

Grand Manan Fishermen's Association Inc.

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Presentation to the Fisheries Resource Conservation Council

Blacks Harbour, NB

April 8, 2010

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views on issues concerning the groundfish fishery.

The Grand Manan Fishermen's Association is in its 30th year of operation representing nearly 200 captain and crew on the islands of Grand Manan and White Head. We represent a diverse group of fishermen that includes groundfish, lobster, scallop, and herring. Our fishermen believe that the multi-license concept has sustained our coastal community throughout its 225 year history.

The groundfish fishery will not fix itself as long as mobile gear is permitted to rape and pillage the stocks. A return to a fixed gear fishery would relieve the enormous pressure on the spawning groundfish stocks targeted by mobile gear.

The multi-license concept has proven itself to be an effective conservation tool for the community of southern New Brunswick. The lack of understanding, acknowledgement, and support by DFO as it relates to multi-license fisheries has been a deterrent to its success.

The Southern New Brunswick Groundfish Community Management Board has successfully managed a community quota system since 1996. It has allowed fishermen to pursue groundfish when the fish are available without encouraging discards. Our community management regime is the only management board operating a truly competitive fishery in the way it was intended upon inception. We do not promote the informal use of ITQ's, but instead believe in and operate it as a community resource.

The mobile gear fleet targets the stock when they are vulnerable during spawning cycles. Without the ability to reproduce, the stock has been unable to recover from these continual efforts. The mobile gear also targets the stocks on a year round basis, focusing all their effort on groundfish, which again does nothing to rebuild the fishery. We are also concerned over their by-catch of various non-target species such as lobster and herring roe.

../2

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Page 2

We want to congratulate the Fisheries Resource Conservation Council for identifying seals as a contributor to the further decline of the groundfish stocks. Clearly more efforts need to be made to reduce the seal population along Atlantic Canada's coastline and we continue to support your efforts in this regard.

Thank you for the opportunity to raise our concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Guptill', written in a cursive style.

Brian Guptill
President