

HIGHLIGHTS
Ninth Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
August 25-26, 1977
Kodiak, Alaska

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council, its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Advisory Panel (AP) met concurrently on Aug. 25-26 at the Elks Club, Kodiak, Alaska. The SSC and AP also met separately one day earlier and at other announced times during the Council meeting dates. A public hearing was conducted on Aug. 24 and public comment was also heard during the course of the Aug. 26 meeting. No closed session was held during the Kodiak meeting.

* Council accepted the Executive Director's report and FY 78 budget totaling \$1,446,517.

* Council heard extended comment on the Bering Sea herring fishery. Reports indicate a potential for a fast development effort on herring stocks by U.S. fishermen with no surplus available for foreign allocation for 1978. Council recommended re-activation of U.S. Corps of Engineers study of St. Paul Island small boat harbor. Potential of the herring fishery and others in that area may change the previous unfavorable cost-benefit ratio as shown in the original plan.

* U.S. Canadian salmon negotiations were described to Council as "very cooperative". Council chairman stated his optimism concerning solving the problem of Canadian troll fishery intercepts of Alaska salmon. Common goal is stock enhancement.

* Council approved four permit applications for Japanese fishing vessels consisting of two refrigerated transports (no fishing capability) and two stern trawlers.

* Council discussed and heard comment concerning the Tanner Crab Management Plan: major considerations are size, fishing areas and pot limits, with C. bairdi stocks reserved to U.S.

* Council heard comment that emergency field announcements should be a part of management plan; question is to adopt state regulations or specifying procedures in the plan. A task force was appointed.

* Council heard a report on the experimental clam fishery in the Bering Sea and directed a management plan be started to cover that fishery. Work this summer indicates a good potential and a production fishery may develop next season.

* Council directed that a working group be formed to develop regulations for the tanner crab and Gulf trawl plans.

* Council heard a report re patrol and surveillance: since July 1, USCG logged 13 infractions (4 violations-9 citations). Majority appear to be technical in nature and to stem from misunderstanding/interpretation of regulations.

* Council heard a report from the Kodiak City Council which passed a resolution to deny foreign processing of fish caught by U.S. fishermen.

* Council accepted report of the Halibut Working Group. There is no Council view at present. Members Lokken and Jensen were directed to participate in renegotiation talks forthcoming.

* Council heard a report on status of black cod fishery. A decline in catch rates of 50 percent for period 1971-76 indicates TAC should be reduced considerably.

* Council delayed submission of the King Crab Plan from September, 1977 until February, 1978.

* Council heard report on Interim Regulations, Part VI and will delay comment until SSC develops procedures in light of Council experience in management plan development.

* Council hired Mike Hershberger as a consultant with responsibilities for writing and editing Environmental Impact Statements and summaries for management plans, editing drafts and other writing requirements.

* Council will contract with FRI, Univ. of Washington, for information concerning incidence of North American salmon in the Japanese land-based fishery; (\$44,500): with the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game for Gulf of Alaska groundfish information; (\$50,000/yr., 2 yrs.): further with Alaska ADF&G for fisheries statistics furthering management plan development; (\$197,600/26 mo.). All contracts previously approved.

* Council heard Requests for Proposal items as follows: Relative merits of various types of joint ventures in developing commercial fisheries off Alaska; Impact of a commercial herring fishery on the economy and villages of the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim; Council will conduct further discussion on RFP calling for a study of eastern Bering Sea herring populations.

* Council directed SSC to prepare comments on Stoker/MMC report for the September meeting.

* Council discussed PMP and OY changes for 1978. It will delay until further study the reports available on some stocks (Sept. meeting). Council is strongly in favor of 30 percent withholding on initial allocations.

* Council received draft of management plan on the salmon troll fisheries off Alaska and circulated them internally for review.

* Council accepted two resignations from AP.

* Council discussed foreign fee schedules and again recommended use of most current possible ex-vessel prices as fee base.

* Council discussed Economic Impact Statements and thought they had little application to management plans.

* Council seated new member Gordon Jensen (Chairman, Alaska Board of Fish). Clem Tillion (State of Alaska, Senate), was re-appointed.

* Public hearings to date have been held in Petersburg, Seattle, Anchorage, Sand Point and Kodiak.

* Council approved meeting date for next meeting, Sept. 22-23-24 in Anchorage. SSC will meet two days preceding AP will meet one day preceding Council meeting.