vessel Amak

Alex Ells



Terry Sweeney

