Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Jennifer Nielsen,
USGS/ Alaska Science Center
1011 East Tudor Rd
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Jennifer,

I fully support Dr. David Fournier's nomination for the William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award for the following reasons: His contribution to fisheries stock assessment throughout his career has earned him enormous respect from fisheries scientists and he has changed the way quantitative assessments are done in this century. He developed a sound statistical base for analyzing multiple data sets, which involved non-linear model fitting with hundreds of parameters. The paper "A general theory for analyzing catch at age data," published in 1982 by Fournier and Archibald is a landmark piece of work that influenced many quantitative scientists including me. The AD model builder (ADMB) developed by him to fit nonlinear models has become a standard tool for natural resources assessments, which I use for fitting length-based models to hard to age crab populations in the Bering Sea, Alaska. Many of my analyses on length-based models would either not be possible or would require extensive additional effort on my part if it were not for this ADMB software. My colleague at the Department of Fish and Game and Alaska Fisheries Science Center use the ADMB software to assess various stocks in Alaskan waters.

In my opinion, his contribution to quantitative fisheries science is enormous and greatly appreciated in the fisheries assessment community for him to qualify for the William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award. Without hesitation, I fully support his nomination for this award.

Sincerely,

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