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Monterey Recreational Salmon Season (Agenda Item E.1.f)

Michael <seacap26@yahoo.com>

Mon, Mar 28, 2016 at 2:40 PM

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Ms. Dorothy Lowman,
Chair Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
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Chair Lowman and Council Members:

I strenuously oppose Alternative III in the Monterey management areas, both North and South, for recreational anglers. We appreciate the need to reduce impacts on winter-run Chinook salmon, but the changes implemented last year (for the 2015 salmon season) have proven effective and adequate. Further closures are not warranted and would do unnecessary harm to both recreational anglers and the businesses that serve them. I have spoken with several businesses in the Santa Cruz, CA area and they are appalled that Alternative III is even on the table. Most of these businesses were sent information that noted Alternative I or Alternative II. It came as a shock that Alternative III was added at the last minute.

The recreational salmon season has already been severely cut back in the Monterey management areas. Last year, the 2015 season took away a month from Monterey North and two and a half months from Monterey South. With the further cuts proposed in Alternative III, the Monterey North season would see a cumulative reduction of three months, leaving only three months open. The Monterey south season would see a cumulative reduction of four months, leaving only two months open.

The collapse seen in the winter-run population has nothing whatsoever to do with ocean fishing. The responsibility lies wholly with inland water managers, specifically the Bureau of Reclamation, whose poor judgment – compounded by drought – has decimated the 2013 and 2014 winter-run brood. Only changes in water operations will allow the winter-run to recover. Overly constraining recreational ocean fishing seasons is not a meaningful tool in recovery.

We support recreational management Alternatives I or II in the Monterey management areas. That structure has proven effective at reducing ocean contact rates. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Michael Caporale
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