



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.
Seattle, Washington 98115

March 10, 2016

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Ms. Lowman:

By this letter and with the concurrence of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, I am approving Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1 (CEBA 1), which includes Amendment 15 to the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan (FMP), Amendment 25 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish FMP, Amendment 3 to the FMP for U.S. West Coast Highly Migratory Species, and Amendment 19 to the Pacific Coast Salmon FMP. As you know, CEBA 1 prohibits the future development of fisheries for a suite of lower trophic level species known as Shared Ecosystem Component (EC) Species until the Council has had an adequate opportunity to both assess the scientific information relating to any proposed directed fishery and consider potential impacts to existing fisheries, fishing communities, and the greater marine ecosystem.

NMFS published a proposed rule to implement CEBA 1 on January 5, 2016 (81 FR 215, RIN 0648-BF15), and we expect to have the final rule effective in spring 2016. Regulations implementing CEBA 1 will prohibit directed commercial fishing for the following species or species groups: round herring (*Etrumeus teres*) and thread herring (*Opisthonema libertate* and *O. medirastre*); mesopelagic fishes of the families *Myctophidae*, *Bathylagidae*, *Paralepididae*, and *Gonostomatidae*; Pacific sand lance (*Ammodytes hexapterus*); Pacific saury (*Cololabis saira*); silversides (family *Atherinopsidae*); smelts of the family *Osmeridae*; and pelagic squids (families: *Cranchiidae*, *Gonatidae*, *Histioteuthidae*, *Octopoteuthidae*, *Ommastrephidae* except Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*), *Onychoteuthidae*, and *Thysanoteuthidae*). CEBA 1 implementing regulations will also prohibit at-sea processing of these species, except in minimal amounts while legally processing groundfish at sea.

Congratulations on completing your first fishery ecosystem plan initiative and first FMP amendment process to simultaneously amend all four of your FMPs. We are grateful to the entire Council family for its cooperative participation in the CEBA 1 development process and its can-do attitude toward ecosystem-based fishery management. NMFS looks forward to working with its partners in the Council process on future fishery ecosystem plan initiatives.

Sincerely,

William W. Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

