



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Dorothy M. Lowman, Chair | Donald O. McIsaac, Executive Director

DATE

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RE: BOEM Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force

Dear Ms. Thurston,

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has become aware of recent developments in the Government's wind energy program for the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Of particular interest to the Council are actions intended for the Pacific OCS. As you may know, the Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MSA), and recommends management actions for Federal fisheries off Washington, Oregon and California. The MSA includes provisions to identify, conserve, and enhance Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for species regulated under a Council fisheries management plan. The MSA defines EFH as "*those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.*" Each Council is authorized under MSA to comment on any Federal or state activity that may affect the habitat, including EFH, of a fishery resource under its authority. The Council is an intergovernmental/stakeholder body with 14 voting members and five non-voting members. The voting members include the director of state fish and wildlife agencies from California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho; the Regional Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service; a representative of a federally-recognized tribe; and eight private citizens appointed by the Secretary of Commerce from lists submitted by the governors of the member states. The non-voting members represent the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of Alaska, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Council was recently briefed by its Habitat Committee on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Oregon Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force. We understand that membership includes federal, state, local, and tribal governments, and that the intended purpose of the taskforce is to create a process for affected entities to provide input into BOEM's renewable energy program. We applaud BOEM for taking a pro-active, localized approach at the onset of this new endeavor. As described in BOEM's first presentation to the Taskforce in March 2011, a key area for member input is in identifying potential conflicts with fishing and other ocean uses. We are encouraged that BOEM is specifically seeking input on potential conflicts with ocean uses, and are interested in assisting BOEM in identifying and finding solutions to these conflicts. The Council possesses a unique regional perspective on fisheries management, broad expertise in fisheries issues, and extensive knowledge of fish and habitat

resources throughout the California Current Ecosystem. As such, the Council is the appropriate entity to address conflicts potentially occurring between offshore energy development and marine fisheries across the Pacific OCS. To this end, the Council respectfully requests membership on the Oregon Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force.

We look forward to working alongside BOEM to identify, avoid and minimize these conflicts, and to achieve the long-term goal of responsible development of this new and promising industry.

Signature Block