

From: [Ken Bates](#)
To: [Ashcraft, Susan@FGC](mailto:Ashcraft.Susan@FGC)
Cc: [Mastrup, Sonke@FGC](mailto:Mastrup.Sonke@FGC)
Subject: Re: Marine Resource Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 10:50:40 AM
Attachments: [Squid 2.pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

My apologies for not actually sending my comments and request. Although I believed that I correctly hit "send", my wife reminds me of my poor email abilities and has luckily taken charge! The following was my request to the Fish and Game Commission.

1. I wish to request Commission consideration of a partial review of the Squid FMP as it relates to three experimental Vessel Permits and their application to North Coast community based fishing.

2. I further request that the Commission implement a 50 short ton per 24 hour (day) landing limit for the upcoming squid season as an emergency conservation measure.

My comments and justifications for the above requests are contained in the attached file.

Again my thanks,
Ken Bates

From: "Ashcraft, Susan@FGC" <Susan.Ashcraft@fgc.ca.gov>
To: "Ken Bates" ([REDACTED])
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2015 3:06 PM
Subject: RE: Marine Resource Committee Meeting

Hi Ken,

I seem to recall that you sent a follow-up to Sonke's reply to your email below. But I cannot locate it. Did you send a follow-up email? Also, in your email below, you said you were providing some comments and observations in a separate file. But I didn't receive that either. Would you mind resending either one or both of these? I want to make sure that if you did submit a request to the Commission for a change or a future agenda item, that we do provide it to them at their April 8-9 meeting.

Many thanks,
Susan

Susan Ashcraft | Marine Advisor

California Fish and Game Commission

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From: Ken Bates [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 8:20 PM
To: Ashcraft, Susan@FGC; Mastrup, Sonke@FGC
Subject: Marine Resource Committee Meeting

Dear folks,

Thank you for your efforts in including me on the March 4th Marine Resources Committee agenda in Marina. As they say “it's never too late to learn something”, and I actually learned a lot! I have included my comments and observations on the Market Squid FMP and the dynamic between the Department and the Wetfish Producer's lobby as a separate file in case you might consider forwarding these comments to other department staff.

Before I get into the meeting discussions and my comments, I have a question ----

- Did the Marine Resources Committee move to ask the full Fish and Game Commission to review portions of the Market Squid Management Plan as the plan relates to the issuance of three experimental vessel permits for use above Point Arena?
- If not, then do I now need to ask to have my request for the squid FMP review put on the agenda for the next commission meeting?
- And if so, do you want me to submit additional letters of support from North Coast interested parties endorsing that this request be put on the agenda?

Sorry about the questions, but it was not clear to me what actually occurred concerning agenda item 9.

Thank you,
Ken Bates F/V Ironic

California Fish and Game Commission

Commissioners,

In September of 2014 Market Squid which have been present off and on in Northern California nearshore waters finally became saleable here in Eureka. Myself and two Fort Bragg fishermen applied for the three experimental market squid vessel permits, so that we could go fishing. What looked like a simple straight forward process has instead become a massive can of worms. Our request has been met with multiple page letters of protest from the California Wetfish Producers Association and one of the major central California squid buyers. In the meantime the Fish and Game Commission staff and the Department of Fish and Wildlife staff look like they would like to hide under the table every time we have brought up the subject of our request at commission meetings.

I recently attended the Marine Resources Committee meeting in Marina on March 4, 2015 to continue to pursue our request and to have some sort of open dialogue with everyone involved. The Commission staff started off the agenda item with a power point presentation explaining that Department lawyers said that the Experimental Vessel Permits for “use in non-traditional geographic areas” (read-- north of Point Arena) have expired and cited the Fish and Game Code section describing Experimental **Fishing Gear** Permits. Now – I have had two Experimental Fishing Gear Permits issued by the Commission. I applied for them, they were issued and after three years of use (and written reporting) these permits expired. They were for the use of “**experiment gear**”. They were not permits for fishing in non-traditional geographic areas. The Department's contention that the Experimental Squid Vessel Permits expired back in 2005 seems like a lot of hot air. By this same logic it would then seem that the Experimental Gear Permit Program would have expired three years after the very first Experimental Gear Permit was issued eons ago. All that being said, here is a question that has been nagging me for months – **Why is there so much protest over our request to have community-based small-scale squid fishing in Eureka and Fort Bragg?**

Well, I have finally come to a conclusion based on conversations with permitted squid fishermen with long histories in the fishery, talks with companies buying and processing squid, letters written to the Fish and Game Commission and a review of the State of California Marine Life Management Act. **The California Market Squid Fishery is completely out of control**

due to no provision in the Squid Fishery Management Plan to limit effort and “effort shift” which is now radically increasing the squid harvest rate.

Captain Neil Guglielmo's comment at the March Marine Resources Committee “that the Department needs to do something about these Canadian Seinners showing up here”, continues to enforce the plain fact that the Squid FMP only limited “entry” and not “effort”. Last year's letter from Tri-Marine, documenting continuing increases in “harvest capacity” is outstanding for its facts and the highly unusual action that Tri-Marine took to hire an outside consulting firm to collect and “fact-check” the data that Tri-Marine sent to the Commission that documented capacity increase in the squid fleet. In all of the Department's collective experience, how many other fisheries' participants have done this?

Besides regulating fishermen, the Department has a more important responsibility to manage California's squid resource, and maximize its long term health. In the Gulf of Maine, inshore fish populations of Cod, Menhaden, and Herring used to be plentiful before wide scale fishing pressure decimated those local stocks in the early 1900's. Now, in spite of long term fishing restrictions to rebuild cod and Menhaden nearshore stocks, these fish species have not repopulated inshore areas. Market Squid, although they only live nine to twelve months have the uncanny ability to return year after year to the same spawning areas – some of which are very localized. The outside edge of the reef off Half Moon Bay, Lover's Point to the Aquarium at Monterey, various spots at Santa Cruz Island and even south of Trinidad Bay and off Big Lagoon in Northern California, all have returning populations of spawning squid. The radically increased harvest pressure on these spots can not be beneficial to the long term health of this fishery. Even with the weekend fishing closure in effect, the harvest rate of the squid fleet is far exceeding anything the Department ever envisioned. Boats are making multiple trips per day on these spots and one boat (Canadian Seiner) after filling the fish hold, actually towed the net back to the dock with another 20 tons of squid behind the boat. **How much is enough?** Is this increase in harvest and spawning disruption good for squid? Even four little herring boats in Eureka figured out pretty quickly that taking the whole winter herring quota out of the first school that poked its head into Humboldt Bay to spawn was a really bad idea. Two seasons ago a major controller of squid permits in Central California (Monterey area) received so much squid so fast from its company boats that the squid rotted during processing and freezing and is rumored to still be in the freezer as it is unmarketable due to spoilage. If an individual fisherman did this he would get a ticket for “wanton waste” and probably lose his fishing permit. Instead, a corporation doing this gets a tax write-off as a “business loss” and the rotten squid becomes a methane source in some landfill.

A fishery that used to last nearly all year is now getting shorter and shorter in the frenzy to catch the quota at all costs before the next guy. When the fishery lasted all year, even the little boats (brailers) had some opportunity to catch squid. It's absolutely no wonder there is so much protest from the “Big Guys” about three measly experimental permits for use above Point Arena in an area renowned for crappy weather, hazardous ocean conditions and transportation difficulties in and out of coastal communities.

While it appears to some of us on the outside, that the Department probably doesn't have

the stomach to curtail the use of Canadian Seiners and lengthened and sponsoned U.S. Boats to reduce this increase in harvest capacity, there is a very simple solution to curtail the rampant wasteful greed in this fishery. The Department or the Fish and Game Commission needs to implement a 50 ton per twenty four hour vessel trip limit for Market Squid. When the San Francisco Bay Herring fishery had a purse seine and lampara round haul component there was a daily landing limit. This in not new. Anything over 50 tons gets confiscated by the Department and the ex-vessel price would be paid to Fish and Wildlife. This is doable, and can be accomplished on an emergency basis. A 50 ton trip limit (\$32,500.00 value) isn't going to put any body out of business. Instead it would stop the race for bigger and bigger boats, slow the rate of catch to preserve fresh marketability, give the small brail boats a chance to fish and most importantly give California Market Squid the chance to spawn and flourish in future seasons. It might even make it reasonable to allow three community based vessel permits for our northern ports a little easier to swallow.

Ken Bates
F/V Ironic



cc: Ocean Protection Council
Neil Guglielmo
Tri-Marine