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Fish and Game Commission



Wildlife Heritage and Conservation
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COASTAL FISHING COMMUNITIES DISCUSSION JUNE 1, 2018 MEETING SUMMARY

Central Coast – Half Moon Bay/Granada

The following is a summary of the meeting as prepared by staff. Input from participants is captured in bulleted format below each question posed in the agenda.

Meeting Goals

- Identify priorities for your fishing community
- Discuss challenges and opportunities facing fishing communities
- Discuss how the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) can contribute to more resilient fishing communities

1. Welcome, Background, and Goals

Valerie Termini convened the meeting at the San Mateo County Harbor District at 4:00 p.m. Commission staff provided a welcome, reviewed meeting ground rules, and introduced Commission and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) staff, and introductions were made around the room, where approximately 13 members of the public were in attendance. A brief background on the coastal fishing communities discussion was presented, and the meeting goals and structure were identified.

2. In-depth Discussion and Dialogue

(A) **Challenges: What are the biggest challenges to a successful fishing/ocean dependent industry in your area? (e.g. infrastructure, limited seasons/catch, complexity of regulations, etc.)**

- Data-poor fisheries management constrains recreational fishing opportunities
 - Federal stock assessment process needs revision
- Difficulty in deciphering recreational fishing regulations due to existing management structure complexity
 - Different regulations for nearshore versus offshore
 - Lack of simple information clearing houses

- Difficult to interpret legal boundaries of rockfish conservation areas (RCAs) that meander
- No warnings for laws
- Lack of information available for recreational angler boundaries
- Restricted fishing access and spatial management
 - Large marine protected area (MPA) fines keep fishermen away from geographical boundaries – they keep a buffer to avoid unintended violations
 - Access to Deep Reef, one of the most productive spots in port area
 - Fishing is concentrated in nearshore areas due to RCAs
 - Layout of Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCA) are arbitrary and cause Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel operators to avoid previously productive areas for risk of unintended violations (this is especially unique to this port)
 - Limited seasons/catch and underutilized species (i.e., limited access to chilipepper rockfish due to RCA-imposed depth constraints)
- Deteriorating infrastructure
 - Need improved fuel facility
 - Limited hours to receive fuel
 - Lacking storage
 - Broken ice machine

(B) *Adapting:* How do you adapt when key fisheries you engage in are not viable, or close?

- Ripple effect: moving into different fisheries (i.e., fisherman turned to squid and sablefish after salmon crash)
 - More emphasis on bottom fish with loss of salmon
- Economic ripple effect: less expenditures with decreased opportunities

(C) *Future:* Fisheries and port conditions have changed over the past 20 years. What do you want your port to look like 20 years from now?

- Allow for bubble (pop-up) fisheries
- Regulation for tier allocation (crab and salmon)
- New generations of fishermen entrants
- Increased education of commercial fishing
- Genetic testing to clarify ranges
- Bycatch tracking
- Electronic representation of current fishing regulations at each port
- Modernization of infrastructure (e.g., credit card machine for fuel house)
- Continued support for recreational and commercial fisheries

(D) Commission response: What policies or new regulations would you like to see the commission develop to help adapt to uncertain conditions and meet future goals for your port?

- Revise Federal stock assessment process
- Lower commercial and sport fishing license costs
- Permit 12-month sport fishing licenses from date of purchase
- Support apprenticeship program for new entrants
- Establish free fishing day to increase opportunities and interest for young fishermen entrants
- Implement requirements for a net and descending device on board to reduce bycatch mortality

3. Next Steps and Wrap-up

Commission staff provided a brief recap of what was learned from the meeting and explained that there will be one last meeting held in Fort Bragg to learn more about the regional challenges faced by fishing communities. Staff thanked meeting attendees for participating and explained that a meeting summary will be posted to the Commission website (www.fgc.ca.gov).

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.