
CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

455 MARKET STREET, SUITE 300
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
FAX (415) 904-5200
TDD (415) 904-5400



Th12b13c

RTI Infrastructure, Inc., Humboldt Co

August 12, 2021

CORRESPONDENCE

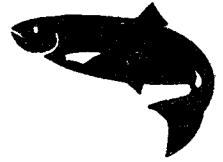
HUMBOLDT FISHERMEN'S MARKETING ASSOCIATION, INC.



3 Commercial Street
Eureka, California 95501-0241

(707) 443-0537

FAX (707) 443-1724



Agenda Item 12b Application No. 9-21-0165

RTI Eureka Cable Project in Humboldt County

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing, not to oppose or delay the installation of this subsea covered cable on the community fishing grounds of Humboldt County, but instead to express the grave concerns of California fishermen over the flawed process taking place for the mitigation of this covered cable. California fishermen have repeatedly asked for a mitigation program through the vehicle of a standardized contractual fishing agreement that would provide for the widest possible benefit to all California Coastal Fishing Communities.

It appears to fishermen that there are no statewide Coastal Commission policies or guidelines for the mitigation of "cable impacts" to California coastal fishermen and fishing communities. Each "area of impact" has different "fishing agreements"; some of these agreements are beneficial to and inclusive of California fishermen and their communities, while other fishing agreements exclude mitigation benefits to all but a few individuals. An example of the latter would be the existing Point Arena Cable Fund.

The applicant, RTI, has had previous experience with California fishing agreements in that RTI was a signatory on the twenty year old Central Coast Fishing Agreement in order to obtain a Coastal Development permit to install a cable at Grover Beach. The Central Coast Fishing Agreement has both local fishermen's associations and individual fishermen as signatories to this agreement. The Central Coast Cable Fund which was established through the the Central Coast Fishing Agreement has been a model for all fishing ground mitigation measures since its establishment twenty years ago.

In the case of the Eureka Subsea Cable Project, the applicant (RTI): found five fishermen from Oregon and California willing to agree to a mitigation plan, funded those individuals in order to form a corporation, then executed their own contractual fishing agreement with the corporation it was responsible for forming. An agreement was signed June 25, 2020 allegedly against the advice of the Coastal Commission staff.

California fishermen protested this process as it was outside of the established norm used in the Central Coast and South Bay Cable Committees. Requests for a more inclusive and broad based fishing agreement similar to the one in Central California were made to the Coastal Commission and the State Lands Commission during public testimony given at the State Lands Commission hearing for the permitting of this project.

At the insistence of California Fishermen, the State Lands Commission included language in the RTI lease agreement which required RTI to **“work in good faith to achieve greater inclusivity and participation”** (Franzoia, Feb 19, 2021).

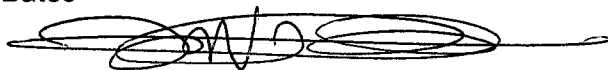
State Lands included in their permit conditions a requirement directing RTI, “to provide an amended fishing agreement” as part of the RTI permit application. California Fishermen’s Associations, working proactively to resolve the fishing agreement problem, submitted to RTI, the State Lands Commission and the Coastal Commission their own “Amended Fishing Agreement” based exactly on the Central Coast Fishing Agreement (which RTI had already signed onto). This “Amended Fishing Agreement” was signed by twelve (12) California Fishermen’s Associations representing over three hundred (300) Fishermen and numerous independent fishermen. This Amended Fishing Agreement, submitted in March 2021, was dismissed outright by RTI and received no comments from State Lands nor the Coastal Commission.

It appears to California Commercial Fishermen that the California Coastal Commission will very effectively lower the standard for the mitigation of cable impacts to Coastal Fishing Communities by allowing coastal developers to engage with a tiny fraction of an industry to form a corporation for the purposes of checking off the mitigation requirement within the Coastal Development permit application and then get their permits.

In no other time in history have twelve (12) California Commercial Fishermen’s Associations presented a signed fishing agreement for the purposes of mitigating the impacts of subsea cables only to have it ignored by the agencies trusted with the protection and prioritization of commercial fishing activities within the California Coastal Zone.

The applicant, RTI, is developing plans to install twelve (12) subsea cables across California’s community fishing grounds. Other cable companies are also advocating for additional cables. Without a succinct and inclusive state policy for the mitigation of impacts from subsea cables, California fishermen will be forced to repeat this flawed process again and again. Thank you for your time and attention.

Ken Bates

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ken Bates', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Humboldt Fishermen’s Marketing Association

August 3, 2021

Request for Specific Permit Conditions - RTI Eureka Cable Project

1. It appears to fishermen that there is no statewide Coastal Commission policy or guidelines for the mitigation of cable impacts to coastal fishermen and communities. Each “area of impact” has different “fishing agreements”; some of these agreements are beneficial to California fishermen, while other fishing agreements exclude mitigation benefits to all but a few individual trawl fishermen. An example of the latter would be the existing Point Arena Cable Fund. Coastal Fishermen’s Associations spent five months trying to negotiate with the cable representative, and had offered an amended fishing agreement that was supported by over 300 California fishermen and twelve California Fishing Associations. This “Amended Fishing Agreement” was dismissed outright by the cable representative and had no support from the California State agencies responsible for the permitting of covered cables. Because of these facts, we are requesting the following text additions to the RTI permit as a way forward to insure a more public transparent process and the beginnings of a framework for actual California Coastal Commission Policy for the permitting and mitigation of the next twelve covered cables planned for installation by cable companies operating in California waters.
2. Request for **specific text** to be included in the RTI, Eureka Cable Coastal Permit as follows:
 - a. **Definition and Purpose of Fishing Agreement.** The purpose of the “fishing agreement” between cable companies and California fishermen and coastal communities is to minimize and mitigate to a “level of insignificance”, the potential disruption of all California commercial fishing activities on local fishing grounds caused by the planning, installation, maintenance and removal of submarine telecommunications cables. To this end, the “Fishing Agreement” (a contractual agreement between California fishermen and cable companies) provides for:
 - i. “best practices” when fishing near covered cables,
 - ii. a fishing gear replacement process for fishing gear tangled on a covered cable and
 - iii. a mitigation fee per cable project which is to be used for the widest fishing community benefit to further reduce the potential impacts to coastal fishing activities in covered cable areas.
 - b. **Definition of “Covered Cables”** **Covered Cables**
— A “Covered Cable” for the purpose of this Agreement is one telecommunications cable installed, maintained, operated and/or removed from the seafloor from mean higher high tide to the 1000 fathom offshore curve that may be buried in soft bottom sediments up to a depth of one (1)

meter but also may be subject to exposure and/or suspension on or above the seabed.

- c. **Definition of a Covered Cable Project.** **Cable Project**
Project — A “Cable Project” for the purposes of this Agreement is the design, permitting, installation, operation, maintenance and/or removal of one (1) telecommunication subsea cable and its components including but not limited to shoreside landing vaults, landing pipes, landing pipe exits, signal regenerators, and cable, crossing the seafloor from mean higher high water to the 1000 fathom depth curve and includes but not limited to the employment of survey vessels, cable ships, guard vessels, on-board observers, cable burial equipment, ROV and cable survey equipment and cable removal equipment. Please note: Installation of multiple landing pipes does not constitute a cable project. Cable Projects are defined by the installation operation or removal of one (1) Covered Cable only.
- d. **All aspects of the “fishing agreement” shall be subject to California Coastal Commission oversight for the entire duration of each covered cable project under the terms and conditions of the coastal permit as issued.**
- e. **Oversight responsibilities by the Coastal Commission include:**
 - i. **Approval of changes, amendments or modifications of the fishing agreement between California fishermen and the cable company before said amendments are to take effect.**
 - ii. **Approval of amendments to the bylaws of the “Joint Committee” contained within the provisions of the fishing agreement between California fishermen and the cable company before said amendments are to take effect.**
 - iii. **Requirement for annual reporting of the actions of the Joint committee concerning the management and grant distributions of the Commercial Fishing Improvement Fund, including an accounting of all expenses and expenditures by category and by listing of individual recipients of grant monies per calendar year.**
 - iv. **Annual Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission review of the effectiveness of the fishing agreement to provide the widest possible benefit to Coastal Fishing Communities via the Commercial Fishermen’s Improvement Fund, with the provision that if the operation of the fishing agreement and Commercial Fishing Improvement Fund management are found to be ineffective in providing the widest possible community benefit, then the California**

Coastal Commission and/or State Lands commission retain the right to correct the actions of the “fishing agreement” or the Commercial Fishing Improvement Fund by any appropriate means.

July 22, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCC), I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in and around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

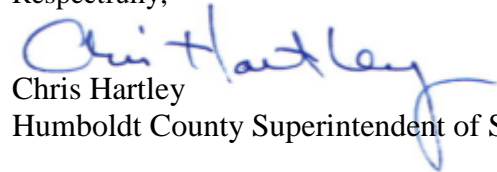
We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval. We appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role that commercial fishermen play in our community.

However, we strongly feel that RTI has now offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project and contend that requiring acceptance of those terms from fishermen organizations that may be opposed to the project regardless of the mitigation included is an unfair standard. In the past, we have been critical of RTI's efforts and have urged them to further address the concerns of all Northern California fishermen organizations. We now believe that the proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization's concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. RCC has been working on the RTI Project since its inception in 2009, and we do not want to be further delayed on providing the community with the connectivity needed and available in almost every urban area in the state. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer. We need to close the digital divide on the North Coast!

RCC asks staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—regardless of whether all fisherman groups currently support the project. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,



Chris Hartley
Humboldt County Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood



Redwood Region Economic Development Commission
Prosperity Center 520 E Street, Eureka, California 95501
Phone 707.445.9651 Fax 707.445.9652 www.rredc.com

July 20, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Redwood Region Economic Development Commission's Support for RTI Eureka Project
CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of Redwood Region Economic Development Commission (RREDC), I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in and around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda. We appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role those commercial fishermen play in our community.

We understand that RTI has offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project. In general, we believe that the standard of 100% acceptance of those measures, even by those opposed to the project regardless of the mitigation included is an unfair standard. Therefore, we urge you to support the RTI Project with their proposed mitigations.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. For over twenty years, RREDC has been an advocate of increased broadband connectivity in our region. We believe that projects like RTI's are critical to our economic and community health, allowing us to participate in the changing economy and, more importantly, improving access to education, jobs, and community involvement from traditionally excluded

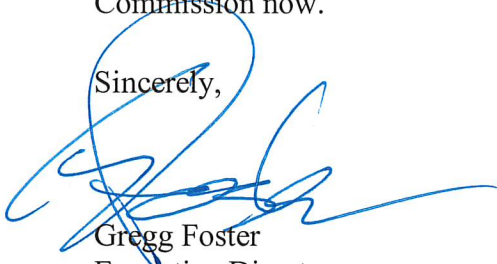


Cities Arcata · Blue Lake · Eureka · Ferndale · Fortuna · Rio Dell · Trinidad
Community Services Districts Humboldt · Manila · McKinleyville · Orick · Orleans · Redway · Willow Creek
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District · Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District
County of Humboldt · Hoopa Valley Tribe · Redwoods Community College District

groups. While we support our historical and important fishing industry, we recognize that projects like RTI's will go a long way to our goal of economic justice and inclusion in our region. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project. We cannot afford to risk it being delayed any longer.

We ask that staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gregg Foster', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Gregg Foster
Executive Director

cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood



July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission

Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director

55 Market Street, Suite 300

San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

As an active partner with the Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCC), I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the “RTI Project”) currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in and around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

We appreciate the Commission’s desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role that commercial fishermen play in our community. However, we strongly feel that RTI has offered good faith mitigation proposals – but some of those commercial fishing interests have not. We believe that RTI’s proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization’s concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. Many organizations in our region have been working on the RTI Project since its inception in 2009, and we do not want to be further delayed on providing the community with the connectivity needed for our region. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer. We need to close the digital divide on the North Coast!

We join the Redwood Coast Broadband Consortium in asking staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—regardless of whether all fisherman groups currently support the project. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,

Sean Taketa McLaughlin
Executive Director

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood

July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCC), I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in an around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval. We appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role that commercial fishermen play in our community.

However, we strongly feel that RTI has now offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project and contend that requiring acceptance of those terms from fishermen organizations that may be opposed to the project regardless of the mitigation included is an unfair standard. In the past, we have been critical of RTI's efforts and have urged them to further address the concerns of all Northern California fishermen organizations. We now believe that the proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization's concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. RCC has been working on the RTI Project since its inception in 2009, and we do not want to be further delayed on providing the community with the connectivity needed and available in almost every urban area in the state. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer. We need to close the digital divide on the North Coast!

RCC asks staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—regardless of whether all fisherman groups currently support the project. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Connie Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Connie Stewart
Executive Director of Initiatives,
Host, Redwood Coast Connect Consortium

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood



COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
Economic Development
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

825 5th Street, STE 112, Eureka, CA 95501
Telephone (707) 445-7745 Fax (707) 445-7219
<https://humboldt.gov.org/>

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

July 19th, 2021

Re: Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

As a partner to the Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCC), I am writing to support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission.

Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project, and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer. Consideration of the RTI Project at the August meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in an around the Arcata/Eureka area. As such, I urge for its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda.

In a recent business support survey performed by staff at our agency to determine how businesses in our community have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 it was found that broadband and high-speed internet access was among the top three (3) concerns of business owners. This fiber project will bring much needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. RCC has been working on the RTI Project since its inception in 2009, and we do not want to be further delayed on providing the community with the connectivity needed and available in almost every urban area in the state.

We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval.

While we appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project we understand that RTI has offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project and that the proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization's concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

That said, our office asks Coastal Commission staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—knowing that obtaining 100% buy in fisherman groups prior to bringing this item to the commission would be unfeasible and also knowing that there are indeed other fisherman who support the project.

Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now. Closing the digital divide on the North Coast is critical to our post COVID recovery.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Adair', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Adair
Director of Economic Development
County of Humboldt
sadair@co.humboldt.ca.us
707-475-4800 (Direct line)



July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of the Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce, I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in and around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval. We appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role that commercial fishermen play in our community.

However, we strongly feel that RTI has now offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project and contend that requiring acceptance of those terms from fishermen organizations that may be opposed to the project regardless of the mitigation included is an unfair standard. We believe that the proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization's concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer.

The Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce ask staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda with the proposed mitigation changes. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donna Wright", written over a horizontal line.

Donna Wright
President/CEO

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood



736 F Street

Arcata CA 95521

City Manager
707-822-5953

Environmental Services
707-822-8184

Police
707-822-2428

Recreation
707-822-7091

Community Development
707-822-5955

Finance
707-822-5951

Engineering
707-825-2128

Transportation
707-822-3775

July 20, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: City of Arcata's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of the City of Arcata, I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in an around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. The City has been working with the regional broadband consortium since its inception and we do not want to be further delayed on providing the community with the connectivity needed and available in almost every urban area in the state. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project and we do not want to risk it being delayed any longer. Please help us close the digital divide on the North Coast!

This project provides support for tremendous economic development of our local area. Reliable connectivity will open our county to a host of job opportunities and will have a transformative effect on the community as a whole. As we work to rebuild our economy from the pandemic the importance of the timeliness of this project has become clear and critical.

The City of Arcata asks staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda, with the proposed mitigation changes. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,



Karen Diemer
City Manager, City of Arcata

c.c.

Senator Mike McGuire, Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov & VIA FAX: (916) 651-4902
Assembly Member Jim Wood, Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov & VIA FAX: (707) 445-6607 &
(916) 319-2102



July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

As a partner to the Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Consortium (RCC), and the party responsible for building the terrestrial connection between the beach landing site and the data center in Arcata, I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission.

The installation of the subsea cable system from Asia to the beach landing site in Samoa, then on to the data center in Arcata, with additional segments extending along the eastern side of Arcata Bay and West from the data center to Redding serves national, state, and local interests. On the local level, the US Census found that within Humboldt County, underserved populations do not have equivalent broadband access to white non-Hispanic households. Furthermore, within Humboldt County there are few reliable options to obtain broadband internet access. The installation of this project will provide the necessary infrastructure to support broadband expansion throughout the region. Furthermore, it creates a tier 1 access point to the internet, reducing latency for users within Humboldt County and Northern California. Finally, on the national level, this subsea link improves reliability and security for global data transmission.

It is our understanding that the Commission has requested RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval. It is our experience that rarely do all parties fully agree and a finding of middle ground is in order. RTI has now offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project. Although many in the fishing community support the project, full acceptance of those terms seem quite unlikely.

The submarine cable landing will serve as the catalyst for investment in broadband infrastructure to serve Humboldt County. With timely completion of this project, the Humboldt County community will have multiple connections to regional internet providers reducing latency and enhancing internet access as well as establishing the backbone for future infrastructure to support broadband deployment. Vero Networks is requesting staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—to ensure this project stays on schedule. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:
David L. Jones
F7477ADD2E8F4B1...

Dave Jones

Chief Technical Officer

Cc: Senator Mike McGuire
Assemblymember Jim Wood

COMMISSIONERS

1st Division

Larry Doss

2nd Division

Greg Dale

3rd Division

Stephen Kullmann

4th Division

Richard Marks

5th Division

Patrick Higgins

Humboldt Bay
Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District
(707) 443-0801
P.O. Box 1030
Eureka, California 95502-1030



July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Humboldt Bay Harbor District's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

The Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, & Conservation District (Harbor District) supports approval of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in an around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government and tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region. The timing of the installation of the project to avoid impacts to the upcoming crab fishing season dictates that the matter must be placed on the August Agenda.

The Project has been reviewed by several regulatory agencies and the public has had several opportunities to provide comment. It is time for the item to go to the hearing stage so that the Commission can hear from those in favor and those that are opposed to the project. There is no new information or any additional analysis that needs to be conducted. It is time for a public hearing and for the Commission to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the project as they determine is appropriate.

The Harbor District has been closely monitoring this project as the proposed landing is located on Harbor District property on the Samoa Peninsula and because the project is of regional and statewide significance. This project has been reviewed in detail by several different agencies and the Coastal Commission approval of CCC 9-21-0165 is the last discretionary permit required.

As you are aware, on February 23, 2021, the State Lands Commission adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, a Mitigation Monitoring Program, and issued a lease to install fiber-optic cables on tide and submerged land in the Pacific Ocean offshore Samoa, Humboldt County for the RTI project. According to the State Land Commission, "These actions facilitate installing subsea cables necessary to keep up with technological advancements to transmit uninterrupted data for essential businesses. The subsea cables would begin in Asia or Australia and be laid on the ocean floor. When they reach offshore areas near Humboldt County, they will be buried, pulled up through a landing pipe, and connected to an onshore cable-landing site."

The Harbor District has reviewed the project description, CEQA document, and mitigation measures in detail. Based on our review, we have determined that since the proposed undersea cables will be buried approximately 35 feet under the ocean floor in conduit for approximately the first 1.3 miles from shore and then plowed approximately 3.3 feet below the ocean floor from 1.3 mile to approximately 32 miles offshore, the project will have no significant impact on the region's fisheries within the first 30 miles from shore. Recent tracking data has shown that there are very few commercial fishing vessels that utilize the area 30 miles offshore and that those users have an agreement with RTI in case there are impacts.

In addition, in March of 2021, the Coastal Commission approved CDP 1-2—0455 (Vero Fiber Networks, LLC) which authorized among other development, the directional boring and installation of vaults at the Harbor District's Samoa Facility where the RTI cables will land and connect to the land based cable.

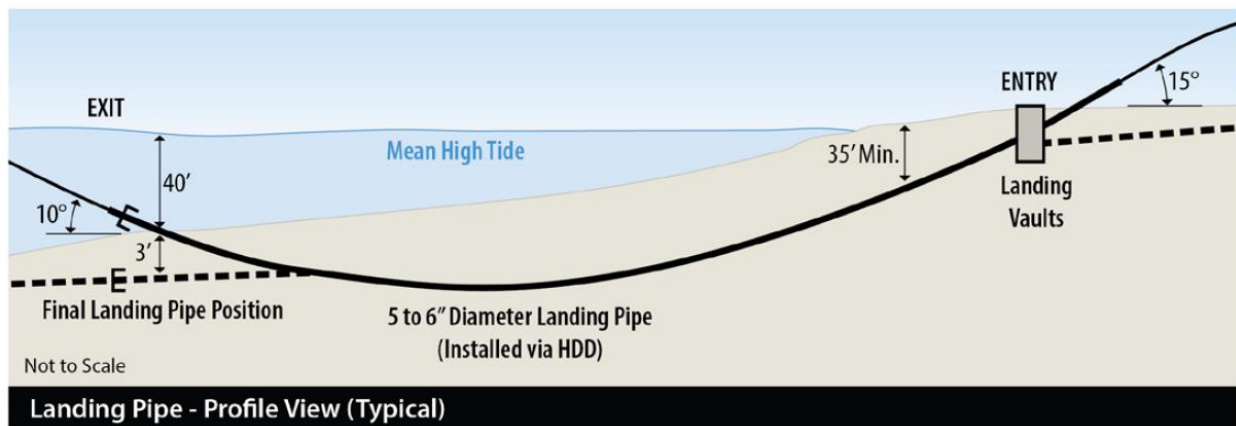
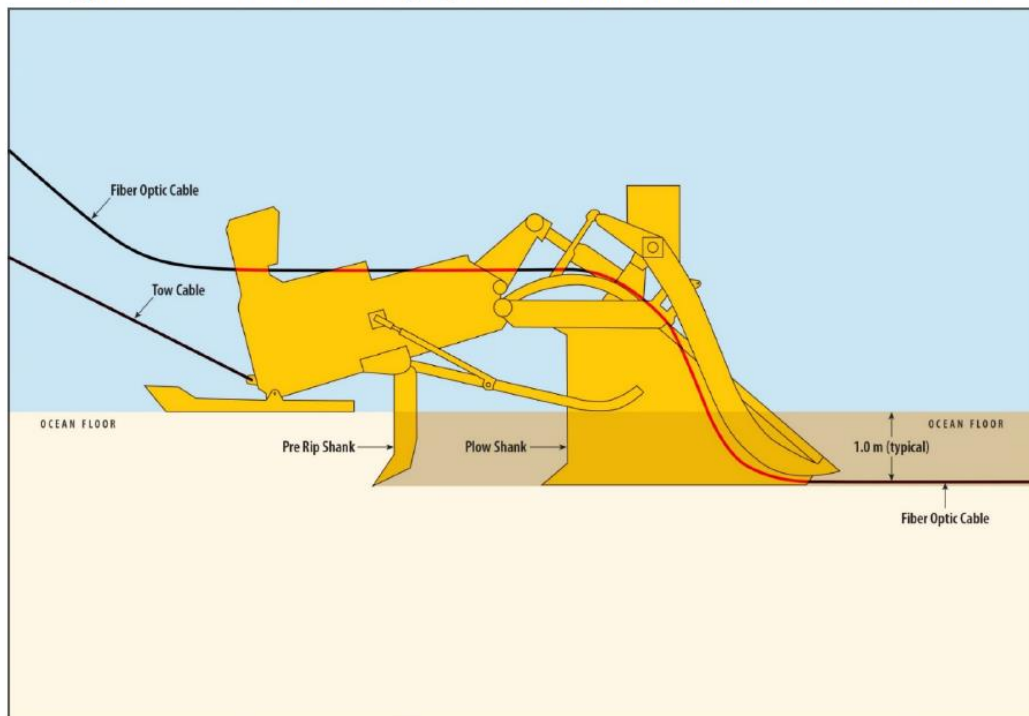
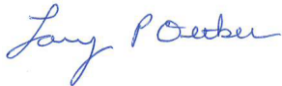


Figure 2-8. Sea Plow for Burying Marine Fiber Optic Cables on Ocean Floor



The Harbor District believes that it is not sound discretionary permit decision making to place conditions or mitigation measures on a project that requires approval from a non-governmental organization prior to approval or commencing development. This is especially true when the organization has voiced opposition to the project and has potential financial gain from withholding their approval. The Harbor District respectfully requests that the Coastal Commission place the RTI Project on the August 2021 agenda for the Commissions Consideration.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Oetker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" being more prominent than the last name "Oetker".

Larry Oetker
Executive Director
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, & Conservation District

July 19, 2021

California Coastal Commission
Attn: Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
55 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: The City of Eureka's Support for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of The City of Eureka, I am writing in support of the pending application for RTI Eureka Project CCC 9-21-0165 (the "RTI Project") currently before the Commission and urge its inclusion on the August 2021 Coastal Commission agenda. Consideration of the RTI Project at that meeting is essential to avoiding substantial delay in the completion of a broader fiber-optic cable infrastructure construction project in and around the Arcata/Eureka area—a project that will bring much-needed and long-awaited broadband internet connectivity to more than 25,000 local government, tribal communities, businesses, and households in the region.

We understand that the Commission has requested that RTI and several Northern California commercial fishermen organizations reach an agreement before the Commission will add the RTI Project to its meeting agenda and consider it for approval. We appreciate the Commission's desire that the Northern California fishermen support the RTI Project. We also greatly appreciate our local commercial fishing industry and the critical and often unheralded role that commercial fishermen play in our community.

However, we strongly feel that RTI has now offered a compromise that serves as mitigation for the impacts of the project and contend that requiring acceptance of those terms from fishermen organizations that may be opposed to the project regardless of the mitigation included is an unfair standard. In the past, we have been critical of RTI's efforts and have urged them to further address the concerns of all Northern California fishermen organizations. We now believe that the proposed changes are adequate to address non-trawler commercial fishermen organization's concerns, regardless of whether there are still some fishermen with objections to the RTI Project.

The impacts of the lack of broadband connectivity during the pandemic have been devastating to our region. The City of Eureka has been in support of the RTI Project since its inception in 2009, and we do not want it to be further delayed in providing the community with the connectivity needed and already available in almost every urban area in the state. Our rural schoolchildren, healthcare and emergency services, local governments, tribes, and local businesses are counting on this project. We need to close the digital divide on the North Coast!

The City of Eureka asks staff to include the RTI Project on the August 2021 Coastal Commission meeting agenda—with the proposed mitigation changes—regardless of whether all fisherman groups currently support the project. Please let the issue be heard and voted on by the Commission now.

Respectfully,



Mayor Susan Seaman

CC: Senator Mike McGuire
Assembly Member Jim Wood

Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, California 94105
Kate.huckelbridge@coastal.ca.gov
June, 2021

Re: RTI Eureka Cable Permits

Ms. Huckelbridge,

Salmon Trollers Marketing Association continues to be involved in efforts to correct the administration of the Point Arena Cable Fund. We are working with local Northern California Fishermen's Associations to stop yet another cable fund that we suspect is based on the Point Arena Cable Fund model. The existing cable fund in this port excluded the majority of fishermen from participation and as you know provided a few trawl fishermen with funds that were used for their personal gain. It has been difficult to turn this agreement around and so we would like to see the Eureka Fishing Agreement executed in a way that benefits both the port and all of the fishermen that work in that area.

STMA and independent fishermen in our area signed onto the Amended Fishing Agreement for the Eureka Cable Project and we advocate both for replacement of the Point Arena Fishing Agreement with this same amended agreement and, the use of this agreement for the 13 fishing associations that originally signed on to this agreement.

We oppose the issuance of any new cable permits in northern California before all the details contained in any fishing agreement and the bylaws for operating the joint committee are completely approved by local fishermen and your agencies. Thank you.

For the STMA Board of Directors



HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

GEOLOGY

May 18, 2021

Dr. Kate Huckelbridge
Deputy Director
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Dr. Huckelbridge,

We are scientists from agencies and institutions studying earthquake and tsunami hazards. The RTI Eureka Transpacific Fiber Optic Cables Project (Application # 9-21-0165) may provide benefits to improving our understanding of the offshore hazards of California's North Coast. This region, comprising the Mendocino triple junction, the Mendocino fault, the Gorda plate and the southern Cascadia subduction zone, is one of the most seismically active regions of the contiguous 48 states, yet our knowledge is limited by the lack of offshore instrumentation.

In the past few years, several studies have shown the promise of using offshore fiber optic cables as instruments (see links below). Unused "dark fiber" and cable polarization measurements can improve offshore epicenter locations at minimal cost compared to the expense of deploying and maintaining ocean-bottom instruments. We are in discussions with the company installing the Eureka cable system and the cable owners to explore applying these new techniques to the Eureka project.

One of the most societally useful applications of piggybacking scientific studies onto the cable network is earthquake early warning (EEW). The West Coast ShakeAlert EEW system, supported and operated by the USGS as well as the State of California, relies on extremely fast assessment of earthquake location and magnitude at the earliest stages of fault rupture. The current network of onshore seismic stations detects the earthquake at about the same time as people feel it. Incorporating data from offshore cables could provide additional seconds critical to an effective early warning system.

The Eureka project is an ideal opportunity to test the applicability of utilizing optic fiber data from cables that may then also be applied in other parts of the state. The rate of earthquake activity on the North Coast makes it likely that several earthquakes in the magnitude 4 to 5 range will occur within the first year of cable deployment. If we can demonstrate success with this new methodology, it may become a standard for future cables everywhere along the coast.

If you have questions about these new techniques or about earthquake early warning systems, anyone in our group would be willing to talk to members of the Coastal Commission. We hope that this project is approved and encourage the development of scientific applications for this and future cable projects. Please contact Lori Dengler at lori.dengler@humboldt.edu with questions and for further inquiries.

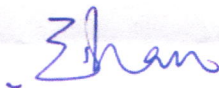
<https://news.berkeley.edu/2019/11/28/underwater-telecom-cables-make-superb-seismic-network/>
<https://www.caltech.edu/about/news/using-submarine-cables-to-detect-earthquakes>
<https://temblor.net/earthquake-insights/fiber-optic-cables-can-sense-aftershocks-12684/>



Dr. Lori Dengler, Emeritus Professor
Geology Department, Humboldt State University



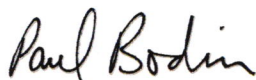
Dr. Peggy Hellweg, Operations Manager
Berkeley Seismology Lab, University of California Berkeley



Dr. Zhongwen Zhan, Assistant Professor of Geophysics
Seismological Laboratory, California Institute of Technology



Robert McPherson, Research Associate
Geology Department, Humboldt State University



Dr. Paul Bodin, Research Professor, Manager
Pacific Northwest Seismic Network, University of Washington, Seattle



Prof. Douglas Toomey, Director
Oregon Hazards Lab, University of Oregon

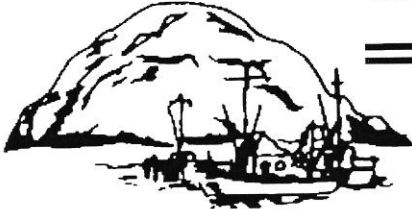


Dr. William S. D. Wilcock
Jerome M. Paros Endowed Chair in Sensor Networks
School of Oceanography, University of Washington



Dr. Steven R. Bohlen, Acting California State Geologist
Head of the California Geological Survey

Morro Bay Commercial Fisherman's Organization Inc.



P.O. BOX 450, MORRO BAY, CALIFORNIA 93443
(805) 772-4893 • mbcfo1972@gmail.com
www.mbcfo.com

Kate Huckelbridge, Deputy Director
California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, California 94105
Kate.huckelbridge@coastal.ca.gov
June 27, 2021

Re: RTI Eureka Cable Project

Dear Ms. Huckelbridge,

The Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization has over twenty years direct experience negotiating with fiber optic cable companies and has been involved in four additional years of negotiations with a wind power company. We are quite alarmed with the present situation in Humboldt County concerning the RTI Cable Protect. Thirteen Fishermen's Associations, including our association, joined the "Amended Fishing Agreement" submitted to RTI and your agency. We feel that this agreement has broad support, however RTI rejected it outright and without good reasons. This "Amended Fishing Agreement" that has strong support from over 350 California fishermen is considered by them to be the best way forward.

If getting everyone onboard with the Amended Fishing Agreements is impossible the following needs to happen before RTI is given any permits:

1. Any fishing agreement needs to be available to California fishermen.
2. All fishing agreements and joint committee bylaws need review and approval of the Coastal Commission before issuing a permit to RTI.
3. Northern California local fishermen's associations need at least 50% voting board representation on the joint committee, along with 50% local non-association fishermen

Thank you for this consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Hafer, President
Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization

Cc. Al Franzoia
Tom Weseloh
Chris Kubiak



United States Department of the Interior

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
350 N. Akron Road
Moffett Field, California 94035

22 April 2021

California Coastal Commission
Kate Huckelbridge
Deputy Director
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco CA 94105

Dear Dr. Huckelbridge,

If the California Coastal Commission approves the RTI Eureka Transpacific Fiber Optic Cables Project (CCC Application No. 9-21-0165), we note that there are potential benefits in the form of reducing losses from earthquakes in Eureka and the surrounding regions. The USGS Earthquake Science Center operates the ShakeAlert Earthquake Early Warning system in conjunction with our partner universities. ShakeAlert is designed to provide seconds to tens of seconds of warning that an earthquake has begun and strong shaking is imminent. Eureka is situated in one of the most seismically active regions of the state and we expect to issue ShakeAlert warnings there about once per year. Many of the damaging earthquakes near Eureka will begin offshore where we do not currently have seismic sensors installed. This causes us to lose crucial seconds of potential warning time and makes the warnings less accurate than they typically are for onshore earthquakes. The use of Fiber Optic cables for detecting earthquakes is a rapidly expanding field, and recent experiments have shown that offshore cables can be used as sensitive detection systems. The cables being considered for offshore of Eureka would make an ideal experiment to test the extent to which these types of systems could improve the accuracy and timeliness of ShakeAlerts. Additionally, the data could be useful in improving our overall understanding of earthquake and tsunami hazards resulting from the Cascadia subduction zone offshore of Eureka.

Regards,

Dr. Stephen Hickman
Director, Earthquake Science Center
U.S. Geological Survey
Moffett Field, CA 94035
hickman@usgs.gov



info@cacoastcrabassociation.org

California Coast Crab Association • 900 Northcrest Drive, #130 • Crescent City, CA 95531

Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer
State Lands Commission
100 Howe Ave. Suite 100-South
Sacramento, CA 95825
CEQA.comments@slc.ca.gov

SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL
1/25/2021

Re: RTI Submarine Cables, Eureka and Point Arena

Dear Ms. Lucchesi,

On behalf of our membership, the California Coast Crab Association (CCCA) is writing to formally retract the comments made in our letter submitted via email on January 18, 2021. This retraction is based upon additional input from our members and additional conversations among our Board of Directors.

Clarifications

In addition to retracting our comments submitted on January 18th, we want to acknowledge, and attempt to clarify and correct some of the misinformation and misunderstandings presented in our previous comment letter.

Initially, we had concerns that the following statement from the report was outdated: *“replacement of historical telegraphic cables with modern fiber-optic cable systems and installation techniques has improved torsional and flexion characteristics in subsea cables virtually eliminating the potential exposed cable to entangle marine species”*. However, we now understand this statement is still true, acknowledging that excessive slack during a cable during a cable installation is the issue here, and that modern technology and equipment ensure that does not happen.

Regarding our statement: *“Any gear set within a few miles of the RTI cables will be subject to entanglement on exposed cables...”* we want to acknowledge that there is almost 100% burial of over 15 cables in the fishing grounds off of Oregon. We understand there are not any exposed cables in the crab grounds there due to overall excellent bottom substrate for burial and fishermen’s input on the route. The exposures that exist are in the deep waters outside of 600 fathoms (3600 feet), where the bottom stairsteps down in places and even then, exposures there are very short (a couple feet).

We went on to comment: *“The storm and current events that bury crab traps will just as easily unbury and expose cables crossing our fishing grounds.”* We now believe this is a false narrative. We now understand that cables usually come out of a bore pipe in approximately 12 fathoms of water. From there, the cable is plow buried to a 1-1.5 meter burial depth out to end of burial, which is outside the trawl grounds in depths that exceed 4200 feet of water depth. We understand and appreciate that in over the last 20 years off the Oregon coast, they’ve never seen a cable become unburied and/or impact crab gear in any way. From our Oregon counterpart’s experience, once a cable is buried, it stays buried.



info@cacoastcrabassociation.org

California Coast Crab Association • 900 Northcrest Drive, #130 • Crescent City, CA 95531

We want to acknowledge that while: *"countries like Australia and New Zealand have treated submarine cable zones as de facto marine sanctuaries,"* we now understand that US Cable companies are not advocating for cable corridors. We understand that in reality, the location of cables off the West Coast are best determined by following the routes that minimize impacts to sensitive habitats and maximize cable protection by being buried in a soft, muddy seafloor.

Regarding our statement: *"According to the publicly available documents, 44% of "shallow water cable failure" is attributed to fixed bottom contact fishing gear hooking or snagging cables, with heavy "pots" (traps) doing the greatest damage..."* we now understand that in at least the last 20+ years, submarine fiber optic cables haven't been damaged by fishing gear. We understand this is because of good burial in cable routes designed with the trawl fishery's input and cooperation with the trawl fleet during that time. Around the world and in general, submarine cables are impacted primarily by:

- 1) Large ships dragging their anchor while in the anchorage
- 2) Earthquake created underwater landslides
- 3) Impacts from trawl gear

Other gears types are not even in the discussion because their presence is benign.

And finally, regarding our question: *"why don't cable companies do everything they might think of to enlist the long term cooperation of all fishermen to protect these cables?"* We now understand that the answer is because trawl gear is the only fishing gear on the West Coast that has the potential to impact a buried submarine cable and trawl fishermen are the only sector with a potential to be impacted by the cable. With that, we believe that the concerns about the RTI project have been adequately addressed.

We apologize for any confusion that our conflicting comments may have caused.

Sincerely,

Jon Gonzalez, Director

805-455-7220

jgonzalez@pacseafood.com

California Coast Crab Association and all of its Members