



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, Washington 98115
September 6, 2016

Mr. Herb Pollard, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Chairman Pollard:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommends that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) consider the enclosed report prepared by NMFS regarding coastal pelagic species (CPS) finfish stocks. I request the Council review this report at its September 2016 meeting. Specifically, the report contains a compilation and examination by NMFS' Southwest Fisheries Science Center of available scientific information pertaining to minimum stock size thresholds (MSSTs) for CPS finfish stocks managed under the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

After receiving advice from your advisory bodies and hearing public comment, I request that the Council determine by or before the close of the March 2017 Council meeting, whether action is warranted to revise or establish one or more of the five MSSTs for the finfish stocks managed under the CPS FMP.

Preparation of the report and this letter are intended to meet the terms of the settlement agreement under which Oceana dismissed its appeal of the litigation challenging Amendment 13 to the CPS FMP (Oceana, Inc. v. Penny Pritzker, et al.; Ninth Circuit No. 13-16183; District Court No. C-11-6527 EMC (N.D. Cal.)). If, after considering this report, the Council determines no further action is warranted, then the obligations under this component of the settlement agreement will be completed. The other component of the Oceana litigation settlement, review of the DISTRIBUTION parameter for Pacific sardine, was completed in November 2015.

If you have any questions, please contact Joshua Lindsay (Joshua.lindsay@noaa.gov or 562-980-4034), NMFS West Coast Region lead CPS staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen P. Freese".

Stephen P. Freese
Acting Assistant Regional Administrator
for Sustainable Fisheries

Enclosure

