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Item 4

January 27, 2016

The Honorable John Laird
Secretary of Natural Resources and Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item 4: Support for Staff Recommendation to Fund Streamlining Analysis
of Peer Review for Fishery Management Plans

Dear Secretary Laird and Council Members,

The Sportfishing Conservancy supports of the staff recommendation for the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) to fund the California Ocean Science Trust to conduct a streamlining analysis and make written recommendations regarding innovative ways for state Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) to undergo peer reviews.

As fishermen we understand the need for ecosystem based management of our fisheries. Currently to develop a fishery management plan for a single species takes multiple years and great expense. The Department of Fish and Wildlife needs to be able to move more quickly and quite frankly many of our fisheries do not require the in-depth analysis that currently is required.

The Marine Life Management Act became law in 1999. It is still the most progressive fishery management law fully utilizing science to inform decision-making. The grant will help California realize its potential.

Sincerely,

Tom Raftican, President

Pacific Herring Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee

The Honorable John Laird
Secretary of Natural Resources and Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

February 3, 2016

RE: Agenda Item 4: Support for Staff Recommendation to Fund Streamlining Analysis of Peer Review for Fishery Management Plans

Dear Secretary Laird,

By way of introduction, the Pacific Herring Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee is a four-member stakeholder committee recently appointed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide guidance and advice on the process of developing a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Pacific Herring. Our membership is comprised of stakeholders representing the commercial herring fishing industry and conservation organizations that have been active in Pacific herring fishery management. We are a consensus-based advisory body; therefore, therefore this communication reflects the unanimous view of all committee members.

We write to the California Ocean Protection Council in strong support of the staff recommendation to disburse funds to the California Ocean Science Trust to develop a robust, streamlined peer review process for state Fishery Management Plans. This funding includes support for the peer review for two FMPs as test cases, one of which is the Pacific Herring FMP. As you may be aware, the Pacific Herring FMP has now been formally initiated by the Department with support from the California Fish and Game Commission, and with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation; and the San Francisco Bay Herring Research Association, which is comprised of commercial herring industry members. As stakeholders from the herring fishing industry and conservation communities, we see immense value in the completion of a Pacific Herring FMP towards the goals of sustainable fisheries, healthy ocean ecosystems, and improved fishery management. Together our Steering Committee shares a collective vision and blueprint for the content and process of the FMP; therefore, we believe it is set up to succeed. This project will enable the successful completion of the Pacific Herring FMP, and test new approaches that will make future FMP efforts more effective.

Sincerely,

Harold Janniro
Director's Herring Advisory Committee Member

Nick Sohrakof
Director's Herring Advisory Committee Chair

Geoff Shester
Oceana

Anna Weinstein
Audubon California