



Port Orford Ocean Resource Team

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May 8, 2009

Mr. Donald K. Hansen
Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Hansen:

At its September 2008 meeting the Pacific Council provided direction to staff and participating agencies to examine bycatch of Pacific halibut in the longline fishery for blackcod. The Port Orford Ocean Resource Team would like to have a status report on the progress made to date to evaluate bycatch in this fishery.

The Council indicated its intention to move towards evaluating potential impacts to halibut and sablefish longline fishery sectors should a management option be developed to allow retention of incidentally caught halibut. POORT feels that the 2009 and anticipated future reductions in the area 2A halibut TAC increase the need for timely analysis of halibut retention options for the directed longline fishery for blackcod.

POORT also wishes to thank the Council for its timely consideration and implementation of in season trip limit changes for the directed blackcod fishery and for adjusting allocation levels for yelloweye rockfish affecting nearshore hook and line fisheries. The new trip limit changes should increase the ability of small ports like Port Orford to access the available blackcod resource during more favorable weather periods and to more fully utilize the optimum yield, which has been underachieved in the past few years. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leesa Cobb".

Leesa Cobb
Executive Director
Port Orford Ocean Resource Team