



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

Mr. Donald K. Hansen
Chair, Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Ste. 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Chairman Hansen:

In November 2007, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) adopted, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved, an overall Pacific sardine harvest guideline (HG) of 89,093 mt for the 2008 fishing year. This HG was then subdivided into a directed harvest fishery of 80,184 mt and an incidental fishery of 8,909 mt. These harvest amounts were initially divided throughout the year in the following way:

- January 1-June 30, 26,550 mt allocated for directed harvest with an incidental set-aside of 4,633 mt;
- July 1-September 14, 34,568 mt allocated for directed harvest with an incidental set-aside of 1,069 mt; and
- September 15-December 31, 19,066 mt allocated for directed harvest with an incidental set-aside of 3,207 mt.

The set-aside allows for the restricted incidental landings of Pacific sardine in other fisheries, particularly other CPS fisheries, when a seasonal directed fishery is closed. Pacific sardine caught incidental to other fisheries during such a closure are counted against that period's incidental set aside.

On August 8, 2008, NMFS announced the closure of directed fishing for Pacific sardine. This closure was necessary because the adjusted directed fishing harvest total for the second allocation period (July 1 - September 14) was expected to be reached. Although timely data were received by NMFS, updated landing reports reviewed after the closure indicate that the directed catch exceeded the allotted directed harvest allocation for this second period by 1,712 mt. Based upon our interpretation of the November 26, 2007, transmittal letter received from the Council regarding harvest and management recommendations for the 2008 Pacific sardine fishing season, NMFS believes it is appropriate that this discrepancy be subtracted from the following directed fishing allocation period rather than deducted from the second allocation period's incidental fishery set-aside. Therefore, when directed fishing for Pacific Sardine re-opens on September 15 per the allocation scheme, the adjusted directed allocation for the final period (September 15-December 31) will represent the subtraction of this overage along with the addition of any unused portion of the 1,069 mt set-aside from the second allocation period.



Should the Council have any questions regarding the steps taken by NMFS during this closure and reallocation please contact Josh Lindsay of my staff at 562-980-4034.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney R. McInnis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'M'.

Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator