

Mike Retherford Jr  
F/V Winona J  
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## RE: Sablefish Gear Switching

My name I Mike Retherford Jr. Im a 2nd generation fisherman. Home port is Newport. I've been fishing since I was a boy. I started on the back deck of my fathers trawl vessel. In the last 22 years I've acquired my own trawl vessel and IFQ, to participate in the west coast trawl fishery, along with my brothers and father. Our family has invested millions of dollars back into the trawl fishery. It is family owned and operated, consisting of 4 trawl vessels. The trawl fishery is in my opinion an untapped resource full of potential. Fish stocks are healthier then they have ever been creating abundant harvests. I know this because I see it first hand. Groundfish is essential to meeting the needs of not just the trawl fleet but it's processors. It is the foundation on which the other fisheries can also thrive because of the stability it brings to each processor and it labor force. It creates year round employment instead of just seasonal work. However the trawl fisherman are limited to access of trawl caught Groundfish, this putting strain on markets and development of future markets. Fixed gear attainment of sable fish limits us access to the other trawl caught species. If we don't have the sable we can't catch other species, it's becomes a choke species and restricts access. Not only in bottom fish but also needed in the whiting fishery with its higher bycatch levels of sable. In turn it also limit them as well. Bottom line, the west coast trawl fishery needs the sable that is allocated to thrive and be successful for now and generations to come. I'm a die hard trawler, I love my fishery and I love the ocean that provides. The trawl fishery has been a champion and a leader in sustainability and continues to prove time and time again it's innovation and better, cleaner harvest methods using trawl gear. The west coast trawl fishery is needed above all to keep our ports and coastal communities thriving. We have all witnessed the negative effects of ports without it. So I urge the council again, please save our fishery. Save the trawl fleet. Make our fishery what it has the potential to be. I would be in support of alternative 3 with sub options 3 and 3. Thank you sincerely Mike Retherford Jr.