

Scallop Plan Team Meeting

February 19-20, 2009

Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Plan Team members present:

Gregg Rosenkranz (ADF&G Kodiak), Herman Savikko (ADF&G Juneau), Scott Miller (NMFS), Jie Zheng (ADF&G Juneau), Gretchen Harrington (NMFS), Diana Stram (NPFMC)
New members: Ryan Burt (ADF&G) and Rich Gustafson (ADF&G)

Public and agency personnel present: Tom Minio (Provider), Jim Stone (Alaska Scallop Association), Mark Stichert (ADF&G), Mike Byerly (ADF&G), Charlie Trowbridge (ADF&G), John Lemar (Ocean Hunter), Diana Evans (NPFMC), Matt Eagleton (NOAA Fisheries), John Olson (NOAA Fisheries), Doug Woodby (ADF&G) and Ken Goldman (ADF&G).

The Scallop Plan Team meeting convened on February 19th at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska. The attached agenda was approved for the meeting.

Administrative issues

New members: The team welcomes new members Ryan Burt (ADF&G) and Rich Gustafson (ADF&G) and looks forward to their participation on the team.

Officers: Diana Stram (NPFMC) and Gregg Rosenkranz (ADF&G) were elected as co-chairs of the plan team for a two year term. The terms of reference (TOR) were modified accordingly (attached).

SPT meeting 2010: The Team reiterated its desire to have a meeting in Juneau next year with tentative timing for the week of February 22nd, 2010. The meeting location would likely be either the Federal building downtown or the Lena Point (TSMRI) NOAA laboratory.

Minutes: The team reviewed and approved minutes from the previous year and did not note any outstanding issues that are not already scheduled for discussion at this year's meeting. The team agreed to divide note-taking responsibilities for sections of the meeting in order to assist Diana's ability to compile minutes while chairing the meeting itself.

Delegation of additional responsibilities for SAFE report: The team agreed to delegate revision and oversight responsibilities for sections of the SAFE report next year. Specific assignments will be made after this year's SAFE is finalized in preparation for next year.

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) 5-year review:

Matt Eagleton (NOAA fisheries regional EFH coordinator) provided an overview of the process and need for conducting a 5-year review of EFH, as required by EFH final rule for all Federal FMPs. John Olson (NOAA EFH analytical expert), and Diana Evans (NPFMC, EFH review team) provided additional information for the discussion. A Council, Center, and RO workgroup has been identified. This workgroup will complete EFH review for all FMPs.

One of the main discussion points for plan team consideration is what are the recent changes in habitat information, since the EFH FMP amendment was developed, and how to weigh these changes for any effect from fishing, if any? The goal is to update FMP language with new scientific information on habitat for managed species. Matt presented the 5yr review plan, including an SSC review of methodology and working with each plan team.

Diana Evans explained that the product of the 5yr review would be a report that identifies which species need changes to the EFH amendment language in each FMP. The next step would be to amend the FMP to make these changes. The nature of these changes would determine the level of analysis necessary to make these changes. The report would provide seven identified determinations; EFH description, research and information needs, fishing activities, cumulative impacts, habitat areas of particular concern, non-fishing activities, and priorities.

The review starts by reviewing the most recent Scallop FMP and 2003 EFH Habitat Assessment Report (HAR) for Scallop Resources of the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands Regions.

The team reviewed and discussed the EFH description and related EFH maps. Gregg noted that we now have more detailed information on where scallops are located beyond the fishery catch data used to make the original EFH map. These areas, currently outside the existing EFH map for scallops are fairly small changes. EFH scallop text is broad and does include these areas. However, the team will need to decide if these small map distribution changes need to be included or is the scallop map OK for this 5 yr review. For scallops, the team discussed that our knowledge of scallop distribution and habitat is rapidly evolving with new research, such as the ADF&G habcam sled work, and the team will present this information in the SAFE report. In the near-future, maybe in the next five years, the team felt that it would have a more complete understanding and could provide a more complete EFH review at that time.

As part of the 5yr review, Matt also provided a review of the 2008 Scallop SAFE that noted which sections of the SAFE provide habitat information for the 5yr review. The team stressed that the SAFE annually contains the new information for the stock assessment and fishery evaluation, but that it does not repeat the EFH information in the FMP. Matt's review was very preliminary and was used just as an example of what may be needed and for future discussion. He also provided a blank version of the review document.

The team also discussed habitat areas of particular concern (HAPC). Matt requested that in the review process (next year) that the team consider whether there are areas the team identifies as HAPC – scallop specific areas that are ecologically significant, rare, or sensitive sites vulnerable to human perturbation. Noting so during the review could assist the Council should the Council initiate a HAPC process in the near future.

Annual Catch Limits (ACLs)

The Scallop Plan Team discussed the final rule for Annual Catch Limits (ACLs). The Scallop Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) will need to be amended to comply with the ACL requirements. However, three work groups are working up technical guidance on how to meet the ACL requirements.

The Council staff and workgroups will be having meetings soon to address the ACL issue. There will be a policy meeting and also a technical workshop. All are invited to attend the workshop, but it isn't a plan team function funded by the Council. Thus, all can attend if supported by their agency. The workshop will be in Seattle May 21, and 22 at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center. The workshop will look at how to incorporate uncertainty into the process as well as amending the Scallop and Crab FMPs to incorporate Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)s. The deadline is to have the Scallop FMP amended by 2011 (prior to July).

The Scallop Plan Team discussed some preliminary ideas for setting ACLs. The plan team discussed the need to first set an Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), which is less than the Overfishing Level (OFL) but above the Guideline Harvest Limit (GHL). As a starting point, it was suggested that we pick a number half way between ABC and OFL to start the process on setting the ACL. The team also discussed the need to have a justification, based on our level of uncertainty, for setting the ACL. Ultimately, that justification will need to be formulated following the guidance that will be forthcoming. The team also discussed the available data on discards in other fisheries, harvest levels, and mortality.

The team discussed statewide management of scallops versus management by region or by bed. In the past, the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) has questioned management on a statewide level and the team discussed the possibility that issue may be raised again when amending the FMP to comply with new ACL rules. The team recognized that criticism will continue for managing as a statewide stock at the FMP level. However, as was the case when the SSC commented on this previously, we do not have a reliable biomass estimates by area to manage by region. The team discussed the fact that groundfish and crab FMPs use a Tier system based upon information levels to establish specifications (OFLs and ABCs for groundfish, OFLs for crab) by stock. The Scallop FMP does not include this and instead the OFL is established at a constant level for the statewide stock based on an estimate of MSY.

Industry representatives raised the issue of the MSY not containing information from beds that are closed and that industry would like opened. The team discussed the fact that the present MSY does not contain biological information from closed beds and that this could be an issue if the State Board of Fisheries (BOF) were to open beds not accounted for in the MSY calculations. The issue would be whether the additional harvest would make it difficult to stay below MSY. This might require an FMP amendment to correct the MSY and the ACL; it was pointed out that we have to follow federal regulations in doing so. That point raised the issue of whether the ACL rule considers what to do in the case of State/Federal co managed fisheries. The discussion that followed established that the rule does consider co-management and indicates that the overall ACL could be divided. However, it is recognized that the ACL is under Federal authority. That point led to the question of whether the State could opt out. The consensus view was that the State can't opt out in the Federal waters fishery and, in the recent past, the legislature didn't want to go to a split state and federal licensing when considering whether to allow the sunset provision in the State Limited Entry program to go forward.

Industry representatives indicated that they are confused on where these levels (MSY, ABC, ACL, OFL) are and on how far we can move. The team discussed the fact that the fishery is currently considerably under OFL. Harvest is presently near a half million lbs. statewide while the statewide OFL is 1.24 million lbs. One reason identified for this gap between harvest and OFL is to account for mortality in other fisheries, which will also be a factor in calculating the ACL. The team then discussed, with industry input, that technically we could set ABC equal to OFL at MSY, but we would have difficulty justifying that so we need to figure out how much below 1.23 million lbs. is justified for the ACL. The ACL should be set sufficiently below OFL to prevent reaching or exceeding OFL when discard mortality and bycatch in other fisheries is accounted for. Industry representatives pointed out that there isn't much scallop bycatch in other fisheries.

Harvest is presently less than 40% of MSY. However, if the MSY is presently set too low because it doesn't include biomass from closed beds, then opening those beds for harvesting could impact the ability to reach the current OFL level. Establishment of ABC (or ACL) levels should also take into account scientific uncertainty and management uncertainty (e.g. discard

mortality etc). Thus it will be important to establish a defensible method for establishing discard mortality. The team then discussed various data sources and their limitations. Team members noted that mortality i.e. crushed scallops not sold (discarded at sea) is estimated in Central Region via observer trips but that it was unclear if the observer program estimates discard/crushed scallops not shucked and discarded. Mortality as a result of the fishery is not accounted for and potentially could be estimated by video survey.

Timing considerations for setting the ACLs were also discussed. Given that the ACLs must be set by 2011, and the scallop fishery starts in July, the scallop ACL must be set before any other fishery. Thus, Council action would need to be no later than six months prior, or December of 2010. The team also discussed whether crab could be done at the same time; however, it was noted that crab doesn't start until October so it would likely be done separately from scallops.

Gregg Rosenkrantz suggested that we should do some work on ACL setting prior to the next SSC meeting so that we could get feedback on what we present. He volunteered to provide some information and idea using scallop bycatch mortality based on available data as well as identifying what might be feasible to do with available data. The team also discussed the need to plan for analysis in setting the ACL. It was pointed out that we would need a draft Environmental Assessment completed by February 2010 in order for it to be available for the next plan team meeting. To do that, it was the consensus view that a workgroup would need to be formed. The workgroup would likely be Gregg, Diana, and Gretchen and it was suggested that the ADF&G Kodiak Area Manager, be included as well. It was the consensus of the plan team that the workgroup is tasked with looking into preliminary recommendations on ACLs, as well as evaluating an analytical approach that could be used to set the ACL. An interim report should be provided to SPT members and members of the public following the May ACL workshop.

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Requirements

Gretchen Harrington provided a summary of Federal VMS regulations and pointed out that we had discussed these requirements at the 2008 Scallop plan team meeting as well. All Scallop vessels are required to have operational VMS units in both the Gulf of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands Areas. It was clarified that this requirement meant that the VMS units must be operational whenever the Federal fishery is open, thus operating in State waters doesn't mean that VMS can be turned off. A current BOF proposal to mirror the Federal requirements was also discussed.

ADF&G Scallop management staff indicated that they would like to be able to review the VMS data but have had difficulty gaining access to the data. Scott Miller volunteered to look into this and see whether ADF&G staff can be given access to the VMS data. The team also discussed some of the legal issues around VMS in state waters.

Research Priorities

Diana Stram reviewed the minutes from last year, which shows past research priorities, as well as the Council's SSC research priorities list. Scallop stock assessment is on the SSC list under item B6, and would also possibly fall under SSC item III, in general, on habitat mapping.

The team discussed the need to set a primary research priority in order to have a better chance for funding from a variety of sources. The consensus of the team is that our overarching goal is to identify stock structure so that we can move away from the statewide OFL definition. All other research priorities will remain on the list because research in those areas is still needed.

Ken Goldman stated that stock structure has very specific meaning, referring to the genetic structure of a population. He then stated that there are new genetics tools that may elucidate our understanding of weathervane scallop stock structure.

Gregg Rosenkrantz indicated that he would like someone in genetics to look into whether these techniques will help with management of the fishery? He noted that perhaps some oceanographic modeling and video plankton recording could be done. He questioned whether scallop genetics studies over a large time period are very applicable to management.

Ken reiterated that there are new techniques that should enable the stock structure connectivity between scallop beds could also be examined. He stated he will talk to a few geneticists who he works with on other projects in regards to their thoughts on this, but Ken felt that since they are doing this work on several species that it should be able to be done with scallops.

Doug Woodby, ADF&G staff in the audience, identified a genetic study that isn't published yet, but it indicates one stock with some genetic variation and suggests that sub area management might be warranted. Doug pointed out that there are also papers in molecular ecology notes on polymorphic microsatellites and another on SNPs on weathervane scallops. Thus, some of the genetics work has been done and there may be a baseline of data but we probably need a little more definitive study of it. There is also genetic work being done to separate localized stocks, mostly with Pacific Cod. There followed an audience discussion on non-genetic markers as well as on the limitations of genetics in management of the fishery. A theme of this discussion was that a research priority should be studies of advection of larvae between beds.

The team also discussed the need to indicate that we will notice EFH and NPRB on our research priorities. Matt Eagleton, NOAA Fisheries staff in the audience, also suggested that Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Research Proposal funds could be available for scallop research. If we identify a priority item related to Scallop EFH and make this part of the EFH review, the priority could then be highlighted within the EFH proposal process. Matt will do this as part of the EFH process and pass along scallop research priorities.

ADF&G is developing a plan to assess GOA scallop stocks in primary fishing areas using a towed imaging system (ADF&G CamSled), and the SPT agree that continuation of research on stock assessment and scallop habitat mapping using CamSled is an important priority. However, the SPT noted that current definitions of MSY and OFL are based on a statewide stock, whereas current ADF&G management practices set GHLs for Management Areas, Districts, and in some cases, statistical areas. If better scallop stock assessment surveys are to lead to more precise harvest control rules, then the SPT believe that an understanding of statewide scallop stock structure and how it affects scallop recruitment to major fishing areas will be essential.

This discussion led to the following definition of a Primary Research Priority:

Determine if discrete scallop beds along the GOA coast from Lituya Bay to Kodiak Island are reproductively isolated units or if upstream areas are a significant source of scallop recruitment via larval advection and subsequent settlement in downstream areas.

The SPT emphasizes that methods applied to this problem must address time scales relevant to the fishery management framework.

The team notes that work continues on many of the 2008 SPT Research Priorities; at this

meeting, the team heard progress reports on CamSled research, a CamSled/dredge comparison, shell aging methodology, shell height modeling, and a pilot study on scallop meat quality and 'weak meats' in the eastern GOA.

Scallop Observer Program

Ryan Burt is the new Scallop Observer Program Coordinator. He gave a brief overview of his experience coming from Dutch Harbor working with the observer program there and various other projects. He mentioned that he enjoys going to sea and hopefully would observe during the scallop fishing season.

Ryan has recently gone through the scallop observer training and has begun updating the observer manual that was last revised in 2004. He also plans on meeting with observers early in the season to brief and debrief observers to insure that they are collecting all the information necessary for management. He also wants to meet with the Area Managers to insure they are familiar with changes in the forms and other issues related to the observers. He brought some new maps (charts) to show the scallop fishermen who were attending the meeting. The new charts will incorporate changes in regulations and management issues such as Steller sea lion closure areas, no transit zones, etc.

There was some discussion between Ryan and Jim Stone about changes in plans and off loading product in Juneau during the 2008-09 season.

The observer program is going to institute a special project on "weak meats". The goal is to collect 90 meat samples and have Dr. Olivera at the Fisheries Industrial Technology Center analyze the samples. The principal component she will test for is glycogen levels. Observers will collect 30 weak meat scallops and 30 healthy scallops from Yakutat area beds and compare them to 30 healthy scallops collected from Kodiak area beds. There was also some discussion on collecting shells from the animals as well.

Ryan also mentioned that all new scallop observer related information and materials will be available on the Westward Region Intranet web pages.

Pending Board of Fishery (BOF) and Legislative actions

Herman Savikko provided an overview of current legislative action and pending BOF action with regards to scallop management. The state vessel permit system (establishing State LLPs) was set to expire on December 30, 2008 and work has been ongoing for 2 years to amend that. During the 2008 legislative session, movement on the proposal was held up in the House Fish committee but eventually was considered by the Senate Resources Committee where it passed. It then passed the full body and the repeal was delayed until December 30, 2013.

Herman provided an overview of all pending BOF scallop proposals. Proposal 187 that was considered during the January 2009 Southeast and Yakutat shellfish BOF meeting in Petersburg. Proposal 187 was sponsored by the Alaska Scallop Association (ASA) and its aim was to move the Area D season opening date to June 1. The department opposed this proposal because of scallop spawning timing concerns and the ASA agreed to remove it from consideration. The board therefore took no action. Jim Stone made a comment about how the ASA is thankful for all of ADFGs input on proposal 187 and that they are 100% behind the decision to not move the opening date earlier.

Proposals 358, 359 and 360 will be considered during the March 2009 BOF meeting in Anchorage. Proposal 358, sponsored by the ASA, is in regards to opening closed waters for scallops in registration area J in an area that is currently open to bottom trawling. Proposal 359, sponsored by ADFG, is in regards to the Alaska Scallop Fishery Management Plan and clarifying the reporting requirements for statewide scallop fisheries. Proposal 360, sponsored by ADFG, is in regards to the Cook Inlet Kamishak District scallop management plan and will put into regulation management elements previously stipulated in fishing permits.

Scallop Stock Assessment

(note all presentations are to be made available on Council website)

Mike Byerly provided an overview of the survey assessment methodologies comparative studies that have been completed. The Kamishak comparative (camsled and dredge survey) study has been completed while the kayak island study data are still being processed.

This report focused on:

- Strengths and weaknesses of each approach
- Explaining the need for the comparison study
- Evaluate survey design and compare abundance estimates

Independent review of dredge counts were evaluated by each region (Central and Westward). Mike outlined the survey designs 1) a 2-stage systematic design for 43 stations using dredge gear (towing NW to SE within each 1 sq Nmi station), 2) the same survey design for the camera sled survey using the same stations, and 3) strip transect design using the full N to S transects (8 samples) sampled by the camera sled. Dredge tow methodology involves obtaining a mile tow in, which is easier to tow at a diagonal with the dredge. The skipper can then land dredge and lift after one mile, which he could not do in a North-South approach. This is also dependent upon sea conditions when towing a dredge.

Next the results were presented for 1) comparing between observer scallop counts from the camera sled data, 2) exploratory analyses of scallop count data between the dredge and camera sled, 3) exploratory analysis of size selectivity between the dredge and camera sled, and 4) comparison of abundance estimates.

Between-observer counts showed good agreement with large scallops (sm <50mm, med = 50-100mm, lg > 100mm). There was decreased agreement on small scallops, with the Kodiak office producing higher counts. With medium sized scallops, also disagreement on numbers observed, but to a lesser extent. Two possible explanations for the disagreement were explained – miss-identification and miss-classification. For small scallops, weathervane scallops and *clamys* could have been confused. The Homer office recorded all *clamys* that could be positively identified and also classed unknown scallops (those that were identified as a scallop but were uncertain that they were a weathervane or *clamys*) Miss-classification to size may have taken place as Kodiak may have biased mediums down to smalls. When lumped (small plus medium) it cleared up and produced better agreement but there was still much less agreement than for large sized scallops.

Distribution of count data by gear type: dredge misses many small scallops less than 58mm, and some of the mediums; therefore selective toward large scallops. It was noted that CI scallops grow quickly, and that small and medium sized scallops are composed of only age 1 and 2 scallops. In addition, due to a 4 inch ring requirement in the fishery, the harvest is composed almost entirely of large scallops.

An exploratory comparison of the dredge and camera sled data for large scallops showed that CPUE between the two gears had similar trends for small catches but were more variable for larger catches. This was probably due to within station variability. Finally, estimates for each survey design were presented. Estimates of abundance were higher for both camera sled surveys than for the dredge survey for all size classes. For the camera sled surveys error was higher for the strip transect estimate.

While sled work is faster in the field (2 days versus 5-8 for dredge), review time is much longer to produce results. Data from this work could aid in the development of an age-selectivity model.

Future discussions:

- Camera sled provides good information for evaluating sampling design
 - Population simulations to test designs
- Detectability with camera sled
 - Varies with animal size, substrate type, and esp. water clarity (visibility)

It is not yet determined if these comparative studies will continue.

Gregg Rosenkrantz provided an overview of the background of camera sled development as well as some recent work with the instrument. Some additional habitat work was completed in the Northern Bering Sea/Norton Sound region last summer. Gregg showed indications of improved resolution results based on modifications to camera sled design.

Gregg provided an overview of a study to analyze the Yakutat weak meats issue. He noted the variability in meat weight amongst organisms in this area. Jim Stone requested information on whether or not weak meats from Cook Inlet could be included in this study. He noted that there is great concern amongst industry that this could spread to Shelikof. The team discussed current evaluations as well as ideas for improved investigation of the weak meats issue and observed disease.

Rich Gustafson noted that in Kamishak they have seen a significant mortality event in 2002 when the abundance dropped 60% between the 2001 survey and the 2003 survey. During the 2002 fishery fishermen caught more "cluckers or clappers" than normal and staff observed higher numbers of cluckers and weathervane shells debris on the observed trip during the fishery. Samples were saved and sent to Ted Meyers for pathological analysis. The samples did not show anything definitive as possible disease pathogen. Another possible explanation would be predation by either sea stars or octopus. ADF&G staff have also observed a possible increase in mud blisters and boring worms.

He noted that in terms of "weak meats", they have not seen high numbers of discolored, grey meats that were stringy in texture from the surveys. Samples could be collected during the 2009 survey this was desirable, provided good criteria were established to define a "weak meat scallop".

Aging techniques and protocol issues

Gregg provided some information in his presentation age and growth issues. He discussed the huge variability in shell height-at-age in the Yakutat region. He provided an overview of some of the sources of error in shell ageing, comparison against data from 1968, indicative of possible aging errors in early growth years.

Ken Goldman provided a presentation on his working group's progress towards a scallop age assessment protocol. He noted that there is a higher variability and less agreement when it comes to assessing age for older scallops, but that is typical for age assessment studies. Ken discussed the age assessment methods that are being employed and statistical methods for evaluating age reader precision and bias. Ken and his working group have currently completed the age assessment protocol but are still working on the caveats of protocol. They are also planning to look into additional isotope work and laser ablation techniques for age validation.

Team members discussed the difficulty in establishing the first annulus and to what extent increment analysis would be useful. Ken stated that they are measuring shells to the second or third annulus in order to assist in ageing scallops where the first annulus (or two) may be obscured. Team discussion also focused on which growth models might be most applicable. Ken noted that they plan to investigate multiple growth models to evaluate which is most applicable for scallops. Jim Stone asked if any work had been done with live scallops. Ken noted that he did not know of any and that captivity and applicable growth during captivity is also an issue. Jim noted that some scallop farms in BC have worked with weathervanes and this might be a useful resource for additional information. Ken agreed to further investigate that and Jim agreed to provide Ken with the appropriate contact in BC.

Rich Gustafson questioned the observed larger scallops in Kamishak than in Kayak and their faster growth rates. He noted a possibility of a depth effect. Doug Woodby suggested conducting sensitivity tests for ageing. He indicated this could assist in providing input on how close results are necessary for accurate aging. Validation from older shells is also necessary as well.

Economics of scallop fishery

Scott Miller provided an overview of plans for updating the table and text in this years SAFE report. He noted his intent to focus on the period since 1990s rather than continuing to include historical data since 1960s. For this year and next Scott will try to evaluate a better means of establishing pricing information and update the LLP ownership. His longer range plans for this section include modification of the catch and areas database to include the scallop fishery and to look into data linkage from VMS. The draft community effects analysis paper currently on hold based on lack of fish ticket and crew member data.

Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report

Diana updated the team on the schedule for finalizing the SAFE report for the end of the month and the presentation to the SSC/AP/Council on the status of stocks in April. The team designated the following members as point people for obtaining information to update the SAFE for these respective regions:

Herman: Southeast

Rich: Central

Ryan Westward

As noted previously specific assignments will be made of all team members for sections for next year's SAFE report. Some ideas for additional information to include next year are more information on ecosystem considerations and a separate section on scallop closures which would detail both the initial justification for the closure as well as the current status. The team notes some of the closed areas under consideration for reopening would have implications in the calculation of MSY and should also be considered in conjunction with the ACL analysis. Doug Woodby commented that the State maintains a closed waters catalogue that could be useful for

the team. Matt Eagleton noted that it would also be useful for the EFH review section to include this closed area information.

The team appreciates the participation of all members of the public, Federal staff and the State staff that have come to the meetings to present and participate. The team notes that having State scallop management and biologists from a range of regions greatly enhances discussion at this meeting and encourages their future involvement as much as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45am, February 20th.

Scallop Plan Team meeting

February 19-20, 2009
Hilton Hotel,
Anchorage, AK

Draft agenda 1/27/09

Timing:

Thursday, February 19th: 10:30am – 12:00pm

10:30am

- Introduction and approval of agenda
- Membership: elect officers, Chair, Vice-Chair (or co-chairs)
- Review and approve minutes from 2008 SPT meeting; review outstanding issues from previous meeting

11:00am

- Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) description: plan for revision (Matt Eagleton)

12:00-1:00pm *Lunch*

1:00 pm

- Annual Catch Limits (ACLs): Final rule (distributed in advance); discussion of plans to revise Scallop FMP for ACL compliance (Diana Stram)
- VMS requirements: Review current regulations (Gretchen Harrington)

2:00 pm

- Update on Scallop Observer Program (Ryan Burt)
- Review any pending BOF actions or regulatory changes (Herman Savikko)

2:45-3:00 *Break*

3:00 pm

- Status of Statewide Scallop Stocks and SAFE report
 - Central Region (Ken Goldman/Rich Gustafson/Mike Byerly)
 - Comparative results from Kamishak survey
 - Kayak Island preliminary results
 - Westward Region (Gregg Rosenkranz)
 - Assessment in other regions; including camera sled presentation

Friday, February 20th: 9:00am – 12:00pm

9:00am

- Status of Statewide Scallop Stocks: continue as necessary

10:30

- Economics of scallop fishery: update on plans (Scott Miller)
- Ageing techniques and protocol issues: update (Ken Goldman)
- Review and revise research priorities
- New business

12:00 adjourn (continue as necessary in work session after lunch)

PLAN TEAM FOR THE ALASKA SCALLOP FISHERIES
DRAFT
TERMS OF REFERENCE
Revised by Scallop Plan Team (2/20/09)

1. **Establishment.** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) shall establish a Plan Team for the Alaska scallop fisheries and this. The Plan Team will inform the Council regarding issues with advice in the areas of regulatory management, natural and social science, mathematics, and statistics as they relate to the scallop fisheries off Alaska.
2. **Membership.** Plan Team members will be appointed from government agencies, academic institutions, and organizations having expertise relating to the scallop fisheries. Normally, the Plan Team will consist of at least one member from the Council staff, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, and other universities and institutions as appropriate. Alternate members may be assigned to participate in case a member cannot attend a meeting. With the consent of the sponsoring agency or institution, nominations may be made by the Council, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), the Advisory Panel (AP), or the Plan Team. All nominations will be subject to approval by the SSC, with the Council retaining final appointment authority. Appointments should reflect the Plan Teams' responsibility to evaluate and make recommendations on management, biological, economic and social conditions of the fisheries.
3. **Organization.** The Plan Team will be directed by a chairperson, and may divide some of its responsibilities among work groups organized according to subject matter. A work group may also include members from the groundfish or crab Plan Team or members with other expertise as necessary. Each work group will be directed by a work group leader.
 - (a) **Rules of order.** In general, rules of order will be informal. Plan Team decisions will be reached by consensus, whenever possible. If a decision is required and consensus cannot be reached, the opinion of the majority will prevail. In representing the Plan Team publicly, the spokesperson, (meaning the chairperson or the chairperson's designee) will take care to relate Plan Team opinions accurately, noting points of concern where consensus cannot be reached.
 - (b) **Meetings.** The Plan Team will meet annually. An annual Plan Team meeting will be held to discuss guideline harvest levels, status and management of the scallop stocks. The Plan Team chairperson may call other meetings as necessary. The Plan Team may meet separately or jointly with the BSAI Crab or Groundfish Plan Teams to discuss areas of joint concern. A draft agenda will be prepared in advance of each meeting by the Council staff in consultation with the chairperson, and may be revised by the Plan Team during the meeting. Minutes of each meeting will be prepared by the Council staff or designee, distributed to Plan Team members, and revised as necessary at or before the subsequent Plan Team meeting. The Chairperson (or designee) will report the Team's findings to the Council.
 - (c) **Selection of officers.** Officers (Plan Team chairperson(s) and work group leaders) will be selected for two year terms at the annual Plan Team meeting preceding the annual Plan Team meeting or as vacancies arise. Work group leaders will be selected for one-year terms. There will be no limit on the number of consecutive terms that officers may serve.

(d) **Public participation.** Public participation is encouraged but may be limited due to time or other constraints and participation will be generally informal and at the discretion of the chairperson.

4. **Functions.** The Plan Teams' primary function is to provide the Council with the best available scientific information, including scientifically based recommendations regarding appropriate measures for the conservation and management of the Alaska scallop fisheries and compliance with the FMP, the Magnuson Stevens Act and all applicable federal laws. All recommendations must be designed to prevent overfishing while achieving optimum yield (National Standard 1). All recommendations must also be scientifically based (National Standard 2), drawing upon the Plan Teams' expertise in the areas of regulatory management, natural and social science, mathematics, and statistics. Finally, uncertainty must be taken into account wherever possible (National Standard 6).

(a) **SAFE report.** The Plan Team compiles a SAFE report for the Alaska scallop fisheries on an annual basis. The SAFE report provides the Council with a summary of the most recent biological condition of the stocks and the social and economic condition of the fishing and processing industries. The SAFE report summarizes the best available scientific information concerning the past, present, and possible future condition of the scallop stocks and fisheries, along with ecosystem concerns.

(b) **Plan amendments.** The Plan Team may also play a role in the development and evaluation of amendments to the fishery management plan, as well as evaluate amendments to other management plans that may affect the conservation and management of scallop resources.

(i) The Plan Team may evaluate amendment proposals and forward their recommendations to the Council.

(ii) In addition, the Plan Team may develop their own amendment proposals.

(iii) Once an amendment proposal has been accepted for consideration by the Council, an analytical team may be assembled by the responsible agencies. Every analytical team should include at least one member from the Plan Team, drawn from the appropriate working group(s), whenever possible.

(iv) Once an amendment analysis has been completed, it may be reviewed by the Plan Team. The Plan Team's comments, if any, are then forwarded to the SSC, AP, and Council.