

PACIFIC SCIENTIFIC REVIEW GROUP

A Regional Advisory Group to the National Marine Fisheries Service

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Dr. James Balsiger
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service
1335 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

July 7, 2008

Dear Dr. Balsiger,

We would like to provide you with the minutes and recommendations from the most recent meeting of the Pacific Scientific Review Group held 9-10 January 2008.

The SRG commends the NMFS for making good progress on the research recommendations previously made by the SRG. The PIFSC has been able to use its limited resources to conduct research, Prescott Grant money has been used to initiate stranding networks to several US Pacific islands, and genetics and tracking studies have provided critical information on false killer whales and harbor porpoise. The NMFS also convened a meeting of the California/Oregon driftnet fishery Take Reduction Team to review the fishery.

The SRG is aware of the budgetary problems currently confronting the NMFS, but it urges the continuation of adequate ship time and funding to monitor both pinniped and cetacean populations along the West Coast and in the Pacific Islands region. The SRG notes the need to monitor the trends of marine mammal populations, particularly those with incidental takes from fisheries. The regular survey of the Washington, Oregon, and California coast and the survey of Hawaiian Islands will soon need to be planned, while 1999 surveys of harbor seal populations in Washington and Oregon can no longer be used under the PBR guidelines and new estimates will be required.

Once again, the SRG compliments your NMFS staff for their excellent presentations, outstanding research, and support of the SRG.

Sincerely,



Michael Scott
Chairman, Pacific Scientific Review Group

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