

Pacific Seabird Group



DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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18 November 2004

Mr. Robert Treanor, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Refusal to Adopt Seabird Protection Measures in Market Squid FMP

Dear Mr. Treanor and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG), we voice our disappointment and dismay at the Commission's refusal to reconsider seabird protection measures at Anacapa and Santa Barbara islands as part of the Market Squid Fishery Management Plant (MSFMP). PSG provided a letter dated 8 October 2004 requesting the Commission to reconsider and adopt Preferred Alternative R.4 of the draft MSFMP, which would provide seasonal closures to protect nesting seabirds from disturbance from the commercial squid fishing.

While we appreciate the Commission's discussion of the matter during the public forum of the October 21, 2004 meeting, we feel the Alternative was not given fair consideration. For example, the Commission's discussion commenced before all public comment had been heard. The Commission's discussion occurred after only one of four scheduled speakers had commented. PSG provided a representative to speak, Gerry McChesney, who was not permitted to provide verbal comment. Commissioner's Hattoy and Schuchat recognized it had long been the Commission's intention to adopt the seabird protection measures as part of the MSFMP, but in the chaos of the August 27th meeting another alternative was chosen, possibly erroneously. Even though these measures could still be adopted, the Commission chose not to. In this way, the MSFMP fails to provide the ecosystem-based fisheries management required under the California Marine Life Management Act, and thus is flawed.

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PSG is an international, non-profit organization that was founded in 1972 to promote knowledge, study, and conservation of Pacific seabirds with a membership drawn from the entire Pacific basin, including Canada, Mexico, Russia, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. Among PSG's members are biologists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, government officials who manage seabird refuges and populations, and individuals who are interested in marine conservation.

Sincerely,

Craig S. Harrison
Vice Chair for Conservation