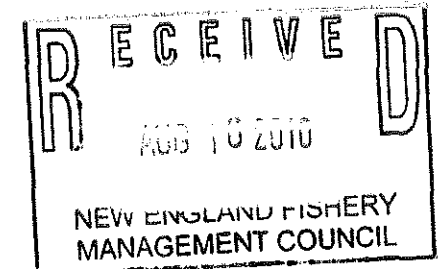


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**Mass Fishing Corp.
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August 13, 2010

New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water St.
Newburyport MA 01950
Attn: David Pierce

Dear Dr. Pierce:

I attended the Scallop Committee meeting in Revere on August 11, 2010, and would like to bring to light several issues that I and several audience members had regarding that meeting. The main problem I had was two individuals were allowed to express their opinions on specific issues before the Committee even though the Chairman specifically told the audience he would not be hearing anyone regarding these issues. When people tried to address the Committee to counter the arguments we were refused the right to speak. Several audience members, myself included, felt this was very unfair and believe this is just another example of how the Committee ignores the views of the majority of permit holders so the Committee can then approve regulations designed by and supported by a few select wealthy and influential fleet owners.

The first problem concerns the issue Mr. Starvish was allowed to bring before the Committee. In Mr. Starvish's own words he believed that with the possibility of stacking/leasing being passed by the Council the industry's harvest would exceed the ACLs and AMs in place for the 2011 fishing year which would result in a cut in the Days at Sea for all vessels. Mr. Starvish's solution to prevent that from happening would be to reduce the amount of scallops a single drag vessel could harvest.

Mr. Starvish is an owner of a large fleet of scallop vessels and is an influential member in the scallop fishery. Mr. Starvish is a supporter of capacity reduction and a member of the capacity reduction group which has successfully lobbied the Committee into passing the stacking/leasing proposal. Furthermore, his son, Mr. Ray Starvish, Jr., is a member of the Scallop Advisory Panel.

It was interesting to note while listening to Mr. Starvish, an ardent supporter of the stacking/leasing proposal, explaining his position before the committee how this capacity reduction measure would increase the amount of scallops that would be harvested. It appears that members of the capacity reduction group clearly understand what the single vessel and small fleet owners' have been saying all along; stacking/leasing would increase the harvest of scallops which in turn will lead to a reduction in Days at Sea the following years.

All during their arguments for the approval of the stacking/leasing proposal the members of the capacity reduction group had said they were not out to hurt the single boat or small fleet owners, yet in the first opportunity they have, before the capacity reduction proposal has even passed, a

cc: DB (8/24)

member of the capacity reduction group has already suggested single drag vessels' allowable catch be reduced to forty percent of what the two drag vessels catch so they would not have to suffer from a reduction in DAS which they will be primarily responsible. To many in the fleet this is an example of the clear intention of the capacity reduction group to eliminate as many individual boat owners' and small fleet owners' as they can in order to fulfill their unabashed greed.

During the past fifteen years the single drag vessels have had to make sacrifices such as reductions in drag size and crew limits in order to stay in the fishery and now that the fishery has reached a high level of sustainability and profitability a few wealthy individuals are once again asking the Committee to do something which they themselves are unable to do on their own and that is to put the individual permit owners out of business so they can increase their market share.

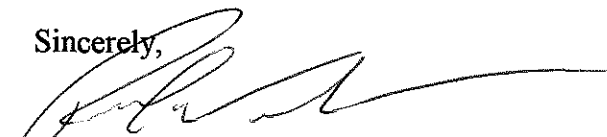
The second problem I have with the Committee meeting was when the Chairman refused to allow discussion on the stacking/leasing issue because the public hearing summaries were not completed even though the issue was on the meeting's agenda but then the Chairman allowed Mr. Pike, a lobbyist for the pro-stacking group, to address the Committee. Several audience members attempted to rebut Mr. Pike's arguments but were not allowed to speak. While I do not believe it was the Chairman's intention to allow only one side of the issue to be heard it does lend credence to those who believe the system is flawed, biased and one sided.

The refusal by the Counsel to attend the public hearings along with the Scallop Committee's decision to allow only permit stacking/leasing proponents to address the Committee shows a clear intent to approve the stacking/leasing option without having to bother to listen to the permit owners who are opposed to it. If the Chairman accidentally opened the door and allowed a person to express one side of an issue then he should allow for one rebuttal before he closes the door and moves onto another subject. In that way he at least appears to be neutral and the audience is satisfied a fair meeting is taking place.

I am asking the Scallop Committee to disregard the proposal brought forth by Mr. Starvish because it was unfairly brought before the Committee and it is inherently unfair to the single drag permit owners who have been fishing with the permit restrictions for over a decade and a half. To suddenly change the livelihood and businesses of a significant portion of the scallop fleet for no other reason than to satisfy the desires of one man stands against everything the Magnuson - Stevens Act was supposed to protect. While Mr. Starvish's desire to protect the resource is admirable, I feel the best way to protect the resource is to deny permit stacking and leasing to begin with.

Thank you for taking a moment to read this letter and allowing me to express my opinion. If you have any questions, require clarification or wish to speak with me on any issue regarding the scallop issue please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul Weckesser