

Thank you chairman Hassemer,

My name is Valerie Phillips and I am the daughter of Tom Faulk whom is the owner of a Limited Entry Fixed Gear Permit with a Longline endorsement on the F/V Aqua Leo based out of Santa Cruz, Ca. My fathers background in this fishery dates back to the 1980's and includes fishing both pots and longline in the open access sector and under his LEFG permit. I have been working full time with him 11 years and although I am not a permit holder I do have a vested interest in the limited entry fixed gear fishery and it's preservation for generations to come.

There is a lot to be said about potential risk reduction measures that can be used in the LEFG fishery and arguably if the entanglement risk we pose warrants such measures. My comments today are not intended to validate the need for these measures which I believe is debatable, but to urge the council to consider the longline and pot fishing industry as its own unique fishing method and not revert back to state led risk reduction management plans used in the California Dungeness crab fishery or entertain experimental innovations that have no basis for being environmentally safe or less risky to protected species and the fishermen deploying them.

I understand how one outside these two very different fishery's could be led to believe that because both use a vertical line that they can be used in reference to each other, but, that would be a grave mistake when pertaining to the management and development of entanglement risk reduction measures. I would like to highlight a few key differences between these fisheries, but, would like to use my allotted time today to advocate for why I feel line markings should be the first and primary mechanism to reduce entanglement risk posed by the longline and pot fishery.

The key differences I feel are important to note between the crab and sablefish fisheries are: the amount of vertical lines deployed during an average fishing trip or season, the amount of time vertical lines are in the water and tended, as well as the key feature of one being a state led fishery and the other federally regulated. This last bit is an important aspect because of the geographical boundaries that management plans are intended to cover.

I recently read data presented by oceana that the Sablefish pot industry account for 1% of known entanglements but theoretically could account for more since the majority of entanglements are from unknown sources. This is a fact that has left all vertical line fisheries and the agencies governing them vulnerable to recent scrutiny. Because of these facts I believe line markings

should be the first mechanism used to lower this industries potential entanglement risk.

I would like the council to note that in regards to the range of alternatives I feel marking just the vertical lines in 20 fathom increments would be sufficient in making our sablefish gear identifiable. The range of alternatives that I am most concerned with is the method these markings are made.

I understand the desire to make these line markings standard, permanent, and uniform. Though, strongly disagree with this being done by creating a manufactured line specific to each fishery. My opinion of strongly disagreeing with this alternative of a manufactured line being phased in as a means of identifying gear type is centered in the belief that no one should be forced to fish with rope that isn't their choosing. Fishermen have personal preferences in what type of vertical line is best suited for their operation based on strength, size, length of spools, price and even how the rope feels and stacks into containers. To manufacture a rope that every LEFG fisherman has to use will create an inequity to all participants. I feel strongly that splicing in a unique twine into vertical lines will be an effective and efficient line marking method. I would even go as far as being in support of a special colored twine being manufactured for this purpose. Which brings me to my second reason I adamantly oppose the alternative of imposing manufactured vertical lines, cost and timeliness. If the council determines the portion and distance and type of twine these marks will be made fishermen can readily implement this action. No matter if a fishermen just bought all new gear or has worked the same gear for decades fishermen can do the work to their current gear and know the work they do now is permanent and maintainable. I feel if you would like fishermen to commit to a temporary line marking that is short-live AND that they will have to buy all new vertical line in the future there will be more opposition to something that can be so beneficial to the preservation of this fishery.

I see the complexity in creating these line markings and recognize the need to determine if the line marking will be universal to the sable fish industry or made to distinguish between sectors and endorsements. I would like the council to consider streamlining the line marking process within the LEFG permit fishery by implementing alternative 2 of item 1 of the follow on actions which is to create a universal endorsement for LEFG permits. I submitted a written comment to the council to advocate for the need of this action in June. If the endorsements remain as is, I would feel it important to have differentiating colors among LEFG sectors.

Thank you for your time today. I feel passionately about matters discussed and appreciate the opportunity be involved in this process.

