

# Regional Fishery Management Council Coordination Committee

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November 18, 2013

Mr. Samuel Rauch  
1315 East West Highway  
Silver Spring  
MD  
20910-3282

Re: FY 2014 Funding for Regional Fishery Management Councils

  
Dear Mr. Rauch,

During a discussion of funding for Regional Fishery Management Councils (RFMC) at the May, 2013 annual meeting of the Councils Coordination Committee (CCC), it was stated that the current outlook for FY 2014 was improved over FY 2013. Notably at that time, the President's proposed budget, the current House mark, and the current Senate mark each were at \$32.4 M for the Regional Councils and Commissions line item. While all were aware that finality of FY 2014 funding was subject to much further process, we took the communication at that time to be that the National Marine Fisheries Service supported a return to the FY 2012 level of aggregate funding for RFMCs.

However, since that time, there have been mixed signals from the agency as to a commitment to fund the RFMC at adequate levels. Agency representatives at different RFMC meetings across the country have indicated differing perspectives on FY 2014 funding in comparison to FY 2012 levels, ranging from a 17 percent reduction in the Regional Councils and Commissions line item, but fully compensated by increases in other line items; to the possibility of 10 – 15 percent uncompensated reductions, depending on further internal review; to the certainty of an uncompensated reduction in total grant funding at about the -16 percent level; to agency representatives remaining silent, at the same time the prior perspectives were being advanced, about any change from the May, 2013 CCC perspective of returning to the FY 2012. Currently, we understand Continuing Resolution funding has provided the agency with FY 2014 funding at a level approximately -2 percent from the 2012 level. On the October 23-24 CCC webinar meeting, there was brief discussion about a change in the FY 2014 funding level for the agency beginning January 16, 2014, at a sequestered level of -5 percent of the 2013 level. There has been reference to an increase in the internal assessment of agency programs to fund common administrative functions, and a change in the exempt status of the Regional Councils and Commissions line item to such internal assessment. There has also been a variety of reasons alluded to as to why reductions are being considered.

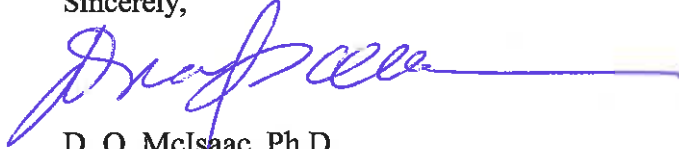
As a result of these mixed signals, the RFMC have many questions about possible decision-making processes that may or may not be underway in the agency relative to RFMC funding. We therefore request a conference call be convened between yourself and any agency staff you deem appropriate, and a



small group consisting of the RFMC Executive Directors, Dorothy Lowman as Chair of the host CCC Council, and because of their involvement in the Councils and Commissions line item, the Executive Directors of the three Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions. We ask that this call be scheduled prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

On behalf of the CCC, thank you in advance for this important meeting. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you or your staff may have.

Sincerely,



D. O. McIsaac, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council

DOM:kma

Cc: Ms. Dorothy Lowman  
Mr. Herb Pollard  
Regional Fishery Management Council Executive Directors  
Interstate Marine Fishery Commission Executive Directors  
Mr. Paul Doremus  
Mr. Alan Reisenhoover  
Ms. Emily Menashes  
Mr. Don Hansen  
Mr. Chuck Tracy