



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

December 16, 2011

Mr. Dan Wolford, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, Oregon 97220

Dear Mr. Wolford:

By this letter, I am notifying you of the approval of Secretarial Amendment 1 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). As you know, Secretarial Amendment 1 revises the rebuilding plans for the following species: Bocaccio south of 40° 10' north latitude; canary rockfish; cowcod south of 40° 10' north latitude; darkblotched rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch (POP), widow rockfish, and yelloweye rockfish. This amendment also creates a rebuilding plan for petrale sole. Petrale sole was declared overfished on February 9, 2010. In addition, the amendment modifies status determination criteria in the FMP for flatfish, establishes a new precautionary harvest control rule for flatfish, and adds an appendix containing the rebuilding plans for each overfished species.

NMFS published a proposed rule to implement Secretarial Amendment 1 and the 2012 groundfish harvest specifications and management measures on September 9, 2011 (76 FR 55865) and a final rule on December 14, 2011 (76 FR 77415) with an effective date of January 1, 2012. During the comment period on the proposed rule NMFS received public comments only on the geographical split for lingcod at 42°, including a letter from the Council. After consideration of the comments from the public and the Council, NMFS has decided to not implement this geographical split for lingcod in this final rule, referring this issue back to the Council for further consideration in the 2013-2014 harvest specifications and management measures process. As you know, the Council has already added consideration of this issue to the list of topics for the 2013-2014 harvest specifications and management measures process. The result of removing the changes from this final rule is that quota pounds for the IFQ fishery will be issued coastwide, following the same procedures used in 2011.

This final rule implements the harvest specifications and management measures from the 2011-2012 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Final Rule (May 11, 2011, 75 FR 27508) which were implemented under the Secretary of Commerce's emergency authority and approves Secretarial Amendment 1. I have attached an electronic version of the FMP which includes all the changes from Secretarial Amendment 1 and the new appendix.



Both the amendment and the 2011-2012 groundfish harvest specifications and management measures were developed over several Council meetings and required the attention of the Council, its advisory bodies, and its staff. Thank you for your time and care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William W. Stelle, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

William W. Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator