

**Advance notice letter**

[DATE]

Dear [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] [Last Name of Respondent],

I am writing to ask for your help with an important study being conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service), a U.S. government agency. In the next few days, you will receive a request to participate in this project by answering questions about your recreational groundfish fishing experiences in waters off of California: the species and locations you prefer, the effect of regulations on your fishing enjoyment, and expenses associated with your most recent groundfish fishing trip.

With your help, NOAA Fisheries Service will gain insight into how important groundfish fishing is to California's recreational fishermen. I hope you will take 25 minutes of your time to help us better understand your fishing experiences.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Project lead or coordinator]

NOAA Fisheries Service

[NOAA LOGO]

**Cover letter, survey questionnaire**

[DATE]

Dear [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] [Last Name of Respondent],

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service), a U.S. government agency, is conducting a study to learn more about the preferences of recreational anglers who target and/or catch groundfish in waters off of California. You have been identified by our partner agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly the California Department of Fish and Game), as someone who targeted and/or caught groundfish in California in 2013. Your name was selected at random from other groundfish anglers who fish in California. Not everyone in the state was chosen for this study so your help is critical to its success.

With your help, NOAA Fisheries Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife will learn more about your groundfish fishing experiences and preferences, the effects of current regulations on your fishing enjoyment, and demographic characteristics of anglers like you. Collecting this information is critical for gaining a better understanding of this important fishery. We are interested in hearing from you – regardless of how often you fish or how interested you are in groundfish.

The survey should take approximately 25 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. That is, your responses will never be publicly associated with your name or mailing address. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Office of Management and Budget to meet the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (OMB Control Number: xxxxxxxx).

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact [Name] at [Email] or [Phone].

My colleagues and I truly appreciate your participation and the time that you set aside to be part of this study. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Many thanks,

[Name]

[Project lead or coordinator]

NOAA Fisheries Service

The data that is collected will remain confidential as required by Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act as amended in 2006 (16 U.S.C. 1801, et seq.) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100 [http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative\\_orders/chapter\\_216/216-100.html](http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_216/216-100.html), Confidentiality of Fishery Statistics. The data that is collected will not be released to the public except as aggregate summary statistics. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

[NOAA LOGO]

**Thank you postcard**

[Date]

Last week, a questionnaire was mailed to you because you were randomly selected to help in a study about recreational groundfish fishing off of California.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, we ask that you please consider completing and returning it. My colleagues and I greatly appreciate your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a questionnaire or if it has been misplaced, please call us at [phone number] and we will send you another one in the mail today.

Thank you for sharing your recreational groundfish fishing experiences with us.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Project lead or coordinator]

NOAA Fisheries Service

**Cover letter, replacement survey**

[DATE]

Dear [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] [Last Name of Respondent],

In [month] we sent a letter and questionnaire to your address that asked you to participate in a study about recreational groundfish fishing off of California. To the best of our knowledge, it has not yet been returned.

We are writing again to ask for your help. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) would like to hear from recreational fishermen like you about the types of groundfish species and fishing locations you prefer, the effect of current regulations on your fishing enjoyment, and expenses associated with your most recent groundfish fishing trip in California. Collecting this information is critical for gaining a better understanding of how important groundfish fishing is to California's recreational fishermen.

The survey should take approximately 25 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. That is, your responses will never be associated with your name or mailing address. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Office of Management and Budget to meet the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (OMB Control Number: xxxxxxxx).

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact [Name] at [Email] or [Phone].

Again, my colleagues and I truly appreciate your participation and the time that you set aside to be part of this study. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Many thanks,

[Name]  
[Project lead or coordinator]  
NOAA Fisheries Service

**Final postcard**

[Date]

Last week, a replacement questionnaire was mailed to you because you were randomly selected to help in a study about recreational groundfish fishing off of California.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, we ask that you please consider completing and returning it. My colleagues and I greatly appreciate your help with this important study.

If you did not receive a questionnaire or if it has been misplaced, please call us at [phone number] and we will send you another one in the mail today.

Thank you for sharing your recreational groundfish fishing experiences with us.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Project lead or coordinator]

NOAA Fisheries Service