

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

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APRIL MEETING RE-SCHEDULED

The regular monthly meeting of the NPFMC has been re-scheduled for the May meeting dates of May 24-25. That meeting will be held in the Anchorage Westward-Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, starting at 8:30 a.m. both days.

Items which would normally have been placed on the April agenda will be included in May. The two-month recess comes at a time when a number of long-term projects are being finalized and coincides with complete development of studies and plans necessary for the Council to consider in their entirety.

Some of those agenda items include herring in the Bering Sea, for which a fishery management plan is being developed, and Tanner crab in the Bering Sea.

Also due for discussion in May are the portions of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island area groundfish fishery which were "reserved" for decision until after the March meeting which was held in Juneau. That material deals with time/area closures in the Aleutians.

DAH & PROCESSOR PREFERENCE REGULATIONS - The Council working group is chaired by Dr. George Rogers, Juneau, and will be making a report in May. The requirement for those materials is a result of the 1978 "Processor Preference" amendment to the FCMA.

SALMON RESOURCE PROBLEMS - A comprehensive salmon plan is being developed for coho and chinook in Southeastern Alaska. The Pacific Fishery Management Council will make a presentation on the problems they are encountering in their plan implementation and how that plan might affect the NPFMC plan. The outlook along their coast is for a generally poor season. If their boats look for other fisheries, the impact is likely to be felt in Alaskan waters.

BERING SEA TANNER CRAB FISHERY - Catch reports through mid-April show the Japanese fishery holding up reasonably well compared to other years, and somewhat improved over their initial weeks on the grounds. The U.S. fishery seems to be reverifying NMFS survey predictions that the crabs actually do not appear to be there; a situation requiring consideration by the Council to possibly reduce the foreign quota (TALFF) or modify their fishing area.

BERING SEA HERRING - The Bering Sea Herring fishery management plan has been distributed to the Council review group for review in late April and comments to the Council during the May meeting.

FOREIGN-BUILT VESSELS REGISTERED IN U.S. - Senators Stevens and Gravel (Alaska) and Magnuson and Jackson (Washington) have moved to close loopholes in the maritime laws to prevent foreign-built ships under limited documentation and manned by American crews to fish and deliver to processors outside of the three-mile limit. The action came on reports of Norwegian stern trawlers having been purchased to be used in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea.

GULF OF ALASKA FMP - An amendment package for additions to the Gulf of Alaska fishery management plan has been sent off and the review process for amendments has started. One of the amendments changes to three the previous five regulatory areas. The old designations of Southeast, Yakutat, Kodiak, Chirikoff and Shumagin have been restructured into Western (Shumagin), Central (Kodiak & Chirikoff) and Eastern (Southeast and Yakutat).

FMP DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP - A team from NMFS central office will be in Anchorage on May 3-4 to work with the Council staff, ADF&G, Regional NMFS and PDT members on the FMP process. Included will be tracking systems for plans and regulations, plan amendment and non-amendment procedures and the administrative record indexing system.

SSC MEETING SCHEDULE - The SSC will meet May 22-23 in Anchorage, and will hold a sub-group workshop on the herring plan in Juneau on April 26.

ADVISORY PANEL - The Advisory Panel will be meeting in Anchorage on May 23. Details of meeting places and times will be included in a later mailing.

JUNE COUNCIL MEETING - The June meeting of the NPFMC will be held in Homer, Alaska on the 28th and 29th at the Land's End Hotel. More details of that meeting are to come.