



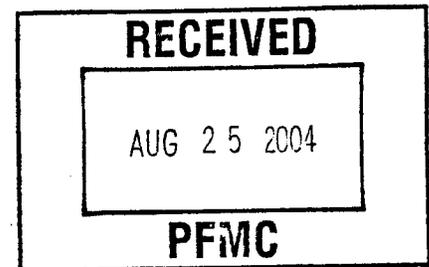
N.W. Indian Fisheries Commission
6730 Martin Way East
Olympia, WA 98516
(360) 438-1180



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 North Capitol Way
Olympia, Washington 98511
(360) 902-2200

August 25, 2004

Mr. Don Hansen, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384



Dear Mr. Hansen:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission on behalf of its member tribes are writing to urge the Pacific Fishery Management Council to direct stock assessment teams to incorporate regional differences in stock abundance, distribution, and genetics as appropriate during the upcoming stock assessment cycle. The tribes and the state believe that identifying and managing for regional differences are required for us to meet our obligations as co-managers of the fisheries resources within the tribes usual and accustomed fishing grounds and stations and to fulfill the tribes treaty rights.

The PFMC has implemented regional management for certain selected species based on results of stock assessments that indicated a biological difference between stocks or portions of coastwise stocks. In the case of black rockfish, genetic differences have been noted between northern and southern stocks. Lingcod in the north and south have demonstrated differing responses to rebuilding efforts as well as displaying differences in key biological parameters such as size at age and maturity schedules. For both of these species, the Council has developed management regimes that delineate two separate regions. The rationale for managing these stocks on a regional basis is to allow differences in management measures, contingent upon the abundance or health of the stock within each respective region, that achieve utilization to the degree possible while meeting conservation and rebuilding goals. We understand that there are data for other species that would provide the needed information to manage other groundfish stocks in a similar manner, and we are encouraging that information to be incorporated in future stock assessments if it is available.

We are specifically requesting that the Council have its Scientific and Statistical Committee add a consideration of regional management to the Terms of Reference for Stock Assessments and STAR Panel reviews. As such, each stock assessment author would be asked to evaluate, based on the available data, whether a biological or

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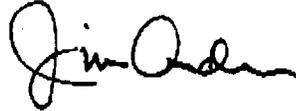
ecological rationale exists to manage the stock on a regional basis, make regional boundary recommendations, as appropriate, or, if there is insufficient information to evaluate regional management for the species, identify the data gaps and/or research needed to facilitate a regional management approach.

We appreciate the Council's consideration of our proposal. We understand that the Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the September Council meeting with final approval taking place at the November meeting. We will come prepared to discuss our proposal further at the September meeting.

Sincerely,



Phil Anderson
Special Assistant
Washington Department of Fisheries



Jim Anderson
Executive Director
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

cc: NWIFC Member Tribes