



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
1201 NE Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97232-1274

Agenda Item E.10.a

July 7, 2017 Supplemental NMFS Report 1  
September 2017

Herb Pollard, Chair  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Re: Council Recommendations for Groundfish Inseason Action - Adjustments to the 2017 Limited Entry and Open Access Fixed Gear Lingcod Trip Limits North and South of 40°10' North Latitude

Dear Chair Pollard,

This letter responds to the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) transmittal letter, dated June 27, 2017, recommending inseason adjustments to groundfish fisheries, including a change to limited entry and open access (OA) fixed gear trip limits for lingcod both north and south of 40°10' North latitude (N. lat.).

The final rule associated with this action (July, 7, 2017, 82 FR 31494) adopts all Council recommendations with the exception of the November trip limit for OA fixed gear for lingcod south of 40°10' N. lat., which will remain at the current lingcod trip limit designated in regulation in Table 3 (South) to Part 660, Subpart F in the Code of Federal Regulations.

For the OA fixed gear fishery south of 40°10' N. lat., the Council recommended a "200 lb (91 kg) per month" trip limit for lingcod during the month of November, which is lower than the current lingcod trip limit of "400 lb (181 kg) per month" for November in the OA fixed gear fishery south of 40°10' N. lat. The Council recommended trip limit was based on an error in the Groundfish Management Team's report ([Agenda Item F.10.a, REVISED Supplemental GMT Report 2, June 2017](#)), which provided the basis for the Council's motion, and is inconsistent with the report's analysis of the estimated impacts, which analyzed a "600 lb per month" trip limit for lingcod during the month of November.

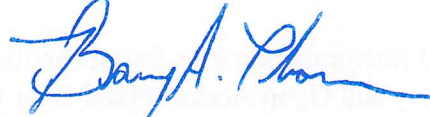
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) understands the Council's intent with the recommendations for changes to lingcod trip limits was to increase trip limits from what is currently in regulation to provide additional access and harvest a greater proportion of the lingcod annual catch limit. It was not the Council's stated intent to reduce harvesting opportunities by reducing the OA fixed gear lingcod trip limits south of 40°10' N. lat. for the month of November from 400 lb to 200 lb. Therefore, NMFS is disapproving the lower November trip limit for lingcod (200 lb (91 kg) per month) in the OA fixed gear fishery south of



40°10' N. lat. for the month of November. The trip limit for that month will remain as is at “400 lb (181 kg) per month.” The Council continues to have the ability to modify trip limits for lingcod, including the OA fixed gear trip limit for lingcod south of 40°10' N. lat., as new information becomes available to support those modifications.

Should your staff have any questions regarding NMFS’s decision on this matter, please contact Karen Palmigiano at (206)526-4491 or karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov, or me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Barry A. Thom  
Regional Administrator

cc: Mr. Chuck Tracy  
Mike Burner  
Kelly Ames