



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NOV 29 2016

Mr. Dan Hull
Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99601

Dear Mr. Hull:

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual importance for fishery management in the North Pacific at the October 2016 Council meeting. One of the issues raised in my discussions with regional stakeholders was the composition of the Advisory Panel and whether it continued to represent the diverse interests in the North Pacific fisheries. The Council, following its Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures, has a tradition of appointing recognized experts from the fishing industry that represents a variety of gear types, industry and related interests as well as a spread of geographic regions of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest having major interest in the fisheries off Alaska.

As the Council prepares to appoint or reappoint members to its Advisory Panel, I encourage the Council to appoint members who best provide the necessary expertise on the important issues the Council is intending to address in the near future. I am confident the Council will consider the current composition of the Advisory Panel and appoint members who help to fill any gaps in representation and give the highest priority to candidates with the ability to be objective and to consider all aspects of an issue. I recognize the importance of these choices because the Council relies on the Advisory Panel for comprehensive advice on how various fishery management alternatives will affect the fishing industry and local economies, on potential conflicts between user groups of a given fishery resource or area, and on the extent to which the United States will utilize resources managed by the Council's fishery management plans.

Sincerely,

Samuel D. Rauch, III
Deputy Assistant Administrator
for Regulatory Programs

