

Public Testimony Sign-Up Sheet

Agenda Item D-4 Arctic Fishery Mgmt

	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	AFFILIATION
1	Dr. Chris Krenz & Caleb Pongowiyi	Oceana
2	Bubba Cook	WWF
3	Jammy Childress	AMCC
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NOTE to persons providing oral or written testimony to the Council: Section 307(1)(I) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act prohibits any person "to knowingly and willfully submit to a Council, the Secretary, or the Governor of a State false information (including, but not limited to, false information regarding the capacity and extent to which a United State fish processor, on an annual basis, will process a portion of the optimum yield of a fishery that will be harvested by fishing vessels of the United States) regarding any matter that the Council, Secretary, or Governor is considering in the course of carrying out this Act.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: ^{DR for}
Chris Oliver
Executive Director

ESTIMATED TIME 1 HOUR

DATE: September 20, 2007

SUBJECT: Arctic FMP

ACTION REQUIRED

- A. Receive update report on Arctic FMP and Ecosystem Committee recommendations and take action as necessary.
- B. Review and approve Arctic outreach plan.

BACKGROUND

At the June 2007 meeting, the Council passed a motion directing staff to prepare a draft Arctic FMP and draft amendments to the scallop and crab FMPs that terminate their geographic coverage at Bering Strait, and to develop an accompanying analysis that considers two options for the Arctic FMP: close the entire Arctic region to all commercial fishing, or close the entire Arctic region to commercial fishing except for the red king crab fishery that has previously occurred in the southern Chukchi Sea. The Council's June 2007 motion is attached as Item D-4(a).

Since June, staff has developed a work plan and schedule for drafting an Arctic FMP, amendments to the scallop and crab FMPs, and the accompanying analyses (the draft work plan and schedule is attached as Item D-4(b)). The schedule calls for Council review of a preliminary draft of the Arctic FMP at its December 2007 meeting, and an initial review of the FMP in February 2008. Following public review, the Council is then scheduled to take final action at their June 2008 meeting.

The Council's June 2007 motion included a recommendation to consult with stakeholders, including Arctic communities, to present the Council's plans for developing an Arctic FMP and to seek input and suggestions for future fishery management in Alaskan Arctic EEZ waters. In response to this recommendation, staff has prepared a draft plan for conducting outreach to stakeholders, including communities and other entities in the Arctic region. That outreach plan is attached as Item D-4(c).

The Council has directed staff to work with the Council's Ecosystem Committee to develop the draft FMP, scallop and crab FMP amendments, and accompanying analyses. A plan for proceeding with the Arctic FMP and related analyses was presented to the Ecosystem Committee on August 22, 2007. The Ecosystem Committee adopted several recommendations for Council consideration; those recommendations are contained in the Ecosystem Committee's minutes, which are attached as Item D-4(d).

The Council is scheduled to review the work plan, outreach plan, and Ecosystem Committee recommendations and provide further direction to staff.

Council Motion – Arctic Fishery Management (June 2007)

In October 2006, the Council directed staff to prepare a discussion paper on management of fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters of the Arctic Ocean. The Council is interested in exploring policy options, such as a Fishery Management Plan (FMP), to conserve marine resources and manage existing or potential future fisheries in this region. The Council received that report at the December 2006 meeting, and tasked staff to further develop options for fishery management in the Arctic.

At present, the Council does not have an FMP that provides comprehensive authority over fishery management issues in the EEZ waters of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. Two of the Council's FMPs cover parts of the Arctic region for some species (i.e. the crab FMP and scallop FMP both cover part of the Chukchi Sea north of Bering Strait to Point Hope).

The Council has determined that a more deliberate and comprehensive management regime should be put in place for the Arctic region. This is partly in anticipation of potential fishery development in the region if climate conditions continue to warm. But this is also in response to some of the unique ecological conditions in the Arctic region, and the unique nature of the region's coastal communities, that merit more attention than has been given to this area previously.

The Council has reviewed several options for accomplishing its goal. These options were analyzed in a discussion paper prepared by staff for Council review in June 2007. These options include amending the existing FMPs so that they cover the Arctic region, writing a new Arctic FMP, or preparing a Fishery Ecosystem Plan. The issues each of these approaches raise have been evaluated by the Council at its June 2007 meeting, and the Council believes that a combination of amending the existing crab and scallop FMPs to terminate their coverage at Bering Strait and preparing a new comprehensive FMP for the Arctic region is the best approach. A single FMP covering the Alaskan Arctic would be a more holistic approach to marine resource management in the ecosystem. As part of that process, the Council intends that this new FMP contain elements of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan in that it should emphasize the unique habitats and resources of the Arctic and how marine resource management could be accomplished against this backdrop.

Therefore, the Council tasks staff with developing a draft Arctic Marine Resources FMP. This should include development of a problem statement or purpose and need statement, a suite of alternative management actions, and other supporting information required under the MSA, as amended in 2006.

An initial problem statement could include this language:

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the Council is authorized to conserve and manage the fishery resources of the Alaskan EEZ, including the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. To date, no large commercial fisheries have developed in these areas, and thus the Council has not had a compelling reason to develop Fishery Management Plans for these Arctic marine areas off Alaska.

But the environment for commercial fishery development in the Alaskan Arctic may be changing, with warming trends in ocean temperatures and changes in seasonal sea ice conditions potentially favoring the development of commercial fisheries.

Although at this time there are no such fisheries in the Alaskan EEZ in the Arctic Ocean, and no routine fish surveys conducted in the region, the Council is interested in exploring policy and management options to prepare for future change.

In addition, the Council recognizes the unique ecological conditions of the Arctic, and expresses its concern over potential effects of commercial fishing on local residents who rely on subsistence fishing and hunting. The Council views the development of an Arctic Marine Resources FMP as an opportunity for implementing an ecosystem-based management policy that recognizes the unique issues in the Alaskan Arctic.

The Council also desires to clarify management authorities in the U.S. Arctic EEZ, and this action would accomplish that objective. A new Arctic Resources FMP would provide the Council a vehicle for addressing future management issues, including deferral of management to the State of Alaska.

The Council's initial preferred alternative will be to close the entire Arctic region, defined as the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas off Alaska, to commercial fishing for all marine species, including forage species, except for fisheries that have traditionally been prosecuted in these waters; currently, the only known commercial EEZ fishery in the Alaskan Arctic is for red king crab in the southern part of the Chukchi Sea. The Council will define its management approach in more detail in the Arctic Marine Resources FMP, including the conditions under which the Council will reconsider its policy for a general fishery closure.

Thus, the Council requests that the following alternatives be analyzed:

1. Status quo
2. Adopt an Arctic Marine Resources FMP, and amend the scallop and crab FMPs to terminate their geographic coverage at Bering Strait, with two options:
 - a) Close all waters north of Bering Strait to commercial fishing for all species, including forage species;
 - b) Close all waters north of Bering Strait to commercial fishing for all species, including forage species, but leave waters between Bering Strait and Point Hope open to commercial fishing for red king crab.

The Council will appoint members of an Arctic Marine Resources FMP Team to work with staff to develop a draft FMP.¹ Staff should consult with stakeholders to the extent practicable, including Arctic communities, outlining the Council's intent and objectives and seeking input and suggestions for future marine resource management in the Alaskan Arctic EEZ.

The Council, as part of this action, tasks staff with preparation of amendments to the existing scallop and crab FMPs to terminate their geographic coverage at Bering Strait. The Council requests that an initial draft Arctic Marine Resources FMP be presented to the Council at its December 2007 meeting. At that meeting, the Council will suggest further development of the draft FMP or send the draft FMP out for public review.

An outline of the process required, and draft language for the amendments, should be part of the package to be presented to the Council at the December 2007 meeting.

¹ Note: After passing this motion, the Council recommended that the Arctic FMP be deferred to the Ecosystem Committee in the interim, and that the Council may appoint an Arctic FMP Team some time in the future.

Arctic FMP Work Plan

Meeting with Ecosystem Committee, August 22, 2007.

I. Council Motion

A. Provide a document that:

1. Analyzes status quo
2. Adopts an Arctic marine resource FMP – amend the scallop and crab FMPs to terminate geographic coverage at Bering Strait – options:
 - a) Close all waters north of Bering Strait to all commercial fishing including for forage species
 - b) Same as above (a) but allow red king crab commercial fishing between Bering Strait and Pt. Hope
3. Has some elements of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan

B. After completing the above, the Council will appoint members of an Arctic marine resources FMP team (to work with staff to develop a draft FM). [*Outside the motion, Council's stated intent is to have Ecosystem Committee give oversight for now, but appoint team later. In that case, who might be on such a team (see III.6 below)?*]

C. Staff should consult with stakeholders, including Arctic communities, to outline Council intent and objectives, seek input and suggestions for future marine resource management in the Alaskan Arctic EEZ. [*Staff has developed outreach plan and list of target audience groups. Discuss outreach plan, communities to be contacted, and contingency plan for requests from stakeholders (see IV below).*]

D. Prepare amendments to the scallop and crab FMPs to terminate geographic coverage at Bering Strait.

Question: Name of this FMP: Arctic Living Marine Resources Fishery Management Plan may be too broad and inclusive (whales, seals)? Consider Arctic Fishery Management Plan (leaving definition of "fish" or "fishery" as described in the Magnuson-Stevens Act).

II. Work Schedule:

- June/July 2007 – Develop work plan and outreach plan; initial letter contact with communities and agencies; scope the effort required to draft FMP text.
- August 22, 2007 – Meet with Ecosystem Committee to review tasks and work plan, discuss issues, and “provide some direction to the Council or advice” (see transcript).
- September 2007 – Contact analysis team? Begin preparation of FMP text, scallop and crab FMP amendment language, and analysis document.
- October 2007 Council Meeting – Progress report.
- December 2007 Council Meeting – **Preliminary draft** of Arctic FMP analysis document including draft language for amending scallop and crab FMPs.
- February 2008 Council Meeting – Present **initial draft** of Arctic FMP analysis, proposed FMP text, and proposed scallop and crab amendment language.

- February to June 2008 – Public review of initial draft package.
- June 2008 – Final review and Council approval.

III. Work Outline – General Approach to Accomplish Work Requested in Council’s Motion:

1. Initial draft of FMP language based on BSAI groundfish FMP and crab FMP.
2. Use the discussion paper, updated and expanded, as the EA which would accompany the draft FMP.
3. Prepare amendment language to amend the scallop and crab FMPs – consult scallop and crab Plan Teams. Amendment language likely to be very simple. Impacts of separating Chukchi Sea crab fishery from crab plan?
4. Complete a community outreach plan (Nicole Kimball), develop list of outreach communities and groups, and send letter with flyer and Council process handbook.
5. Scope out elements of an economic analysis of amending the two FMPs and implementing both alternatives and the two options to alternative 2. Scope the elements of a sociocultural analysis also: effects on communities, subsistence, cultural issues.
6. Analysis team: NMFS AKR (Melanie Brown), AFSC fish ecologist (Mike Sigler/Matt Eagleton?), a NMML marine mammal scientist (John Bengtson), a cultural/subsistence analyst (AFSC? Council staff?), and perhaps a habitat person (Matt Eagleton/Cathy Coon?) and a graphics person (Cathy Coon?).
7. Write a chapter on ecology of the Arctic. This could be an appendix that contains the elements of a FEP – i.e. descriptions of the oceanography, biological resources, marine mammals, interrelationships, seasonal cycles, and a summary of knowledge of fish and invertebrates or other potentially-exploitable species. It would describe recent physical and biological trends, effects of warming, etc. as a backdrop for the action taken in the FMP (prohibit commercial fishing). It would describe subsistence fishing and hunting, subsistence economies of villages and regions, etc. Involve Sarah Gaichas because of her AI FEP experience? (Consult draft final synthesis report from NPRB – Hopcroft et al 2006.)

IV. Stakeholders - Outreach

A. Community/cultural group:

North Slope Borough (Barrow), NW Arctic Borough (Kotzebue), Nome Census Area
 Coastal communities: Wales, Shishmaref, Kotzebue, Kivalina, Pt. Hope, Pt. Lay, Wainwright, Barrow, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik
 ASRC, NANA, Maniilaq, UIC, Kawerak, Bering Straits NA

B. Agency/organization group:

State of Alaska – ADF&G, DCCED, Governor’s Office
 NOAA – AFSC – NMML (bowhead whales, ice seals, oceanography)
 UAF (oceanography, general research)
 Coast Guard (ice transit, research)
 Other Federal agencies: MMS, BLM, NPS, USFWS (parks, refuges, NPRA)
 AOGA – and the majors: BP, Conoco-Phillips, Exxon, Shell
 U.S. Arctic Research Commission
 Canada – DFO

C. Discuss possible requests for community meeting. Presentation: 1) primer on Councils, the MSA, the Council process; 2) an overview of FMPs and the Council’s intent for an Arctic FMP; 3) outreach to seek input, suggestions for future management.

D. Discuss staff working draft of Senate Joint Resolution (July 24, 2007) on International Agreement for Managing Fish Stocks in the Arctic Ocean

Attachments:

Council motion from June 2007 meeting
Transcription of June 2007 Council meeting discussion and motion
Outreach plan and list of communities, groups, agencies
Sample outreach letters
Flyer to accompany outreach letter
Arctic FMP geographic coverage map
Staff working draft, Joint Senate Resolution
Poster paper, Harrington and Scheurer 2007 (for NMFS SF meeting)
Letters on Arctic FMP issues

Proposed Community Outreach Plan for Arctic FMP

Background on the need for a community outreach plan

At its June 2007 meeting, the Council notified the public that it intends to draft a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Arctic. As part of the development of that FMP, the Council intends to conduct an outreach program. As specified in the Council's motion:

Staff should consult with stakeholders to the extent practicable, including Arctic communities, outlining the Council's intent and objectives and seeking input and suggestions for future marine resource management in the Alaskan Arctic EEZ.

Prior to its June 2007 meeting, the Council received letters from the Native Village of Kotzebue, and the Maniilaq Association, which represents twelve communities located in Northwest Alaska.² The correspondence from these entities noted concern with the Council's lack of communication with communities living adjacent to the Arctic EEZ about the potential development of an Arctic FMP. Their comments on potential alternatives for an Arctic FMP were combined with a request for the Council to pursue "full consultation and input from affected communities and residents"³, as well as a request to be considered for a role on an Arctic Plan Team to further develop an Arctic FMP.⁴

In addition, one of the Council's workplan priorities is to increase Alaska Native and community consultation, and an outreach plan is currently being developed for review by the Council. As stated in the workplan, it is intended to be implemented through two specific goals: 1) develop a protocol or strategy for improving the Alaska Native and community consultation process; and 2) develop a method for systematic documentation of Alaska Native and community participation in the development of management actions. This outreach program for the Arctic FMP, then, is part of the Council's evolving outreach efforts to improve communications with Alaskan Natives and rural communities.

Native & community outreach plan

The following are suggestions for an outreach plan to be implemented during the development of the Arctic FMP. Council staff would oversee this plan and maintain ongoing and proactive relations with Native and rural communities.

- Identify coastal communities within the North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, & Nome Census Area that are adjacent to the action area (Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea)
- Identify regional and village corporations, community governments, or other community or Native entities in each of those communities (e.g., regional nonprofits, etc.). See **attached draft list**.
- Identify contact information for each of those entities.

²Member villages of the Maniilaq Association include Ambler, Buckland, Deering, Kiana, Kivalina, Kobuk, Kotzebue, Noatak, Noorvik, Selawik, Shungnak, and Pt. Hope.

³Letter from H. Bolen, Maniilaq Association to S. Madsen, NPFMC. May 25, 2007.

⁴Letter from A. Whiting, Native Village of Kotzebue to S. Madsen, NPFMC. May 25, 2007.

- Contact (by letter) and solicit input from each entity identified as being potentially affected by the proposed action, prior to the release of the preliminary analysis. Send letter in August 2007. Include in letter:
 - New brochure on Council process: *Navigating the North Pacific Council Process*
 - June 2007 Council motion on Arctic FMP
 - Schedules for action
 - Summary of action (1 pg flyer) that can be easily distributed in community

[NOTE: The Ecosystem Committee recommends that staff postpone sending letters and instead make verbal (telephone) contacts with key individuals at the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Eskimo Walrus Commission, the North Slope and Northwest Arctic Boroughs, Maniilaq, and Kawerak. Staff would discuss with these individuals how best to communicate with villages and other entities in the Arctic, and how to get the word out on the Council's intent.]
- Convene meetings as necessary and appropriate during the development of the analysis. This step may only be necessary if it is determined that the action has significant, unique, or substantial direct effects on a particular community. This could also be prompted by strong desires from individual communities that they have an opportunity for face to face discussion of the proposed action outside of the Council meetings or FMP Team meetings. *[NOTE: The Ecosystem Committee mentioned that staff might consider outreach via the Alaska Federation of Natives annual meeting and participation in an upcoming Arctic Research Commission meeting.]*
- If an Arctic FMP Team is formed, consider representation from an Alaska Native and/or community entity representing each of the three boroughs in the action area. *[NOTE: The Ecosystem Committee recommends that an Arctic FMP Team not be appointed at this time; rather, the Ecosystem Committee would guide development of the Arctic FMP. The Team would be appointed at such time in the future when the Council wishes to consider the framework under which a fishery might be opened in the Arctic, to develop the process that would determine what species might be fished, and to identify when, where, and who would be allowed to participate in any fisheries that were opened.]*
- Contact (by email, fax, or letter) and solicit input from each entity identified as being potentially affected by the proposed action, prior to the Council's scheduled final action (tentatively June 2008). *[NOTE: The Ecosystem Committee recommended making verbal contact with a few key individuals first to seek their recommendations for communications. This may involve letters or other communications with a broader audience.]*
- After a decision by the Council, follow-up with the potentially affected entities (by email, fax, or letter) as to the results of the Council's action. Convey that the Council's action is a recommendation to the Secretary of Commerce, and further input can be provided to the Secretary.
- Document this consultation process in a short summary in the Secretarial review draft of the analysis supporting the action. Include a summary of the process undertaken to solicit input from affected entities, including solicitations for input, public meetings, and the distribution of documents. Include a brief summary of the participants and issues discussed at meetings.

	Borough	Regional Native Corp.	Regional Native Non-profit (health & social services)	Regional Development Org.
Northwest Arctic Borough Communities	Northwest Arctic Borough P.O. Box 1110 Kotzebue, AK 99752	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49 Kotzebue, AK 99752	Maniilaq Association P.O. Box 256 Kotzebue, AK 99752	NW Arctic Economic Dev. Comm. P.O. Box 1110
	Village Council (IRA)	Village Native Corp.	City Government	
Ambler	Native Village of Ambler P.O. Box 47	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Ambler P.O. Box 9	
Buckland	Native Village of Buckland P.O. Box 67	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Buckland P.O. Box 49	
Deering	Native Village of Deering (IRA) P.O. Box 36089	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Deering P.O. Box 36049	
Kiana	Kiana Traditional Council P.O. Box 69	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Kiana P.O. Box 150	
Kivalina	Native Village of Kivalina (IRA) P.O. Box 50051	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Kivalina P.O. Box 50079	
Kobuk	Native Village of Kobuk Traditional Council	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Kobuk P.O. Box 5120	
Kotzebue	Kotzebue IRA Council P.O. Box 296	Kikiktagruk Inupiat Corporation P.O. Box 1050, 373A Second	City of Kotzebue P.O. Box 46	
Noatak	Native Village of Noatak (IRA) P.O. Box 89	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	N/A	
Noorvik	Noorvik Native Community P.O. Box 209	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Noorvik P.O. Box 146	
Selawik	Selawik IRA Council P.O. Box 59	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Selawik P.O. Box 99	
Shungnak	Native Village of Shungnak P.O. Box 64	NANA Regional Corporation P.O. Box 49	City of Shungnak P.O. Box 59	
Nome Census Area Communities	Borough	Regional Native Corp.	Regional Native Non-profit (health & social services)	Regional Development Org.
	N/A	Bering Straits Native Corp. P.O. Box 1008	Kawerak, Incorporated P.O. Box 948	Bering Strait Dev. Council P.O. Box 948
	Village Council	Village Native Corp.	City Government	CDQ Group
Diomede	Native Village of Diomede (IRA) P.O. Box 7079	Diomede Native Corporation P.O. Box 7040	City of Diomede P.O. Box 7039	Norton Sound Econ. Dev. Corp.
Shishmaref	Native Village of Shishmaref P.O. Box 72110	Shishmaref Native Corporation General Delivery	City of Shishmaref P.O. Box 83	N/A
Wales	Native Village of Wales P.O. Box 549	Wales Native Corporation P.O. Box 529	City of Wales P.O. Box 489	Norton Sound Econ. Dev. Corp.
North Slope Borough Communities	Borough	Regional Native Corp.	Regional Native Non-profit (health & social services)	Regional Development Org.
	North Slope Borough P.O. Box 69	Arctic Slope Regional Corporation	Arctic Slope Native Assoc., Ltd. P.O. Box 1232	N/A
	Village Council (IRA)	Village Native Corp.	City Government	
Alpine	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Alpine is an unpopulated, seasonal use community. It</i>
Anaktuvuk Pass	Village of Anaktuvuk Pass P.O. Box 21065	Nunamiut Corporation P.O. Box 21009	City of Anaktuvuk Pass P.O. Box 21030	
Atkasuk	Atkasuk Village P.O. Box 91108	Atkasuk Corporation Tikiglyk & Akpik St	City of Atkasuk P.O. Box 91119	
Barrow	Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (IRA)	Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation P.O. Box 890	City of Barrow P.O. Box 629	
Kaktovik	Native Village of Kaktovik P.O. Box 130	Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation 010 A Street	City of Kaktovik P.O. Box 27	
Nuiqsut	Native Village of Nuiqsut P.O. Box 169	Kuukpiik Corporation P.O. Box 89187	City of Nuiqsut P.O. Box 148	
Point Hope	Native Village of Point Hope P.O. Box 109	Tigara Corporation 2121 Abbott Road	City of Point Hope P.O. Box 169	
Point Lay	Point Lay Tribal Council (IRA) P.O. Box 59031	Cully Corporation 405 East Fireweed Suite 203	N/A	
Prudhoe Bay	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Unincorporated. Oil drilling site.</i>
Wainwright	Village of Wainwright P.O. Box 143	Olgoonik Corporation P.O. Box 29	City of Wainwright P.O. Box 9	
Other community contacts	Inuit Circumpolar Conference 429 L Street Anchorage, Alaska 99501	Alaska Native Science Commission Patricia Cochran, Executive	Barrow Arctic Science Consortium Glenn W. Sheehan, Ph.D.,	Harry Brower, Jr., Chair Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission
	Eskimo Walrus Commission P.O. Box 948 Nome, AK 99762			

This is a list of other entities, agencies, stakeholders that should be noticed that the Council is developing an Arctic FMP

State of Alaska
Denby Lloyd, Commissioner
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
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Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Jim Menard
Area Management Biologist
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Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
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Fred Bue
Area Management Biologist
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Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
1300 College Rd
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Alaska Dept. of Commerce, Community &
Economic Development
Emil Netti, Commissioner
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Cora Crome, Fisheries Policy Advisor
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Jim Marcotte
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Federal agencies
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Superintendent
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Superintendent
Cape Krusenstern National Monument
National Park Service
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Kotzebue, AK 99752
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Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
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District Engineer, Alaska District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
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Other
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Director
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Director
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BLM???

Bruce Leaman
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Tom Weingartner
Institute of Marine Science
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Ecosystem Committee Minutes

Wednesday, August 22, 2007 1pm-4pm
2nd Floor Conference Room, Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute, Juneau, AK

Committee: Stephanie Madsen (chair), David Benton, Jon Kurland, Jim Ayers (teleconference), Diana Evans (staff), Chris Oliver (staff), Bill Wilson (staff)

Others participating included: Joe McCabe, Lauren Smoker, Melanie Brown, Lew Quierolo, Chris Krenz, Jon Warrenchuk

The Ecosystem Committee discussed the three items on their agenda. The next Committee meeting is targeted to occur between the October and December Council meetings, tentatively during the first week of November, 2007.

Arctic FMP

Mr. Wilson introduced the Council's June 2007 motion to develop an Arctic FMP that generally closes all waters north of the Bering Strait to commercial fishing, and the Council's charge to the Ecosystem Committee to help staff develop the FMP. Mr. Wilson discussed his work plan for this project, including the timeline and approach, and a draft outline of the FMP. Mr. Wilson also presented a community outreach plan for the project, prepared by Ms Nicole Kimball (Council staff), and some informational material on the Arctic.

With regard to the workplan, Mr. Wilson had flagged certain issues as needing further clarification, which the Committee addressed. Consequently, the Committee makes the following recommendations to the Council:

- **That the document under development be called an Arctic Fishery Management Plan.** The motion refers to an Arctic Marine Resources FMP, but the Committee believes this may be confusing as the Council would not be regulating seabird or marine mammal harvests. The document should clarify that the Council adopts the Magnuson-Stevens Act definitions of 'fish' and 'fishery', which clearly exclude marine mammals and birds.
- **That final action on the Arctic FMP be targeted for June 2008,** in accordance with the timeline drafted by staff.
- **That Arctic fishery management proceed in a stepwise progression. The Council's first step would be expeditious implementation of an Arctic FMP that is simple and straightforward. The conditions under which fisheries might be permitted in the future, and their management, would be addressed at a later stage.** Although the FMP must include the contents required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act, it need only contain the essential elements of what is required to close the area to commercial fishing (subject to the Council's options). To the extent that it is consistent with rapid implementation, the FMP may also describe the process the Council would use, at a future time, to determine the conditions under which fisheries may be opened: how will the Council involve stakeholders and communities to decide the criteria for what, when, where, and how fisheries may open, and who may participate. The actualization of this process would be the Council's second step in Arctic fishery management.
- **That the Ecosystem Committee continue to oversee the development of the Arctic FMP.** The Committee appreciates the opportunity to stay involved in the development of the document, and would continue to interact with Mr. Wilson and the staff-level analytical team identified in the work plan. **The Committee recommends that the appointment of an Arctic FMP planning team be deferred until after the implementation of the FMP, at such time when the Council is considering the conditions under which fishing might be allowed.**

The Committee agrees generally with the approach presented in the work plan. Only a limited economic analysis may be required to support this action, as prohibiting the commercial fisheries effectively has no practical impact. The sociocultural analysis, describing the subsistence fabric of life in the Arctic region, will be an important

backdrop for the Council's action. A thorough discussion of marine mammals, waterfowl, and seabirds should be included in the analysis. Additionally, the scallop and crab Plan Teams should be advised of the Council's intent to truncate the FMP management areas at Bering Strait, and solicited for feedback and a more definitive description of the red king crab fishery in the southern Chukchi Sea.

Regarding community outreach, the Committee approves of the proposed Community Outreach Plan, as presented by staff, but recommends to the Council the following changes:

- That staff postpone sending letters to each entity (villages, community governments, etc.), and instead begin with telephone contact with key people at the regional level. Sending an official letter without prior personal contact may be misunderstood, and first initiating some basic conversation is more likely to be effective. Organizations to begin with include the North Slope Borough, the Northwest Arctic Borough, the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Eskimo Walrus Commission, Maniilaq, and Kawerak. Staff can discuss with these organizations how further communications should proceed, and solicit their recommendations as to how to get the word out. Telephone conversations should then be followed up with a letter.
- That staff identify events or forums at which to do outreach. For example, the Council may consider staffing a booth at the upcoming Alaska Federation of Natives annual meeting, to distribute information or answer questions. The Council has also been invited to give a presentation at the Arctic Research Commission meeting in Nome this October.
- That the Council respond formally to those entities who have sent letters regarding the Arctic FMP.

The Committee also discussed Senate Joint Resolution 17, submitted by Senator Stevens on August 3, 2007. This resolution proposes that the US should, as a matter of policy, support efforts to halt commercial fishing in the high seas of the Arctic Ocean, until international agreements to manage migratory, transboundary, and straddling Arctic fish stocks are in place. This resolution, if it passes, would effectively extend to international waters the Council's proposed action in US Arctic waters, namely to halt fishing until such time as an appropriate management framework, supported by adequate scientific knowledge, is in place.

Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan

The Committee received a draft of the 'glossy' synthesis pamphlet of the AI FEP to review, and will individually provide comments back to Ms Evans. Ms Evans suggested that the distribution date for the pamphlet be pushed back beyond the targeted October 1st deadline, which would allow more time for review (by the Committee and others). The Committee inquired about the distribution plan for the pamphlet, and agreed to discuss this further at their next meeting.

One of the suggestions of the FEP is for the Council to further develop the concept of 'ecosystem health'. At their last meeting, the Committee offered to begin this task, and the Council agreed. Consequently, the Committee asks staff to draft a discussion paper outlining an approach to defining ecosystem health, or as a first step, desirable or undesirable states of the ecosystem. The Committee suggests consulting with the AI Ecosystem Team, and refers staff to the academic literature and any other fishery management practitioners who may be tackling these issues. The Committee will review the discussion paper at their next meeting.

Other updates

Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum

Ms Evans and Ms Madsen provided a brief update on the July meeting of the Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum, the Federal-State regional collaboration on marine ecosystem issues, of which the Council is a member. One question raised at the Forum is that there are a number of Federal-State collaborations in Alaska, and some thought may need to be given to how they interact with each other. A Committee member also suggested that thought needs to be given to how the public can provide input to these collaborations.

NOAA's Integrated Ecosystem Assessments

NOAA is planning to conduct an Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) in Alaska in 2010, for which fiscal planning is currently underway. The IEA is intended to contain the information necessary to understand the inter-

relationship between resource management decisions and the changing state of an ecosystem. Three regional ecosystems have been identified for pilot studies: the California Current, Alaska, and the Northeast US. The Committee recommends that the Council should request a presentation from NOAA on its plans for an Integrated Ecosystem Assessment in Alaska in 2010, and specific clarification regarding the Council's role in this project. Unless otherwise directed, the Ecosystem Committee will continue to track the agency's progress with IEAs.

NOAA's Alaska Regional Collaboration Team (ARCTic)

Throughout the nation, NOAA has established regional collaboration teams that cut across NOAA line offices. These bring together NOAA employees working in a particular region, with the goal to improve NOAA's productivity and value to customers. The Alaska team is currently developing an integrated services plan, which will assess current NOAA services in the Alaska region, and develop an approach for product and service enhancements, in concert with key partners and stakeholders. The Council has been asked to participate in the development of this assessment, as a NOAA partner. More information on regional collaboration is available at: http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/regional_collaboration.htm.

NOTICE



The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is Developing a Fishery Management Plan for the Arctic

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is developing a fishery management plan (FMP) that recognizes the unique resources of Arctic waters and the potential for continued climate warming trends. The Council does not currently have a fishery management plan for the Arctic region; this proposed plan would cover Federal marine waters (3 - 200 nm off Alaska) of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. The plan will guide the Council with respect to ecosystem-based management decisions affecting Arctic waters in the future. To date, very little commercial fishing has occurred in this region. The Council intends to be precautionary and prohibit commercial fisheries in Arctic waters under this plan until adequate knowledge is acquired upon which to make sound decisions. The proposed analysis includes an option to allow a small commercial red king crab fishery in the southern Chukchi Sea, as that fishery reportedly has occurred in the recent past. Otherwise, no commercial fishing would be allowed under the authority of the new Arctic FMP.

The Arctic FMP will:

- create a policy that directly affects commercial fishing in Federal waters

The Arctic FMP will NOT:

- affect management of birds or marine mammals such as whales, seals, or polar bears
- regulate subsistence or personal use harvests of any fish, shellfish, bird, or marine mammal

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INPUT

The Council is interested in hearing from local residents and communities, as well as agencies, organizations and the general public, during the development of the analysis and prior to decision-making. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to contact the Council and/or attend upcoming Council meetings with their concerns and suggestions as the Council proceeds with this effort.

Proposed Timeline:

- December 3 - 11, 2007, Council meeting in Anchorage - Preliminary review of FMP analysis
- February 4 - 12, 2008, Council meeting in Seattle - Initial review of FMP analysis and draft FMP
- February to June 2008 - ongoing public review of FMP analysis and draft FMP language
- June 2 - 10, 2008, Council meeting in Kodiak - final review of FMP analysis and Council approval of FMP
- After the June 2008 meeting, the Council would send its recommended FMP to the Secretary of Commerce for review and approval. Prior to approval by the Secretary, a public comment period would be noticed in the Federal Register.
- 2009 - anticipated date when the Arctic FMP would be effective

As they are completed, working drafts of the analysis and FMP will be available at www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc.

DRAFT AGENDA (AS OF 10/2/07)
United States Arctic Research Commission 84th Meeting

8-9 October 2007
Nome, AK

Monday, October 8 – Aurora Inn Conference Room

8:10 AM	Welcome and opening of meeting	Mead Treadwell, Chair, USARC
8:20	Meeting logistics	Kathy Farrow, USARC
8:25	Welcome	Denise Michels, Mayor
8:40	Nome from the Indigenous Perspective	Danny Karmun, Elder
9:00	Nome's Local Concerns	Randy Romenesko, City Manager
9:20	USARC Overview	Mead Treadwell, Chair, USARC
9:40	Break	
10:00	Local/Reg'l Natural Resources & Research	Rose Fosdick/VP of Natural Resources, Kawerak
10:20	Marine Advisory Program (MAP)	Heidi Herter, UAF Fisheries, Asst. Professor
10:40	Local Traditional Knowledge Survey	Austin Ahmasuk, Dir., Kawerak Subsistence
11:00	Polar Bears, NPS, Alaska-Russian Relations	Charlie Johnson, Alaska Nanuuq Commission
11:20	NSEDC, CDQ, Fisheries	Charlie Lean, Norton Sound Econ. Devel. Corp.
11:40	AK Climate Impact Assessment Commission	Caleb Pungowiyi, ACIAC
Noon	Lunch	
1:15 PM	Bilingual/Bicultural Program at BSSD	Jim Hickerson, Bering Strait School District
1:35	Indigenous Languages, Cultures and Identities	Vera Metcalf, USARC and Igor Krupnik, Smithsonian Institution
1:55	King Island Cultural Research/Heritage	Bernie Alvanna-Stimpfle, Inupiaq Lead Teacher
2:15	Social Studies: Adaptation and Resilience	Martin Robards, UAF
2:35	Beringia Cultural Center	Kaci Fullwood, Kawerak Culture Center Planner
2:50	Break	
3:10	Economic Impact of Climate Change	Peter Larsen, ISER at UAA
3:30	Nome's Weather Challenges	Jerry Steiger, NWS Station Manager
3:50	Regional/Local Transportation: Shishmaref, Erosion, Flooding	John Alvis, Kawerak Transportation Dept.
4:10	NPFMC: Developing an Arctic Fisheries Plan	Bill Wilson, NPFMC
4:30	Open Mike: Dialogue with Local Community	
5:30	Adjourn Meeting	Mead Treadwell, Chair, USARC
6:00	Reception	

Tuesday, October 9 – Site Visits/Aurora Inn Conference Room

9:00 AM	Northwest Campus Tour	Lee Haugen, Director
9:45	Port of Nome	Joy Baker, Harbor Master
10:00	Norton Sound Regional Hospital	Hospital staff
11:15	Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum	Laura Samuelson, Museum Director
12-8 PM	Lunch/USARC Business Meeting	USARC Commissioners and Staff

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Whereas the decline of several commercially valuable fish stocks throughout the world's oceans highlights the need for fishing nations to conserve fish stocks and develop management... (Referred to Different or Additional Senate Committee)

SJ 17 RCS

110th CONGRESS

1st Session

S. J. RES. 17

Directing the United States to initiate international discussions and take necessary steps with other Nations to negotiate an agreement for managing migratory and transboundary fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

August 3, 2007

Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KERRY, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted the following joint resolution; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

September 5, 2007

Committee discharged; referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

JOINT RESOLUTION

Directing the United States to initiate international discussions and take necessary steps with other Nations to negotiate an agreement for managing migratory and transboundary fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean.

Whereas the decline of several commercially valuable fish stocks throughout the world's oceans highlights the need for fishing nations to conserve fish stocks and develop management systems that promote fisheries sustainability;

Whereas fish stocks are migratory throughout their habitats, and changing ocean conditions can restructure marine habitats and redistribute the species dependent on those habitats;

Whereas changing global climate regimes may increase ocean water temperature, creating suitable new habitats in areas previously too cold to support certain fish stocks, such as the Arctic Ocean;

Whereas habitat expansion and migration of fish stocks into the Arctic Ocean and the potential for vessel docking and navigation in the Arctic Ocean could create conditions favorable for establishing and expanding commercial fisheries in the future;

Whereas commercial fishing has occurred in several regions of the Arctic Ocean, including the Barents Sea, Kara Sea, Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, and Greenland Sea, although fisheries scientists have only limited data on current and projected future fish stock abundance and distribution patterns throughout the Arctic Ocean;

Whereas remote indigenous communities in all nations that border the Arctic Ocean engage in limited, small scale subsistence fishing and must maintain access to and sustainability of this fishing in order to survive;

Whereas many of these communities depend on a variety of other marine life for social, cultural and subsistence purposes, including marine mammals and seabirds that may be adversely affected by climate change, and emerging fisheries in the Arctic should take into account the social, economic, cultural and subsistence needs of these small coastal communities;

Whereas managing for fisheries sustainability requires that all commercial fishing be conducted in accordance with science-based limits on harvest, timely and accurate reporting of catch data, equitable allocation and access systems, and effective monitoring and enforcement systems;

Whereas migratory fish stocks traverse international boundaries between the exclusive economic zone of fishing nations and the high seas, and ensuring sustainability of fisheries targeting these stocks requires management systems based on international coordination and cooperation;

Whereas international fishing treaties and agreements provide a framework for establishing rules to guide sustainable fishing activities among those nations that are parties to the agreement, and regional fisheries management organizations provide international fora for implementing these agreements and facilitating international cooperation and collaboration;

Whereas under its authorities in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has proposed that the United States close all Federal waters in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas to commercial fishing until a fisheries management plan is fully developed; and

Whereas future commercial fishing and fisheries management activities in the Arctic Ocean should be developed through a coordinated international framework, as provided by international treaties or regional fisheries management organizations, and this framework should be implemented before significant commercial fishing activity expands to the high seas: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That--

(1) the United States should initiate international discussions and take necessary steps with other Arctic nations to negotiate an agreement or agreements for managing migratory, transboundary, and straddling fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean and establishing a new international fisheries management organization or organizations for the region;

(2) the agreement or agreements negotiated pursuant to paragraph (1) should conform to

the requirements of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and contain mechanisms, inter alia, for establishing catch and bycatch limits, harvest allocations, observers, monitoring, data collection and reporting, enforcement, and other elements necessary for sustaining future Arctic fish stocks;

(3) as international fisheries agreements are negotiated and implemented, the United States should consult with the North Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and Alaska Native subsistence communities of the Arctic; and

(4) until the agreement or agreements negotiated pursuant to paragraph (1) come into force and measures consistent with the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement are in effect, the United States should support international efforts to halt the expansion of commercial fishing activities in the high seas of the Arctic Ocean.

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N.P.F.M.C.

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September 20, 2007

Mr. John Bundy, Acting Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Street, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Mr. Doug Mecum, Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region
709 W. 9th Street
Juneau, AK 99802-1668

Re: Arctic Fisheries Management D-4

Dear Mr. Bundy and Mr. Mecum,

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Arctic Fishery Management Plan (FMP) agenda item D-4. WWF is a global conservation organization with over 1.2 million members in the US and over 2,000 members in Alaska. WWF seeks science-based, non-partisan, collaborative, and creative solutions to conservation issues. We submit this letter in support of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) further consideration of the Arctic Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to prohibit commercial fishing north of Point Hope and prohibit commercial fishing for forage species north of the Bering Strait.

WWF commends the Council for considering the Arctic FMP. Setting aside these sensitive Arctic marine areas would allow for solid scientific studies on the resiliency and productivity of the ecosystem prior to any commercial fishing activity. Moreover, consideration of an FMP that provides comprehensive authority over fishery management issues in the EEZ waters of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas represents a prudent and precautionary approach. Recent scientific evidence indicates that the climate continues to warm and poses a substantial threat to the unique ecological conditions in the Arctic region and its associated coastal communities.

WWF supports amending the existing crab and scallop FMPs to terminate their coverage at Bering Strait and preparing a new comprehensive FMP for the Arctic region as the best approach to address the Arctic fisheries. A single FMP covering the Alaskan Arctic represents a holistic approach to marine resource management.

WWF also supports the Council's desire to consider ecosystem elements in the Arctic FMP. The Arctic marine environment is home to numerous species of marine mammals, shorebirds fish, shellfish, crustaceans and other invertebrates. Moreover, the Arctic is a fragile ecosystem which is slow to change and slow to recover from disruptions or damage. Effects from even minor disturbances in the Arctic could have substantial impacts that ripple throughout the ecosystem. The disturbance imposed by commercial fishing in the Arctic must be restricted until we gain a complete understanding of the Arctic ecosystem, the effects of climate change, and the Arctic's relationship to its productive bordering seas.

WWF would like to reiterate that we do not recommend altering the existing fisheries between the Bering Strait and Point Hope. Furthermore, we maintain that an Environmental Assessment would provide the appropriate NEPA documentation.

Therefore, WWF urges the Council to continue consideration of the alternatives for the Arctic FMP agenda item D-4, as it progresses with this analysis. Setting aside the Arctic will help

protect the resilience of Arctic ecosystems, prevent additional pressure on currently-stressed wildlife and important marine habitat areas, and ensure the continued productivity of the Arctic's bordering seas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alfred Lee Cook Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alfred Lee "Bubba" Cook Jr.
Kamchatka/Bering Sea Ecoregion Senior Fisheries Program Officer
World Wildlife Fund