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September 6, 2013

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 N.E. Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-7204

Dear Chair Lowman:

In light of several halibut issues on the upcoming Council meeting agenda, including the Halibut Catch Sharing Plan and the South of Humbug Policy Group report, the IPHC staff would like to provide comment with regard to the 2013 IPHC summer assessment survey conducted off the west coast, including northern California.

We have recently read several comments which conclude that the 2013 survey results will have no bearing on decisions regarding the 2014 fishery. This is incorrect. In fact, the 2013 survey results will be part of the data set used in our assessment to estimate the coastwide exploitable biomass, and also to apportion the biomass among regulatory areas, including Area 2A. While we are unable to make the survey results public until we present the results of the staff's assessment to the Commission in early December, the current year's survey data have always been used for the subsequent year's fishery decisions.

Ms. Heather Gilroy of the IPHC staff will be attending the September meeting of the Council, and will be able to elaborate on this or other issues at the Council's pleasure.

Sincerely yours,



Bruce M. Leaman
Executive Director

cc: IPHC Commissioners