



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southwest Region  
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200  
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

**NOV 05 2007**

Mr. Don Hansen, Chair  
Dr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Hansen, Dr. McIsaac and Council members:

As you are aware, NOAA Fisheries has expressed its support of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) approved motion to initiate development of an Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan (EFMP). By taking this initial step, the Council has committed to broadening its management responsibilities on the West Coast to include important ecosystem interactions in implementing its existing fishery management plans. The Council's decision emphasizes its priority to manage for the sustainable use of the California Current Ecosystem (CCE). It is obvious that the Council considers examining ecosystem trends and dynamics in relationship to the fisheries it manages as the appropriate way to make fishery management recommendations to NOAA.

The Council's proposal to move forward with an EFMP coincides with the formation of a proactive regional partnership created by the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California to protect and manage the ocean and coastal resources along the entire west coast. The "West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health" initiative stresses the importance of regional collaboration to support ocean and coastal management on an ecosystem level. While the recently released "Draft Action Plan" identifies seven priority areas (including the effective implementation of ecosystem-based management), it is clear to us that the ecosystem-based management action identified in the action plan is inherently connected to each of the other priority areas. We believe that the Council's proposed EFMP can directly support this priority in the Governors' action plan, and beyond, as the Council's EFMP efforts would include the entire Pacific salmon ecosystem. Participation on the EFMP plan team by representatives from each of the coastal states would ensure that Action Priority 3.3 (i.e., strengthened coordination by states' representatives on the Council) is implemented.

In its efforts to undertake an EFMP, NOAA Fisheries would also like to bring to the Council's attention the collaborative efforts to develop an Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) for the CCE that involves NOAA Fisheries, NOAA Ocean Service/National Marine Sanctuary Program, NOAA Information and Satellite Service/National Coastal Data Development Center, and academic partners. The IEA



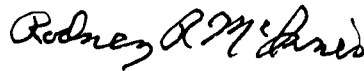
will provide a comprehensive summary of the status and potential risks of the CCE, and evaluate alternative management strategies against the CCE's condition. We see that the IEA can support the Council's development of the EFMP and allow the Council to play an integral role in the eventual development of Action Priority 3.2 of the plan against the backdrop of fishing effort.

In closing, NOAA Fisheries believes that the Council's support of the West Coast Governor's Agreement through its EFMP process can lead to a better opportunity for achieving the Governors' objectives as well as NOAA's Ecosystem Goal for protecting, restoring and managing the use of coastal and ocean resources.

Sincerely,



D. Robert Lohn,  
Regional Administrator  
Northwest Region



Rodney R. McInnis  
Regional Administrator  
Southwest Region

cc: Usha Varanasi, Ph.D.  
William W. Fox, Jr., Ph.D.