

## F/V COHO

Capt. Philip Steve Drage  
P.O. Box 645  
Warrenton, OR 97146  
(503) 861-1545

November 23, 1994

Richard B. Lauber, Chairman  
Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99615

To: Fax No.(907) 271-2817

**RE: Regulatory Amendment to Require Minimum Codend Mesh Size**

Dear Mr. Lauber and Mr. Pautzke,

Upon visiting with some members of the Industry Work Group on mesh size restrictions, I found many felt that their efforts on this subject had been misrepresented in the information as presented to the Council on Option 2 of Alternative 3. There was broad consensus by the Work Group concerning the acceptability of the proposed motion, because it allowed the option of *either square mesh OR diamond mesh top panels*. This was *changed* to just square mesh panel by the individual presenting the information. I understand that a typed copy of the original motion was prepared but unfortunately not delivered to Council members.

Diamond mesh proved very effective in the Bering Sea Pacific Cod fishery this past year. On the East Coast of Canada and in Scotland, the use of square mesh technology has been discontinued because it did not perform as expected.

*To require this square mesh would give one net manufacturer a monopoly on the supply of material.* Knotless web is the only material that can be used effectively to make the square mesh panels. There are only two looms to my knowledge, that make this knotless web: one in Japan and the other in Bainbridge Island. There is doubt that the one in Japan would be able to make codend material. It might have been stated that knotted web could be used, but it would not be practical from my experience.

Many fishing companies are ordering materials for codends at this time and any changes in the regulations should be made clear as soon as possible. Due to the costs involved in construction or modification of codends there is a desire to "do it right the first time".

I am very concerned about this issue and the way it has been handled. I strongly suggest that this be revisited at the next Council meeting and corrected. The work by the Industry Work Group should not be ignored. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*PHJ "Steve" Drage*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Capt. Philip S. Drage

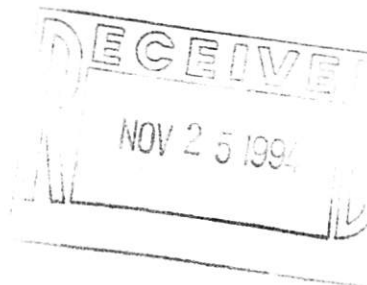
**KODIAK FISH COMPANY**

F/V Alliance F/V Provider  
P. O. Box 469  
Kodiak, Alaska 99615-0469



November 24, 1994

Mr. Rick Lauber, Chairman  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99615



Via Fax 1-271-2817

Dear Mr. Lauber:

I am writing in regard to the vote taken at the last Council meeting on mesh size requirements for cod ends used in the Bering Sea groundfish trawl fishery which required square mesh materials to be used.

Much information about diamond mesh was overlooked in your deliberations. Testimony by several participants in the Bering Sea rock sole fishery had been given earlier in the meeting in which we advised the Council of our decision to voluntarily use 6" diamond mesh cod ends to help in the release of undersized or unmarketable fish. I don't feel the people who testified during Council deliberations on the rock sole fishery were aware of when the mesh size issue would be on the the agenda and so did not give testimony when it came before the Council.

I think the Council should revisit this decision and consider the additional testimony in regard to the use of diamond mesh so that regulations will actually achieve the Council's desired goal in reducing bycatch.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

MARK P. KANDIANIS

907-486-3910  
Box 991



Kodiak, Alaska  
99615

FAX 486-6292

FAX CONFIRMATION  
Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Rec'd 11/23/94

11/23/94

TO: Richard B. Lauber, Chairman  
Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director

RE: Minimum Codend Mesh Size

Since the September meeting, many fisherman have come to me with comments that the ammendment passed is too narrow in concept and overly restrictive. They have compared this regulation with the T.E.D. device imposed on the shrimp fishermen in the G.O.M. It didn't work and when the fishermen were allowed to modify their nets in their own fashion, the turtle extrusion worked much better.

Therefore, we are requesting that the mesh proposal be revisited during the December meeting.

Sincerely,

Alvin R. Burch  
Executive Director  
Alaska Dragger Association

*Harvesting Alaskan Shrimp and Whitefish*

October 13, 1994

Rick Lauber, Chairman  
North Pacific Management Council  
P. O. Box 103136  
Anchorage Alaska, 99510

Re: Regulatory Amendment to Require Minimum Codend Mesh Size

Dear Rick,

The purpose of this letter is to ask that prior to sending the regulatory amendment on codend mesh size requirements on to NMFS, the council to clarify its intent relative to option 2 of Alternative 3 at the upcoming Dec. Meeting. We believe that the omission of option 2 was a result of an oversight and failure to properly communicate to the council the results of the workgroup led by Spike Jones.

Option 2 would have provided that the use of single wall codends of 6" BK mesh or greater for the full circumference of the codend would be an acceptable alternative to the use of square mesh top panels in the cod and rocksole fisheries. A Xerox of hand written draft of a proposed motion had been circulated amongst industry representatives prior to the day of council action and also provided to at least some council members. Because there was broad consensus concerning the acceptability of the proposed motion, and in the interest of time, Steve Hughes provided the only testimony on behalf of the industry workgroup. A typed copy of the proposed motion had been prepared, but unfortunately it was not distributed to council members.

We understand that as a regulatory amendment proceeds there would be time for the council to comment on it's own action and for industry and others to comment directly to the agency to correct this oversight. We feel it would be better, however, if the council would take this up at it's upcoming teleconference. While it is unlikely that this regulation could be in place in the first half of 1995 in any case, many companies are in the process of placing orders for new or modified codends, particularly for the rocksole and cod fisheries. In the rock sole fishery most operators have concluded that single wall, large diamond mesh, full circumference bags will be more effective than square mesh top panels in reducing catches of unwanted small sole and pollack. However, due to the costs involved in construction or modification of codends there is a desire to "do it right the first time". Given the lead time in ordering and manufacturing the specialized web required for single wall or square mesh codends, the sooner the council can clarify it's intent on option 2, the better.

We have attached for you a copy of the proposed motion that had been circulating amongst the industry during the council meeting, and request that it be provided to council members prior to the teleconference. We would also urge that as the implementing regs

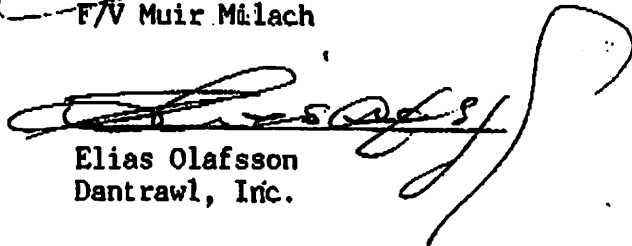
are developed that the agency work with the Trawl Mesh Committee on the necessary definitions of a codend and its components, as well as details concerning placement of chaffing panels, appropriate allowances for non-square mesh lacing strips along riblines and adjacent to zipper mesh, etc.

In conclusion we ask that you schedual consideration for the teleconference meeting to possibly recind the previous action and adopt the motion as proposed by the mesh size work group. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dave Fraser  
F/V Muir Milach



Elias Olafsson  
Dantrawl, Inc.

cc:  
Steve Pennoyer, NMFS

(NO ATTACHMENT)

Brent C. Paine  
Executive Director



Steve Hughes  
Technical Director

December 2, 1994

Rick Lauber, Chairman  
North Pacific Management Council  
P. O. Box 103136  
Anchorage Alaska, 99510

Re: Regulatory Amendment to Require Minimum Codend Mesh Size

Dear Rick,

The purpose of this letter is to ask the Council to reconsider its recommendation on the codend mesh size issue made at the September 1994 Council meeting. After the Council made its decision on this issue, many UCB members, trawl net manufacturers and other trawl industry members expressed to me their extreme opposition to the motion that passed the Council at that time.

Many feel that the omission of option 2 was a result of an oversight and failure to properly communicate to the Council the results of the workgroup led by Spike Jones. In addition, the AP ran out of time to review this issue and thus did not provide the Council with guidance. Option 2 would have provided that the use of single wall codends of 6" BK or greater diamond or square mesh for the full circumference of the codend. We believe this would be an acceptable alternative as experience has shown this to be more effective than square mesh top panels in reducing catches of unwanted small sole and pollock. The Council's action has resulted in a fair amount of uncertainty as many companies are in the process of placing orders for new or modified codends, particularly for the rocksole and cod fisheries.

I have attached for you a copy of the proposed motion that had been circulating amongst the industry during the Council. This was the recommendation from the Trawl Mesh Working Committee. We would also urge that as the implementing regs are developed that the agency work with the Trawl Mesh Committee on the necessary definitions of a codend and its components, as well as details concerning placement of chaffing panels, appropriate allowances for non-square mesh lacing strips along riblines and adjacent to zipper mesh, etc.

To provide for a better understanding of this issue, the Trawl Mesh Committee will reconvene next week to discuss this issue and provide a report to the Council. Therefore, we request that the Council consider rescinding its previous action during the December 1994 Council meeting (Item D-2), then consider the Trawl Mesh Committee's and the AP's recommendations at the January 1994 Council meeting prior to making a final decision on a minimum mesh size. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Brent C. Paine  
Executive Director

cc: Steve Pennoyer, NMFS

**As a starting point, we understand research is ongoing. I move:**

**Alternative 3, square mesh top panel codend with a minimum of:  
3.25 inches for pollock in GOA and BSAI directed pollock  
fishery**

**6 inches for cod in the GOA and BSAI directed P. cod fishery**

**6 inches for rocksole in the BSAI directed rocksole fishery.**

**Or a single layer mesh or entire codend made of square or diamond  
mesh with these minimum mesh sizes between knot measurements.**

**This motion includes the Trawl Mesh Committee's comments on  
configuration of the codend, including: definition of a codend  
(number of meshes), 3 and 4 foot end panels for smaller and larger  
vessels, the number of riblines, and size of chafing gear under these  
riblines, etc.**

**Also, staff would have to change the VIP rates in the Rocksole fishery  
to account for the increased escapement of non-targeted fish.**