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Exhibit C.8
Attachment 1
September 2002

State of Washington
PFMC DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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August 2, 2002

Dr. Donald McIsaac, Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Don:

As you know, Council planning for groundfish stock assessments in 2003 anticipated updates of the black rockfish, yellowtail rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and lingcod stocks. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) scientists have historically undertaken each of these assessments. However, our staff scientists are actively involved in two critical yelloweye rockfish tasks, both occurring this summer: 1) update the yelloweye stock status and rebuilding schedule for the September 9 Council meeting; and 2) estimate yelloweye abundance in habitats designated as untrawlable by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) along the north Washington coast using a new application of video survey techniques. Therefore, in June, I advised the Council that we were evaluating our workload and may not be able to provide the traditional assessments as planned.

Since the June Council meeting, I have had discussions with our Marine Fish Science staff. Our three stock assessment scientists are each involved in the 18-day August yelloweye rockfish survey. The combination of sea-time and over-time accrued during the survey will consume six weeks of work time alone. Moreover, all of these scientists serve as technical advisors to the Pacific or North Pacific Councils. There are three North Pacific and two Pacific Council meetings between August 2002 (when the video survey is conducted) and March 2003. The video survey results are scheduled for delivery to the Council at the March meeting. Stock assessment results are similarly timed to be available for STAR panel review after mid-March. Given the known workload commitments of our assessment staff, we estimate that between August and March they will have 70-80 uncommitted working days to complete the analysis of the summer survey data, and address other contingency requests for their time.

The video survey is a "first of its kind" application and, as such, requires considerable attention of our science staff. There are high hopes in many quarters that the survey will successfully determine yelloweye abundance and provide the Council with improved information on stock status in Washington. So we do not violate the public trust, we need to make sure that we have our scientific "ducks in a row." Accordingly, the staff advises me that they will need all the

Dr. Donald McIsaac

August 2, 2002

Page 2

“uncommitted” work-day time they have between now and March to deliver the survey results. Therefore, we have the following proposal: 1) We recommend that the black rockfish and lingcod stock assessments be postponed until 2004. WDFW staff will form a Stock Assessment Team (STAT) to complete these analyses for the 2004-05 assessment cycle. 2) We recommend that NMFS assume responsibility for the yellowtail rockfish stock assessment. Dependent on NMFS scientists’ workload, you may also want to postpone the yellowtail assessment until 2004.

I understand there are issues associated with this proposal concerning lingcod and the required update for stocks managed under a rebuilding plan. I would like to discuss this with NMFS officials to determine how we can meet the requirements with the minimum amount of staff time.

In my view, this proposal will best serve the public interest, and it is my hope that you will agree. A discussion between yourself, NMFS, and myself prior to the September Council meeting would be useful so that we can solidify our work plans and meet the Council’s needs. I would appreciate having a discussion with you about this proposal at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Philip Anderson
Special Assistant
Intergovernmental Resource Management

PA:dak

cc: Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, NMFS/NWFSC
Mr. Bill Robinson, NMFS
Jack Tagart