December 3, 2019

The Honorable Wilbur Ross  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross,

As members of the recreational fishing and boating industry, we ask that you affirm the October 31, 2019, decision by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), which found the Commonwealth of Virginia out of compliance with Amendment 3 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Menhaden for failing to fully and effectively implement and enforce the Chesapeake Bay Reduction Fishery Cap (Bay Cap). Furthermore, we ask that you take such action as deemed necessary and consistent with the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act to compel the Commonwealth of Virginia to come into compliance with the FMP.

As ASMFC describes in their letter to you dated November 15, 2019, the Bay Cap is a management solution that conserves menhaden as critical forage for the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, while reducing conflicts between an industrial fishing fleet and the sportfishing and boating communities. The Bay Cap is particularly important as of late because menhaden’s top predator, Atlantic striped bass, is currently in poor condition and the Chesapeake Bay is the primary spawning and nursery area for the species. Additionally, recent science suggests that the industrial harvest of menhaden contributes to the decline in striped bass biomass1. Therefore, the intent of the Bay Cap is to ensure adequate forage for striped bass and other important predator species (e.g., bluefish, summer flounder, black sea bass, weakfish) that have significant recreational fisheries within the Bay and along the Atlantic coast.

These valuable recreational fisheries are major contributors to America’s economy and support many fishing-dependent businesses across our industry. A Department of Commerce report, “Fisheries Economics of the United States 2016”, details the economic contributions of these menhaden-dependent fisheries to the various regions along the Atlantic coast2. Saltwater recreational fishing along the Atlantic is enjoyed by 6 million anglers annually, contributing $11.3 billion to the economy and supporting 120,236 jobs. The jobs created by these fisheries are the lifeblood of our Atlantic coastal communities as more than 90% of the sportfishing and boating industry is made up of small businesses.

Furthermore, the sportfishing and boating industry consistently plays an integral role in stewardship of our fisheries by directly funding conservation and habitat restoration efforts through licensing fees and excise taxes set up through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. In 2019 alone, $365.4 million was apportioned to the states to fund fishery conservation programs with the money generated from excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel. Our industry is proud to be a partner in this cooperative approach to fisheries management because we know that fisheries conservation and fishing access afforded by these funds directly supports outdoor recreation and the American

2 https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/webdam/download/97729452
economy. As stewards of our shared public resources, we respect the laws that govern our fisheries which ensure the sustainability of the resource and our industry. We simply cannot tolerate the recent actions of Omega Protein which willfully exceeded the Bay Cap and forced the Commonwealth of Virginia out of compliance with ASMFC.

Interstate fishery management only succeeds when each state fully and effectively implements and enforces the requirements of ASMFC and its FMPs. Your affirmation of the finding of non-compliance will hold Omega Protein accountable for their actions; demonstrate clear leadership to the millions of Atlantic coast anglers and the thousands of businesses they support; and ensure the ASMFC process continues to bring cooperative management solutions to our shared fishery resources.

Respectfully yours,

Glenn Hughes
President
American Sportfishing Association
Alexandria, VA

Jeff Angers
President
Center for Sportfishing Policy
Baton Rouge, LA

Jeff Crane
President
Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation
Washington, DC

Matt Gruhn
President
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
Minneapolis, MN

Jim Donofrio
President
Recreational Fishing Alliance
New Gretna, NJ

Chris Edmonston
President
BoatU.S.
Springfield, VA

Patrick Murray
President
Coastal Conservation Association
Houston, TX

Jason Schratwieser
Acting President & Conservation Director
International Game Fish Association
Dania Beach, FL

Frank Hugelmeyer
President
National Marine Manufacturers Association
Washington, DC

Whit Fosburgh
President and CEO
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Washington, DC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Carl Abissi</td>
<td>National Sales Manager</td>
<td>Dexter Outdoors-Dexter Russell, Inc.</td>
<td>Southbridge, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Randall Lyons</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Massachusetts Marine Trades Association</td>
<td>Foxboro, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chris Megan</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>On the Water LLC</td>
<td>East Falmouth, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Cui</td>
<td>VP Sales</td>
<td>SiOnyx, LLC</td>
<td>Beverly, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beau Thebault</td>
<td>Managing Member</td>
<td>Why Knot Fishing, LLC</td>
<td>Winthrop MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>Stephen Medeiros</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association</td>
<td>Coventry, RI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Capt. Rick Constantine</td>
<td>VP of Marketing and General Manager</td>
<td>Acme United Corporation</td>
<td>Fairfield, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony Graffeo</td>
<td>CEO and Founder</td>
<td>FlipRocks, Extreme Footwear</td>
<td>Sandy Hook, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Orefice</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Game On, LLC</td>
<td>Enfield, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alan Gnann</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>REC Components</td>
<td>Stafford Springs, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Steve Carhart</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Coyote Eyewear</td>
<td>Pittsford, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jeffrey Goldberg</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Fish307 LLC</td>
<td>Lake George, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neil J. Miritello</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>FJ Neil Company, Inc.</td>
<td>Lindenhurst, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John H. Butts</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Rome Specialty Company, Inc.</td>
<td>Rome, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Hoge</td>
<td>Co-Owner</td>
<td>Sea Eagle Boats</td>
<td>Port Jefferson, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Caruso</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>The Fisherman Magazine</td>
<td>Shirley, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Nick Cicero</td>
<td>Sales Manager</td>
<td>Folsom Corp.</td>
<td>Mahwah, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Taylor</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Jersey Coast Anglers Association</td>
<td>Toms River NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marilou Geverola</td>
<td>Co-Owner</td>
<td>NOREAST’R</td>
<td>Morganville, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David Arbeitman</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>The Reel Seat, Inc</td>
<td>Brielle, NJ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pennsylvania
Michael Shields
VP Sales & Marketing
AFW Fishing Brands
Coatesville, PA

Brad Myers
Owner
CarLyd Enterprises/ Bait Up
Ephrata, PA

Michael S. Flanagan
President and C.E.O.
Felmlee Lures
Lewistown, PA

Marlene Cipriani
Operations Manager
Hopkins Fishing Gear, Inc.
Northumberland, PA

Hunter Grogan
Founder & CEO
Zee Bait Co. LLC
Birchrunville, PA

Delaware
Damon Olsen
President
Nomad Design Tackle Inc
Lewes, DE

Maryland
Larry Goldberg
Managing Member
FWBC, LLC t/a Freedom Boat Club MD/DC
Annapolis, MD

Tobin Mergenthaler
President
Imperium Outfitters In
Edgewater, MD

Virginia
Jim Dunbar
President
Fiber Consulting Services, LLC
Mechanicsville, VA

Capt. David Gibb
Owner, Director of Operations & Training
Freedom Boat Club of Virginia
Portsmouth, VA

John Crews
President
Missile Baits
Salem, VA

Brian Ryals
Partner
Ocean Creek Apparel
Virginia Beach, VA

Capt. Andy Sutter
President
SOVA Boat Club
Chesapeake, VA

North Carolina
Donald W. Betts
President
Betts Tackle Ltd.
Fuquay Varina, NC

Gary Zurn
SVP Industry Relations
Big Rock Sports
Graham, NC

Jim Hardin
Government Relations Manager
Grady-White Boats
Greenville, NC

Rob Jones
President
Propel IP, Inc.
Raleigh, NC

Robert A. Eakes
President
Red Drum Tackle Shop, Inc.
Buxton, NC

South Carolina
Jeff Williamson
Co-owner
Best Catch Bait Company
Chapin, SC

Evan Lyendecker
Brand & Content Director
Confluence Outdoor
Greenville, SC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
<th>Company/Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Davis</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>DL Ventures LLC Lexington, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Martin</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Fish Razr Charleston, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Clyburn</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Heybo Outdoors Chester, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Sims</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Hook + Gaff Watch Company West Columbia, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Pfeiffer</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Shimano North America Fishing Ladson, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary J. Hinze</td>
<td>President/CEO</td>
<td>What The Fin LLC Greenville, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Nussbaum</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Z-Man Fishing Products, Inc. Ladson, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrell Keith</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Hydro Glow, Inc. Eatonton, GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skip Dahlstrom</td>
<td>Managing Partner</td>
<td>Rogers Sports Marketing Norcross, GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Speciale</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Yamaha Marine Group Kennesaw, GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Meehan</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>American Tackle Co Oviedo, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett Fitzgerald</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Angler Action Foundation Lake Worth, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim McDuffie</td>
<td>President and CEO</td>
<td>Bonefish &amp; Tarpon Trust Miami, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Salyers</td>
<td>Fishing Group Publisher</td>
<td>Bonnier Corp. Miami, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Foley</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Boone Bait Company Winter Park, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Zaloga</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Captains Cove Outfitters Inglis, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aledia Hunt Tush</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>CB's Saltwater Outfitters Sarasota, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Bulthuis</td>
<td>VP Government Affairs</td>
<td>Costa Sunglasses Daytona Beach, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lili Crook</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Crook and Crook Fishing &amp; Marine Supplies Miami, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Lillo</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Don Coffey Company Windermere, FL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Michael Dixon  
VP/GM  
Engel Coolers  
Jupiter, FL

Doug Hughes  
CEO  
FishAnywhere, LLC  
Winter Garden, FL

Linda Sheldon  
Vice President  
Flying Fisherman  
Islamorada, FL

Louis Chemi  
Vice President  
Freedom Franchise Systems, LLC  
Venice, FL

Adrian Martinez  
Owner/President  
Handler Fishing Supply  
Merritt Island, FL

Chris Peterson  
President  
Hell's Bay Boatworks  
Titusville, FL

Sid Dobrin  
Co-Owner  
Inventive Fishing, LLC  
Alachua, FL

Don Patnaude  
President  
Jones & Company  
Stuart, FL

Eric Bachnik  
President  
L and S Bait Co./ MirrOlure  
Largo FL

Clark Lea  
VP  
Marine Metal Products  
Clearwater, FL

Jeff Miller  
President  
Millers Boating Center, Inc.  
Ocala, FL

Ray Rosher  
President  
R and R Tackle  
Miami, FL

Derek Williams  
President & Owner  
Sea Fear, LLC  
Clearwater, FL

Jennifer Stegura  
Co-Founder/VP Marketing  
Skinny Water Culture  
Clearwater, FL

Ted Alflen  
CEO  
Skuze Shoes, LLC  
Pompano Beach, FL

Casey Damron  
Founder  
Sodium USA  
Crystal River, FL

Rob Southwick  
President  
Southwick Associates  
Fernandina Beach, FL

Hunter McIntosh  
President  
The Boat Company  
Jacksonville Beach, FL

Troy Faletra  
Founder/CEO  
Throw Raft LLC  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Bill Bachman  
President  
Tuppen’s Marine & Tackle  
Lake Worth, FL