



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Sustainable Fisheries Division F/NWR2  
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1  
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

Agenda Item E.6.a  
Attachment 3  
June 2009

MAY 27 2009

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

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

Following a National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) review of the current petrale stock assessment where we discussed it with the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, NMFS believes a review and follow up report related to this stock assessment would aid the Council in its final adoption of this assessment and the petrale specifications. Specifically, NMFS believes a review by the SSC of the following issues is warranted:

- The new assessment shows that the estimated  $B_{MSY}$  is a better fit than the proxy that was previously used.
  - NMFS would like the SSC to discuss the difference between these estimations and any issues with moving forward using the estimated  $B_{MSY}$  rather than the  $B_{MSY}$  proxy as used in the past assessments.
- NMFS would like to know what the SSC's general policy is regarding use of an estimated  $B_{MSY}$  versus the use of proxies for rockfish. What are the reasons for using the estimated  $B_{MSY}$  in this case and not in other stock assessments? This issue could be examined holistically across all rockfish species.

Given the time constraints associated with the June, 2009 Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting, attention to these matters might be best served through meetings of a subgroup of the SSC that deals with groundfish over the summer, with a report to be submitted to the Council at the September meeting.

NMFS looks forward to continuing its work with the Council and its advisory bodies.

Sincerely,

Frank Lockhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator.

