

June 5, 2009

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Lubchenco:

The eight Regional Fishery Management Councils thank you for participating in the recent Council Coordination Committee Meeting in Boston. We were pleased to hear in your opening remarks that communications will be one of the four focus areas for NOAA under your leadership.

For the past 33 years, the Councils have been the primary interface in outreach efforts to fishers and the general public to promote sound stewardship of the nation's marine fisheries. Outreach by the Regional Fishery Management Councils plays a fundamental role in the sound management of our nation's fishery resources and is driven by the following laws, reports, reviews and policies:

- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (2006)
- Coral Reef Conservation Act (2000)
- National Environmental Policy Act (1969 as amended)
- American Competes Act (P.L. 110-69)
- GAO Report on Stakeholder Participation in Developing Quota-Based Programs (2006)
- NRC Review of Recreational Fisheries Survey Methods (2006)
- NOAA Fisheries Outreach Strategic Plan (2007)
- NMFS Policy Directive 30-129 (2007)
- NOAA Science Advisory Board Report on Engaging NOAA's Constituents (2008)
- Marine Recreational Information Program Implementation Plan (2008)
- NOAA Ecosystem Goal, Fisheries Management Program, Performance Measures & Strategic Planning (2009)

Recently, the eight Councils collaborated on a series of outreach initiatives, with funding support of \$50K from NOAA Fisheries. One of those initiatives, the publication *US Regional Fishery Management Councils: Opportunities and Challenges*, is enclosed for your information. This collaboration continues a partnership with NOAA Fisheries that includes two Managing Our Nation's Fisheries conferences (2003, 2005) and a National Workshop on Developing Best Practices for Scientific and Statistical Committees (2008). We believe that these are a good beginning, and ones we should build upon.

According to the NOAA Science Advisory Board Report, NOAA Fisheries spends about 1% on outreach and education. The Board recommends that NOAA spend 10% of its total budget on outreach and that it strengthen its outreach with partners. The Councils are identified as formal partners.

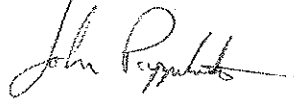
We, therefore, respectfully request your assistance in strengthening the formal outreach partnership between NOAA Fisheries and the Regional Fishery Management Councils, including initiating a policy to invite the Councils to regional and national NOAA outreach and education related meetings. We also request that NOAA work through the budget process to request \$2M as an additional annual allocation to the Councils specifically for outreach, education and engagement, including funding for staff trained and dedicated to these activities (see enclosed Councils' Outreach and Education Brief). Together, these



actions will promote the development and dissemination of consistent messages regarding sustainable management of our nation's fisheries resources and marine ecosystem as well as the implementation of other aspects of the NOAA Fisheries Outreach Strategic Plan, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and the other outreach drivers listed above.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. If you should have questions or need additional information please call. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John W. Pappalardo, Chair
New England FMC



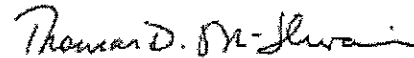
Richard B. Robins Jr., Chair
Mid-Atlantic FMC



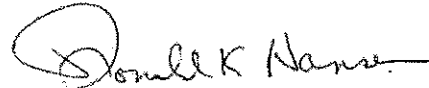
Duane Harris, Chair
South Atlantic FMC



Eugene Pineiro-Soler, Chair
Caribbean FMC



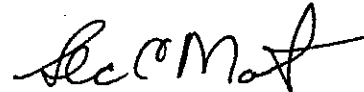
Thomas McIlwain, Chair
Gulf of Mexico FMC



Donald K. Hansen, Chair
Pacific FMC



Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific FMC



Sean Martin, Chair
Western Pacific FMC

Encl: Regional Fishery Management Councils' Outreach and Education Brief
US Regional Fishery Management Councils brochure

Cc: Dr. Jim Balsiger, Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service
Gary Reisner, NMFS Chief Financial Officer & Director, Management & Budget Office
Alan Risenhoover, NMFS Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries