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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325
Santa Rosa, California 95404-4731

November 17, 2014

Sonke Mastrup, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, California 94244-2090

Dear Mr. Mastrup:

This letter is in regard to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) support of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) proposed rule change to the freshwater fishing regulations. CDFW is requesting the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) adopt changes to subsections 7.50(b) and 8.00(b) set forth in the *Notice Register 2014, No. 34-Z, Z2014-0812-07*, and the subsequent *Continuation Notice of Proposed Changes in Regulations*, dated October 14, 2014. Adoption of these recommendations by the Commission will enhance low-flow protection of salmonids in specific California coastal rivers and streams. The proposed changes are in alignment with NMFS' mission to protect and recover salmonids listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended.

Salmonids in many coastal watersheds in California are subject to increased angling pressure during periods of extended low-flow. Although, CDFW currently has low-flow closures in some watersheds in Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties, NMFS considers the current thresholds inadequate to protect adult salmonids during their spawning migration. When low-flow conditions occur, adult salmonids are subjected to increased mortality due to predation, physiological stress, and elevated angling pressure. Because of the risks associated with low-flow conditions, we believe it is prudent to increase their protection with enhanced protections during the fishing season. With Commission approval of CDFW's proposed changes, NMFS believes listed salmonids will receive necessary protections during these vulnerable periods.

In summary, NMFS supports the proposed changes to subsection 7.50(b) and 8.00(b), and believe timely implementation of these changes to the sport fishing regulations will ensure protection of federally ESA-listed salmonid species during extended low-flow periods. If you have any questions or would like additional information about our support for this effort, please contact Joshua Fuller at (707) 575-6096 or by email at Joshua.Fuller@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alecia Van Atta".

Alecia Van Atta
North Central Coast Office Supervisor
California Coastal Area Office



cc: Irma Lagomarsino, Assistant Regional Administrator, NMFS, Arcata, CA
Charlton Bonham, Director, CDFW, Sacramento, CA
Stafford Lehr, Fisheries Branch Chief, CDFW, Sacramento, CA
Scott Wilson, Regional Manager, CDFW, Yountville, CA
Eric Larson, Biological Programs Manager, CDFW, Yountville, CA
Neil Manji, Regional Manager, CDFW, Redding, CA
Tony LaBanca, Coastal Fisheries Environmental Program Manager, CDFW, Eureka, CA
Allan Renger, Southern Humboldt and Mendocino Counties Fisheries Management
Acting Supervisor, CDFW, Fortuna, CA