

September 2008


**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

THE DIRECTOR

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PFMC

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

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Pacific Fishery Management Council's intention to establish a U.S. West Coast shallow-set longline fishery for swordfish.

The proposed action would address the current prohibition of shallow-set longline fishing in the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species that was partially disapproved by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service when the FMP was originally submitted in 2003. As you point out, this action follows the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's ongoing process to amend the FMP to remove effort restrictions and adjust sea turtle limits in the Hawaii-based shallow-set longline swordfish fishery.

I have asked the Administrators of the Pacific Islands Regional Office and the Southwest Regional Office to explore options for collaboration. I anticipate this collaboration will focus on ensuring that fishing opportunities are equitable for the existing Hawaii-based fishery and for the proposed U.S. West Coast-based fishery, while providing necessary safeguards for protected species.

I appreciate your continued leadership on these issues.

Sincerely,

James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Acting Assistant Administrator
for Fisheries



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THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FOR FISHERIES

