

Timothy Clark

From: pomega@gci.net on behalf of F/V Point Omega [pomega@gci.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2009 1:49 PM
To: Timothy Clark
Subject: HJR 21

March 4, 2009

RE: HJR 21 Requesting the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to cease consideration of an amendment package that would require a Pacific cod endorsement for a license limitation program license holder to participate in the Pacific cod fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska.

My name is Chris Holland. My husband Ken and I own and operate the 72' F/V POINT OMEGA out of Kodiak and we have been fishing Pacific Cod with pots since 1986. Our entire income is from our fishing operations and we as well as our children and their children live and work out of Kodiak.

We have been spending our hard earned money for the last several years to attend the North Pacific Fisheries Council meetings and try to help keep our community and our fisheries here in this coastal town viable for serious fishermen who actually fish.

The NPFMC is very engaged in this and they are the body that handles fisheries, we don't understand why now you are trying to have the legislature step into an on going action and mess with it. Do you understand the make up of the fishing fleet in our coastal communities? Do you earn your entire living off of working on the sea? I don't know what your situation is but I would really appreciate it if you would let those of us who have been following this issue get some relief.

The P. Cod fishery in the Central Gulf of Alaska has many and varied participants and it has been a fairly stable part of our yearly fishing business plan. We are being impacted here by people who are coming with money from other rationalized programs (like the Bering Sea Crab and the AFA and the CDQ groups) and trying to add our fisheries into their business plan now that they can lease out their crab shares or have a co-op catch their pollock.

The action that you are discussing derailing here is intended rather like other programs that have been done in State fisheries. It is to protect the resource and to protect the people and businesses that have been dependent on this fishery.

Many of the people who may be talking to you about this being a good idea have no stake in this fishery at all. The action is also leaving alone an entry level jig fishery that has half the state water cod in the Kodiak area already and will be able to fish with out endorsements at all in both the federal and the state fisheries.

We would rather that you take on the State water fishery and institute a limited entry program that is fair in State waters than for you to mess up a federal program that

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people like us who are sincerely dependent on the P. Cod pot fishery have been helping to craft.

Maybe if I put it in terms of State limited entry programs that people have been working with successfully for years, like salmon and herring you will see what I mean.

The amount of fixed gear LLP's that are being discussed in this action is huge, mostly they were originated by p cod deliveries made during halibut and sablefish operations and most of these LLP's have never been dependent on the p cod fishery at all. In fact they haven't even tried to make a delivery even though we had several years where rationalization was a possibility. The threshold for catch criteria in Component 4 of the recency (endorsement) package hardly shows dependence if you are actually trying to make a living at cod fishing. Once again I would like to point out that there is no such endorsement being recommended for the jig fishery and that it is open to all. People don't seem to have a problem with the limited entry program for salmon or herring, if you want to fish it and you never did before you buy a permit, in this case you would find a permit with an endorsement for the right area. It makes sense to protect the resource by limiting the amount of effort. If you think about the salmon fishery and the herring fishery and compare what is being done here it is much the same. The resource is getting smaller and the ability to have over 800 permits targeting p cod in the CGOA would have negative impacts on the resource and on those of us who have been fishing here since this fishery was first a viable fixed gear fishery. If we continue to get the kind of big boat participation that is now coming around here since crab rationalization we will soon be unable to make enough money fishing cod to make it worth the effort. This action will still leave way more permits with P cod endorsements than there are people who fish on a yearly basis so there is still opportunity for people to get in as abundance dictates.

Please leave the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council to do what they do pretty well and let us get on with our fishing business and not spend all our time worrying about who is going to try and take it away from us next.

Sincerely,

Chris and Ken Holland
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