



8-17-2016

Curt Melcher, Director ODFW  
ODFW Commission  
ODFW Marine Resource Managers  
Chuck Tracy, Executive Director PFMC  
Brad Pettinger, Director, Oregon Trawl Commission

Thank you for your consideration of the following issue we would like to bring to your attention.

On July 19 the trawler “Calamari” was seen fishing the area just North of Cape Kiwanda, Pacific City Oregon. Very near shore in about 80 feet of water.

Large amounts of bull kelp were on the surface of the water for days afterward. Not something that is normal. It was definitely torn out by the trawler working shallow water areas.

This area between Sand Lake and Cape Kiwanda is a very popular fishing area accessed by dory boats that launch off the beach at Cape Kiwanda. Commercial fishers in the area are dorymen that launch from the beach and are hook and line type fisheries targeting rockfish, ling cod, salmon, crab etc to serve local markets and restaurants. The sport and commercial fisheries there coexist together as they have done for decades.

This is also a very popular sport fishing area with a number of dory charters and dozens of sport dories and even kayaks accessing fisheries there daily.

As you may be aware, Oregon’s rockfish and nearshore fisheries are closely monitored and managed. Sport fishers had just been restricted to fishing inside of 20 fathoms (120’) to avoid bycatch of Yellow Eye. A very slow growing rockfish that trawlers had overfished and now will take decades to recover.

It was very disturbing to both local sport and commercial fishers to see a trawler working in this area. So close to the popular area that all we share.

CCA was alerted and immediately called ODFW staff at the Newport office to find out why this was happening. We were told it was completely legal and that the boat was fishing for “sand sole” and was using gear that was made to fish over sand and not rock or reef. But Bull Kelp doesn’t attach to sand. Only rock. And kelp is important habitat needed for rearing young fish and vital to other marine life.

We were told that it was an-exploratory fishery and we would not likely see the boat come back. But we were concerned that it was allowed in the first place.

On August 6<sup>th</sup> the same boat "Calamari" returned and was seen that afternoon, and overnight North and South of Cape Kiwanda. Sometimes passing directly over that reef but in the dark there is no way to know if his gear was deployed or not.

He was still in the area in the morning of August 8<sup>th</sup> and the same condition of kelp floating on the water was seen. CCA received dozens of calls from concerned fishers asking why this was happening.

We again contacted the Newport ODFW Staff and ODFW Fisheries managers. Within a few hours we received a call from the Newport staff telling us they had contacted the processor associated with this particular boat and were told they had asked "Calamari" to leave the area and not be back. He continued fishing elsewhere. He was sighted near Neskowin following that.

While trawl fishing even in Oregon's state waters is managed by PFMC, ODFW does have input to what should and should not be allowed. We are not recommending or asking for regulatory changes at this time. But we are very concerned about the obvious "social conflict" with local sport and commercial fishers, and concerned about damage to fragile nearshore habitat such as kelp forests.

We hope that by bringing this to yours and also PFMC's attention that better direction to trawl operators and processors can help avoid more of these incidents regardless of where they take place in Oregon's state waters. Perhaps have a conversation about best practices going forward.

We have attached photos of the trawler with gear deployed very near shore, and have others from numerous boats and from shore taken on the days mentioned.

Best Regards,

Bruce Polley  
Chair, Government Relations Committee  
Coastal Conservation Association of Oregon

