

Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries

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October 18, 2006

William T. Hogarth

Director, NOAA Fisheries

1315 East West Highway, 9th Floor

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Hogarth:

The ACSF applauds your decision to support the Pacific Fishery Management Council's recommendation to conduct an exempted fishery permit (EFP) for the west coast swordfish drift-net fishery.

We view your support of this EFP as an outstanding example of resource management leadership in balancing the often times conflicting mandates to protect our nations' marine resources, as well as to promote sustainable fishing opportunities. The above mentioned EFP accomplishes both these goals.

The EFP gives the drift-net swordfish fishermen an opportunity to demonstrate that the time/area closure enacted to protect leatherback sea turtles was based on assumptions that did not take into account the reduced leatherback interaction rate since the implementation of a regulatory requirement for drift-nets to be set a minimum distance of 36 feet below the sea surface. It also limits fishing opportunity through the EFP, and ensures the highest levels of leatherback protections by requiring 100% observer coverage, real-time monitoring, and fixed leatherback and marine mammal take caps.

It is not often that such a win-win scenario is encountered, and you are to be congratulated for supporting your staff at the Southwest Region for their role in facilitating the successful implementation of this EFP.

Sincerely,

Frank Emerson

Co-Chair, ACSF

C: Don Hansen, Chairman PFMC

Mark Helvey, NOAA Fisheries

Rodney McInnis, South West NOAA Fisheries Regional Administrator

Supporting Associations & Organizations

Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association
Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen's Association
Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Association
Monterey Commercial Fishermen's Association
Fishermen's Association of Moss Landing
Santa Cruz Commercial Fishermen's Marketing Association
Half Moon Bay Fishermen's Marketing Association
Fishermen's Alliance
Western Fishboat Owners Association
Ventura County Commercial Fishermen's Association
Federation of Independent Seafood Harvesters
Golden Gate Fishermen's Association
Port San Luis Harbor District
City of Morro Bay Harbor
City of Monterey Harbor
Moss Landing Harbor District
Santa Cruz Port District
Pillar Pt. Harbor, San Mateo County Harbor District

