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April 2, 2014

Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, OR 97220-1384

RE: Agenda Item C Groundfish Management

Dear Council Members:

City of Forks is the base for Washington Ocean Area 3, and together with Neah Bay make up the Washington North Coast management region. A distance of 50 miles to the north and over 100 miles to the south to reach another town makes for economic isolation. Citizens in these areas are heavily reliant on resource and tourism based income that is provided through fisheries and timber.

The North Coast of Washington is a rockfish habitat rich area containing robust stocks of lingcod, black rockfish and Pacific halibut, the target species of the majority of fishermen. WDFW prohibited all commercial fishing in state waters including the near shore commercial hook and line fishery in 1996 as a conservation measure to ensure healthy groundfish stocks for the sport fishery.

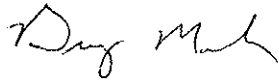
A large yelloweye rockfish conservation area (YRCA) has been in place in the north coast region since the early 1990's. This area is closed to recreational halibut and bottom fish fishing as a conservation measure to protect yelloweye rockfish which are managed under a rebuilding plan by the Pacific Fishery Management Council.

WDFW has taken additional management measures to protect yelloweye and canary rockfish including restricting recreational fishing to the area shoreward of 20 fathoms from May 1 through September 30.

In a time of National Economic Recovery, implementation of highly restrictive Ground fish Harvest Specification and Management Measures for 2015-2016 that is not backed up by a Full Assessment of all stocks in the Complex will bring unnecessary Hardship to our Community.

given the economic vulnerability of these remote coastal communities, we do not support implementation of highly restrictive harvest specifications and management measures for nearshore rockfish until more data is available to do a stock assessment that takes into account Washington specific data and historical management measures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryon Monohon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Bryon Monohon, Mayor  
City of Forks