



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Sustainable Fisheries Division F/NWR2
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

FEB 09 2010

Dr. Donald McIsaac, Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

This letter is to formally notify the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) that the most recent stock assessment of petrale sole, conducted in 2009, indicated that the ratio between the biomass and the overfished threshold (B/B_{LIMIT}) has fallen below a value of one, and petrale sole is considered overfished. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) understands that the Council is in the process of considering revisions to the Bmsy and the overfishing threshold for petrale sole. However, regardless of any revisions, the stock is still considered overfished at this time. The overfished determination is a change in status as listed in the NMFS Species Information System database. The Council was made aware of the change in the overfished determination for petrale sole at its November 2009 meeting.

As you know, the Council recommended and NMFS implemented interim management measures effective January 1, 2010, that would benefit the stock and help facilitate rebuilding. Because this determination on petrale sole is new for 2010, the Council will be crafting a rebuilding plan as Amendment 16-5 to the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan through the 2011-2012 Management Measures and Harvest Specifications process. Through this process the Council will provide recommendations and supporting analysis for the changes that NMFS will evaluate for implementation.

We look forward to working with the Council on this important issue. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Frank D. Lockhart
Assistant Regional Administrator

