



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Phil Anderson, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director

September 6, 2019

Dr. David Wilson
Executive Director
International Pacific Halibut Commission
2320 West Commodore Way, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98199-1278

Re: Transition Planning for Transfer of Management Authority of the Area 2A Non-Indian Commercial Directed Halibut Fishery

Dear Dr. Wilson:

At its June 2019 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) discussed the Area 2A Non-Indian Commercial Directed Halibut Fishery (directed fishery) Transition Process and Workshop Planning. The Council agreed to pursue a transition of management authority of this fishery from the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) to the Council and wanted to convey our commitment to that effect. Transitioning the fishery will have its challenges and the Council needs time to develop and implement changes across multiple agencies. Recognizing this, continuing the cooperative and collaborative relationship between the Council and the IPHC will be key to ensuring a seamless transition.

As you know, the first steps toward the transition have already begun and the Council appreciates the assistance of the IPHC Secretariat in distributing our news release to the directed fishery license holders. The purpose of the news release was to notify stakeholders that we do not intend to consider any major changes to the fishery management structure during the transition period. For those who may not be familiar with the Council process, the news release also informed directed fishery participants that along with the Council's Catch Sharing Plan preseason process, the September and November meetings include agenda items to provide input to the Council on annual directed fishery regulations for 2020.

The Council may also need to develop and implement new processes for permitting the directed fishery, reviewing fishery data, and developing and discussing any proposed regulatory changes. To help us move forward, the Council is requesting that IPHC continue to issue licenses for the 2A halibut fisheries, including the directed commercial halibut fishery for 2020 and 2021 at a minimum, in order to provide sufficient time for the development and promulgation of new Federal regulations.

The Council would also like to discuss a data sharing arrangement with the IPHC Secretariat relative to the IPHC 2A halibut licensing system and the commercial directed halibut fishery

logbook data. Both of these datasets will help us assess the resources needed for management of the directed fishery.

At the upcoming September 2019 Council meeting, the Council will review and discuss a range of management recommendations for the 2A directed fishery in 2020, which will be distributed for public review after the meeting. In November, the Council will finalize its recommendations and forward to IPHC for consideration during their interim and annual meetings in November and February, respectively.

Also at the November 2019 Council meeting, the Council will discuss transition planning under a separate Pacific halibut agenda item. National Marine Fisheries Service is scheduled to provide an initial report that would describe the process, timeline, and workload associated with transitioning the management of the directed fishery; this report will help the Council develop additional recommendations to IPHC for their interim and annual meetings.

If you or the IPHC staff have any questions regarding the items outlined here, please feel free call upon Ms. Robin Ehlke of the Council staff or the Council's Executive Director, Mr. Chuck Tracy at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Anderson', written in a cursive style.

Philip Anderson
Council Chairman

RDE:ael

Cc: Council Members
Mr. Steve Keith
Mr. Chuck Tracy
Ms. Robin Ehlke