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FORTIETH SENATE DISTRICT

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September 25, 2006

Mike Chrisman, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project: A Model for Community Involvement in Science-based Management and Value-added Marketing

Dear Mr. Chrisman:

I am writing to express my support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project. As you are aware, the Sea Urchin Fishery (SUF) project addresses the next stage of an ongoing commitment by stakeholders to create a sustainable and profitable sea urchin fishery in the San Diego area.

This SUF project incorporates the collection, sharing, and synthesizing of essential data to create a comprehensive preparation framework for market improvements that will benefit sea urchin fishermen/fisherwomen and consumers alike. These efforts are required for the development and implementation of a strategy for responsible harvesting, collection and distribution of a high value product, and local-level stewardship of the resource.

The SUF project supports the implementation of the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) and works toward fulfilling the mandate of the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA) to support innovative approaches to sustainable fisheries management.

I respectfully encourage the Ocean Protection Council to rank this project as a high priority for funding at its next public meeting. Please feel free to contact my District Representative, Jonathan Hardy, at (619) 409-7690, should you have any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely;

Denise Moreno Ducheny

DENISE MORENO DUCHENY
State Senator, 40th District

DMD/jmh
cc: Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

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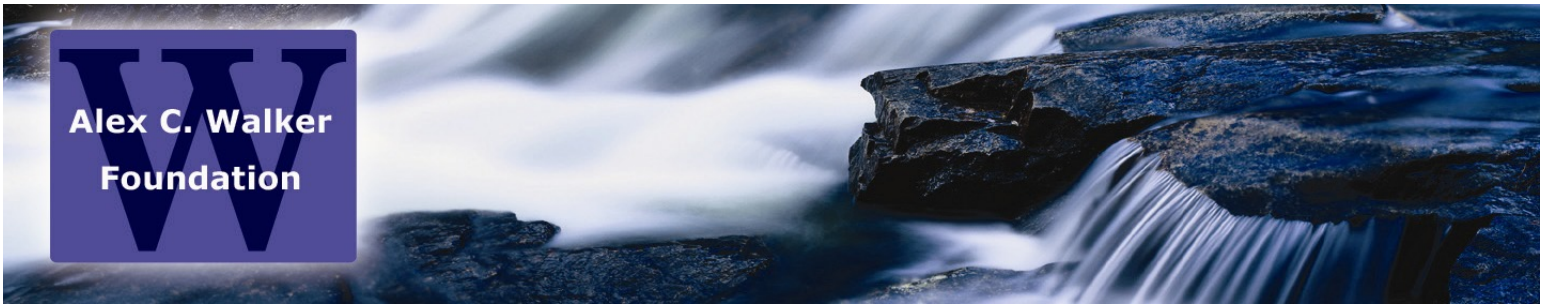

9/26/06
The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project: A Model for Community Involvement in Science-based Management and Value-added Marketing

Dear Mr. Chrisman;

I am writing to express my strong support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project.

The Walker Foundation has provided $20,650 as seed money in support of the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project. The following summary from the grant report explains why we supported the project:

Like most fisheries nationwide, the California Sea Urchin Fishery is regulated in a way that discourages fishermen from cooperating to conserve stocks or improve the quality of their product. A group of grant partners, including the Walker Foundation, funded a study conducted by fishermen of the San Diego Watermen's Association to collect population data needed for improved management. The grant also funded meetings to report results of the study, and to solicit input from fishermen and experts on ways to improve the fishery. As a result, the San Diego Watermen's Association proposes a pilot program to show that both economic and conservation benefits will result by changing management from open access to ecosystem management based on area specific harvest rights.

I'm pleased to learn that you are now considering a substantial grant to move the project forward. I believe the project takes an innovative approach to sustainable fisheries management. On a recent site visit to San Diego that included diving with Peter Halmay, one of SDWA's members, I had a chance to observe the project first had and meet with commercial fishermen and other stakeholders. Our trustees are impressed by what the project has accomplished to date.

With the decline of U.S. fisheries and the marine environment, the SDWA's cooperative approach to improving management has the potential to set an example for the larger fishing community. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Barrett P. Walker

Home Office - 1729 Coventry Place, Decatur, GA 30030-1006 • www.walker-foundation.org
Phone - 404-378-2752 • Fax - 404-378-2751 • barrettwalker@mac.com

September 26, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project: A Model for Community Involvement in Science-based Management and Value-added Marketing

Dear Mr. Chrisman;

I am writing to express my strong support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project.

The sea urchin fishery was once the most valuable in the state, and has a history of proactive management as opposed to crisis management. The fishery is well organized relative to most of the state's fisheries, with its own harvester's association, harvesters cooperative, and foundation. The fishery's leadership has successfully secured significant funding from private foundations to support collaborative research with top-flight academic scientists, as well as an investigation of alternative management measures and governance models. These efforts have resulted in significant progress toward progressive reforms such as rotating closures to maximize product quality and minimize waste, and cooperative marketing to overcome the market problems that have plagued the fishery in recent years.

The San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project would build on these gains by providing fishery leaders with the time and resources to educate the fishery about the need for reform, develop consensus as to the type of governance reform most appropriate for the fishery (for example, IFQs or Territorial Use Privileges), and complete a comprehensive program of collaborative research aimed at the development of a Fishery Management Plan that comports with the ecosystem-based management goals and objectives of the Marine Life Management Act.

This project is intended to be the culmination of several years of efforts funded by private foundations and NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy and Environmental Defense. As such, we anticipate that the proposed work will result in a sea urchin fishery that is well positioned to secure financing from the California Fisheries Fund (if the Fund is authorized and capitalized) and become a well-managed, profitable fishery with a sound basis in science and economics, capable of sharing the costs of stewardship with the state. In addition, a revitalized sea urchin fishery will be essential for maintaining the fishing heritage of San Diego Harbor, especially of Driscoll's Wharf, which is fragile due to competing plans and visions for the waterfront. Furthermore, the project will support the dissemination of lessons learned and successes to other California fisheries using the most effective communication modes, including peer-to-peer discussions and site visits.

The sea urchin fishery's strong leadership and organizational infrastructure as well as its track record of proactive management make it an excellent candidate for the successful implementation of the fishery elements of the Ocean Protection Council's strategic plan and for fulfilling COPA's fishery-related mandates. The breakthroughs in fishery governance, ecosystem-based management, and cooperative marketing that are expected as outcomes of the proposed work will benefit not only the sea urchin fishery but all other California fisheries willing to take the risks and put in the effort that the sea urchin fisheries have.

I encourage you to recommend funding for this project at your next public meeting. Environmental Defense will continue our support of this work, building on the grant we made in support of ecological modeling of the fishery and assistance in the preparation of the proposal before you.

Sincerely,

Rod Fujita, Ph.D
Marine Ecologist and Senior Scientist
Environmental Defense

From: Jeremy Prince [biospherics@ozemail.com.au]
Sent: Sunday, October 01, 2006 8:47 PM
To: rpollock@scc.ca.gov
Cc: phalmay@earthlink.net
Subject: San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project

Rebecca Pollock

CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

Dear Rebecca,

Peter Halmay has just passed on a copy of your recommendation for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project and having read it through thought I would like to write to lend my support for the proposal.

I am an Australian marine ecologist whose specialty is with sustaining fisheries for marine invertebrates like sea urchin, abalone, clams other marine shellfish.

The story of my life has been about discovering that most of these species live in relatively separate small populations, scattered across wider areas; with each local population requiring its own monitoring, assessment and management. Rather than the large trans-zonal resources requiring the co-operation of nations and states many of our resources need local scale management. The sea-urchin is a classic case where local management is needed to ensure long term sustainability, but local patterns of harvesting are also needed to ensure urchin harvesting is co-ordinated to maximize the harvest of prime quality uni.

Through the Developing Nation's of the Pacific Rim there is growing awareness that many marine resources will only ever be managed successfully with local scale organizations and there are many exciting initiatives of Village based fisheries management occurring. However in Developed Countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (not to mention the Atlantic nations) there has been a strong resistance to reforming the management of some fisheries to allow for local management strategies.

The ground-breaking nature of this current initiative should not be under-estimated. It leads the world in terms of developing exciting new models for the sustainable management of fisheries globally. In this project San Diego has a genuine grass roots, home-grown and world leading initiative I sincerely hope you will recognize this and support it.

Yours sincerely,

Assoc. Prof. Jeremy Prince.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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DONALD BREN SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT SANTA BARBARA, CA 93106
http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/

October 3, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project

Dear Chairman Chrisman:

My name is Christopher Costello and I am Associate Professor of Economics at the University of California, Santa Barbara. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project. This project has all of the key ingredients for a successful OPC-funded pilot project including unprecedented leadership, a strong vision, and bioeconomic characteristics that will facilitate learning how governance and economic reform can benefit marine resources and the State of California.

I have been to San Diego to witness the fishery first-hand, and have had the pleasure of discussing at length some of the reform ideas with Peter Halmay, one San Diego's urchin harvesters. In my capacity as a resource economics at the University of California, I am proud to commit to collaborating with the OPC and the San Diego fishermen to provide economic analysis of the likely benefits of various reform options. From an economic perspective, one the exciting features of this project is that it actually institutionalizes coordination (in data collection, marketing, even harvest) among fishermen. Once just a theoretical possibility, coordination of this type will ultimately benefit both urchins and fishermen. The objective is to enhance sustainability, and increase profitability of the fishery.

It is rare for economic and environmental objectives to be aligned. The collaborative effort proposed by the San Diego divers will institutionalize the alignment of incentives. In that way, this project will serve as a model for fisheries reform in, and beyond, the state of California. I strongly urge you, and the rest of the OPC, to give due consideration to the San Diego Urchin Project; I give it my strongest endorsement.

Sincerely,

Christopher Costello
University of California, Santa Barbara
Costello@bren.ucsb.edu

RESOURCES LAW GROUP, LLP

555 CAPITOL MALL, SUITE 650 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
916.442.4880 916.442.4193 (FAX) www.resourceslawgroup.com

October 4, 2006

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council

The Honorable Douglas Bosco
Chair, State Coastal Conservancy

1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Support for San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project at OPC meeting on 10/26 and Conservancy meeting on 11/9

Dear Rebecca Pollock:

I am writing to express my strong support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project. The project would fund three activities that will enable this group of fishermen to move toward community-based management, to build upon past collaborative research, and to identify means for improving product quality and preparing for a business plan. These all are essential elements for sustainability of small-scale fisheries in these challenging times.

The volunteer efforts of this segment of the sea urchin fishery already have led to advances that are nearly unique within my experience with California fisheries and that point toward a future of sustainable and well-managed small-scale fisheries in the state. The partnerships that the fishery's leadership has struck with scientists and conservationists are clear evidence of determination and a willingness to seek new paths.

I urge your approval of this request.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Weber

Michael L. Weber
Program Officer,
Ocean, Coasts and Fisheries

SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Wednesday, October 04, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project: A Model for Community Involvement in Science-based Management and Value-added Marketing

Dear Mr. Chrisman;

I am writing to express my strong support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project.

Sand County Foundation assembled 25 leading fishermen from around North America in January 2005 in Del Mar, CA in an exchange of their own local efforts to improve management of local marine resources. A representative of the San Diego urchin fishery took part in that meeting. The ideas generated at this meeting have catalyzed several important initiatives toward co-management of fisheries. The San Diego Watermen's Association (SDWA) barefoot ecology program and their development of urchin population and habitat models is one of the more promising initiatives to emerge from that meeting.

Sand County Foundation, through the Bradley Fund for the Environment, along with the Alex C. Walker Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, provided funding and encouragement to San Diego urchin harvesters to engage with scientists from UC Santa Barbara and the University of Washington, and many others, in 2005-2006. That funding enabled the incorporation of the SDWA and their monitoring and planning activities.

The proposed project addresses the next stage of an ongoing commitment by stakeholders to create a sustainable and profitable sea urchin fishery in the San Diego area. This project includes collecting, sharing, and synthesizing essential data as well as completing comprehensive preparations for market improvements that will benefit sea urchin fishermen and consumers alike. These efforts are required for development and implementation of a strategy for responsible harvesting, collection and distribution of a high value product, and local-level stewardship of the resource.

Developing conservation leadership through ethics, science and incentives
5999 Monona Drive • P.O. Box 6587 • Monona, WI 53716 • 608 . 663 . 4605
www.sandcounty.net

- The project supports the implementation of the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) and works toward fulfilling the mandate of the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA) to support innovative approaches to sustainable fisheries management
- By supporting the project, the Ocean Protection Council is joining a successful partnership of groups across the country that agree the San Diego sea urchin fishery is worthy of investment
- When the project is complete, the local sea urchin fishery is expected to be self-sufficient and may serve as a model in other areas and to other fisheries

The next steps in this on-going effort will be critical to the long-term success of improving fisheries management regionally and nationally. There is a high level of interest from the environmental community as well as other states and federal marine fisheries authorities. Sand County Foundation will remain engaged as the project develops and will consider continued investment of technical, financial, and organizational resources as needed.

I encourage the Ocean Protection Council to find that this project is a high priority for funding at its next public meeting.

Sincerely;

SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Kevin McAleese

Kevin McAleese
Program Director

Cc: Rebecca Pollock ✓
Pete Halmay
Brent Haglund

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Paul Dayton Mail code: 0227
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(858) 534-6740 pdayton@ucsd.edu

October 4, 2006

Rebecca Pollock
rpollock@scc.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Pollock,

Peter Halmay asked that I comment on the staff recommendation regarding the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project. It is a pleasure to support this proposal.

I have researched the Point Loma Kelp forest since the late 1960s and have extensive programs in the Point Loma and La Jolla kelp forests. In the last 20 years or so we have become increasingly concerned about the heavy fishing in these habitats and the depletion of natural resources and degradation of the environment with the severe reduction of many of the exploited species. The fate of the abalones is the most conspicuous, but many other stocks have been seriously reduced. In fact, the red sea urchins themselves have been reduced.

What makes this proposal so exciting is that uniquely in my experience Pete Halmay has realized the problem and moved forcefully to persuade the fishermen to step to the plate and be proactive in attempting to realize a sustainable harvest such that the fishermen can earn a living into the future. I wish other fishermen were so wise.

The proposal itself is exciting and establishes a wonderful precedence. He organized the San Diego Waterman's Association and has been extremely active over many years working to develop the scientific base of proper long-term management. The Urchin Divers have brought in experts from around the world including Australian, Chile and Seattle. They have been collecting recruitment data for years and have quantified the rate of recovery in different parcels of the kelp forest. The reason that it is so easy to support this project is that Halmay et al have spend years and a great deal of their hard earned money laying the foundation. They represent one of the most progressive and enlightened fishing organizations I know.

They are asking for $114,120, a pittance compared to the long-term value of the work. They are partnering with all sorts of agencies, share their data, and have done everything that anybody could ask. Pete is always willing to come and help our students and brings a robust sense of humor when he comes to talk to conservation-oriented people like myself. He is well known and greatly respected at Scripps and may be the only fisherman who, while surely disagreeing with my cries for reserves, is willing to discuss the issue rationally. And he and the urchin divers are one of the few organizations actually to be negatively impacted by spatial reserves because their resources do not move around to allow them to fish the edge. They really are displaced, and yet they will discuss the issues with us and see what we are hoping to accomplish.

It is a pleasure to support this proposal. If there is anything more that I can do to help, please get in touch with me. I look forward to your funding this and working with Pete Halmay in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Paul K. Dayton

The Nature Conservancy
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

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nature.org/california

October 5, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: Support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project: A Model for Community Involvement in Science-based Management and Value-added Marketing

Dear Secretary Chrisman:

I am writing to express The Nature Conservancy's strong support for the San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project.

The request for funding by the San Diego Watermen's Association will support an ongoing effort to create a sustainable and profitable sea urchin fishery in the coastal waters off San Diego. Their project benefits from broad-based support that includes academic scientists, environmental organizations and private foundations. These groups have assisted the Association with preliminary efforts to collect, share and analyze data with an eye toward developing a science-based management plan that will consider area management and a range of harvesting strategies to enhance the economic value of the fishery.

The grant request before the Ocean Protection Council is important to realize this vision. The funds will be used to support further data collection and analysis and the development of the management plan. We believe that support for this project is timely and consistent with the goals with the California Ocean Protection Act to support innovative approaches to sustainable fishery management. Moreover, the vision shared by the San Diego Watermen's Association and its partners to move towards area-wide management is wholly consistent with the Marine Life Protection Act, and if successful, could serve as a model for other fisheries along the California coast.

The Nature Conservancy will continue to partner with the San Diego sea urchin fishermen and provide the necessary resources to ensure the project's success. Our goal is to increase the conservation of marine habitats along the California coast using marine protected areas and market-based approaches. The San Diego Sea Urchin Project will help us realize this goal. We, therefore, encourage the Ocean Protection Council to find that this project is a high priority for funding at its next public meeting.

Sincerely,

Kathy Viatella

Kathy Viatella
Project Director

Recycled Paper

Sea Grant California

UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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Sea Grant Extension Program
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Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology
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ANR UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA

November 3, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, CA 94612
c/o Rebecca Pollock, Project Manager

RE: San Diego Sea Urchin Fishery Project Proposal

Dear Mr. Chrisman;

We have been asked by Pete Halmay to comment on the San Diego Watermen's Association proposal to OPC. In our role as Sea Grant Extension Program Advisors, it is critical that we maintain a non-advocacy position, so we will comment on the proposal concepts only rather than making recommendations about funding.

Both of us have been involved with projects related to the sea urchin fishery for many years. After reading over the proposal and talking with members of the San Diego group, we have the following comments:

The San Diego Watermen's Association is showing strong initiative to explore alternative approaches to managing the fishery. They have been successful in attracting funding from several foundations to begin work on the stock monitoring and governance parts of their work. They view this as a demonstration project yielding results that could be applied elsewhere in the state.

As extension advisors both of us have provided scientific advice and information to sea urchin industry participants in their efforts to develop collaborative research and co-management approaches, as we do with many marine fishery groups. Specifically we have provided them with information about shellfish management approaches overseas, access to UC expertise in business planning, and advice on research. Our advisory role will continue, and we will be a resource for the project participants as our time allows.

What the San Diego Watermen are proposing is no small task. Changes in governance, both locally and at the state level, will be particularly challenging. It will take cooperation among local and statewide sea urchin industry participants, as well as CDFG and the Fish & Game Commission. The Watermen have already begun to build this cooperative framework, illustrating their commitment toward sound management of the fishery. By continuing this work, they will provide an important test of collaborative research and co-management concepts, thus taking a significant step toward evaluating the potential for a new management strategy for the sea urchin fishery, and potentially other fisheries, in California.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher M. Dewees
Marine Fisheries Specialist
Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology Dept.
University of California

Dr. Carolynn Culver
Marine Advisor
Sea Grant Extension Program
UCCE Ventura County