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July 2, 2002

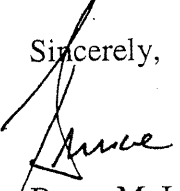
Dr. M. Elizabeth Clarke, Director  
Fishery Resource Analysis and Monitoring Division  
Northwest Fisheries Science Center  
2725 Montlake Boulevard E  
Seattle, WA 98112-2097

Dear Elizabeth:

Thank you for the revised report on IPHC Area 2A bycatch mortality. Gregg Williams of our staff had reviewed the report and we believe the revised version addresses the calculation issues we had noted previously concerning 1999 and 2000 estimates. I appreciate your constructive response to the issue and anticipate our staffs will strive to avoid recurrence. A minor editorial issue: intervals of length and depth in Tables 4-6 should be relabeled as they suggest overlap in measurements.

Our understanding is that this analysis will be updated this summer and that the estimate for 2001 will be transmitted to the Commission and the SSC for review and comments in September. We anticipate receiving a final number by October 15<sup>th</sup> in time for inclusion in our stock assessment. As you are aware, we normally carry forward the estimate from the previous year to use in our yield apportionment table for the coming year. In this case, we would use the forthcoming 2001 bycatch mortality estimate in the table for 2003 yields. However, the Pacific Fishery Management Council's recent decisions on restricted fishing opportunities for 2002 and likely for 2003 raises the question as to the appropriate level of bycatch mortality that should be used in calculations for 2003 yields. In addition, new observer data may also be available. We will need to make a determination this fall and would appreciate your views on methods to calculate an appropriate bycatch mortality figure for Area 2A.

Sincerely,

  
Bruce M. Leaman  
Executive Director

cc: McIsaac - PFMC  
Hoard - IPHC  
Varanasi - NMFS/NWFSC  
Anderson - WDFW

Robinson - NMFS/NWR  
Bodenmiller - ODFW  
Balsiger - NMFS/AKR