



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

605 W. 4th Ave. Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817

Action Memo

File Number:Catch 17-015

Agenda Date6/5/2017

Agenda Number:D1

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
AFA and non-AFA Small Sideboard Elimination - Discussion paper

STAFF CONTACT: Jon McCracken

ACTION REQUIRED:
Review discussion paper.

BACKGROUND:

The Council received a report on the American Fisheries Act (AFA) Program review at the February 2017 meeting. As part of the review, NMFS recommended revising regulations to prohibit directed fishing by non-exempt AFA vessels for those species (and any future break-out or combination of these species) where the sideboard limits are not large enough to support a directed fishery. NMFS would then no longer publish AFA sideboard amounts for these species in the annual harvest specifications. The Council requested a discussion paper to analyze this proposed action to come back to the Council in June 2017. At the April 2017 Council meeting, NMFS notified the Council that it would expand the discussion paper to include analysis of revising regulations to prohibit directed fishing by crab vessels in the Crab Rationalization (CR) Program in the Gulf of Alaska for those species with sideboard limits that are not large enough to support a directed fishery, similar to the proposed action for non-exempt AFA sideboards.

This discussion paper examines the potential for using regulations to close directed fishing for species with both AFA and CR Program sideboard limits that are not large enough to support a directed fishery or for those species that are fully allocated to other programs. NMFS would continue to publish sideboard limits through the annual harvest specifications and open those fisheries with sufficient sideboard limits to allow directed fishing.