



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

January 31, 2018

Mr. Phil Anderson, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Mr. ^{Phil}Anderson:

Through this letter, I am notifying you of the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) approval of Amendment 16 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP). NMFS published a Notice of Availability for Amendment 16 in the Federal Register on November 6, 2017 (82 FR 51381) and a proposed implementing rule on November 22, 2017 (82 FR 55551). NMFS intends to publish the final implementing rule in the near future and expects the rule to become effective in late February or early March, 2018.

As you know, Amendment 16 would add a description of "minor directed" fisheries to the CPS FMP, and the corresponding revision to the implementing regulations will allow small amounts of CPS finfish to be harvested in directed fisheries even when large-scale directed CPS fishing is closed. Until now, these small-scale fisheries have been precluded from directly harvesting small amounts of CPS because they did not fall under the existing closure exemptions for incidental harvest or for targeting CPS to be sold as live bait.

Allowing minor directed harvest of CPS stocks will provide economic relief to these small-scale CPS fishermen while still effectively conserving CPS stocks.

Sincerely,

Barry A. Thom
Regional Administrator

