



Wild Fish Conservancy

N O R T H W E S T

S C I E N C E E D U C A T I O N A D V O C A C Y

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
H-107 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Democratic Whip
148 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Representative McCarthy and Representative Hoyer,

On behalf of our 226 active members, Wild Fish Conservancy strongly urges you to oppose any legislation, including H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023, that would undermine the conservation provisions of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Stevens Act). Our members rely on healthy, abundant fish populations, especially of wild Pacific salmon, and numerous ground fish species including rockfish, Pacific halibut, Pacific cod, and sablefish. Any legislation that would weaken their management should not move forward in this Congress.

H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023 would increase the risk of overfishing and threaten the progress we've made on rebuilding vulnerable fish populations. They would undermine years of strong science-based management that is helping stabilize fishing businesses and coastal communities.

These bills would extend the timelines for plans to rebuild vulnerable fish populations, delaying when fishermen would benefit from a fully healthy stock. They would exempt fish populations from the use of science-based annual catch limits designed to prevent overfishing. The Magnuson-Stevens Act is helping to end fishing at unsustainable rates and put species such as numerous depressed and ESA-listed west coast rockfish on the road to recovery. The signs of success for many west coast rockfish species - more and bigger fish dispersed throughout a broader range—are evidence that strong fisheries management can work.

Wild Fish Conservancy advocates for scientifically sound and risk-averse management of native freshwater and marine fishes and the ecosystems on which they depend. The benefits of sustainable fisheries to present and future generations of local communities and society at large critically depend on independent scientific stock analysis and advice based firmly on the precautionary approach. H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023 would significantly weaken current provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) that incorporate many of the principles of the precautionary approach that are essential to prevent overfishing and secure the prompt, timely rebuilding of overfished stocks to robust sustainable levels of abundance and diversity that are essential to enabling fish stocks to persist in the face of challenges from rapidly changing environments. Both pieces of proposed legislation are ill-considered and would fail to further the fundamental purposes of the MSA.

Wild Fish Conservancy urges you to oppose H.R. 200 and H.R. 2023, and any other legislation that would undermine the conservation requirements that have been critical to the success of the Magnuson Stevens Act.

Sincerely,

Kurt Beardslee
Executive Director
Wild Fish Conservancy