

5-26-09

Dear Fish and Game Commission,

My name is Dan McCafferty, I am a Commercial Fisherman. I am 47 years old. I started fishing when I was 16, I have made my whole life around boats and fish. Needless to say it's been a challenge. But rewarding, rewarding in the sense that I have been able to be on the water and try and utilize my experience as a fisherman to make a living I have a wife and we work hard together. In the last few years there have been a lot of changes in the fishery that I have been engaged in. I use set lines and target the Sculpin species in Southern California, also I catch California Halibut using rod and reel. I sell the fish live to restaurants that I have developed through much hard work. Speaking of hard work, I know that you have your hands full with the responsibility of managing so many different animals and fish and the laws that govern them, let alone the people who wish to use these resources. Hats off to you.

The purpose of my letter is to let you know of the situation that I am in a result of all the monthly quotas and to ask that you consider helping me.

Since the implementation of the quotas on Sculpin stocks, I have not been able to catch enough fish to cover fishing or living expenses adequately. With the way the economy is, it is very tough to make the ends meet, as I m sure that you are very well aware

I am requesting that there be an in season adjustment to the amount of Sculpin we are allocated. I think that there are several valid reasons for doing so, namely because of the abundance of the fish, also the economy and the rising expense of fuel and other essential life expenses. Rent, insurance car payments ect. Let alone the upkeep of a fishing boat and all the licenses and equipment that are required to use it., like the added expense of the VMS unit. To a big time fisherman these expenses are a lot. Just imagine what it means for a small time guy like me.

I have restaurants that are running out of the fish I sell them, therefore they are looking for other sources, causing the chance of me losing the business altogether. This has happened already. I am at an unfair disadvantage to my competitors, namely fish that is shipped in from out of state.

Another good reason that it makes sense for an in season quota adjustment is that there are only a few guys left trying to target Sculpin commercially, even though it has been historically caught as a Commercial fish since the records go back, to 1916. We are not making a dent in the biomass, not the way we fish for them. It's been very hard to deal with these quotas since the mainstay of my business is selling live Sculpin and to have it reduced to an amount that is totally insufficient. I myself am not trying to make a "Killing" just a living. It makes sense to me to allow us to catch at least 1000 lb per month. And to remove the two month closure in February/ March, this would give us enough to supply our markets that we developed, help the economy and to help keep us from ending out on the street. I truly think this is fair, considering that the Sport Sector has a 12 month season on Sculpin, and historically doesn't have the catch history with Sculpin as does the commercial sector.

Regarding the Closure in February/ March on Sculpin, this closure makes it nearly impossible for me to take care of responsibilities during tax season and also the renewal of Fish and Game licenses and keep food on the table. I ask of you please consider my requests and do what you can do to help me and the others who have been using the Sculpin of Southern California to maintain a living.

Thank you

Sincerely, Dan McCafferty