

**Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries
P O Box 1309, Carmel Valley, CA 93924 (831) 659-2838**

January 2, 2004

Tony Campos, President
AMBAG
P O Box 809
Marina, CA 93933

Dear President Campos and AMBAG Board Members:

Our organization, the Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries, (ACSF) represents recreational and commercial fishing people from Port San Luis to Pillar Point Harbor. As our name implies, we seek to bring public awareness of the importance of the economy, culture and heritage of fishing to our coastal communities, and we are advocates for sustainable fishing practices.

The ACSF represents by far the single largest group of users of Sanctuary waters and resources. We, in fact, have the most at stake in having good water quality, healthy fish stocks, and a public that is educated as to the threats and challenges to resource conservation. Because of this role, we have had much direct experience in working with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and its Advisory Council.

It is on the subject of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) that we are now writing to you. We hope that the AMBAG Board of Directors will continue to press the Sanctuary Program, and Congress, to allow the SAC to be a strong and independent group, fairly representing our local viewpoint. The recommendations that AMBAG has already made to the Sanctuary Program are well thought out, and change in the way the SAC operates is needed. Please continue to weigh in on the side of creating a strong local representative voice to the Sanctuary Program. AMBAG should use its political influence to encourage needed changes to the SAC operating rules. For example, currently the Sanctuary Superintendent gets to choose the representatives for a number of industries, including fishing. Why shouldn't the organized fishing community be able to select its own representative? Why shouldn't the SAC, as an informed representative body, be able to write to Congress if it has concerns or support for this Federal Program? Considering that the Sanctuary Program does not need to have its rules approved by Congress, it becomes all the more important that there be a strong and informed local voice. We need meaningful input into decisions that could have tremendous importance on our lives.

We fishermen are at the center of this problem. The Sanctuary has the authority to essentially put us out of business if it so chooses, without the approval of elected officials. The AMBAG Board, we hope, will weigh in to try to balance this power out a bit. Please work to assure that the advice given by the Sanctuary Advisory Council is advice freely and strongly given by a body which truly represents local community interests. A group of representatives from our Alliance will be present at your January 14, 2004 meeting at 7:00 p.m. to give public testimony about this issue.

There is much good that the Sanctuary Program has and can accomplish. However, this issue of how the SAC operates is dragging the Sanctuary Program down, as it is so contrary to the norms of governance that we Americans expect. Please help resolve this issue.

Sincerely,

Mike Ricketts, Co-Chair, ACSF

Kathy Fosmark, Co-Chair, ACSF

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