

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

C-7 Inshore-Offshore Allocation

Lt. Governor, Steve McAlpine, State of Alaska. Mobile fleets now pose the same sort of threat to the resource as foreign fleets have in the past. Congress and Senator Magnuson were concerned about the catching capacity to overharvest and then leave the area without concern for local economies, not just the foreign fleet per se. Council needs to be concerned about waste and resource conservation.

Vic Horgan, King Crab, Inc./Ocean Beauty Seafoods. In favor of the concept of shoreside preference. If the Council doesn't choose shoreside preference, then they should do something to solve the problem or fisheries around Kodiak or they will be reduced to one-day openings. He suggested the Council could set several separate seasons a year, use trip limits, or any number of combinations, but it's critical to do something now.

Wayne Marshall, Manager, King Cove. King Cove has been involved in the fishing industry a long time and hopes to continue. Over the last two years the basic structure of their economy has changed; salmon, and king and Tanner crab processing is becoming more of a year-round operation. They are now fishing for groundfish, however they have small boats and need shorebased plants to deliver to. Strongly support the inshore preference concept.

Bob Jettner, Sand Point. Agreed with Mr. Marshall's testimony. In March and April the coastal villages generally have very little money in the community. But this year, more money was coming into the community from cod; it's an opportunity for local communities to get into the groundfish fisheries. Support shoreside preference to increase economy for their residents.

Terry Baker, Francis Miller, Arctic Alaska. Their vessels catch and process groundfish, crab and other species in the Bering Sea. Doesn't believe the Council should even consider the question of inshore preference, nor does he think they have the authority to do so. They were encouraged under MFCMA and through government loans to develop their industry. Now they are threatened with economic extinction by shoreside preference. Shoreside processors are generally owned by the same foreign interests that owned the fleet they displaced.

Eric Silberstein/Eric Maisonpierre. Under the MFCMA they felt they could expect a stable policy to develop the industry. Shorebase preference is contrary to the Act. It favors one sector of the industry over the other, and shifting to shoreside would be economically devastating to the catcher/processor fleet. This segment of the fleet has virtually no representation on the Council voting on their fate. Urged Council to see that the integrity of the Act is maintained. Suggested Council try again for a moratorium on entry and feel there's still a chance for shoreside/offshore interests to coexist. If nothing else, this issue should be folded in with the other limited access analyses and sent out for public review.

Bill Wason, Village of Port Graham. Port Graham has a small processing plant owned by the village corporation which processes salmon and halibut and has in the past processed cod. They are in favor of a shoreside preference; it's important to send a message to industry that continued construction of factory trawlers is not a good idea.

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski, State of Alaska. Chaired Senate Community Affairs Committee and sits on INPFC. Strongly supports development of options that would protect fishery resources and the economic viability of coastal communities.

Paul Fuhs, Mayor of Unalaska. Factory trawlers do contribute to their community, so they are not seeking a preference that would put them out of business. However, shoreside processors do need some protection. Part of the problem is overcapitalization and in the absence of limited access, some sort of preference is needed.

Mark Chandler, F/V TOPAZ. Shorebased vessels and plants are dependent on year-round fisheries. Urged the Council to prohibit roe stripping and give shoreside plants preference.

Reed Wasson, Eagle Fisheries. Supports shoreside preference. Eagle Fisheries was the first plant in Kodiak to concentrate on bottomfish and also the first to process flatfish in large fillets for U.S. markets. Without some preference shore plants in Kodiak will close down. He's concerned about factory trawler waste in other fisheries, not just pollock. Urged the Council to adopt a shoreside allocation policy as soon as possible.

Tiny Shasteen, Dutch Harbor. Overcapitalization by both offshore and shoreside interests is the problem. Unalaska/Dutch Harbor receive economic benefits from factory trawlers too. Suggested the Council limit entry on new processing, both shorebased and factory trawlers, and not favor one over the other.

Chris Blackburn, David Harville. The Gulf of Alaska has small quotas compared to the Bering Sea/Aleutians. Intensive effort by large vessels in one place can cause conservation problems. Strongly support Kodiak shorebase preference. Industry is going to go through a state of collapse; asking the Council to mitigate that collapse somewhat.

Ken Allread/Mel Morris, Western Alaska Fisheries. They are a shorebased processor, owned by the Japanese since 1967. Support the shorebased preference proposal submitted by the coalition from Kodiak. The biggest problem today is the rapid development of at-sea harvesters. The Council should have initiated a moratorium like the FOG Committee recommended.

Joe Plesha, Alec Brindle, Dick Pace, Ralph Hoard. Members of Southwest Alaska Shorebased Coalition. They submitted a proposal for shorebase preference and are also supportive of the Kodiak Coalition proposal. Believe very strongly that the Council must take action to initiate a shorebase preference and fast track it with a final decision at the December meeting.

Ted Evans, Paul MacGregor, AFTA. This is an important issue to those who developed the domestic fisheries under the MFMCA. Urged the Council not to consider shorebase preference proposals. Feel they are discriminatory, illegal, and not realistic. If the Council institutes a shorebased preference, their industry would be devastated. The Council should lay out the issues and try to determine the cause of the current problems. Also suggested hearings in coastal communities in Washington and Alaska to hear from people who are doing business with factory trawlers.

Brad Resnick, Aleutian Dragon Fisheries. In the interest of conservation, investigate separating the privileges of harvesting and processing - don't allow vessels to participate in both in the same year. This would prevent concentration of benefits of a public resource to few hands.

Bill Orr, Golden Age Fisheries. The shorebase preference proposals should not be sent out for public review. They are essentially limited access proposals and should be melded into the current limited access studies.

Doug Gordon, AHSFA. Asked that his letter of June 8 be entered into the record in full. They have a clear intent of getting into the DAP fisheries, but it looks very doubtful there will be any excess this year. He asked that a portion of DAP be set aside for them as soon as possible.

Thorne Tasker, Alaska Joint Venture Fisheries. Kodiak has a definite reason to complain; however, a few Japanese plants in Dutch Harbor shouldn't be given a major portion of the resource in the Bering Sea. He also thinks there are other ways to deal with the Kodiak issue other than an inshore preference.

Dave Fraser, Cape Flattery Fisheries. Still favors limited access; this issue should be dealt with in the limited access analyses. If there is an emergency, perhaps better consider having an emergency session of Council and comment on a moratorium on entry into the groundfish fisheries.

D-1(a) Groundfish Amendments

Matthew Iya, Eskimo Walrus Commission. Submitted a proposal to close area around Walrus Island for groundfish fishing to minimize disturbance to walrus. Supports Alternative 3.

Linda Kozak, Kodiak Longline Vessel Owners Assn. Regarding the sablefish allocations, all three alternatives are allocative in nature; it's imperative to reestablish equity in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands. They suggested an apportionment of 70% (longline) and 30% (fixed gear) in the Bering Sea, and 90% (longline) and 10% (fixed) in the Aleutians. They support Alternative 2 of the fishing season framework proposal and prefer the status quo on the halibut PSC framework proposal. Suggested that the PSC proposal be put on extended cycle until an observer program is in place and more data are available.

Kathy Kinnear, Kodiak. Ms. Kinnear commented on the extensive impact of the oil spill on the fisheries and the economy of Kodiak. Urged the Council to stay informed on the impacts and to be flexible in management over the next few years to help Kodiak and other fishing communities recover. Also commented on the need for a domestic observer program to protect the resource while they are recovering. Research is also needed on the impact of the oil spill on the fisheries.

Bob Trumble, IPHC. The IPHC supports most of the options for the Gulf PSC framework proposal. They prefer a framework rather than fixed PSC limits. They do not support retention of halibut in other fisheries. The IPHC staff strongly supports a mandatory observer program - prefer Alternative 3 which would framework coverage so that the proper observer coverage would go to the right areas and provide the maximum amount of benefit for the observer dollar. With regard to the expanded Pacific cod trawl exemption zone, IPHC commissioners have expressed a reluctance to support trawling in this Bering Sea area which has been identified as a juvenile nursing zone and the IPHC staff does not have enough information to make a recommendation counter to that position. They support the fishing season framework and feel that both alternatives provide some flexibility.

Brian Pfundt, Petersburg VOA. Need mandatory observers to gather information on vessels. Prefer Option 3 of the observer program proposal. Smaller vessels would have difficulty taking a observer but would agree because of the necessity to gather information.

Kate Graham, United Fishermen's Marketing Assn. They do not have a preferred alternative for the observer program because different groups in their association support various proposals. Some question the purpose of the program; their view is that it should be strictly for data gathering - information needed to make management decisions. The Council needs to determine what type of data they need and then determine the amount of coverage required and in which fisheries. Another question is who will pay for it? Authority is needed under the FCMA to assess everyone to fund an observer program.

Michael Lake, Alaska Observers Incorporated. His company supplies observers for the State mandatory observer program. They support a mandatory program with Council oversight, but NMFS and industry should be involved to ensure that program is feasible and the data gathered will be statistically viable. 100% coverage is desirable but should be achieved in 25% increments to allow for phasing in. Training for observers should be uniform so they can observe in any program and collect necessary information. Also thinks current qualifications for observers should be changed to allow undergraduate biology students to become involved.

George Anderson, Fishing Company of Alaska. They have a detailed logbook/data gathering system on their four vessels and are willing to share that information with the teams/staff under confidentiality guidelines. Prefer Option 2A under reporting requirements section of amendment. Would like to see 100% observer coverage in time, but it will be costly. Their concerns include the need for well-qualified, well-trained observers, availability of observers when they need them and for the time frames they require (40-60 days sometimes). Implementation should be no later than 1/1/90; suggested Council establish a committee to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Philip Eby, John Radosovic, FVOA of B.C. Presented written testimony expressing concern over the management of the halibut fishery and the effects of trawling on halibut stocks and habitat. They have recommended several courses of action to their government, one of which is to urge American authorities to establish a 100% observer program to strictly regulate the U.S. domestic trawl fleet.

Jerome Selby, Mayor of Kodiak. Prefers Alternative 2 for the season framework amendment. For the time/area closures around Kodiak, he suggested adoption of Alternative 1 or 2. Urged 100% coverage for a domestic observer program; accurate data are required to manage the fisheries. Advocated moving observer program to Alaska and making state/federal programs consistent. Coverage should be tailored to size of operation, in combination with a logbook program.

Steve Hughes, Midwater Trawlers. Barry Fisher proposed about two years ago that a domestic observer program be implemented. Favors Alternative 2 of the sablefish proposal. The fishing season framework proposal is difficult to comment on if they don't know what the specific start dates will be. They do not oppose a separate Shelikof District, but this proposed regulation assumes that all the spawning pollock in the winter period in the Gulf are in Shelikof. Their position is that if you establish a Shelikof District, the problem won't be solved. There's a great deal of pollock outside Shelikof and a better way to protect the spawning stocks would be to establish a percentage of the TAC that could be taken Gulfwide during the winter spawning period. With regard to the closure to protect walrus, it appears that a large number of walrus have been poached and this aspect has not been included in the analysis. Prefers Alternative 2b for the Halibut PSC proposal; when a PSC is reached only the trawl fishery is closed, it should be industry-wide. They support a domestic observer program and suggested a method of supplying observers to smaller vessels via a small ship with accommodations for observers that could be distributed among all vessels; they could visit, collect information, and go on to other vessels.

Paul MacGregor, AFTA. Essentially supports the AP position on the sablefish apportionment proposal, which is the status quo. Currently, the Regional Director provides that adequate bycatch is deducted from the TAC for sablefish to ensure the bycatch needs of the longline, pot and trawl fisheries for other species will be satisfied before allowing a directed fishery to be prosecuted. They believe that is the proper approach to management of this resource.

Brad Resnick, Aleutian Dragon Fisheries. Suggested a two-year program, beginning as soon as possible, which requires 100% coverage on any vessel 90 ft. or over that sort fish, all catcher/processors, on motherships who receive codends only, and for all shorebased facilities. This would allow gathering of critical data as soon as possible. The program could be reduced after the base period.

Vince Curry, AFTA. They support the status quo on the Walrus Island proposal. Suggested that there are other problems - food supply, hunting pressure, onshore human intrusion, etc., that could be affecting the walrus. Favors Alternative 3 for the Pacific cod exemption proposal. For the time/area closures around Kodiak, they support the existing Type I & II closures. If the Council considers Type III areas, they should require that the definition of the recruitment event be tied to some sort of objective so industry can evaluate it in that light.

Ted Evans, AFTA. Supports a legitimate observer program to begin in 1990, mandatory on all vessels, and fair and comprehensive for all segments of the fishery. The program should be centrally-managed; suitable coverage for statistically reliable data; and industry-financed. 100% of all fish sorting points should be subject to observers.

Bill Orr, Golden Age Fisheries. Favors Alternative 3 for the Pacific cod exemption proposal. This will allow additional groundfish to be harvested per bycatch allowance.

John Bruce, Deep Sea Fishermen's Union. Agrees with the concept that an assessment of 1/2 of 1% would pay for a domestic observer program. If industry would go to Washington, DC to tell them that, it could be done. They are against retention of halibut in all Gulf of Alaska fisheries. Supports Linda Kozak's proposal for sablefish allocation in the Bering Sea and Aleutians. With regard to the Pacific cod trawl exemption, he cannot support because of his concern over the bycatch of halibut.

Chris Blackburn, Alaska Groundfish Databank. On the fishing season proposal, they prefer the regulatory amendment process. It gives flexibility and more procedure than frameworking. Support the separate Shelikof management district. On the Gulf bycatch plan, they prefer continuing the current type closures. Asked that ADF&G numbers that represent threshold levels for those areas be a part of the package. On the halibut PSC, they prefer the alternative that sets separate fixed caps: trawlers, 2,000 mt; longliners 750 mt.

Dave Harville, Kodiak Westward Trawlers. Supports Chris Blackburn's testimony. Adamantly in favor of an industry-funded, 100% observer program for all factory trawlers and up to 100% on all other fisheries.

Wally Pererya, ProFish Int'l. Supports a strong observer program. No rational justification for 100% coverage except in some enforcement situations in closed areas.

Phil Chitwood, Arctic Alaska. Suggested that the recordkeeping and reporting requirement proposal be sent back to the plan team, NMFS, and ADF&G in order to develop a comprehensive program for review in September. This is not a comprehensive program; it is a duplicative program. No effort has been made to develop forms both NMFS and ADF&G can use so industry

doesn't have to fill out two sets. Prefers the status quo on the sablefish allocation proposal for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Denby Lloyd, Special Asst for Natural Resources, State of Alaska. Congratulated the Council on their approval of Amendment 12a. There is no question that there is a need for a domestic observer coverage to appropriately manage the fisheries. Roe-stripping is a waste of usable fish products and should be addressed. With regard to onshore/offshore preference, the Governor has not yet formed a definite opinion on this issue, but feels there must be some protection for shoreside processors and asked Council to give full consideration to proposals on this issue.

Alan Otness, Petersburg Vessel Owners Assn. In favor of a mandatory domestic observer program, with 100% coverage. It's the only way to obtain the necessary information for management of the resources.

Gainhart Samuleson, PVOA. In favor of 100% domestic observer coverage in place for 1/1/90 funded by industry. Prefers the status quo on the fishing season framework.

Arni Thomson, ACC. Support views of Petersburg Vessel Owner's Assn. about 100% observer coverage, but the Data Gathering Committee recommendation of a 125 ft. cut-off for crab vessels could be a problem. ACC supports Alternative 3 on sablefish allocation. On the king crab protection areas, they support Alternative 3, the modified time/area closures with the new types of areas. Support Alternative 4b, the cod trawl exemption zone, Alternative 2 for the recordkeeping proposal to modify the exiting requirements, and 100% observer coverage. Concerned about expansion of trawl exemption zone because of bycatches of king crab, halibut, and herring. He does not agree with the plan team's assumptions under this amendment.

Robert Wrum, KLVOA. Supports 100% observer coverage for vessels 125 ft and over and 30% for vessels under 125 ft. The cost of observers is a cost of doing business. Supports daily catch logs and reporting requirements, but agrees that it would be good to synchronize state/federal requirements. Opposes a roe-stripping ban unless combined with full utilization measures.

Cindy Lowry, Greenpeace. Submitted written comments on the proposal to protect walrus in the Bering Sea. They support Alternative 3 to ensure protection of the walrus from acoustical disturbance from the yellowfin sole fishery.

Doug Gordon, AHSFA. An observer program should be instituted on an equal level across the fisheries and linked to a policy toward full utilization. They support daily catch logs but agree that it would be good to coordinate state/federal reporting requirements.

Ken Taylor, ADF&G-Dillingham. Manages Walrus Island State Sanctuary. During his ten years in this position he has observed the various fisheries and offered to answer Council questions. He indicated that the overall Pacific walrus population was at an all-time high in 1985 when the last survey was conducted. The estimate at that time was about 240,000 walruses in the Bering-Chukchi Sea area. In the Round Island area addressed in this amendment, there were peak haul-outs in 1986 which have declined since then. However, the counts this month show them beginning to increase again. The poaching problem mentioned earlier is mostly being encountered in Norton Sound, not in the Round Island area.

Paul Finzer, Kodiak. In favor of an observer program and will pay his share so they can continue to fish until there are other funding alternatives.

Steve Drage, F/V COHO. Favors the status quo on the Walrus Island closure. He has been involved in the yellowfin sole fishery since its beginning and walrus were never afraid of them. The decrease in walrus population could also be related to the number of tourists visiting the island at the same time. Divers underwater have reported hearing no vessel sounds. Regarding the Halibut PSC proposal, prefers Alternative 2b.

Harold Sparck. Concerned because he felt the staff misinterpreted the AP recommendation on the Pacific cod exemption proposal and that the public had not had an opportunity to comment on their alternative.

D-2(a) Shelikof Strait Pollock

Chris Blackburn, Alaska Groundfish Databank. The model used for the pollock analyses is a good one which will provide more information about pollock. Agrees that the pollock stocks are declining right now. The SSC used the model results to project a new 1989 quota, but this is based on results that the Council traditionally would use to set a 1990 quota. If a fall fishery is need, it should be acknowledged that quota is being borrowed from the 1990 fishery.

David Harville, Kodiak Western Trawlers. Supports stand of the Kodiak processors.

Ken Allread, Western Alaska Fisheries. They need 35-40,000 mt tons of pollock this fall; if not their community will suffer for at least six months. If the status of stocks information the Council receives in December indicate there is less than shoreside needs for 1990, then the season should not open until at least April 1, 1990.

John Sevier, Alaska Pacific Seafoods. The coastal communities of Alaska have diversified and weathered many hardships. However, 1989 is a whole new situation. Pollock roe-stripping by trawlers has decimated their stocks and the oil spill and other fishery problems have put their community in immediate jeopardy.

Mel Morris, All Alaskan Seafoods. They need an allocation of pollock now, using 1990 allocations. If they receive an allocation, they request an opening of September 1 at the earliest.

Joe Plesha, Trident Seafood: Regarding the Peter Pan Seafoods request to reapportion Pacific Cod TAC from the Central Gulf to the Western Gulf. Over 11,000 mt Pacific cod has been taken in the Western Gulf out of a 13,500 mt TAC; in the Central Gulf, only about 15,000 mt of the 52,000 mt quota has been taken. Local fishermen will not be able to continue to fish in the Western Gulf as the quota is depleted; they will need an additional 12,000 mt. Asked for reapportionment of 12,000 mt from the Central area to the Western area.

D-3(a) Bycatch Management in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands

Bob Trumble, IPHC. The IPHC staff has concluded that the bycatch management for Pacific halibut in Amendment 12a should not be adopted on a permanent basis. The concept needs to be modified to account for the possible limited observer coverage and the Olympic style DAP fishery. IPHC staff submitted a written proposal for long-term halibut bycatch management in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.