City of Morro Bay

Morro Bay, CA 93442
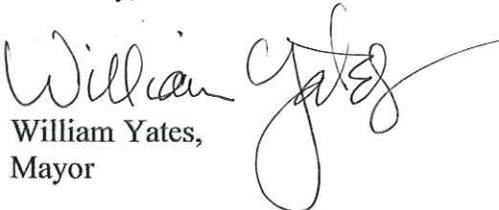(805) 772-6200

February 27, 2012

Mr. Dan Wolford
Chairman, Pacific Fisheries Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220

RE: Agenda Item B-3-Future Swordfish Management Recommendations

Dear Chairman Wolford and Council Members:

The City of Morro Bay asks for your support for efforts to revitalize the West Coast Swordfish Fishery. In 2011 Morro Bay had a majority of the remaining Swordfish Drift Gillnet (DGN) Fishery landings, but overall landings and the number of participants dropped again this year. This fishery, as currently managed, experiences extremely low by-catch with minimal marine mammal interaction but is on a collapsing economic trajectory. At the same time swordfish imports, often from under-regulated and unobserved international fisheries, increase every year. The remaining participants in this fishery have identified some small changes in the Swordfish DGN Regulations that can help stabilize the fishery (and jobs) in the short term without negative by-catch or environmental impacts. This can occur while the industry, communities and the regulatory arena work on longer term improvements to keep these businesses and their high-quality product in the United States. We ask you to consider the suggestions of the industry participants included in Agenda Item B-3 to keep this clean and economically important fishery alive, while longer-term solutions can be implemented.

Sincerely,

William Yates,
Mayor

cc: Morro Bay City Council

u.w.letters.swordfish fishery

ADMINISTRATION	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	FIRE DEPT.	PUBLIC SERVICES
595 Harbor Street	595 Harbor Street	715 Harbor Street	955 Shasta Avenue
HARBOR DEPT.	CITY ATTORNEY	POLICE DEPT.	RECREATION & PARKS
1275 Embarcadero Road	595 Harbor Street	850 Morro Bay Boulevard	1001 Kennedy Way

Approximately 260 emails with this message were received as of 3/1/12

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Corrine Martinez** <   >
Date: Thu, Mar 1, 2012 at 8:30 AM
Subject: Halt West Coast Swordfish Expansion
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Dear Chairman,

Dear Chairman Wolford and Council Members,

I am writing to urge the Pacific Fishery Management Council (the Council) to decide against taking any further action to expand the drift gillnet fishery for swordfish and shark or to develop a new pelagic longline fishery for swordfish and sharks off the U.S. West Coast.

Drift gillnets have been banned on the High Seas and along most of the West Coast because of high bycatch of marine life including endangered whales, dolphins, sea turtles, shark, tuna and other non-target fish. Recently two endangered sperm whales were entangled and killed in the California drift gillnet fishery. That is why it's called the curtain of death!

It makes no sense to invest taxpayer dollars in or support controversial federal efforts to develop a pelagic longline fishery for swordfish when the State of California and the Pacific Fishery Management Council have already taken actions to prohibit it due to the high levels of bycatch associated with the fishery and the take of endangered and threatened species.

Several new developments to protect endangered sea turtles along the West Coast must be considered in relation to the swordfish and shark fishery, including the designation of nearly 42,000 square miles of ocean as critical habitat for the endangered Pacific leatherback and the uplisting of the Pacific loggerhead from threatened to endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

For these reasons, I urge you to stop the plan to expand the swordfish fishery before it goes any farther. Instead, I urge the Council to begin to phase out the drift gillnet fishery along our coast, permanently ban longlining under any circumstances and to support sustainable fishing practices that don't compromise the health of endangered species, fisheries and our oceans.

Sincerely yours,

Corrine Martinez