

## **Proposal for funding (\$50K) to support Council Education and Outreach Initiatives February 2009**

The regional fishery management councils are seeking additional funds to develop new education and outreach materials. We believe that we must act quickly to educate the new administration about the regional council system and the crucial role of the Councils in the management of our fisheries, as well as the importance of recreational and commercial fisheries across the Nation. We request the additional funding at this time because these initiatives are an unanticipated add-on to existing council budgets.

We are planning to undertake four separate but related initiatives:

1. Publish an information brochure on the council system.
2. Host a regional council website.
3. Prepare and publish synthesis articles on key management issues.
4. Participate in the Capitol Hill Oceans Week activities.

### **Brochure**

We intend to publish a 40 page glossy information brochure on the regional councils that describes the council system as well as challenges and opportunities for the councils. Text will be prepared, and photos and graphics supplied by each Council and edited for consistency.

The estimated cost for this project is \$25,000, which includes some money for a professional graphics contractor and printing costs for producing  $\geq 2,000$  copies. Mailing costs would be picked up by the Councils under existing budgets. The brochure would be widely distributed to people in the administration, from the Secretary of Commerce to the NOAA Administrator, to virtually anyone who may not know about the importance of the regional council system. One possible allocation of 2,000 copies would be:

- 1,200 to councils (150 each) for regional distribution;
- 150 to NMFS HQ, regions and centers;
- 150 to administrators, House resources committee, Senate commerce committee and staff
- 500 for distribution at the Capitol Hill Ocean Week (June 8) conference & NOAA Fish Fry.

### **Website**

We intend to host a regional council website that serves as a clearinghouse for information regarding the regional council system, with links to the 8 individual council web sites. We believe this will enhance coordination and communication across the councils, and improve our outreach to the general public searching on the internet for fishery management information. The cost for this activity is free. It will be hosted by a council on their server, and designed and maintained by a council staff webmaster.

### **Current Issues Publication**

We intend to prepare background articles on key issues being addressed by the Councils, and information about how the councils are addressing these issues. We intend to assign staff from each council to prepare individual summaries, and coordinate the review of these papers across councils to ensure accuracy. The list of 11 topics tentatively identified include Ecosystem-based management, habitat, MPAs, deep-sea corals, bycatch, overfishing and stock rebuilding, IFQs and other share based programs, protected species, international issues, recreational fisheries, and commercial fisheries.

These summaries would be posted on the regional council website, and published in the fall issue of the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA) journal, *Current*. The cost to produce a 40 page issue of *Current* is \$15,000, which would include distribution to 1,500 marine educators in the U.S., and 1,500 extra copies for the Councils to distribute. Extra copies can be ordered in advance for only \$1 per issue.

## **Capitol Hill Oceans Week**

Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) will be held this year from June 8-10, and will be attended by many U.S. senators and representatives and their staffs. Additionally, the NOAA Fish Fry will either be held that week, or the week prior (June 10 or June 3). The National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, which runs CHOW, said that their focus this year is "The Ocean and its Affect on the Economy". They have chosen their panel topics to include aquaculture, marine transportation, travel and tourism, agriculture, energy, exploration, and drugs from the deep. They are now seeking to fill these panels with speakers, which is coordinated by NMSF CEO Lori Arguelles with suggestions and input from various colleagues and sponsors. We sent a request that fisheries be considered as a panel topic, and noted how important fisheries are to the US in terms of jobs and income.

We are working to see if a sponsorship can ensure the regional fisheries management councils' presence on a panel. The cost to sponsor a panel is \$10K, and would provide an opportunity to discuss issues and how the regional councils are working to address them. We would also have exhibit space for distributing informational materials and discussing issues one-on-one with interested individuals.

## **Summary**

**The Councils are requesting a supplemental grant of \$50,000 to cover the costs of developing new education materials and expanding outreach during this critical transition year. The monies would be used to publish a glossy brochure on opportunities and challenges (25K), print an issue of the Marine Educators Association journal (15K), and pay for sponsorship costs (10K) to participate in the Capitol Hill Oceans Week.**