

Oceanside Senior Anglers

February 26, 2015

Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Kit Dahl, HMS
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220

Subject: Drift Gillnet Management Plan

Oceanside Senior Anglers, Inc. is a 501 (c) (7) Fishing Club located in Oceanside, California. Our club is comprised of over 400 members who primarily fish the Eastern Pacific, from Alaska down to Cabo San Lucas.

Our club is writing this letter to let you know we collectively believe it is time to hold the commercial drift gillnet operations to a higher standard of accountability. The issue is not with the commercial fisherman, but the indiscriminate killing nature of the drift gill nets. We are also concerned that the PFMC may support opening up licenses for long lines off the coast of Southern California.

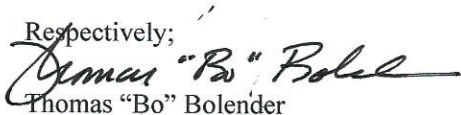
The numbers of fish and mammals killed by both drift gill nets and longlines is not really known. Proposed monitoring of each commercial license seems like a step in the right direction. The technology exists today to document what is actually being ensnared in the nets. Funding should exist to also have a physical presence on a portion of the commercial fleet. Every time our local San Diego news shows a whale ensnared in a net or wrapped in nylon rope, it reflects on the stewards of the ocean who are supposed to regulate and control the use of gillnets and long lines.

The latest numbers posted in Western Outdoor News (Feb 27, 2015) indicate 20 drift gill fishing boats netted over 800,000 lbs. of sword fish in the Sept 2014 to Jan 2015 season. I won't go into the details of the "By Catch" listed in the article but it seems to our members, if the "By Catch" was observed on a limited basis, what is the true total of whales, dolphins and sea lions and other non-target fish killed in the nets?

It's time for PFMC to take a stand. Fund the technology and physical inspection of the drift gill net operations along the west coast. Fund the science to come up with an alternative technology to capture sword fish and make sure the alternative method is not long lines. Many of our members can tell you how devastating long lines are off the coast of Baja Mexico. They are a menace to everything that swims and use of long lines off the coast of Southern California should not be allowed.

Our stance is clear. Protect and enhance the experience of ocean fishing. Through proper management ensure the natural resources are available for our children and grandchildren. We entrust professionals like you to represent the interest of the recreational fishing community. Please press for improved monitoring of the drift gill net fleet and do not allow long lines off the coast of SoCal.

Respectively;



Thomas "Bo" Bolender
Vice President and Conservation Director
Oceanside Senior Anglers