



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

NOV 18 2008

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, we enclose for your review the Bering Sea Chinook Salmon Bycatch Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (DEIS/RIR/IRFA).

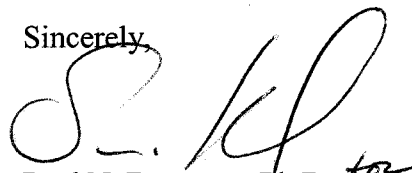
This DEIS/RIR/IRFA is prepared pursuant to NEPA to assess the environmental, social, and economic impacts associated with NOAA proceeding with measures to minimize Chinook salmon bycatch to the extent practicable in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The alternatives analyzed in this DEIS/RIR/IRFA generally involve limits or "caps" on the number of Chinook salmon that may be taken as bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery and closure of all or a part of the Bering Sea to pollock fishing once the cap is reached. These closures would occur when a Chinook salmon bycatch cap is reached, even if the entire pollock total allowable catch has not yet been harvested.

The DEIS/RIR/IRFA is also accessible electronically through the NMFS Alaska Region's website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/bycatch/default.htm>. Additional CDs or printed copies of the DEIS/RIR/IRFA may be requested from this website.

Written comments should be submitted through mail, facsimile (fax), or email to the Responsible Program Official identified below. Written comments submitted during the agency's 60-day public comment period must be received by February 3, 2009. When submitting fax or email comments, include the following document identifier in the comment subject line: Salmon Bycatch EIS.

Responsible Program Official: Robert D. Mecum
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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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Sincerely,



Paul N. Doremus, Ph.D. *for*
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

