

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) discussed the proposed Senate Bill 3138 on aquaculture (Agenda Item I.1, Attachment 6). The bill proposes to create an Office of Marine Aquaculture within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), to streamline the approval process for aquaculture in Federal waters, and to fund research activities. The bill is designed to be consistent with conservation and management measures under the Magnuson Act, and to not reasonably interfere with fishing access. The bill calls for state review of projects and consistency with the Coastal Zone Management Act, as well as programmatic Environmental Impact Statements.

The CPSAS is supportive of regulatory streamlining in the context of aquaculture, and offers the following comments for Council consideration:

- Environmental and socio-economic analyses should include evaluation of impacts to existing wild capture fisheries, as well as other local concerns;
- An indemnity plan should be developed to addresses accidental interactions with structures that holds fishermen harmless and compensates for loss;
- An independent stakeholder group that includes fishing representation should be established to assess and minimize potential damages or interactions that would affect existing wild capture fisheries.

The CPSAS is supportive of regulatory streamlining, increasing domestic seafood production, and of creating opportunities for economic development. At the same time, the CPSAS recognizes that some valuable fishing areas are already off limits, either through voluntary or regulatory actions, and is committed to protecting fishing access to important and productive fishing areas.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

PFMC