UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

MEMORANDUM FOR: DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Barry A. Thom
Deputy Regional Administrator

SUBJECT: REAPPORTIONMENT OF PACIFIC WHITING & MINOR SLOPE ROCKFISH BYCATCH NOTICE

Effective: 1200 Noon, local time, October 4, 2012

Reapportionment

Regulations at 50 CFR 660.131 (h) provide for the reapportionment of Pacific whiting allocations that the Regional Administrator determines will not be used by the end of the fishing year. The best available information on October 2, 2012 indicates that at least 28,000 mt of the tribal allocation of 48,556 mt for the 2012 tribal Pacific whiting fishery will not be used by December 31, 2012. Recent conversations with tribal fishery managers indicate that reapportioning 28,000 mt, leaving a tribal allocation of 20,556 mt, will not limit tribal harvest opportunities for the remainder of the year. Tribal harvests to date amount to less than 1,000 mt. In addition, the Quileute Tribe has not entered the fishery to date. Even if the Quileute Tribe enters the fishery, the remaining tribal allocation following reapportionment will allow for their participation. Therefore, NMFS is taking action at this time to reapportion 28,000 mt of Pacific whiting. Such reapportionments are disbursed to the other sectors in the same proportion as each sector's allotted portion of the fishery harvest guideline, and all non-tribal commercial sectors have expressed an interest in additional harvest of Pacific whiting.

Effective **1200 Noon, local time on October 4, 2012,** 28,000 mt of Pacific whiting is reallocated from the tribal allocation to the non-tribal commercial fishery. The revised Pacific whiting allocations by sector for 2012 are: catcher/processor 55,584 mt; mothership 39,235 mt; and shorebased 68,662 mt.

Conservation of Bycatch Species

The trawl allocation of minor slope rockfish north of 40°10' north latitude for 2012 is 885 mt. The rougheye rockfish contribution to the minor slope rockfish north overfishing limit is 78 mt for 2012. Current projections indicate that this amount will be exceeded by the at-sea fishery (catcher-processor and mothership sectors). **All sectors are reminded to minimize bycatch and avoid rougheye rockfish as this fishery progresses through the remainder of 2012.**

This communication serves as official notice of the reapportionment.

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