

RE: Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Councilmembers, These comments are to express my current thoughts to improve opportunity for small boat hook and line fisherman from the 40.10 to 42.00 region of which I am a very active participant. As Yelloweye (YE) stocks rebuild I would encourage the council to relax the RCA boundaries to allow more access to rebuilt stocks. Specifically I would like to see the inside boundary adjusted out to 40 fathoms and the outside boundary adjusted to 75 fathoms. I saw talk of the outer boundary change to 75 fathoms in past briefing books and would like to see it brought forth for discussion again as well as 40 fathoms. The RCA has worked well for rebuilding stocks and I know there is talk of it going away at some point but I have reservations to see it go away without YE stocks rebuilt completely. My major concern is if YE incidental harvest/bycatch trended to exceed an annual limit for the sector the YE conservation areas in our region could be enacted and shut down the areas where I make my living for all other species. Also it leaves me scratching my head why a trawler can run right down the RCA dragging nets but I can't lay a longline or use rod and reel gear within those boundaries. The additional depth ranges would allow us to better access pacific halibut in this region when the weather is bad on an opener, besides the bigger picture groundfish opportunities it would create year around. A winter extension to 40 fathoms could be worth entertaining if opening if year around isn't possible. Other areas that would help open access fishermen in our region would be to separate out widows from the minor shelf trip limits and give them their own quota or include them with yellowtail rockfish (YT) trip limits or a combination of some sort. This would be important if we could get us out to 40 fathoms as I would guess we could contact quite a few more of them. It may also be worth adding widows to YT trip limits for salmon trolling purposes in the CA KMZ, we do contact them when trolling here and we have to discard them due to current regulations. Another limiting factor is canary quota, I was very happy with the additional canary limits at the beginning of this year, but we could use more to allow us to access other species trip limits such as YT especially if we could get out to 40 fathoms even if as little as 100 lbs or less. Thanks you for your consideration, Marc Schmidt Eureka, CA