

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

June 27, 2000

Donald O. McIsaac, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

Thank you for your recent letter describing the Council's intention to review preseason chinook and coho abundance forecasts. WDFW appreciates the Council's commitment to improving the technical basis for our management, and we look forward to having the SSC and STT help us evaluate our methodologies. We agree with your assessment that review of methodologies for all stocks would be a large work load and believe it would be best to approach the task by prioritizing methodologies and taking them on in manageable pieces.

Our intent is to begin compiling documentation for the management units we judge to have the greatest need. WDFW's highest priority for review is the forecast approaches applied to Puget Sound and Washington Coastal coho, specifically methods used to forecast Queets natural, Hood Canal natural and Strait of Juan de Fuca natural stocks. The high priority we attach to resolving methods for these stocks reflects the degree to which forecast uncertainty has influenced the Council's decision process in recent years. The Queets natural coho stock is a perennial driver stock in determining harvest quotas in the North of Cape Falcon management region. For Hood Canal and Strait coho forecasts, WDFW and Puget Sound tribal co-managers have committed to evaluation of methodologies prior to the 2001 season planning process. Documentation of our assessment this year could be provided well in advance of the SSC's scheduled review of methodologies beginning in October 2001.

I look forward to discussing this issue at the June Council meeting.

Sincerely,



Philip Anderson
Special Assistant
Intergovernmental Policy