

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

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The NPFMC met Sept. 28-29 in the Centennial Building, Sitka, Alaska. Some of the highlights of that meeting included:

- * TILLION ELECTED CHAIRMAN - Clement V. "Clem" Tillion, vice-chairman, was unanimously elected chairman of the Council for the coming year. Harold Lokken, out-going chairman, was elected vice-chairman. Tillion will formally take the reins of the Council at the October meeting.
- * COUNCIL ADDRESSES HALIBUT PROBLEMS - The Council, upon the recommendation of the Halibut Working Group, has called for immediate negotiations with Canada to ask for continuing the joint halibut research of the International Pacific Halibut Commission after April 1, 1979. The action was taken because the outlook for successfully settling the U.S./Canada talks on fishery matters of common interest appears poor at this time. The U.S. had called for a renegotiation of the treaty which established the halibut convention between the two countries. A two-year notice is required for such matters, making the expiration date of the treaty April 1, 1979. If negotiations on the research problem are not acceptable to Canada, the Halibut Working Group offered more than a dozen other recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Council and which include terminating the IPHC on April 1, 1979, as scheduled, the transfer of management of halibut stocks off Alaska to the NPFMC and the stocks off Washington, Oregon and California to the Pacific Council, transfer of IPHC staff to a proposed halibut division of NMFS, legislation to accomplish whatever of the recommendations might require it and other recommendations designed to safeguard management of halibut and a continuance of work to date.
- * HERRING STEERING GROUP APPOINTED - A Council steering group consisting of Dr. John Harville, PFMC, Dr. Ronald Skoog, Commissioner of ADF&G and Jim Campbell, Anchorage, was appointed by the Council to work with the plan development team on the herring fishery management plan.
- * PUBLIC HEARING CANCELLED - Due to the good attendance at the public hearings held on the Troll Salmon FMP in Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka, Pelican and Petersburg, the additional hearing scheduled for Ketchikan on Oct. 5 is considered unnecessary. Scott Stafne, attorney for the Alaska Trollers Association, concurred with the Council that the meeting be cancelled.

* INPFC REPRESENTATIVES CONFIRMED - The Council approved Council members Lokken and Tillion to continue as representatives of the NPFMC on the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission.

* TROLL SALMON HEARINGS - More than 300 fishermen and other interested persons turned out for the public hearings which were conducted during the week of Sept. 22-29 in Southeastern Alaska on the troll salmon FMP. Council members, staff, some advisory personnel and Bob Simons of the Commercial Fisheries Limited Entry Commission were in attendance during hearings held in Juneau, Ketchikan, Pelican, Petersburg and Sitka. Some 60 persons offered testimony in addition to those who attended to listen in. Juneau had the largest number attending (90) while Sitka had the most speakers (18). Weather throughout the trip was excellent and the hospitality shown the Council entourage was, as always, first-class.

There will be additional opportunity for comment on the salmon plan by trollers during a hearing to be held in Seattle on Oct. 7 and during hearings in Kodiak and Unalaska on Oct. 10, 11 & 12. The comment period ends on Oct. 20 and all comments must be in the hands of the Council staff by that time if they are to be formally considered.

* SSC MEMBERSHIP - The Council unanimously approved reappointing SSC members Alan Milliken, Ed Miles, George Rogers, Jack Robinson, Donald Bevan and Donald Rosenberg. Robinson will serve as vice-chairman. Jack Lechner (Kodiak ADF&G) was appointed to replace Carl Rosier. The Council discussed revising the SSC charter to increase to 11 from 10 the SSC membership but adopted a recommendation from the Finance Committee to leave the membership at 10, one of the positions to be filled by a marine mammal specialist.

* SSC OCTOBER MEETING - The SSC will be meeting on Oct. 25-26 at the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center, Seattle, in advance of the Nov. 2-3 Council meeting. Representatives of the SSC will be present at the Council meeting to present their report, but no formal meeting of the group will be held at that time due to conflicts in scheduling.

** NPFMC OCTOBER MEETING - Because of the way the calendar falls, and the December holiday schedule, the October meeting of the NPFMC will be held on the 2-3 of NOVEMBER. Meeting place will be the Anchorage Westward-Hilton, in Anchorage.

** NPFMC NOVEMBER MEETING - For the same reasons above, the November meeting of the Council will be held NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 1.

** NPFMC DECEMBER MEETING - There will be no meeting held after the above meeting until JANUARY 25-26. Not having a meeting during the December holiday period is normal Council procedure.

* REPORT ON INCIDENTAL SPECIES - The Council working group on incidental species met on the 28th of October in Sitka to revise a first draft of a position paper on this subject. A final report is expected by the November meeting.

* AP MEMBERSHIP - Members of the Advisory Panel are due for reappointment by the Council at the November meeting. Included are the positions filled during the September meeting. Nominations or volunteers for membership on the AP can be made to the Council office. It is suggested that these be made as soon as possible for Council consideration.

* TANNER CRAB FMP FOR 1979 - Mr. Jay Hastings, representing the Japanese Tanner crab industry, testified before the Council on amendments to the Tanner crab FMP that the Japanese had asked for at the August meeting. Hastings asked the Council to defer the consideration of the Japanese requests until the November 2-3 meeting.

* CONGRESSMAN YOUNG VISITS - The Honorable Don Young, Congressman from Alaska, was a surprise visitor to the Council meeting. Mr. Young encouraged the Council to draft recommendations on the halibut question in the form of legislation, where that is needed, and forward the recommendations to him in Washington, D.C.

* FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT - The Finance Committee met on Sept. 28 and reviewed and made recommendations on the Joint-Venture study contract (UofA Seagrant) and herring socio-economic effects (Dames & Moore). Payment of contract costs was approved for both. A discussion was held on the FY '79 administrative budget reduction but no action was taken.

* SHRIMP WORKSHOP - A report from the SSC on the shrimp workshop indicated a cost of \$14,000, of which the Council approved funding of \$3,500. The UofA SeaGrant program has committed for \$4,000 and the remainder is expected to be shared between ADF&G and NMFS. The workshop is designed to bring together shrimp experts from around the world where pandalid shrimp are fished, and to explain and discuss fishing and management strategies. It is scheduled for January in Kodiak.

* COUNCIL RESEARCH PROGRAMS - The Council at the present time is gaining information or progress reports on contracts including the following: (1) coded wire-tag recovery on chinook and coho (for information on migration patterns, numbers of fish, origin of stocks in the fishery, etc.); pilot observer program (for information from the troll fishery off Alaska); hydraulic clam harvesting in the eastern Bering Sea (effects on bottom conditions, aquatic plants, etc.); continent of origin (sockeye and coho studies to determine origin of stocks); herring spawning (amounts and places of spawning herring and capelin in the eastern Bering Sea, including incidences of kelp spawning, age classes, etc.) All Council funded research must be directed toward a specific stock under management by the Council.

* USCG ENFORCEMENT FOLLOW-UP - A new dimension will be added to the monthly CG report of surveillance and enforcement. In addition to the citations issued, the eventual penalty for each actionable infraction will be listed and a report made to the Council each month.