

## WEST COAST REGIONAL OPERATING AGREEMENT FINAL REVIEW

In September 2015, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released final Operational Guidelines (OG), which provided guidance on development, review, and implementation of Federal fishery management plans, amendments, regulations, and for content of Regional Operating Agreements (ROAs). ROAs are documents that describe roles and responsibilities of the regional Council staff and its corresponding NMFS/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) General Counsel regional partners in planning, developing, and approving fishery management plans, amendments, and regulations.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and NMFS West Coast partners have an ROA that was signed in 2013. The current ROA was intended to document existing processes and not to impose any desired changes in the roles and responsibilities of the parties. The new OG requires parties to review their ROA by 2016, and provide the opportunity to revise the ROA to update procedures and make any desired changes. At its September meeting the Council discussed potential revisions to the ROA, with the objective of finalizing a new ROA at the November 2016 Council meeting. Council staff has coordinated with NMFS and has recommended only a few minor changes to the ROA for Council consideration (Agenda Item G.2, Attachment 1)

### **Council Action:**

#### **1. Review and provide final comments on the West Coast ROA.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item C.1, Attachment 1: Draft Operating Agreement Among the Pacific Fishery Management Council; NOAA Fisheries Service West Coast Regional Office; NOAA Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center; NOAA Fisheries Service Southwest Fisheries Science Center; NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement West Coast Division; NOAA General Counsel, Northwest Section; and NOAA General Counsel, Southwest Section.

### **Agenda Order:**

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| C.1 West Coast Regional Operating Agreement Final Review   | Chuck Tracy |
| a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities   |             |
| b. Public Comment  |             |
| c. <b>Council Action:</b> Review and Provide Final Comments on the West Coast Regional Operating Agreement |             |