



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

February 4, 2020

Dear Reviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to be a peer reviewer for the Draft Recovery Plan for Black Abalone (*Haliotis cracherodii*), prepared pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. Your comments will help us ensure that the plan is based on the best information available.

The ESA requires recovery plans to incorporate: (1) a description of site-specific management actions necessary to achieve the plan's goals for the species' conservation and survival; (2) objective, measurable criteria which, when met, would result in a determination that the species be delisted; and (3) estimates of the time required and the cost necessary to carry out those measures needed to achieve the plan's goal and to achieve intermediate steps toward that goal.

The draft plan gives a brief background on the natural history, status, and threats to black abalone; lays out a recovery strategy to address the threats based on the best available science; identifies site-specific actions with time lines and costs; and includes demographic and threats-based recovery criteria to gauge progress toward recovery.

We are also making this draft plan available for public comment. Before the plan is finalized, we will consider all substantive comments received during the peer review and public comment period and address them as appropriate. Once finalized, the plan will be used to direct conservation and recovery actions for the species in the U.S. and to encourage international cooperation to promote the recovery of the species outside of U.S. jurisdiction.

Questions to Consider during the Peer Review

We welcome comments on any aspect of the draft plan, but request that you focus your review on: 1) issues and assumptions relating to the biological and ecological information of the plan, and 2) scientific data relating to the tasks in the proposed recovery program. We provide the following questions to help focus your review:

- Is the information presented in the background sections accurate and current? If you are aware of additional or more current relevant information, please provide the suggested reference(s) and, if possible, a copy of the paper(s).
- Does the discussion of potential threats and other stressors accurately consider and reflect the risk to this species?
- Do you have any comments or concerns regarding the proposed recovery criteria?
- Do recovery action priorities presented in the plan's Implementation Schedule reflect a biologically sound conservation approach for black abalone recovery?
- Are the proposed research, monitoring, and management recovery actions appropriate and sufficient?
- Are there other recovery actions that should be considered for inclusion in the plan?



Requirements of the Peer Review

In accordance with the White House Office of Management and Budget's Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (OMB Bulletin), we must post online the name and affiliation of each peer reviewer, along with all reviewer comments, as part of the agency's public record. However, the comments will not be identified by reviewer. Previously submitted peer reviews for other documents are available at:

http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/prplans/PRsummaries.html

The OMB Bulletin further requires that non-Federal peer reviewers complete a "Confidential Conflict of Interest Disclosure" form.

Finally, the OMB Bulletin requires that peer reviewers be informed of applicable access, objectivity, reproducibility, and other quality standards under federal laws governing access and quality. NOAA's Information Quality Guidelines are available at:

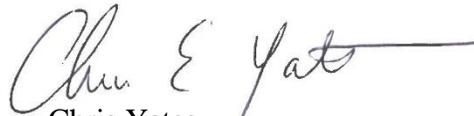
http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/IQ_Guidelines_103014.html

Logistics

By March 30, 2020, please return your comments and a signed copy of the attached disclosure form to Susan Wang electronically at Susan.Wang@noaa.gov or by mail to the Protected Resources Division, West Coast Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802.

Thank you for your assistance with this important effort. If you have any questions regarding this review, please do not hesitate to call Susan Wang at (562) 980-4199.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Yates". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chris Yates
Assistant Regional Administrator
Protected Resources Division
NOAA Fisheries, West Coast Region

cc: Administrative File: 151409SWR2011PR00476