

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0552

January 15, 2016

Ms. Elizabeth Sablad
Environmental Scientist
US EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
(WTR-5)
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: NEPA Review for Rose Canyon Fisheries Sustainable Aquaculture Project

Ms. Sablad,

As Representatives of the County of San Diego, we support the Rose Canyon Fisheries (RCF) application for permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to operate a commercial aquaculture farm in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) off the coast of San Diego. We encourage the timely advancement of this sustainable enterprise.

Aquatic farming, or aquaculture, is critical to the world's and our nation's food supply. Over 50% of today's existing supply of seafood is farmed to meet growing worldwide demand. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture recognize that our nation's seafood production will need to increase over the next 20 years and that aquaculture can play a major role in meeting that need. In 1980, the U.S. Congress passed the National Aquaculture Act that encouraged the development of aquaculture:

Section 2(c) POLICY.--Congress declares that aquaculture has the potential for reducing the United States trade deficit in fisheries products, for augmenting existing commercial and recreational fisheries and for producing other renewable resources, thereby assisting the United States in meeting its future food needs and contributing to the solution of world resource problems. It is, therefore, in the national interest, and it is the national policy, to encourage the development of aquaculture in the United States.

The RCF project provides a new paradigm for domestic seafood production that will produce healthy seafood in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner. Recent studies published by U.S. researchers as well as by international, non-governmental organizations report that aquaculture, conducted properly, is a sustainable way to produce animal protein for human consumption. Marine aquaculture requires minimal land-based infrastructure, no fresh water, and minimal energy consumption. We are confident that the EPA is well

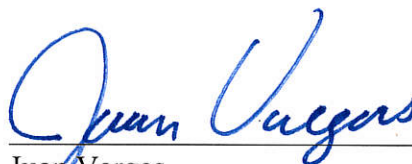
equipped to conduct a rigorous environmental review to ensure that the RCF project adheres to the highest sustainability standards. A study conducted by the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation also predicts that RCF will support hundreds of jobs, help our regional seafood industry, sustain the working waterfront, and generate millions in taxes annually, benefitting our economy while respecting the environment.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact our offices if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Peters", written over a horizontal line.

Scott Peters
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan Vargas", written over a horizontal line.

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress