



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

October 24, 2012

Dear Referendum Voter:

Enclosed is a ballot for your vote in the Second Fishing Capacity Reduction Program for the Longline Catcher Processor Subsector of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Non-Pollock Groundfish Fishery (buyback) referendum. Our records indicate that you are the permanent holder of the License Limitation Program (LLP) license specified on the enclosed ballot which qualifies you to one vote.

This referendum determines whether voters approve or disapprove the post-buyback landing fees necessary to repay a \$2,700,000 fishing capacity reduction loan. Enclosed is a ballot to vote for or against approving the plan and taking on an industry loan to fund the reduction in LLP permits.

For more program details, please thoroughly read the final rule published in the Federal Register (77 FR 58775) on September 24, 2012 which is available on our website at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/mb/financial_services/buyback.htm.

Please note that for your vote to be effective, you must complete the enclosed ballot and return it to us in the enclosed envelope in time for us to receive it no later than 5 P.M. on November 7, 2012. If a majority of the 36 permit holder ballots are in favor of the industry fee system, we will move forward with program implementation.

You may return the completed ballot to us by U.S. mail, overnight delivery, or any other method you choose. Whichever method you choose, please put the ballot in the enclosed envelope. You will receive one ballot for each LLP license you hold separately by mail.

The remainder of this letter concerns the results of the fishing capacity reduction plan for the fishery as submitted by the Freezer Longline Conservation Cooperative (FLCC), which may affect how you want to vote. The following summarizes the results:

- (1) A single inactive LLP license will be relinquished.
- (2) The total cost is \$2.7 million.
- (3) No vessels will be permanently removed from fishing activity as this is a permit-only buyback. However, if this permit was activated it would allow for a vessel of 220 feet which would be the largest in the fleet.



(4) The projected initial loan repayment fee percentage is an additional one tenth cent per pound of Pacific cod. Please note that NMFS will annually review loan amortization progress and adjust the fee as appropriate to ensure the loan is amortized over a 30-year period.

Please contact Mike Sturtevant by phone at (301) 427-8782 or email him at Michael.A.Sturtevant@noaa.gov if you need further referendum or buyback information.

We will notify all voters of the referendum results and publish a reduction payment tender notice in the Federal Register as soon as we possibly can. We look forward to receiving your referendum ballot not later than November 7, 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul L. Marx".

Paul Marx, Chief
Financial Services Division

ENCLOSURE (one ballot for one permit)