

Satisfying the wish for fish



By Scott Gilbert

Scott Gilbert is a freelance writer and editor who lives on the Oregon coast.

Visitors of the villages of Tillamook County on the Oregon coast often have fresh seafood on their minds. A community-supported fishery branded under the same name and based in the fishing port of Garibaldi is working to turn those thoughts into reality.

Community Supported Fishery is a boat-to-table enterprise headed by fishermen and entrepreneurs Jeff Wong and Mark Wilde, who took over the former Tillamook Bay Boathouse processing facility in March 2014. The two men grew up in Portland and met about four years before starting their business. They do their own fishing aboard Wilde's 30-foot Longfin and work with about three dozen other boats along the Oregon

coast to supply high-quality seafood to chefs, grocers, wholesalers and directly to consumers.

The company is shifting toward a model in which consumers pay an annual fee to have access to CSF products at chef prices.

Buying directly from fishermen at Oregon ports and selling directly to end users removes a chain of middlemen, creating value at both ends. In addition, CSF sells its canned fish in Jacobsen Salt from Netarts Bay and Oregon Olive Mill oil from Dayton. "Everything in that can is sourced within 100 miles," Wong says.

Wilde and Wong sell albacore tuna, silver and king salmon, black rockfish, lingcod, Dungeness crabs, spot prawns, octopus, oysters, clams and limited blackcod, plus some sockeye salmon from northern waters that they receive already cut. They insist on high standards of fish handling by their skippers, but Wilde says most local fishermen al-



CSF/TILLAMOOK COAST

ready followed those guidelines.

"These guys, they've all been doing it for three, four, five generations; they know how to treat those fish," he said.

Wong says hearing customers rave is rewarding, and Wilde loves being "part of this culture of recognizing the quality of local products."

CSF tries to get seafood from boats to diners' plates in half the industry standard time, and sometimes the turnaround is much faster.

"I can literally take a crab off of my boat and have it on a diner's plate at the Big Wave Cafe in an hour," Wong said.

You can find their products at CSF's cannery on the northeast end of the Garibaldi boat basin. A full list of locations is available on the CSF website. NF

Washington LOOKOUT

Doing the math

Old closed areas, like old attitudes, die hard. After 10 years' work, the New England Fishery Management Council took final votes in June on Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2, addressing essential fish habitat protection in the Gulf of Maine, on Georges Bank and in the Great South Channel.

One last major vote involved Georges Bank. Discussions had proceeded for months about how to work within the existing alternatives to refine a carefully drawn area that closed three areas for habitat protection. The council's choice for Georges came down to two options: doing nothing or a new alternative based on more than a decade of new scientific data and analyses. Ultimately, the council chose progress.

The argument to do nothing was driven by a false choice that has gained at-

attention as rhetoric began to outpace the facts contained in council decision documents. For two-plus years, environmental NGOs have made the false argument that more than 7,000 square miles of allegedly pristine habitat on Georges Bank will be thrown open to mobile bottom-tending gear, to be replaced by only 2,000 square miles of habitat protections. Lost in the blizzard of misinformation is the fact that the habitat amendment subjects *more* area on Georges Bank to habitat management than "no action."

And now, a warning: We'll mire you in some details. Sound bites are easy. It's harder to explain change involving complex analyses and choices.

The history: In December 1994, NMFS closed 6,711 square miles of Georges Bank, via the emergency enactment of Closed Areas I and II. The clo-



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sure's focus was reducing fishing mortality on cod, yellowtail and haddock to aid rebuilding. Then, in 2006, Scallop Amendment 10 and Groundfish Amendment 13 designated 1,965 square miles within the two closed areas as closures to protect habitat. The council needed to close areas to protect habitat on Georges and it decided to work within the existing groundfish closures rather than closing additional areas. The areas designated as habitat closures have remained permanently closed, while much of the remaining 4,746 square miles (6,711 minus 1,965) have been used as scallop and/or

groundfish special access areas, among other things.

The changes: In contrast to the 1,965 square miles on Georges Bank specifically managed for habitat now under “no action,” the habitat amendment would specifically manage approximately 2,470 square miles for habitat: about two-thirds of the existing Habitat Area of Particular Concern in Closed Area II, plus some area outside it; a new Georges Shoals area, to the west, currently open to fishing; and a dedicated habitat research area within existing Closed Area I. Almost all these 2,470 square miles will be closed. Less than 10 percent would be open to scallop access area fishing, and about half that to limited groundfishing.

In addition, the habitat amendment closed for habitat approximately 1,700 additional square miles in the Great South Channel. Most is within a new habitat of concern for juvenile Georges Bank cod. This would replace a somewhat larger closure within the Nan-

tucket Lightship Closed Area. Virtually none of the existing area habitat closure is habitat of concern for juvenile Georges Bank cod, or anything.

When viewed across the entire Georges Bank cod stock area (Georges Bank and the Great South Channel), the habitat amendment would include roughly 4,170 square miles for habitat management (totally closing more than 90 percent of it) versus 4,050 square miles for “no action,” and it includes far more habitat of concern for juvenile Georges Bank cod than “no action.” The habitat amendment also closes more areas that peer-reviewed analyses identify as vulnerable gravel and cobble substrate.

What of the rest of the “lost” Georges Bank and Great South Channel groundfish closures? The remaining areas include: current access areas, such as the scallop and groundfish special access areas in southern Closed Area II and central Closed Area I, and portions of the closed areas that the habitat amendment’s peer-

reviewed metrics show have little to no habitat value whatsoever. The amendment does not, moreover, open these areas without restriction, but rather imposes approximately 5,500 square miles of seasonal spawning closures. Protecting spawning is the remaining conservation consideration now that quotas control groundfish fishing mortality.

The result: More, *not* less. Altogether, approximately 7,764 square miles of the Georges Bank cod stock area on Georges and in the Great South Channel will either be managed as a habitat area or seasonal spawning closure. Moreover, the council designed these areas using peer-reviewed models, rather than 2006’s dead reckoning approach limited to existing groundfish closed areas. In total, across Georges Bank, the Great South Channel and the Gulf of Maine, the habitat amendment would close more area for habitat than is currently closed. As the late Paul Harvey might say, “That’s the rest of the story.” NF

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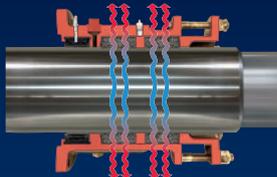
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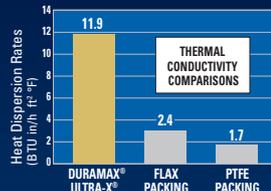
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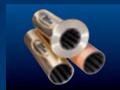


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