

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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### Director's Travel

I attended the 200-Mile Fisheries Impact Conference in Seattle on February 27th and 28th, an extremely well attended meeting structured on the Combs study commissioned by the Secretary of Commerce. The meeting brought out a wide range of participants and some healthy discussion on the way fisheries development may go.

I traveled to Washington, D.C. on March 6th and testified before the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries on budget matters. I explained the Council's budget and indicated we would need some help this year and then testified on the value of strengthening the NMFS budget in four areas, the observer program, enforcement, data analysis and the need to improve and regionalize the review of fishery management plans.

Committee members asked a number of questions about the enforcement and observer programs. Feeling seemed to run rather strongly that the observer program should be beefed up, with most of the congressmen present indicating a desire to see the observer program funds as earmarked money, eliminating the need for line item appropriations in the NMFS budget.

## Plan Development Team Meetings

The Clam Plan Development Team met in the Council conference room for three days the week of March 5th. Mike Hershberger spent one day in Juneau working with Comprehensive Salmon Plan Development Team.

## Amendments to the Gulf of Alaska FMP

We have finished the first draft of the amendment package to the Gulf of Alaska FMP. We should have it finalized and into Washington next week. They have already been notified that it is coming; a summary of the amendments went to them right after the last Council meeting.

## FMP Schedules and the May Council Meeting

I would like to recommend skipping the May Council meeting. It would not only save some money but would allow us to catch up on some of the management plan work that we continue to fall behind in. Dropping the May meeting may mean a one-month delay in two FMP's, King Crab and Bering Sea Herring. The SSC will review the King Crab Plan at this meeting and at the April meeting. The Council could probably consider it at the May meeting. The SSC will consider the Herring Plan at the April meeting, if they can complete the review in one meeting the Council could consider it in May. Delaying Council consideration until June will mean a one-month later implementation for both those plans, probably until May and June, 1980. Neither delay will hurt the timing as far as the fisheries are concerned, in fact, they'll improve it for herring which should not be implemented while a major fishery is in progress.

The May meeting also conflicts with a National Conference on Fishery Development scheduled for May 23rd and 24th in Washington that some of the Council members may wish to attend. The purpose of the Conference

is to announce a policy and program on fishery development establishing the administration's role in assisting the fishing industry and to discuss the implementation of the policy and programs and the role of the Department of Commerce, NOAA/NMFS and other agencies in carrying out the policy. Attendees are expected to number approximately 250 and they will be from industry, states, financial agencies, government and universities. Principal participants are expected to be the Department of Commerce, White House, OMB and industry.

Saltonstall/Kennedy monies have been released by OMB but NMFS does not intend to release any of them until after this National Conference. The Alaska Fisheries Development Corporation is still stalled.

#### Finance Committee Meeting

I would like to have a Finance Committee Meeting Friday morning. We have requests for additional funding for the troll salmon observer program from ADF&G. We need to discuss the financing for the Comprehensive Salmon Plan, review of travel and per diem rates for the Council, review and approve the second half of our FY'79 Administrative Budget, a request from ADF&G for assistance from a biometrician on the Comprehensive Salmon Plan and the possibility of staff help for SSC working groups.

#### Salmon FMP

#### Working Group for FCMA Oversight Hearings

Congress will be holding oversight hearings on the FCMA this spring. We should examine our problems and history in relation to the Act and formulate any needed recommendations for use at those hearings.