

From: Bill Hogarth [Bill.Hogarth@noaa.gov]
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2005 10:20 AM
To: _NMFS All Employees
Subject: Survey Results

Note for all NOAA Fisheries Service Employees:

In a press release on June 28th, the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) and partners said that in a survey they conducted involving more than 27 percent of NOAA Fisheries Service scientists, responders indicated that they are increasingly unable to carry out their work to protect fish and other protected populations from extinction, due to political pressures. I am concerned about this for a number of reasons. First, of course, I am always interested in what our employees think. I have an open door policy as you know. Also, I encourage all employees to tell me or their supervisors how things are going, through our ongoing program, *the Survey Feedback Action*. Employee satisfaction rates from our most recent SFA are seemingly in conflict with results from the PEER survey.

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->

I can say, however, with strong confidence that we do not change our scientific documents at NOAA Fisheries Service, as the survey implied. Any decision made in a natural resource agency of this size and importance involves many factors. Every decision we make starts with a scientific base. After that, we look at many other factors before we make final decisions, and perhaps this makes the rationale for decisions unclear to some. I encourage you to talk with your leadership and ask questions where you do not understand the basis for management decisions.

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->

With respect to the survey, one of the apparent discrepancies is that only 124 employees returned questionnaires. This is less than four percent of our almost 3,000 employees and a small fraction of the nearly 2,000 scientists. In fact, PEER did not invite scientists from the Science Centers and laboratories to participate in the survey, making the results difficult to interpret and understand. The PEER survey was flawed in a number of ways, including that the responses reflect more of the management, rather than science decisions in our Agency.

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->

I value the public service each and everyone of you provides to our country and our natural environment. If you have concerns, please bring them to me or send me an e-mail message, and let's work together to improve our communications and processes. Thank you.

Bill Hogarth
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->

From: Bill Hogarth [Bill.Hogarth@noaa.gov]

Sent: Thursday, July 07, 2005 4:18 PM

To: _NMFS All Employees; Conrad C Lautenbacher; Scott Rayder; James R Mahoney; Jack Kelly

Subject: Science in NOAA Fisheries

In follow-up to my email of June 30th and response to several newspaper articles regarding the PEER Survey, attention continues to be focused on science in the agency and how reports, etc. have been changed to meet political needs. I feel I must point out some additional information. <!--[if !supportEmptyParas]--> <!--[endif]-->

These accusations sincerely bother me. In fact, I consider this to be an attack on me as a manager. As Head of NOAA Fisheries Service, I have never been asked to change a decision I have made. We have had discussions up the chain of command on issues, but I have always been told to follow the science. <!--[if !supportEmptyParas]--> <!--[endif]-->

I encourage each of you to talk to your supervisor, if you think decisions have been made that are not based on review of the data and the overall goals and objectives of the agency. We all must remember that many factors go into the complex decisionmaking we are involved with on a daily basis. <!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->All of our decisions must be based on the best scientific information available and must ultimately meet our Congressional mandates to rebuild and sustainably manage our living marine resources for the long-term utilization and enjoyment by all United States citizens.<!--[endif]-->

If you feel you need to discuss this issue with me, please contact me by email or call me on 301/713-2239. This is a serious and important issue to me. We have a great agency that performs important duties for the United States and I am very proud of our record. I will not stand by and see it destroyed. <!--[endif]-->

Thank you for your dedicated efforts. <!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->I want you to know that all of your work is extremely important to me and NOAA.

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]-->

Bill Hogarth, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries