

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES

December 4-7, 1988

Anchorage, Alaska

The Advisory Panel of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met on December 4-7, 1988 in the Anchorage Sheraton Hotel. The following members were present:

Nancy Munro, Chair	Edwin Fuglvog	Ron Peterson
Arne Aadland	Pete Granger	Jon Rowley
Terry Baker	Ron Hegge	Rich White
Al Burch	Pete Isleib	Dave Woodruff
Lamar Cotten	Rick Lauber	John Woodruff, Vice Chair
John Crowley	Dan O'Hara	Fred Zharoff

Members not present were Mark Earnest and Barry Fisher.

The minutes of the September 26-28, 1988 Advisory Panel meeting were approved as read.

The AP requests the Council honor Barry Fisher as he steps down from the Advisory Panel. We wish to publicly thank Barry for his long, inspirational, and meritorious service to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and fisheries in the North Pacific.

### C-3 HALIBUT MANAGEMENT

#### Area 4B Allocation

The AP recommends that the Council request the International Pacific Halibut Commission to provide a series of five one-day openings prior to the July opening in Area 4B to allow for a fishery by Atka fishermen. *The motion carried unanimously.*

#### Area 4C Allocation

The AP recommends that the Council stick with the status quo. *The motion carried unanimously.*

#### C-4 SABLEFISH MANAGEMENT

The AP revisited the subject of sablefish management which was on our agenda in September. In September the AP voted on two motions:

1. To recommend that the Council adopt a license limitation system. That motion failed 7 to 11.
2. To recommend that the Council continue with open access. That motion tied 9 to 9.

Obviously split, the AP conducted an informal tally to ascertain if we could reach consensus around any option. We could not.

At this meeting the AP again heard extensive public testimony. (15 people testified, 10 in favor of some sort of change to the status quo.)

The AP first voted that the status quo was unacceptable for sablefish management in the Gulf of Alaska. *The motion passed 9 to 6.*

The AP then voted to recommend a license limitation system for the Gulf of Alaska.

- Licenses would go to vessel owners who had delivered 5,000 pounds in either 1985, 1986, or 1987.
- A review board would be established to consider individual cases and, specifically, the question of who should own the license, an absentee vessel owner or a lessor.
- Vessel permits would be bracketed by size as in Alternative #4 with the addition of a 70' to 100' size class.
- A boat which had fished sablefish with pots would qualify for a longline license.

*The motion failed 7 to 9.*

The AP recommends that the Council establish, by emergency rule, a one-year moratorium on entry into the sablefish fishery, effective December 31, 1988. To qualify to fish in 1989 a vessel must have delivered 5,000 pounds in any one year from 1985 through 1988. During 1989 the AP would recommend that the Council establish a committee to design an alternative management system for sablefish. *The motion passed 12 to 4.*

The AP was advised by Ron Berg that an emergency rule could be in place by April 1.

Summary of details brought up by public testimony.

1. Should lessors or absentee owners qualify?
2. Should the system allow leasing?
3. Should the system include pot boats?
4. Should licenses be non-perpetual, non-transferable?
5. Should a review board be established to consider individual cases?
6. Should the qualifying years include 1987 which adds about 273 boats?
7. Should a buy-back program be established?
8. Should fishermen have to buy licenses?
9. Should there be separate permits for Southeast/East Yakutat?
10. Should any system include both the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands?

**D-1 GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH**

Halibut Bycatch Cap

The AP heard a report on the status of stocks from the Plan Team, and industry testimony on individual TACs for pollock, Pacific cod, sablefish, and rockfish.

Before setting individual TACs the AP discussed halibut bycatch in the Gulf. Realizing that Gulf TACs have traditionally been constrained by the halibut bycatch cap of 2,000 mt, the AP analyzed possible TACs.

For those fisheries which have significant halibut bycatch:

	<u>Possible TAC</u>	
Pollock	85,000 mt	60,000 mt
Pacific cod	76,000 mt	40,000 mt
Flounder	18,000 mt	12,000 mt
Resulting Halibut Bycatch	3,000 mt	2,000 mt

The AP then debated whether or not to raise the halibut bycatch cap of 2,000 mt. Those in favor of increasing the cap argued:

- The halibut population is healthy and increasing the cap would only account for the inflation of the halibut stocks since the cap was originally set.
- The cap assumes that all TACs are achieved. Only 1,400 mt have been taken to date.
- According to IPHC data the 10-year mortality average has been 2,900 mt.
- The cap is a moot point since in a DAP fishery nothing happens when the cap is reached.

Those in favor of retaining the halibut bycatch cap argued:

- Increasing the cap will be taking halibut away from the target fishery. We have no economic analysis of costs or benefits, so why should a historical fishery suffer to allow for a new fishery?
- The cap should be kept low as an incentive to minimize bycatch and take observers. If necessary, the time to raise the cap will be in 1990 when the fisheries should have observers.
- Setting TACs within the cap still allows for growth in the DAP fisheries for Pacific cod and flounders.
- DAP needs may be inflated.
- To date the fisheries in the Gulf have only taken 1,400 mt of halibut bycatch; why should we double that for 1989?

The AP recommends that the Council retain the halibut bycatch cap of 2,000 mt. *The motion carried 11 to 3.*

#### TACs and Apportionments

The AP recommends the preliminary 1989 TACs, DAPs, and JVPs for Gulf of Alaska groundfish as shown in Table 1. The following describes the AP's rationale.

Pollock: TAC = 60,000 mt (of that 60,000 mt, 10,000 mt would be allocated for the Shelikof area). *The motion carried unanimously.*

For 1989 the AP recommends that the Council encourage a voluntary industry agreement that there be full utilization of the carcass for either meal or filets. *The motion carried unanimously.*

The AP recommends that the Council add pollock to the agenda for the June 1989 meeting. This would allow emergency action for an additional allocation of pollock to DAP in the Gulf of Alaska, if new scientific evidence shows more fish. *The motion carried 14 to 1.*

Pacific cod: TAC = 71,000 mt. *The motion carried 8 to 6.*

Flounder: TAC = 16,000. *The motion carried 9 to 6.*

Sablefish: TAC = 26,000 mt. *The motion carried unanimously.*

Rockfish: TAC = 16,800 mt. *The motion carried 11 to 3.*

**Pelagic Shelf**

Rockfish: TAC = 3,300 mt. *The motion carried unanimously.*

**Demersal Shelf**

Rockfish: TAC = 420 mt as suggested by ADF&G. *The motion carried unanimously.*

Thornyhead: TAC = 3,800 mt. *The motion carried 12 to 1.*

## **D-2 BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN ISLANDS GROUND FISH**

### TACs and Apportionments

The AP recommends the preliminary 1989 TACs, DAPs, and JVPs for BSAI groundfish shown in Table 2 based on the following rationale:

1. The AP set TACs equal to DAP needs as projected by NMFS for those species in the NMFS survey: pollock, Pacific cod, yellowfin sole, greenland turbot, rock sole, other flatfish, and Atka mackerel.
2. Sablefish -- the AP set TAC and the DAP allocation equal to the Plan Team ABC.  
Pacific ocean perch and other rockfish -- the AP used the 1988 TACs and fully apportioned to DAP.
3. Squid and Other species -- the AP set TAC based on the 1988 catch.
4. The remainder was apportioned to joint venture yellowfin sole and other flatfish.
5. Final adjustments were made to provide bycatch of pollock, Pacific cod, greenland turbot, and rock sole to JVP. Those bycatch amounts were recommended by staff. *The motion carried unanimously.*

*The motion carried 10 to 2.*

The AP recommends that the Council reaffirm NMFS' obligation to examine the reapportionments of unused DAP to JVP on a quarterly basis. *The motion carried 11 to 1.*

In anticipation of no JVP target fisheries other than yellowfin sole and other flatfish, the AP recommends that the Permit Review Committee establish a March 1 opening date to provide for higher CPUE, lower bycatch rates, and a safer fishery (better weather). *The motion carried unanimously.*

### Sablefish Directed Fishing Definition

Considering bycatch needs and the low TAC for sablefish, the AP recommends that sablefish in the Bering Sea be considered primarily as a bycatch-only fishery.

The AP recommends that the Council redefine directed fishing for sablefish as when retention onboard exceeds 2% for all groundfish species, except Greenland turbot and Pacific ocean perch, for retention onboard could be up to 10%. *The motion carried 8 to 6.*

### Observer Program

The AP advises the Council that it is becoming increasingly difficult to accomplish its task with the information now available. Without observer data we have no accurate information on catch rates or bycatch rates to form a basis for our recommendations.

We recommend that the Council appoint a workgroup representing the various segments of the fishing industry, and associated interests, to analyze the most cost efficient way, including industry-wide funding, an observer program can be established to provide the Council family with the information we need to make critical management decisions for each sector.

We would expect the workgroup to consider existing observer programs, as well as the one enacted in the Marine Mammal Protection Act Amendments of 1988, in making its recommendations. *The motion carried unanimously.*

### Halibut and Crab Bycatch

Terry Smith described to the AP the computer program which predicts the costs of bycatch decisions in the Bering Sea. The AP also heard extensive public testimony both for and against changing the 1989 bycatch regime for crab and halibut recommended by the Council in September.

Realizing that this only applied for 1989, the AP recommends that the Council stick with their September decision on crab and halibut bycatch. *The motion carried 11 to 6.*

**Table 1. Advisory Panel Recommendations for Gulf of Alaska Groundfish TACs and Apportionments (metric tons).**

Species	Area	Advisory Panel Recommendations		
		TAC	DAP	JVP
Pollock	W/C	50,000	50,000	0
	Shelikof	10,000	10,000	0
	E	200	200	0
	Total	60,200	60,200	0
Pacific cod	W	13,500	13,500	0
	C	52,000	52,000	0
	E	5,700	5,700	0
	Total	71,200	71,200	0
Flounder	W	3,200	3,200	0
	C	11,800	11,800	0
	E	1,000	1,000	0
	Total	16,000	16,000	0
Sablefish	W	3,770	3,770	0
	C	11,700	11,700	0
	W.Yak.	4,550	4,550	0
	S.E./E.Yak.	5,980	5,980	0
	Total	26,000	26,000	0
Rockfish 1/	W	4850	4850	0
	C	7100	7100	0
	E	4850	4850	0
	Total (GW)	16,800	16,800	0
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	W	500	500	0
	C	2,400	2,400	0
	E	400	400	0
	Total	3,300	3,300	0
Demersal Shelf Rockfish	SE Out	420	420	0
Thornyhead	GW	3,800	3,800	0
Other species	GW			
<b>GULF OF ALASKA TOTAL</b>		<b>197,300</b>	<b>197,300</b>	<b>0</b>

1. Rockfish refers to all rockfish of the genera *Sebastes* and *Sebastolobus* unless specifically separated into other management categories.

**Table 2. Advisory Panel recommendations for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish TACs and Apportionments (metric tons).**

Species	Area	Advisory Panel Recommendations		
		TAC	DAP	JVP
Pollock	EBS	1,340,000	1,280,100	59,900
	AI	13,450	13,450	0
	Area 515	-	-	-
Pacific cod		209,025	190,425	18,600
Yellowfin sole		191,675	51,675	140,000
Greenland turbot		16,264	16,234	30
Arrowtooth flounder		6,000	6,000	0
Rock sole		80,762	79,462	1,300
Other flatfish		87,839	25,890	61,949
Sablefish	EBS	2,800	2,800	0
	AI	3,400	3,400	0
Pacific ocean perch	EBS	5,000	5,000	0
	AI	6,000	6,000	0
Other rockfish	EBS	400	400	0
	AI	1,100	1,100	0
Atka mackerel		20,285	20,285	0
Squid		1,000	1,000	0
Other species		15,000	15,000	0
<b>BS/AI TOTAL</b>		<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,718,221</b>	<b>281,779</b>

JVP amounts for Pollock, Pacific cod, Greenland turbot, and Rock sole are considered necessary as bycatch in a yellowfin sole/other flatfish fishery, and are not intended for additional directed fisheries.