

To:
Bob Lohn
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
7600 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115-0070
(206) 526-6150
bob.lohn@noaa.gov

cc: Frank Lockhart
frank.lockhart@noaa.gov

cc: Gretchen Arentzen
gretchen.arentzen@noaa.gov
(206) 526-6147

Subject: RFA/GGFA Exempted Fishery Permit Report for 2008 Trips
Title: Recreational Rockfish Catch Composition Seaward of the Rockfish Conservation Area

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Applicants:



Recreational Fishing Alliance
Contact: Jim Martin, West Coast Regional Director
P.O. Box 2420, Fort Bragg, CA 95437
(707) 357-3422



Golden Gate Fishermen's Association
Contact: Roger Thomas, President
P.O. Box 40
Sausalito CA 94966
(415) 760-9362

Dear Bob, Frank and Gretchen,

This letter is intended to fulfill the requirement of our Chilipepper rockfish EFP to report on our progress since the agency's approval in August of 2008.

We have conducted three EFP trips in 2008, two aboard the *Queen of Hearts* out of Half Moon Bay and one on the *Telstar* out of Fort Bragg.

The first trip was conducted on the *Telstar* and produced no fish, one Humboldt squid, and no bycatch. The anglers aboard had a good attitude and understood that this was an experimental trip. However, with no landings of the target species it was difficult for the *Telstar's* captain, Randy Thornton, to attract interest in more EFP trips. He did discover the Humboldt squid in the area we were fishing and had a number of successful trips later that year and into 2009.

Bob Ingles was more successful and landed a few chilipepper on his first trip. Here is a picture of one of the successful anglers with his fish:



We would like to request a permit for the 2009-2010 season that runs from April through April. Chilipepper move into the deeper water over the winter months, and we feel we will be more successful in attracting anglers if there is a better chance of catching fish.

We received the permit in August of 2008 and before we really got started the permit expired in December.

We've had a hard time marketing the trips when they cost more than the average rockfish trip due to the observer costs. After the initial enthusiasm and the novelty of the trips wears off, unless we can deliver a satisfying fishing experience it will be very difficult to gather meaningful data for future management action. Moving the EFP to an April 2008 to April 2010 timeframe would allow us to fish throughout the winter months when we feel we will be more successful.

On the positive side, we've experience zero bycatch on the trips. The gear we are using was easier to use than we had anticipated. There were minimal tangles, and I had no problem reaching the bottom with 50-pound test braided line and a twelve ounce weight. The floats we used worked as expected.

We request that the Council consider some modifications to the EFP, including the ability to fish outside of 100 fathoms, and allowing the EFP to run a full calendar year. We would like to get more trips under our belt and prove out the idea that we will have no bycatch on these trips.

Thanks for the opportunity to work with your staff on this EFP. Contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,



Jim Martin

Summary Table

Total Anglers	Trips	Chilipepper	Humboldt Squid
45	3	17	3