

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

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SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING ISSUE

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COUNCIL TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING

The NPFMC will conduct a public comment session Oct. 3 at 9:30 a.m. in the Sitka Centennial Building to receive public comment on several topics related to Council proposals for fisheries under its jurisdiction.

The topics will include comments on fishery management plans for Gulf of Alaska Groundfish, Troll Salmon and Tanner crab and will cover a discussion of possible limited entry in the halibut fishery.

Specific topics on which the Council will solicit comment include:

1. Halibut limited entry
2. Gulf of Alaska Groundfish and sablefish concerns
3. Troll salmon FMP proposed changes
4. Tanner crab FMP proposed changes

The purpose of this issue of the Newsletter is to acquaint all who are interested in any of the above fisheries with the details of what the Council hopes to receive in the way of public comment.

- (1) HALIBUT -- the broad topic is limited entry for this fishery:
 - a. should limited entry be imposed on the halibut fishery?
 - b. if so, when should limited entry be imposed?
 - c. should a moratorium on licenses be imposed for 1980?
 - d. How should limited entry be developed and implemented?

The Council's concern regarding halibut is based on the present uncertain status of the Halibut Convention between the U.S. and Canada. If eventual jurisdiction passes from IPHC to NPFMC, the Council will be responsible for developing a management plan for halibut. If so, it would be advantageous for the Council to have the information it now seeks on the subject of limited entry to ensure a fishery being conducted on halibut in as proper a manner as possible with respect to conservation and effort.

(2) GoA GROUND FISH -- the broad topic is the GoA groundfish fishery and specifically joint ventures, trawling in general and sablefish concerns:

- a. should sablefish be a special, directed longline species?
- b. or should sablefish be a part of a mixed trawl fishery?
- c. should domestic trawling off Southeast Alaska be more regulated?
- d. should joint ventures on POP, pollock and cod be encouraged off Southeast Alaska?

The Council would like to explore potential or existing problems associated with gear conflicts between the trawl and longline fisheries associated with sablefish and the potential or existing problems associated with gear conflicts between the domestic and foreign fishing efforts in the Gulf; whether or not additional or different regulatory changes can assist in the development of the fisheries in the Gulf; the possibility of encouraging joint ventures on selected species to afford American fishermen additional opportunities for marketing catches; and receive comment on sablefish directed longline or mixed trawl fishery methods.

(3) TANNER CRAB -- The broad topics are the DAH determinations and regulations:

- a. possible elimination of the foreign Tanner crab fishery in the Bering Sea.
- b. increase the DAH for the Bering Sea for 1980.
- c. determine probable areas of fleet operations.
- d. greatly reduce the Tanner crab fishery in the Bering Sea.

There is a strong possibility that the American fleet is capable of taking the total OY in the Bering Sea.

If predictions are true and if data show that U.S. production estimates for 1980 are correct and that U.S. vessels are capable of harvesting available stocks, the foreign Tanner crab fishery would have no excess for assignment to TALFF.

The Council will also invite comment on ADF&G proposals as follows:

- i - record dead loss on fish tickets
- ii - close Bering Sea C. opilio season earlier than Sept. 3
- iii - reduce Kodiak area C. bairdi OY to 10-25,000,000 lbs.
- iv - reduce Bering Sea C. bairdi OY to 17-51,000,000 lbs.