

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver
Executive Director *Chris*

DATE: September 20, 2013

SUBJECT: Updated discussion paper on Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch management

ESTIMATED TIME 12 HOURS (All C-5 items)

ACTION REQUIRED

Provide direction on potential measures to manage bycatch and prohibited species catch in the Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries.

BACKGROUND

In June 2013, the Council directed staff to prepare a discussion paper covering four specific topics. The paper was mailed to the Council in early September 2013.

The first section is a review of the research themes that appear in recent peer-reviewed literature on quota-based fishery management. The discussion presented in the paper attempts to draw out the conclusions and assertions that are most applicable to the Gulf of Alaska's groundfish trawl fisheries. This literature review is not meant to be a comprehensive summary of all catch share-related research; rather, it focuses on work that has been completed since the Council last considered elements and options for a quota-based program. Subsections discuss the impact of quota-based management on economic outcomes, social considerations, ecological outcomes, and program design.

The second section provides a structured summary of the stakeholder proposals that had been presented to the Council as of June 2013. The elements of each proposal are outlined in a format that identifies how it would approach the Council's "Tier 1" decision points (allocation, area, duration, and transferability), to the extent that those aspects are addressed. Not all proposals were made with the intention of describing every aspect of a potential management structure; missing Tier 1 issues are omitted in those cases. Each summary also notes how the proposal would address the overarching goal of providing the fleet with tools to avoid or minimize prohibited species catch.

The third section examines the aspects of a groundfish management program where federal and State of Alaska decision processes are interrelated. Some GOA groundfish fisheries are also prosecuted in state waters, and some vessels fish in both state and federal waters. Also, the State manages separate fisheries for some GOA groundfish species – or may elect to do so in the future. The paper identifies points in the program design process where Council action would need to be coordinated with, or reactive to, State decisions. The paper notes several design elements that would allow management and reporting aspects of the program to function as both State and federal agencies intend.

The final section attempts to outline the Council's role in developing a Community Fishing Association (CFA) program structure. The Council's vision for a CFA has not yet been defined, and the Magnuson-Stevens Act does not define CFAs. This paper frames the discussion around experiences with community-held quota in two other regions (Pacific, New England), as well as the MSA definition of a Fishing Community.