



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

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SEP 6 2011

Mr. Dan Wolford, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Ste. 101
Portland, Oregon 97220

Dear Mr. Wolford:

By this letter, I am approving Amendment 13 to the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan (CPS FMP). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a proposed rule to implement Amendment 13 (RIN 0648-BA68) on June 28, 2011 (76 FR 37761) and we expect to have the final rule effective by the end of October 2011.

As you know, Amendment 13 revises the CPS FMP to implement new statutory requirements for annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs) and in response to the revised guidelines to implement National Standard 1 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. NMFS believes that, as designed, the following specific changes being made to the FMP through Amendment 13, will better account for scientific and management uncertainty and help to prevent overfishing of CPS stocks:

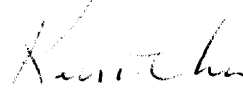
1. Modification of the existing harvest control rules for actively managed species to include a buffer or reduction in acceptable biological catch (ABC) relative to the overfishing level (OFL) to account for scientific uncertainty. This buffer will be determined during the annual management cycle through a combination of scientific advice from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and a policy determination of the Council (P* approach);
2. Maintenance of the default harvest control rules for monitored stocks as modified to specify the new management reference points. ACLs would be specified for multiple years until such time as the species becomes actively managed or new scientific information becomes available. The current 75 percent reduction buffer in the ABC control rule (ABC equals 25 percent of OFL or MSY) will remain in use until recommended for modification by the SSC and approved by the Council;
3. Addition of AMs and sector-specific ACLs and/or ACTs to the CPS FMP management framework for use in the annual harvest and management specification process.

NMFS also recognizes the Council's attempts to further ecosystem management through Amendment 13 and the addition of Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii pallasii*) and jacksmelt (*Atherinopsis californiensis*) to the FMP as ecosystem component species.



NMFS appreciates the Council's ongoing efforts to meet the objectives of National Standard 1 in order to more effectively prevent overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks, or stocks that may become overfished.

Sincerely,



for Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator

cc: D.O. McIsaac, Ph.D. - Pacific Fishery Management Council