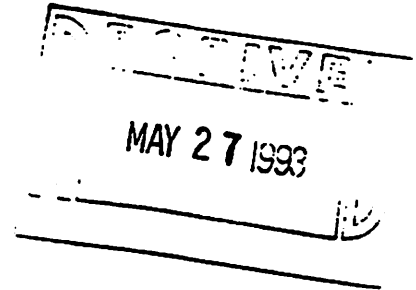




AGENDA B-3

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

May 20, 1993



Clarence Pautzke
Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Clarence,

Thank you for the letter requesting clarification of certain information items. We have enclosed a summary of the procedure used in generating the all-species blend estimate of catch which can be included in a Council mailing.

We are assessing the feasibility of comparing bycatch rates from 100 percent and 30 percent coverage vessels to answer questions about changes in fishing behavior when observers are on board. Many factors exist that affect bycatch rates from vessel to vessel. Even if analysis in the same area showed that 30 percent coverage vessels had lower bycatch rates than 100 percent coverage vessels, it would be difficult to conclude that this difference was due to coverage manipulation. We are likely to present a discussion paper or qualitative analysis at the June meeting.

I appreciate the Council's desire to pursue monitoring individual allocations of bycatch to CDQ's. However, the issues outlined in our previous letter to the Council still remain, and go well beyond simple "bugs" that can be worked out. We have basic questions regarding program ability to monitor and enforce multiple small quotas, particularly of discarded species. We will continue to work on this issue but will be able to implement a system only if we feel we can adequately monitor and enforce the proposed limits.

Consistent with the Council's motion on salmon management, I will be reviewing the State's Southeast Alaska management plan. If I am unable to certify the plan, the Council may need to take action at the June meeting.

We are requesting the observer program to provide data on halibut bycatch by vessels using pelagic trawl gear. These data will be provided to you separately.



Last, we will keep the Council advised about the Alaska Fishery Development Foundation's project design for its trawl selectivity studies, especially its tonnage of pollock required.

Sincerely,



Steven Pennoyer
Regional Director

Enclosure

cc: Lisa Lindeman GCAK

May 18, 1993

1993 All-species blend

The 1993 blend system incorporates observer and weekly production data for all species of groundfish. The procedure for generating the blend is as follows:

Industry reported product data is converted to round weight through application of standard product recovery rates (PRR).

Observer groundfish sampling data is applied to observed total catch to obtain round weight of each species.

Total catch weight is obtained from observer reports and from production reports by week, processor, and management area (Gulf of Alaska or Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands).

These two total weights are compared. If the observed total weight is within the range 5 percent higher or 5 percent lower than the weekly production report total weight, production reports are selected as the data source. Otherwise, the higher of the two reports is selected as the data source. If either report is missing, the available report is selected.

A previous feature of the blend, which allowed observer reports to be selected as the data source if they were more than 5 percent below the production report, has been eliminated. This feature was originally incorporated to account for differences in the day fish was caught and observed and the day that production was performed. Since reporting is done on a weekly basis, fish caught on the last day of the week would be included in the observer report, but would not show up in the production report until the following week. Analysis of blend data has shown that the magnitude of other differences between observer and production reports mask this effect. A more serious bias is that observer or production data may be manipulated to take advantage of the blend system, and result in underestimation of catch. Specific instances of this have been documented by NMFS. The current blend procedure removes much of the ability to affect the blend by manipulating data in this way.

STATUS OF COUNCIL TASKING

June 17, 1993

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>TASKING</u>
REPORTS:			
1	Crab Management	Report in Jun	Region/ADFG/Council
REGULATORY AMENDMENTS:			
1	Insh/Offsh/CDQ Bycatch	Passed by Council	Council/Region
2	Performance Pelagic Trawls	Final rule pending	Region
3	1993 Rept/Record Requirements	Being developed by NMFS	Region
4	Observer Requirements 1993	PR in Preparation	Region/Council
5	Require Offloading of PSC Species Caught Beyond EEZ	PR published Comment period ends June 21	Region/Center
6	Standard PRRs	PR in WDC	Region
7	Pollock Roe-Stripping PRR	PR inWDC	Region
8	Gangion-Cutting/Careful Release	Effective May 15	Region
9	Hook & Line Fair Start	Effective May 11	Region
10	Define Legal Gear Types	PR in preparation	Region
11	Rockfish Directed Fishing Standards	Initial review in Sept	Region/Council
12	Delay 2nd Quarter GOA Pollock Season (Reg. Amdt.)	Final Rule on Mar 31	Region
13	'A' Season Framework	Final action in June	Council

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>TASKING</u>
PLAN AMENDMENTS:			
1	Moratorium	PR in preparation	Council/Region
2	Exclusive Registration	Passed by Council Review in Jun	Council/Region
3	Sablefish/Halibut IFQs	Final Rule pending	Council/Region
4	NPFR Plan	PR in preparation	Council/Region/Center
5	Pref Seasonal Allocations of Cod	Final review in Jun	Center
6	Pribilof Closures	Initial Review in Sept	ADFG
7	Salmon Bycatch	Final decision in Jun	ADFG
8	Salmon VIP	Final decision in Jun	Region
9	'B' Season Delay	In effect	Council/Region
11	IFQ Block Proposals 1000 Pd Floor	Initial Review in Jun	State/Council
12	Comprehensive Rational Plan	Report in Jun	Council
13	Subdivide Aleutians Mgmt Area	Under SOC review Day <u>95</u> is Jul 6	Center/Council
14	Establish Atka Mackerel as Separate Species in GOA	Final review in Jun	Center/Region/Council
15	Total Weight Measurement for CDQ Fisheries	Final review in Jun	Region
16	Rockfish Rebuilding Amendment	Final review in Sept	Center/Region/Council
17	Additional Marine Mammal Closures	Final review in Jun	Region/Center
18	Scallop Management	Initial review in Jun	ADFG/Council

ACTION

STATUS

TASKING

OTHER ACTIONS:

1	June 24, 1992 Control Date	Published June 20	Region
2	Final Groundfish Specs for 1993 (including EA)	In effect	Region
3	Atka Mackerel Apportionments for Aleutians	Jun	Region/Council