

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

James O. Campbell, Chairman
Jim H. Branson, Executive Director

605 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99510



Mailing Address: P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Telephone: (907) 274-4563
578 271-4064

Certified By: *[Signature]*
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MINUTES

North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Scientific and Statistical Committee
May 21-22, 1984
Anchorage, Alaska

The Scientific and Statistical Committee of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in Anchorage on May 21 - 22, 1984. Members present were:

Don Rosenberg, Chairman	Richard Marasco, Vice Chairman
Robert Burgner	Jack Lechner
John Burns	Steve Langdon
William Aron	Al Millikan
John Clark	Jack Robinson, Alternate for L. Hreha

C-5 April Policy Meeting

The SSC reviewed the newly drafted policies which resulted from the April Council meeting. We strongly support the direction provided in these new policies. We would like to recommend some specific changes to the document entitled "Policy on Annual Management Cycles" dated May 1, 1984. The proposed changes are provided in the attached SSC draft of this policy.

We recommend deletion of the sentence on the first page which makes reference to use of the Board of Fisheries proposal format and deletion of Attachment B. If the Council wishes to have a form we believe it should be a Council form which ensures that proposals received are structurally complete with regard to the criteria provided for in the Council policy. We feel that use of the state form could lead to confusion.

The SSC did have some concern regarding the intent of the paragraph on the second page starting with "Late information . . ." the SSC has developed some changes to that wording in hopes to clarify the intent of this paragraph.

The Council staff asked for a recommendation from the SSC on how to implement the new policy of plan team composition, tasking and operations. The SSC feels that the best way to implement this revised policy is to reconstitute each of the teams. This will allow each of the management agencies the opportunity to review its participation in team activities. The SSC believes that the agencies having responsibility for management of the fishery resources under the jurisdiction of the Council are as provided in the following table:

	<u>Salmon</u>	<u>Herring</u>	<u>Groundfish</u>		<u>Crab</u>	
			<u>BSAI</u>	<u>GOA</u>	<u>King</u>	<u>Tanner</u>
NPFMC	x	x	x	x	x	x
NMFS/RO	x	x	x	x	x	x
NMFS/FC	x	x	x	x	x	x
ADF&G	x	x	x	x	x	x
IPHC			x	x		
WDF	x					
ODFW	x					
CRITFC	x					

These agencies should be contacted to nominate individuals for team membership. The Council may wish to incorporate the agencies list into the Council policy.

Additionally the SSC recommends that Council members and members of the SSC and AP should be reminded that there is the opportunity for nomination of team membership from other agencies and organizations that have a role in the research and/or management of fisheries.

The SSC will, in accordance with the policy, review all nominations , their qualifications and provide a recommended team composition to the Council. This should be able to be completed by the September meeting.

D-1 Herring FMP

The SSC discussed the make-up of a contract monitor subgroup to follow the herring scale pattern study and the offshore research, should it be started. The SSC recommends Al Millikan, Steve Langdon and Don Rosenberg for membership on the subgroup.

D-2 King Crab FMP

The SSC received a presentation by the Council staff on the actions of the Board with regard to the king crab resource and with regard to the status of the FMP. We did not find any items which required SSC review.

D-3 Tanner Crab FMP

The SSC received a presentation by the Council staff on the Board action with regard to the Tanner crab FMP. We did not find any items which required SSC review.

D-4 Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

Domestic Observer Regulation

The SSC received a presentation on the draft domestic observer regulations from Council staff. The SSC has no specific comments on the draft. It was brought to the SSC's attention by Council staff that the current regulations do not allow the Regional Director to use field order authority to close an area to protect crab stocks. This problem could be solved by bringing the regulations into conformity with the plan.

Prohibited Species Workgroup

The SSC received a presentation by the chairman of the Gulf of Alaska Prohibited Species Workgroup. It became apparent to the SSC that the group would not be able to complete its work in time for consideration by the Council under the plan amendment schedule. The SSC therefore concurs with the recommendation of the crisis committee that the bycatch of halibut be addressed by the Council with another emergency rule at the September meeting and that the team be instructed to prepare an amendment for the start of the cycle in December.

Groundfish Monitoring Program

The SSC reviewed the Steering Committee report on data needs for management of the groundfish complex off Alaska. The data base routinely acquired in the course of foreign fishing and surveillance will continue to decline as foreigners are phased out. To an increasing extent, information must be acquired from the domestic fishery through coordinated federal and state efforts.

Preliminary state program plans were reviewed. It was found that although several underlying assumptions were made in the state planning documents, these basic assumptions were not clearly stated. As a specific example, the federal government has traditionally undertaken large scale trawl and acoustic surveys for groundfish to obtain required data on abundance, species composition and population parameters. Such surveys are an integral and important source of data and their continuation is assumed by the State of Alaska. Thus, in planning a state program, such surveys by the state appear as a low priority.

The ability of the Council to manage fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska and eastern Bering Sea is critically dependent upon having a current and complete data base. Important elements of this data base include information collected via resource surveys and fishery data. Transition of fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska and eastern Bering Sea from foreign dominated to fully domestic, requires that data collection efforts be examined to determine adequacy. Since the Interagency workgroup has been tasked with this type of study, the SSC is supportive of the group's efforts.

It was brought to the attention of the SSC that the workgroup initially is focusing its attention on determining what data is needed. The SSC feels that this is a necessary first step leading to the development of a functional data base for the domestic fishery. If during its deliberation, the workgroup determines that immediate action is required to facilitate the development of this data base, consideration should be given to the development of RFPs, if appropriate. FY84 programmatic funds could be used to support these undertakings. Definition of data needs will facilitate the division of labor among the agencies involved in data collection. The chairman of the SSC can appoint a contract review group if necessary to assist the Council in the review of RFP responses.

E-1 Contracts and Proposals

The SSC reviewed the summary report entitled "Social and Cultural Characteristics of North Pacific Halibut Fishermen" dated May 1984. Members of the SSC provided the contractor with editorial comments. The SSC recommends the Council approve the report.

May 22, 1984

SSC DRAFT

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Policy on Annual Management Cycles*

The Council has adopted annual schedules for decision making on its fishery plans for groundfish, salmon and crab. One for the herring plan will be added when the plan is finalized. These cycles will dictate how the Council gathers and processes proposed changes to its plans and regulations, when decision documents will be available for public review, and when final decisions will be made by the Council concerning the various fisheries. The cycles are displayed in Attachment A. Further explanation of certain steps in the cycles is given below. In addition, the Council's Policy on Processing Proposals for Changes in Fishery Plans or Regulations (approved in April 1984) should be referenced when a rapid response to an emergency is requested.

Gathering and Processing Proposals. All proposals except those determined to require a rapid response will be processed according to the relevant annual cycle. Cutoff dates have been established for each fishery and this applies to all proposals regardless of source. The deadlines for proposals will be announced in the Council's Newsletter. ~~Use of the Board of Fisheries proposal format will be acceptable (see Attachment B).~~

All proposals will be reviewed initially by the Council staff for structural completeness using the following four criteria:

1. Is the objective clearly evident and stated?
2. Is a preferred solution offered?
3. Is supporting documentation presented to explain the problem and need?
4. Does it affect the FCZ?

The staff will attempt to gather additional information if required.

*Approved by the Council in April 1984 at the policy and planning meeting.

The relevant plan team will then perform an initial review, assessing the technical merits of proposals against Council goals and FMP objectives. A preliminary legal review also may be desirable. Team recommendations will be given to the SSC and AP who will review the proposals in light of their particular expertise and will refer all proposals to the Council with recommendations on adoption or rejection. The Council will retain sole authority to determine final disposition of the proposals. All proposals will be reviewed by the Council before being sent to public review.

Decision Documents. The Council will have before it all documents required for review when making its final decisions. These documents should be made available to both the Council and the public, before Council approval. The analyses will be as final as possible given time constraints. Late arriving comments may be incorporated as necessary. The Council may delegate authority to its staff to finalize all documents after the Council makes its final decision. Any substantive changes outside the original range of alternatives presented to the Council must be re-sent to public review with the appropriate supplemental analyses. Draft regulations should be prepared for each significant alternative, time permitting. Should these regulations not be available when the Council makes its final decision as shown in the appropriate plan schedule, the Council will delegate authority to write the regulations to its staff with advice from NOAA-GC and NMFS.

~~Late information is expected to be the exception, not the rule. Significant new information will be considered only if deemed necessary by the SSC. The SSC will make a recommendation as to what constitutes the best scientific information available.~~ [The decision documents should be based upon the best information available to the team. On rare occasion data may be received late which will have significant bearing on a fishery.] Every attempt will be made to incorporate this information and information presented to the Board of Fisheries into the Council's decision process where relevant. The Council will attempt to allow for adequate public review of its proposals and supporting documentation. Thirty days is expected to be the minimum for public review.

[It is anticipated that all data and analyses used for decision documents must be reviewed by the appropriate team and the SSC prior to Council action. Cut off dates based on the annual management cycles must be established for receipt of the above data and analyses consistent with permitting these reviews. The SSC will make a recommendation to the Council as to what constitutes the best scientific information available.]

It is assumed that peer review will take place within individual agencies. All analyses should be reviewed by the SSC, AP and appropriate plan team. The one exception may be salmon data which become available very late in the management cycle. Products of special Council workgroups will undergo the same review criteria.

A preferred alternative is not required for analyses presented to the Council.