

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE MEETING June 21, 1978

The Scientific and Statistical Committee met in the Council offices on Wednesday, June 21, 1978 and at 7:00 a.m. in the Anchorage Westward on the 22nd.

Those in attendance were:

Dr. Donald Bevan - Acting Chairman
Don Collinsworth
Dr. George Rogers
Bob Loeffel (for Jack Robinson)
Alan Millikan
Jack Lechner (for Carl Rosier)
Frank Fukuhara for Lee Alverson

Absent were:

Ed Miles
Dayton L. Alverson
Carl Rosier
Steve Pennoyer

Contract 78-10 (Clam Study With Tetra Tech)

Mr. Thomas J. Kawling of Tetra Tech made an informal presentation to the Committee, he stated that the main objective was to assess effect hydraulic dredge has on benthos. He stated they would use a sampler which had been previously used with tremendous success in a Southern California program.

He stated they would take samples, do tests and develop an effective sampling plan after initial sampling to determine the variability of observations.

The one objective which at present they could not identify how it would be done would be the repopulation assessment. They stated this could not be done within a season.

The Committee was satisfied with the discussion with Tetra Tech and has confidence that they are able to meet objectives and develop a well designed sampling scheme.

Comments on Draft Report of Investigation of Joint Ventures in Developing Commerical Fisheries off Alaska

The June 15, 1978 report of Dr. Gorham is deficient in several respects in its present form. The most basic criticism of the SSC review is that it has not adequately addressed the main objectives of the original request for proposals made by the Council and the modified proposal of December 30, 1977. The Council has not been provided in this report with any means for estimating and evaluating short term and long term impacts of presently proposed or possible further joint ventures on "the domestic commerical fishing industry and on consumers" and modification they "would make in the allocation of products, employment and income of the groundfish fisheries." The analysis contained in the report (simplified hypothetical cases of three extreme allocation alternatives and a proposed investment behavior model to be developed for use in the Gulf of Alaska Fisheries), furthermore, it is found to be incomplete in response to the other key objectives of the originally proposed research.

As a means of correcting deficiencies in the present draft report, the SSC has appointed a special subcommittee to meet with Dr. Gorham, review and evaluate the material collected and other work accomplished in the course of her investigation, and assist in designing further analysis and the format of a final report. The members of the Committee are George Rogers Chairman, Don Collinsworth, Ed Miles and Richard Marasco. A report will be made at the July meeting of the SSC. We suggest the Council consider this item on their agenda for the July meeting.

Bering Sea Herring Biology Contract

The Committee discussed the progress of this contract but was unable to make any recommendations with the information at hand.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game appears to be on schedule at this time and the work seems to be progressing well.

Tanner Crab Regulations

The recommendations under Tab 12 in the Council Agenda Packet were reviewed by the SSC.

The SSC feels that they are complete and suggest they be implemented.

We suggest the Council inform NOAA of the importance of final review and editing at the Regional level before publication of proposed rules in the Federal Register. We feel this is very important. After careful review and with the amendments suggested, the regulations are at the point they were when they were originally submitted.

Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP Proposed Amendments

The Committee discussed proposed changes for the Gulf of Alaska FMP. The Committee recommends that with the exception of reallocation of blackcod in the Chirikof Area which can be accomplished without amending the plan, the Council should implement the plan, as is, as soon as possible. We feel, if necessary, the 1978 plan could be carried over into 1979 until the plan for 1979 could be implemented. We feel that it is very important the 1978 plan be implemented as soon as possible and amendments be started as a separate process.

Scallop Proposal

Mr. Bob Wyman of Northern Aurora Fisheries wrote (letter under Tab 17 in Agenda Packet) to the Council regarding a ADF&G regulation regarding 4" ring size. They stated that the scallop dredges they had made in New Bedford came with 3" rings. They want Council assistance in having this regulation modified so that 3" rings would be legal gear for that area west of Port Moller. They state their fishing for scallops will be outside the 3 mile limit.

The SSC recommends to the Council that they have seen no scientific information but as we are talking about relatively small amount of fishing effort, recommended the Council request the Alaska Board of Fisheries consider the proposal. We believe that there should be some type of agreement with the operator to have an observer aboard.

Bering Sea Shrimp Fishery

The SSC suggests that NMFS act as the lead agency with Rob Wolotira as Team Leader of the Management Plan Development Team for this fishery.

Also suggested are:

Jerry McCrary, ADF&G
Fred Gaffney, ADF&G

Appointment of Halibut MPDT and Lead Agency

We recommend that a lead agency not be appointed.

The team suggested is Dick Myhre and Steve Hoag of IPHC, Jim Balsiger and Richard Marasco of NMFS, Phil Rigby of ADF&G and Don Gunderson, University of Washington.

Additional help from Harold Lokken, Gordon Jensen, Richard VanCleve, Bernard Skud, Bob Stokes, Steve Pennoyer, Don Collinsworth, Bruce Rettig, Bob Alverson, William Gilbert and others should be sought by the team.

Council Annual Reports

The SSC recommends that the Council issue an annual report that reviews the management of each of the fisheries covered by a FMP. We believe that the report should serve as a performance audit of the Council's fisheries management. The report should provide the Council's estimate of the effect of regulations, document the magnitude of transfers where allocations have been attempted and measure the degree of success of other objectives and goals within a plan.

We think the public is well aware of the Council's goals and objectives since they receive wide review in the hearing process. Statements by critics concerning other Councils which have FMP's in place indicate there is a lack of understanding of the results of Council actions.

Development of EIS

The SSC recommends that the Council, in its development of FMP's, in plans when the OY is set equal to or less than the ABC, consider a finding of no significant impact.

We believe that in cases where the OY is set below ABC, the fishery could sustain itself or rebuild itself, in cases where fishing has been too heavy.

In considering this recommendation, we recognize the need to use socioeconomic data and the interactions with other species in the determination of OY.

Troll Salmon Plan

The SSC reviewed some questions from the salmon planning team and provided some clarifying comments.

The SSC agreed with the Council's view as to how they wanted to handle this fishery and their instructions to the MPDT. They had talked with representatives of the team and think that by next meeting the team will come back with the proposed alternatives to carry out the Council's directives. Hopefully they will be able to show why in fact a quota won't work very well, why the present limited entry scheme will not keep a lid on effort, why using catch per unit effort doesn't work well in a troll fishery, how percentages cannot be obtained until after the season is over and how those effect the ability to work within season or cross season. It is the job of the management team to develop the alternatives to implement your request to put a lid on that fishery.

The team is looking at options for what can be done for 1979. It is possible to do some things to stop that fishery from increasing. It is quite evident that if some action is not taken it is going to increase. The team has comments from the SSC which will help them develop some alternatives for the Council to consider.