

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Wildlife DIRECTOR](#); [FGC](#)
Cc: [CNRA Office of the Secretary](#)
Subject: RAAC-Recreational Abalone Advisory Committee
Date: Monday, April 28, 2014 3:29:52 PM

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Charlton Bonham, Director of Fish and Wildlife
Sonke Mastrup, Executive Director Fish and Game Commission
Fish and Game Commissioners
1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
2014

April 28,

RE: Recreational Abalone Advisory Committee (RAAC)

Dear Director Bonham, Director Mastrup and Fish and Game Commissioners:

I recently participated in the March, 2014 meeting of the RAAC via conference call. After listening to and participating in the day-long meeting there were only two action items that came from the committee. First, they decided on a date for their next meeting and second, they resolved to write another letter to you recommending spending a larger percentage of the money collected from the abalone stamp/report card for enforcement.

I understand that this committee was established in 1997 by SB463, was appointed by the Director of the Department Fish and Wildlife and that the public members are supposed to represent the abalone fishing community. I also read in the bill that the committee's responsibilities are to review abalone studies and policies from the DFW and "recommend" how to spend money collected through the abalone stamp/report card fees for the improvement of the abalone fishery.

The committee is not fulfilling its responsibilities when one of the two representatives from the north coast has not attended an RAAC meeting since 2009 and the notes from the legally mandated annual meetings have not been published on the DFW website since 2010. It was even more obvious that recreational abalone divers, especially those of us who live on the north coast, are not represented when one of the members from Southern California described people who live on the north coast and dive frequently as "professional divers" and "only want to protect their own little pieces of turf".

If the DFW does not act on the recommendations made by the committee to spend more of the fees paid by recreational divers on enforcement, and its members do not represent or communicate with the recreational diving community, then what is the purpose of the committee?

After 13 years the members of this committee seem to have become complacent about their responsibilities and I suggest that the committee be reorganized with new members who will actively represent and communicate with the diving community. I also recommend that members be given an additional responsibility to communicate with the recreational diving public via an annual newsletter summarizing DFW studies, policies and the resulting recommendations that they have made to the DFW. In addition I suggest that the committee be given more authority over how fees collected from recreational divers are to be spent to benefit the fishery. If the committee's recommendations are not followed then there should be a written explanation from the DFW as to why the recommendations are not being followed which can be passed along to the diving community through the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Jack Likins
Recreational Abalone Diver

Cc John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources