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Subject:Open Access in the groundfish sector

Date:Wed, 14 Oct 2009 07:49:00 -0700

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To:Donald.McIsaac@noaa.gov

CC:Merrick.Burden@noaa.gov, John.Coon@noaa.gov, Mike.Burner@noaa.gov,
John.DeVore@noaa.gov, Kelly.Ames@noaa.gov

Dear Sir(s), Something needs to be done soon about open access. The recent decision to increase the open access limits on sablefish is turning the fishery into a mess in the Conception Area. More boats from out of the area are arriving in Morro Bay daily, with the plan of cashing in on the sablefish bonanza. The price of sablefish has already gone down as a result of the anticipated glut of fish. New vessels with no previous history of groundfish landings are rigging up with longline and pot gear. In Morro Bay for example, several commercial passenger vessel (party boats) have rigged up for longline and one has already made two landings. This is no way to manage a fishery. As a long time, 30+years, groundfisher with trawl and longline, I have had a long committed interest in a stable, viable fishery that will be managed for the long haul. All fisheries are now managed with limited access plans. Everybody either has a crab, salmon, groundfish, nearshore, lobster or gillnet permit. I have a limited entry permit for longline. I can't fish "open access" for crab or salmon or any of the other limited fisheries. Allowing this fiasco of open access to continue goes against the mandates of prudent management of the resources. The council has established a control date and a plan, so I encourage you that now is the time to rapidly implement it. Thank You,
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John Coon, Deputy Director

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