

Editor:

This is a message from an ardent sports fisherman and retired commercial fisherman from the 4th District. I have known Pat Higgins a long time. Pat has worked long and hard to prevent mismanagement of our rockfish populations under the Marine Life Protection Act that is threatening to close much of our near-shore fisheries.

Pat helped convene a Humboldt Bay Harbor District sub-committee that allows a coordinated effort from the governments and Tribes of our region from Crescent City to south of Ft Bragg. He worked with Harbor District staff, regional scientists, fishermen and tribes to create an acceptable array of closed areas that minimize economic damage while preserving maximum fishing opportunity.

The resulting array represents a scientific approach to conservation and will help produce a bounty of marine resources long into the future. It proposes a system of fewer large preserves that are outside 10 mile safety zones around harbors in order to limit economic harm.

Unfortunately, the MLPA process still looks like it will over-ride the local option and create more small preserves that could cripple our economy and further restrict fishing options. Pat is ready to lead the North Coast regional challenge of the MLPA, to ensure that it is truly scientific and not economically harmful. I hope 5th District residents will support Pat's work protecting our environment and our fishing rights when they vote on June 8.

If you fish, know a fisherman, or just like to eat fish, please vote for Pat Higgins.

**Sincerely,
Tom Peters
Eureka**

Submitted to the McKinleyville Press