

**PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224  
Portland, Oregon 97201

Telephone: (503) 326-6352

*C. CALLOWAY*  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Lawrence D. Six

CHAIRMAN  
Art C. Fletcher

August 14, 1996

Don Hansen  
Chair, Groundfish Advisory Panel  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
34675 Golden Lantern  
Dana Point, CA 92629-2990

Dear Don:

At its June meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council's Habitat Committee discussed the issue of fishing gear impacts on essential fish habitat. That issue needs further consideration and I am requesting that the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) appoint at least two of its members to work with the Habitat Committee in gathering information on this topic.

As you may recall, a few years back at a Council meeting in San Francisco, a session was convened to discuss fishing gear impacts on bottom habitat. It is my understanding that attendees of that meeting agreed to begin collecting information related to this topic. However, it appears that the information collection effort has yet to begin. Therefore, we propose to reinstate the data collection with assistance from the GAP. The GAP's role is especially important to keep the inquiry focused on fishing gear impacts, not fishing gear conflicts.

We believe this exercise is also timely in light of current language in legislation reauthorizing the Magnuson Act which calls for measures aimed at considering and/or reducing the adverse impacts of fishing on habitat.

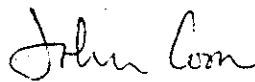
The purpose of this exercise will be to determine:

- 1) What information exists regarding fishing gear impact on bottom habitat.
- 2) What information needs to be collected.
- 3) What management measures, including gear modifications have been undertaken to reduce impacts.

We would like to begin this effort as soon as possible. We would appreciate it if you could discuss our request at the GAP's upcoming meeting in Portland.

Please call either John Coon or myself if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



*for* Stephen Phillips  
Chair Habitat Committee

SP:jcc