

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

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SUMMARY

Twenty-Fourth Plenary Session
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Anchorage Westward Hotel
Anchorage, Alaska
May 24-25, 1979

The regular meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council was held at the Anchorage Westward Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska, on Thursday and Friday, May 24 and 25th, 1979, starting at 8:30 a.m., both days.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee conducted a two-day meeting Tuesday and Wednesday, May 22-23, in the Council Conference Room at the Council offices in the Post Office Mall Building starting at 9 a.m., both days.

The Advisory Panel held a one-day meeting on Wednesday, May 23, 1979, in the Kenai/Aleutian Room at the Anchorage Westward Hilton Hotel starting at 9 a.m.

A public comment period was held during the Council meeting on Thursday, May 24, commencing at 3:30 p.m.

The following is a summary of the meeting:

Chairman Clement V. Tillion convened the meeting and memorialized Prof. Donald L. McKernan. Prof. McKernan, a Council member, was stricken and died during a trip to China in early May. Member Charles Meacham offered additional comments.

AGENDA

1. Draft agenda adopted by motion.
2. Previous meeting minutes for Feb-March adopted by motion.
3. Executive Director's report accepted by motion.
4. Alaska Department of Fish & Game Report - The report consisted of updates on the herring fishery in Bristol Bay and the Tanner crab fishery in the Bering Sea. The herring report indicated spawning started early, was missed by the majority of boats due to lay-ups caused by storm conditions and will probably peak at 10,000 mt, short of pre-season estimates. Prices in the fishery will average \$5-600/mt. Tanner crab fishing is announced to stop on May 24. Unseasonal declines in C. bairdi put increased effort on C. opilio early in the season. Final season figures should show 40 million lbs of bairdi and 20 million lbs of opilio caught. (Season closure of May 24 applies only to bairdi.) Total value of the 1979 fishery should be \$23.6 millions.
5. National Marine Fisheries Report - The percentage of foreign fishing effort in Alaska, compared to the rest of the U.S., while always high, is even more pronounced at this time. KORMEX joint-venture has suspended operations and is scheduled to return June 1, 1979. The KMIDC joint-venture will continue with two

boats fishing for bottomfish and shifting to shrimp on June 1 and several additional boats expected to start deliveries shortly. The May 2nd release of reserves will include 25% of all species except sablefish. A summary of enforcement case disposition was given and showed a settlement of \$47,000 for seven cases for which penalties and assessments had totaled \$51,500. U.S. District Judge James Von der Heid ruled Wednesday, May 23 in U.S. District Court, Anchorage, that the Coast Guard action in boarding the Tsuda Maru without a warrant was legal. Defense counsel for the ship had maintained that warrantless searches were illegal. The case is a precedent.

6. U.S. Coast Guard Report - One report of violation and two citations have been issued in the past two months.
7. SSC Report - The SSC has recommended the plan development team for the herring FMP be given additional time to present its final draft to the Council. Substantial revisions must be made to the sections on derivation of MSY-EY-OY-ABC, socio-economic analysis and Management objectives and options. It was announced also that Dr. James Crutchfield has resigned from the SSC for reasons of an increased schedule and commitments.
8. AP Report - An AP sub-group dealing with the DAH/processor preference subject has recommended to the Council that price not be a factor in the consideration of granting a processor preference. AP member Jesse Foster asked that the AP endorse a motion to the Council to investigate the problem of salmon interceptions on the high seas. The AP concurred.
9. Herring FMP - No action (Deferred for additional work).
10. GoA FMP/Rattail amendment - The Council has proposed an amendment to the GoA FMP to assign an OY of 13,200 mt to the species Coryphaenoides (rattails, grenadiers), thus taking the accumulated catch of rattails, a species discarded at sea, out of the "Other Species" category.
11. GoA FMP/Reserve Release - Council has concurred in the NMFS proposal to release 25% of the reserve for all species except sablefish. Action was deferred on the scheduled July 2, 1979 release of reserves.
12. GoA FMP/State-Federal Regulations conflict - Council examined the potential for conflict in waters technically FCZ but historically and traditionally managed by the State under their definition of territorial waters. A proposal will be worked on for Council consideration.
13. Tanner crab FMP - Information only, no action required.
14. BS/A groundfish FMP - Council adopted the following motion: "That the BS/A FMP be amended to adopt...trawl closures west of 172 degrees West longitude... which include a year-round no-trawl area between 172 degrees West longitude and 178 degrees 30 minutes West longitude and a six-month no-trawl area encompassing Petrel Bank. Current four-month trawl closures will continue to apply in other areas west of 178 degrees 30 minutes West longitude. Longlining will be allowed into three miles year-round throughout the area west of 172 degrees West longitude."
15. DAH Working Group report - A report was received from the working group and the Executive Director is to reply in advance of the comment deadline with the Council consensus regarding availability of price information.
16. Troll Salmon FMP - Lorry Nakatsu, Executive Director, PFMC reported to the Council on the salmon problems on the West Coast and how they might affect the

Alaskan fisheries. A request was made for the NPFMC to take some action to help resolve the severe resource problem on the West Coast. Both Councils are working on comprehensive salmon management plans and cooperation is essential.

17. FCMA Changes - (Discussion in advance of FCMA oversight hearings) - The Council considered a lengthy list of possible changes which might be brought up as subjects during the FCMA oversight hearings and which can be combined with similar positions on the same subjects considered by other Councils.

18. FMP Development Workshop - A report was made to Council on the FMP Development Workshop conducted by Bill Gordon on May 3-4. Included was a detailed discussion of the framework FMP concept and the A.R.I.S. filing system. The NPFMC has been chosen to conduct a pilot program on the filing system.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS -

Council considered a proposal for the formation of a Western Regional Bottomfish Council to coordinate bottomfish development in the North Pacific and concluded such a group was unnecessary.

The subject of a proposed National Orientation Meeting for Council members was thought to be unnecessary and the money earmarked for it could be put to better use.

The next regular meeting of the NPFMC will be held in Homer, Alaska, June 28-29. Meetings of the SSC and AP will be held on their regular schedule, with the SSC meeting Tuesday & Wednesday prior to the Council meeting and the AP meeting on Wednesday. The Council meeting will be held in the Elks Club. Transportation to Homer is by car via the Kenai Highway or by AAI (numerous flights daily) and Wien Air Alaska.

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