

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Clement V. Tillion, Chairman
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 3, 1978
TO: Scientific & Statistical Committee Members
FROM: Executive Director *[Signature]*
SUBJECT: SSC Meeting January 22, 23, & 24, 1979

I am sending the following information for your review before the January SSC meeting.

1. Minutes of the SSC meeting of November 28, 29 and 30, 1978.
2. A report of the meeting between the US and USSR scientists which Dr. Bevan attended in Seattle December 20-24.
3. A packet of material on Socio and Economic data collection for FMP's which includes:
 - a. Memo of December 28, 1978 from Mark Hutton to Panel
 - b. Questionnaire dealing with data needs for the preparation of fishery management plans
 - c. Report on Socio-Economic Data Strategy Meeting held in January of 1978
 - d. Letter of November 1, 1978 from Hoyt Wheeland to Tom Roach
 - e. Memo from Zuboy to Regional Panel Chairmen transmitting background information on the Socio-Economic Data Contract and the role of the Regional Panels, also a copy of the RFP, etc.
 - f. Dr. Miles' letter to Richard Frank (signed by Lokken) of January 31, 1978 commenting on the report entitled "Economic and Allied Data Needs for Fisheries Management."

The Shrimp FMP is expected in our office the end of the week and will be mailed to the SSC as soon as possible after it is received.

The King Crab FMP will not be presented to the Council until March and has therefore been dropped from the agenda for the January meeting.

Attachments

IN

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Certified by:
SSC Chairman,

Steve Pennoyer
Date: 2/22/79

MINUTES SCIENTIFIC & STATISTICAL COMMITTEE January 22-24, 1979

The Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 am, Monday, January 22, 1979 in the Council offices. Present were:

Steve Pennoyer, Chairman
Jack Robinson, Vice Chairman
Dr. Don Bevan
Dr. James A. Crutchfield
Don Rosenberg
Dr. Ed Miles
Dr. George Rogers
Alan Milliken
Dr. Frank Fukuhara
Jack Lechner (arrived after lunch)

The SSC welcomed Dr. James A. Crutchfield the newest member of the SSC.

SHRIMP WORKSHOP

Brenda Melteff of the Univ. of AK and Pat Holmes, ADF&G, reported on the progress of the Shrimp Workshop planned for Kodiak February 12-15, 1979 and distributed an agenda. Mr. Holmes stated they had good response from foreign countries and were expecting a good deal of participation. The SSC stated they were impressed with the amount of work that had taken place to organize the workshop. The workshop content seems designed to answer questions of management and research pertinent to problems of Council shrimp management plan preparation.

The SSC asks that the Council approve travel for one SSC member to attend, Jack Robinson. The Council may wish to approve travel to this workshop for other Council or AP members.

SOCIOECONOMIC DATA NEEDS CENTAUR ASSOCIATES QUESTIONNAIRE

The SSC wishes to restate the view expressed in the last two substantive paragraphs of Harold Lokken's letter on this subject to Richard Frank, dated January 31, 1978. In particular, we think that only certain types of data are suitable for collection on a long-term,

continuous basis at the national level. These relate to the analysis of consumer demand, the price impacts of fluctuations in consumer demand, and problems related to international trade in fisheries products.

From the point of view of the North Pacific Council, however, questions related to the harvesting and processing of fisheries are paramount in so far as these have very significant effects on employment, incomes, distribution of incomes by gear type and locality, and, consequently, on local fishing communities in general.

The focus on harvesting and processing issues implies a regional, not national, approach to data collection storage and retrieval. Within that regional approach, data to be collected must be defined by some conceptual/analytical framework which specifies how they are to be utilized and why. But the types of data required, as listed in the questionnaire submitted, are so general as to be meaningless in the context of North Pacific problems. The question of subsistence fisheries is never raised. The survey addresses a large number of issues that may be important to the national economy but these are not necessarily germane to the management responsibilities of the North Pacific Council. Moreover, we note that the collection of primary economic data from private companies in the harvesting sector is such a difficult undertaking that there is simply no hope of doing this on a continuous, routine basis. In fact, if it were attempted, it would alienate the people whose cooperation is essential when periodic surveys must be carried out.

The most important questions for our purposes, given the management plans which we must produce, and given the difficulty and cost of collecting relevant data, are: 1) What are the minimal requirements for producing each particular FMP? 2) What particular community characteristics are important?

The SSC therefore recommends that the Council establish an ad hoc working group consisting of Messrs. Crutchfield, Miles and Rogers of the SSC, Messrs. Hart, Marasco, Martin and Stokes as economists involved in the preparation of FMP's or other relevant activities, the chairmen of the plan development teams and two members of the Advisory Panel.

The task assigned to this group should be to evaluate the draft FMP's which have been prepared to date in terms of the following questions:

- 1) What socioeconomic information would have been useful but is missing?
- 2) What sources of information were utilized with what effectiveness?
- 3) What information on community characteristics appears to be necessary independently of particular FMP's?

It is expected that this group will be convened during the period of April/May 1979 and deliver a report by June 1, 1979.

SHRIMP FMP

The Management Plan Development Team for the Bering Sea Shrimp FMP discussed the plan with the SSC. Paul Anderson of the Team pointed out the FMP was for the Bering Sea and not just the Pribilof Area as in the January 8, 1979 title of the draft. The team stated the plan's historical harvest and biological data, EY's, OY's, etc., refer to the Pribilof grounds. The intent is to prohibit fishing outside of the Pribilof area, except by special permit from Department of Commerce and the Council for an exploratory fishery if requested.

The SSC recommends the Council approve the Plan, after recommended editing changes, to go out for public review and commended the MPDT on their drafting of the Plan.

SSC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The SSC expressed their concern of not having sufficient time to review the documents directed to it for comment. They request that if possible they would like one month's lead time to review first drafts of the FMP's, and two weeks lead time to review second drafts. On contract reports they would like three weeks to one month's time. They also talked about agenda development and stated they will try to identify when they are going to discuss each subject, so the concerned public, team and agency personnel could better schedule their time.

The SSC established a procedure of appending to their meeting minutes a list of all documents reviewed at each meeting. This will provide a permanent record of all documents reviewed by the SSC.

US/USSR SCIENTISTS MEETING

Dr. Bevan presented the SSC with a brief report of the meeting of December 20-24 held in Seattle. He pointed out the Soviets were using ground survey techniques to verify aerial surveys on herring. He stated it would be worthwhile to look into their methodology and its possible application to Alaskan fishery management problems.

Mr. Larkins commented that NMFS is following up to some extent on this. Dr. Bevan stated papers would be forthcoming when they are edited and translated.

GROUND FISH OBSERVER PROGRAM

Phil Rigby reported that a U.S. bait fishery had started prior to Christmas in the Davidson Bank area and took about 250,000 pounds, primarily of Pacific cod. It is planned to send out observers on trips in the westward region in the next two weeks. He stated 5-6 boats should be fishing for bait in the next month. He also stated Alaska Packers and New England Fish Company indicated they would be starting a fishery this month on Kodiak.

TETRA TECH DRAFT FINAL REPORT ON EFFECTS OF HYDRAULIC CLAM HARVESTING IN THE BERING SEA

Mr. Tom Kawwling of Tetra Tech made a slide and TV presentation on their draft final report. He reviewed the scope, field study, sampling plan, etc. The report is not complete and a final draft will be available in March. The SSC suggested clarification of the section referring to marine mammals and recommended that consideration of future research studies emphasizing the clams and the fishery impact on the clams. The SSC suggested that Tetra Tech add a conclusion section, referencing pertinent results to the objectives of the contract. The SSC is to direct their individual comments thru Mark Hutton in writing, to Tetra Tech.

TANNER CRAB REPORT

The SSC reviewed a NMFS report entitled "Assessment of Tanner Crab Stocks in the Eastern Bering Sea for the 1979 Fisheries from the 1979 NMFS Trawl Survey" and discussed it with the author, Jerry Reeves. The ABC range for C. bairdi is given as 42.8 to 70.0 million pounds reflecting the uncertainty of current stock conditions. Jerry Reeves pointed out that warmer water temperatures in the last two years may have increased mortality or decreased availability of bairdi to the survey gear. Regarding the projected long term decline in C. bairdi abundance, he stated this should bottom out in 1982.

C. opilio: Jerry Reeves reported NMFS had compared the 1979 survey to the 1975 OCS survey. He noted the decline in large size male opilio and the significant shift in distribution of large C. opilio to south of 58°. In 1975, distribution of opilio south and north of 58°N latitude was about 50-50, while in 1978 about 90% of legal opilio were south of 58°. This may pose very substantial problems for the Japanese Tanner crab fleet in taking the 15,000 mt TALFF north of 58° in 1979, since it appears there may not be sufficient large males in that area. There is some uncertainty regarding the accuracy of the survey results. Additionally we could not predict at this time the ice conditions in the Bering Sea or U.S. fishery desire to fish for opilio concentrations in the area from 57°-58°N. It was pointed out that there is some evidence from current price negotiations of an increased U.S. interest in opilio.

The SSC indicated the need to base any changes in regulation should be judged on fishery performance, but felt that NMFS/ADF&G should discuss the report and develop the criteria upon which regulation changes in 1979 could be based if required to enable Japan to take her 15,000 mt TALFF allocation. The SSC requested NMFS/ADF&G report back to the SSC regarding the alternatives and possibilities at the meeting in February.

The Committee discussed briefly exploitation rates and management strategies. It was pointed out again that we had requested that in view of the projected long term decline in bairdi abundance (through at least 1982) that the team and appropriate agencies had been requested to present further analysis on size limits and exploitation rates later this spring. For the current season the managing agencies intend to keep the Council informed on in-season fishery progress and management strategies.

GULF OF ALASKA AMENDMENTS

The SSC heard presentations and reviewed documents from Carl Mundt and Paul MacGregor, representing the North Pacific Longline/Gillnet Association and also from Jay Hastings representing the Japan Trawl Association.

The Committee worked from the Council Action Paper of January 25-26, 1979 (Agenda Item #12). Bert Larkins and Phil Rigby of the plan development team were available for questions.

Deferred Amendment #1: Change the sablefish OY. The SSC reviewed the document entitled "(DRAFT) GENERAL PRODUCTION MODELS ON SABLEFISH IN THE NORTH PACIFIC" by Loh-Lee Low and Vidar Weststad. Bert Larkins' analysis based on it indicated an EY of 14,000 - 20,000 mt for 1979. Mr. Larkins' analysis indicates an OY of 13,000 mt would be conservative and appropriate because the CPUE in 1977 was very reduced and 78, while showing no further decline, did not increase. Mr. Larkins pointed out that the conservative approach is further helped by the fact that approximately some 3500 mt of the 15,000 mt OY available for harvest in 1978 was not taken and will carry over in the stock to this year. It was also pointed out that there has been an apparent increase in juvenile abundance in the Gulf as one sign that declining trends may be leveling or reversing. The Committee concurred with Mr. Larkins' assessment.

Deferred Amendment #2: Open Davidson Bank to longlining. The SSC reviewed this matter and feels this is not a scientific problem. The main problem is with gear conflict and promoting development of the U.S. fishery and not with the status of stocks. There is only a small U.S. fishery there at present and we were not given any data on the likelihood of any major expansion at this time.

Deferred Amendment #3: Restrict the incidental catch of sablefish in joint-venture catches and allocations to 0.5% of the total pollock catch: We did not consider this amendment, as it was approved by the Council in December. As requested by the Council, we did look into the feasibility of a directed trawl fishery for sablefish. Past foreign fishing performance and data from Washington, Oregon and California indicates that a directed trawl fishery can occur but economics and fishing area will probably restrict this. Generally trawl catch fish are smaller and command a lower price.

Deferred Amendment #4: Eliminate the special joint-venture reserve amount of Pacific Cod (3,000 mt). The Committee felt that the total question of DAH, reserves and TALFF for this and other species needs to be reexamined. In the Gulf the 1979 cod DAH is given at 15,500 mt plus a reserve of 10,000 mt, even though only a very small portion of this total tonnage was taken by U.S. fishermen in 1978. At present there is no provision in the plan for reallocation of unused DAH even though reserves can be reallocated 25% every two months with possible total reallocation by July 2. Phil Chitwood reviewed the NMFS telephone survey of industry groundfish processing intent for 1979 that led to identical DAH estimates to those used in 1978. No actual data was presented to the Committee in support of these estimates. After considerable discussion the Committee recommended that the Council:

- (a) Appoint a working group to consider how to arrive at DAH. We feel a standardized way to arrive at a reasonably accurate DAH should be derived. This group could consist of two people from the SSC, (Rogers and Crutchfield suggested), someone from the NMFS Regional Office (Phil Chitwood) and some AP members, etc. This information could be used to help standardize DAH determination and documentation on the national level as well.
- (b) Request that the Regional Office soon resurvey the U.S. industry to try to verify their estimates of what they expect to take this year.
- (c) The Council amend the FMP to allow release of DAH to reserve with Council approval. This would not be an automatic release. This would apply maximum flexibility in both allowing U.S. fishing of its DAH and transfer to TALFF if U.S. capacity/intent is overestimated.

Figures given us indicate about 3,500 mt of cod were taken by all U.S. fisheries in 1979, against a present DAH of 15,500. The Council may wish to consider transfer of some of this DAH to reserves although this could probably be handled at the time amendment (c) was approved.

Deferred Amendment #5: Reduce the number of regulatory areas in the Gulf of Alaska. Mr. Larkins' position remains that grouping of the areas would not have any significant impact on state of stock. He provided a chart which suggested that if the areas were cut to three that they be Southeast and Yakutat, Kodiak and Chirikof, and that Shumagin stand alone as the third area. He feels that with existing boundary lines and what is known of stock concentrations that this proposal is reasonable. As stated at the last meeting, the Committee feels that this is a bandaide approach to the operational problems engendered by minute foreign allocations of some species in some areas. The real answer still probably lies with examination of the need for different area OY's for individual species plus some added flexibility for the Council and Regional Director to implement these changes. We feel the team should reexamine this problem and suggest appropriate plan amendments. The SSC feels that it would be acceptable at this time to cut the areas and that the Council should use Bert Larkin's recommendation which is based at least in part on NMFS oceanographic data for the Gulf.

Deferred Amendment #6: Allow a directed foreign longline fishery for Pacific cod between 157° West longitude and 140° West longitude landward of the 500 meter isobath during the off-season for U.S. halibut fishermen. The SSC reviewed this amendment but felt they did not have enough information to make a recommendation to the Council. They recommended a small study group, with SSC members Bevan and Milliken to meet with Bert Larkins and Phil Rigby, and members of the Halibut Commission to discuss this matter. They recommend the matter be deferred until this group meets and the team collects more data and information. They asked the group to meet within the next week or two and the team to have information available at the next meeting.

Atka Mackerel: There is presently no OY or TALFF for Atka mackerel in the SE region. The Japanese currently harvest mackerel incidentally to other species and requested a small TALFF to accommodate legitimate by-catches. Bert Larkins stated that the 0 OY estimate was inappropriate and simply reflected a lack of data. Foreign harvests indicate substantial Atka mackerel off SE. The Committee would endorse an OY for this species sufficient to alleviate the incidental catch problem but not to sponsor an expanded fishery until further data is available.

BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN GROUND FISH FMP

The public comment period for this plan has just ended. The draft plan, public comment summaries and a number of public and agency documents were given the Committee. Public testimony was also received and the items contained in the January 25-26 Council Decision Paper (Agenda Item #10) were noted. Team members Rigby and Larkins commented on various items.

The status of the plan drafting process based on Committee comments and recommendations coupled with Council direction and AP comments, the Team would rewrite the draft for final approval, and submission to the Council in March.

The Committee notes that the plan development team has not had time to meet since the public comment period and has not been able to review the comments or supportive documents. The Committee does not feel that the best solutions would be reached by the SSC trying to do the data analysis, organize research results, dig out appropriate reference material or initially recommend the appropriate management strategies. These are team functions and they will carry them out given the time to do so. They can, of course, benefit from SSC, AP and Council comments or questions on the major issues to assist them in this task.

The Committee chose to follow this course. We will make no recommendation to the Council for adoption or rejection of the various decisions and options at this time. We did review each of the items in the decision paper and the various other documents related to them with the team members present and gave them our comments on further data or analysis which might be required or the course to follow in responding.

Some items discussed:

1. Pot Sanctuary Closures - Some discussion of whether proposed area is adequate to cover recent expansion in king crab fishing areas and pot storage. Jack Lechner to report at next meeting.
2. Winter Halibut Savings Area Closures - Referred to same Committee on halibut incidental catch and mortality as for Gulf Plan. Particularly applicability of 500 mt restriction in Bering Sea, consolidation of recent observer data on incidental harvest and mortalities were discussed.
3. Statistical Reporting Requirements - Committee recommended evening session at next meeting between team, SSC and AP selected members to square differences between ADF&G/IPHC statistical systems.
4. Limited Entry - The Committee questioned the statement that no program is presently necessary or should be implemented until all foreign fishing is terminated. Council may in fact wish to institute a study on when and what form of limited entry may be desirable in this fishery before it is actually needed. It is possible that a limited entry program may be desirable before all foreign fishing for all species are terminated.

5. A number of time/area closures based on the actions taken in previous bilateral agreements were discussed. Rationale for these closures was not given in the plan. The Committee agrees that it is reasonable to assume that these past measures were based on management needs such as protection of U.S. subsistence and developing commercial fisheries. The Committee recommends that the team make every effort to explore the background for these measures and perhaps resubmit closures in these areas for public input. The consideration of longline sanctuary provisions was delayed until the team could examine all the documents submitted. The question of halibut incidental catch and mortality engendered by trawl vs longline gear was to be addressed in conjunction with similar considerations in the gulf and the halibut savings area.

6. We discussed a request from Joe Demantle and Jesse Foster for a special section in the plan treating incidental catch of King salmon - suggest time/area closures to control.

The SSC suggested Bert Larkins and the PDT examine this to see if there are area time differences in this catch which might lend themselves to special management. This is potentially a serious problem. The SSC will consider this matter in more detail in February.

7. Marine Mammal Commission Commentary - The SSC feels we can't respond very usefully to the Marine Mammal Commission unless they supply us some data on marine mammal needs, OSP, etc. If the Marine Mammal Commission has information and data it should bring it forth to the Council. The FMP does not suggest any major change in fisheries development from the pattern of recent years and in fact, the recovery of various stocks being engendered by proper management should benefit Marine mammals populations or at least not place any added stress on them.

KING CRAB MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

This was deferred until the February meeting.

The agenda for the February meeting was discussed and the meeting scheduled for 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 21 and will continue on the 22nd if necessary.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm on Wednesday, January 24, 1979.

SSC DOCUMENTS
January 22-24, 1979

1. Memo of December 5, 1978 from Pat Holmes to Jack Lechner - Subject: Shrimp Workshop
2. Letter of January 12, 1979 from Edward Miles to Mark Hutton - Subject: Socioeconomic data needs
3. Letter of December 19, 1978 from Centaur Associates, Inc., to Regional Panel Members - Subject: Socioeconomic Data Needs (Questionnaire)
4. Draft dated January 8, 1979 entitled "Fishery Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Pribilof Area Shrimp Fishery in the Bering Sea"
5. Letter of December 8, 1978 from Jim Branson to Ron Regnart - Subject: Herring Plan Development
6. Letter of December 27, 1978 from Don Bevan to Jim Branson - Subject: Report of the Meeting Between US and USSR Scientists for the Exchange of Information on the Condition of Fishery Stocks in the Bering Sea and Northwestern Pacific
7. Draft Final Report "Effects of Hydraulic Clam Harvesting in the Bering Sea" prepared by Tetra-Tech
8. Assessment of Tanner Crab Stocks in the Eastern Bering Sea for the 1979 Fisheries from the 1978 NMFS Trawl Survey by J.E. Reeves, January 1979
9. Letter of January 15, 1979 from Mundt, MacGregor, Happel, Falconer and Zulauf to Clement Tillion - Subject: Fishery Management Plan for Gulf of Alaska Groundfish
10. Comments of support of the proposed amendment to reduce the number of regulatory areas from five to three in the FMP for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery from the Japan Deep Sea Trawlers Association
11. (Draft) General Production Models on Sablefish in the North Pacific by Loh-Lee Low and Vidar Weststad (January 1979)
12. Handout - H.A. Larkins dated 1/23/79 entitled "Sablefish"
13. Letter of December 7, 1978 from Donald McCaughran to Robert Alverson in response to a request for IPHC staff views on longlining for Pacific cod inside 500 meters from 157° W to 140° W

14. Handout - "Japanese Sablefish Fishery - Gulf of Alaska" from Bert Larkins, no date
15. Bottomfish Catch in Metric Tons in Alaska - January - December, 1978 by ADF&G, 1/22/79
16. Handout by Bert Larkins - "Atka Mackerel -- Gulf of Alaska"
17. Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish FMP Decision Paper. Agenda Item 10, January 25 - 26, 1979, prepared by Council Staff
18. Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish FMP Comment Summary. Agenda Item 10, January 25-26, 1979, prepared by Council Staff
19. Fishery Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Groundfish Fishery in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Area. July 27, 1978, Draft
20. Letter of January 18, 1979 to Chairman Clem Tillion from Bob Alverson (Fishing Vessel Owners Association) regarding Council action to amend the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan regulation to restrict allowable catch of national allocations to 25% of total between December 1 and June 1.
21. Letter of January 8, 1979 to Jim Branson from Henry H. Happel - Subject: Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish Plan
22. Position paper in support of the proposed longline sanctuary in the Central Aleutian Islands to the NPFMC from Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association and the International Longline Association, submitted by Scott Stafne on January 10, 1979.
23. Letter of January 18, 1979 from the Marine Mammal Commission to Jim Branson regarding the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish Plan
24. Comments on the Draft Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish Plan. Official NMFS comments on the plan submitted as a memo from F3 Roland Smith to FAK, Regional Director

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Harold E. Lokken, Chairman
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December 22, 1978

Scientific and Statistical Committee
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council

Gentlemen:

Below is a tentative agenda for our January meeting. I'm sure we'll pick up a few new items from the Council as we go along. Let me know if I have left anything out. See you next year.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

A. Bering Sea Shrimp

This draft plan was reviewed for the first time at the last meeting. The PDT has made revisions based on SSC comments (eg. clarification of EY, ABC and OY).

Action: Review for first release as DMP/DEIS for NEPA/CEQ and public reviews

B. King Crab

Expecting initial receipt of first draft

Action: First internal critique (if document is received in time for review)

C. Bering Sea Groundfish

Public review has been completed and the PDT has revised the draft.

Action: Review final draft for submission to Secretary

D. Gulf of Alaska Groundfish

Action: Reconsideration of some of the proposed FMP amendments outlined at the last meeting (see agenda item #11 - 11/30-12/1 Council meeting)

Cancel

Amend #1 Sablefish OY

Further analysis on rates of rebuilding will be presented

Amend #2 Davidson Bank closure

Further data to be presented

Amend #7 Reduction of number of statistical areas. More information to be presented.

Amend #13 Longline fishery for Pacific Cod east of 157° W. long. to 140° W. long.

E. Comprehensive SE coho-chinook plan. SSC wanted to review the plan content and scheduling. Team says this may be premature but we could review actions taken by Board of Fisheries.

CONTRACTS

A. Southeast Alaska Salmon stock separation feasibility analysis
Fisheries Research Institute Probably no action in January.

B. Development and enhancement of computerized fisheries information system - ADF&G

Progress report

C. Tetra-Tech's final report is expected

D. Progress report from groundfish observer program, ADF&G

INFORMATION REPORTS

A. Alaska Board of Fisheries

Summary of December meeting in Juneau (finfish and Tanner Crab) as it related to FCZ fisheries

B. Status of shrimp workshop

C. Presentation on University of Alaska's shrimp research project - People to make presentation not available, but proposal attached for your information.

D. King crab management strategies

Presentation on computer simulation model by NMFS.

E. Analysis of the problem of reporting catch areas (i.e. INPFC vs State's ecological areas)

F. Cooperative enforcement agreement

OTHER

A. Policies and procedures

Sincerely,

Steve

Steve Pennoyer, Chairman
Scientific and Statistical Committee

cc: Branson
Thornburgh

Jim Branson - Will you please ask Irma to supply Dr. Crutchfield with the latest versions of all of our existing and draft plans. Might not be a bad idea to send him a copy of our working and information papers for the last 3 months also. Thanks

Meyndersk

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PROPOSED AGENDA
ADVISORY PANEL
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Sheffield Hotel
Windsor Room
January 24, 1979

#15 Advisory Panel nominations

A list of the 23 current Advisory Panel members will be available at this meeting. The Panel needs to make its recommendations for a chairman. Formally, the AP chairman is appointed by the Council chairman.

#9 Bering Sea and Aleutian Groundfish Fishery - FMP

First Council consideration and rewrite. Plan was mailed to you some time ago. Bring it with you.

#10 Bering Sea Shrimp - FMP

Revised draft should be in mail to you by January 10. Council action is required to approve this plan for public review and comment.

#11 FMP Amendments - Gulf of Alaska Groundfish

Proposals deferred from the December Council meeting will be considered by the Council. They are listed below along with AP and SSC December recommendations. Some Council action is included for clarification.

Amendment #1 - To change the sablefish OY. (a) reduce the OY commensurate with the latest (1977) foreign CPUE data; (b) increase the OY in the FMP from 13,000 mt to 15,000 mt, which is the OY currently in effect in the FMP.

AP recommendation: The Panel endorsed a reduction in the OY commensurate with their earlier recommendations to 10,000 mt. In addition, the Panel concurred that the reserves for sablefish should not be transferred to TALFF as scheduled for January 2 and March 2.

SSC recommendation: The Japanese Longliners Association is preparing further information on the status of stocks to be presented at the January meeting. The SSC suggested action be deferred until the January meeting.

Amendment #2 - A proposal to allow foreign longlining on Davidson Bank.

AP recommendation: The Panel rejected the proposal for conservation and gear conflict reasons.

SSC recommendation: The SSC said the proposal had been withdrawn by the Japanese Longline-Gillnet Association. Further data on Davidson Bank will be presented at the January meeting.

Amendment #3: A proposal to restrict the incidental catch of sablefish in joint venture catches and allocations to 0.1% of the total pollock catch.

AP recommendation: The Panel recommended adoption of this proposal. They felt an allowable bycatch of 1.5% sablefish was unrealistic and could reasonably be set at 0.1%.

SSC recommendation: The SSC said that based on testimony from Mr. Larkins, an incidental rate of 1.5% seems high for joint ventures; 0.5% would be more appropriate for a true cod directed pollock fishery.

(Council action: The Council unanimously approved the reduction of $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% of the pollock catch. They asked AP member Oral Burch and the SSC to look into the matter of a directed trawl fishery on sablefish and to report to the Council in January.)

Amendment #4: A proposal to eliminate the special joint venture reserve amount for sablefish (1,500 mt) and Pacific cod (3,000 mt).

AP recommendation: The Panel studied this proposal and information supplied by Carl Mundt and recommended adoption.

SSC recommendation: The SSC said the joint venture harvest should be considered part of DAH, with an actual tonnage limit of bycatch based on a realistic appraisal of joint venture performance. It would appear that 1,500 mt of sablefish is far too high.

(Council action: The Council moved and seconded a motion approving the AP recommendation, but tabled the motion until the January meeting.)

Amendment #7: A proposal to reduce the number of statistical (regulatory) areas in the Gulf of Alaska.

AP recommendation: The Panel recommended rejecting the proposal. They felt that the present system of five INPFC statistical areas and the ensuing closures of an area once any species or species group is exceeded are essential to the plan.

SSC recommendation: The SSC said it was evident the present five areas cause the foreign fleet some operational difficulty, particularly since final division of OY for minor species to 5 areas combined with 5 or more national allocations results in some very small individual quotas. Mr. Larkins' opinion was that a reduction to 3 areas would not have any significant biological effect. The SSC stated they did not feel this would solve the problem since some species OY would still be very small. The Japanese have agreed to present more detailed information on their operational difficulties to assist the choice of appropriate area changes and the team has agreed to examine possible effects of various area combinations for different species. This will be presented in January. The SSC recommended sending the proposal to reduce the number of areas from five to three to a public hearing for the January meeting. A review of the analysis and a decision could be made at that time.

Amendment #13: A proposal to allow a directed longline fishery for Pacific cod east of 157° West longitude to 140° West longitude, and landward of the 500 meter isobath, during the offseason for U.S. halibut fishery.

AP recommendation: The AP recommended rejection of the proposal. The two principal reasons for rejection stemmed from halibut conservation problems and potential gear conflicts with the developing blackcod U.S. longline fishery.

SSC recommendation: The SSC said the Japanese Longline-Gillnet Association had asked this proposal be delayed until January.

#12 Review regulations for halibut and salmon FMPs.

These regulations are currently still being drafted. They will be available at the meeting.

#13 Final report from Tetra-Tech on "effects of Hydraulic Clam Harvesting in the Bering Sea."

The SSC is reviewing the report now, and will report to the AP. Copies have been sent to AP representatives Don Rawlinson and Ray Lewis for review. They were assigned by the AP to follow this contract.

#14 Council information booklet.

Sample has been mailed to you. Bring it with you with your recommendations on content, format, etc.

#16 Alaska Board of Fisheries Action

A summary of the meetings will be ready for your review at the Council meeting.

#18 U.S. catcher/processors in the crab fishery.

SSC Agenda Item:

INFORMATION REPORTS

Regarding king crab management strategies, the SSC will hear a presentation on computer simulation model by NMFS. The AP may be interested in this also.

DRAFT
MINUTES
SCIENTIFIC & STATISTICAL COMMITTEE

January 22-24, 1979

The Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 am, Monday, January 22, 1979 in the Council offices. Present were:

Steve Pennoyer, Chairman
Jack Robinson, Vice Chairman
Dr. Don Bevan
Dr. James A. Crutchfield
Don Rosenberg
Dr. Ed Miles
Dr. George Rogers
Alan Millikan
Dr. Frank Fukuhara
Jack Lechner (arrived after lunch)

The SSC welcomed Dr. James A. Crutchfield the newest member of the SSC.

SHRIMP WORKSHOP

Brenda Melteff of the Univ. of AK and Pat Holmes, ADF&G, reported on the progress of the Shrimp Workshop planned for Kodiak February 12-15, 1979 and distributed an agenda. Mr. Holmes stated they had good response from foreign countries and were expecting a good deal of participation. The SSC stated they were impressed with the amount of work that had taken place to organize the workshop. The workshop content seems designed to answer questions of management and research pertinent to problems of Council shrimp management plan preparation.

The SSC asks that the Council approve travel for one SSC member to attend, Jack Robinson. The Council may wish to approve travel to this workshop for other Council or AP members.

SOCIOECONOMIC DATA NEEDS CENTAUR ASSOCIATES QUESTIONNAIRE

The SSC wishes to restate the view expressed in the last two substantive paragraphs of Harold Lokken's letter on this subject to Richard Frank, dated January 31, 1978. In particular, we think that only certain types of data are suitable for collection on a long-term, continuous basis at the national level. These relate to the analysis of consumer demand, the price impacts of fluctuations in consumer demand, and problems related to international trade in fisheries products.

From the point of view of the North Pacific Council, however, questions related to the harvesting and processing of fisheries are paramount in so far as these have very significant effects on employment, incomes, distribution of incomes by gear type and locality, and, consequently, on local fishing communities in general.

The focus on harvesting and processing issues implies a regional, not national, approach to data collection storage and retrieval. Within that regional approach, data to be collected must be defined by some conceptual/analytical framework which specifies how they are to be utilized and why. But the types of data required, as listed in the questionnaire submitted, are so general as to be meaningless in the context of North Pacific problems. The question of subsistence fisheries is never raised. The survey addresses a large number of issues that may be important to the national economy but these are not necessarily germane to the management responsibilities of the North Pacific Council. Moreover, we note that the collection of primary economic data from private companies in the harvesting sector is such a difficult undertaking that there is simply no hope of doing this on a continuous, routine

basis. In fact, if it were attempted, it would alienate the people whose cooperation is essential when periodic surveys must be carried out.

The most important questions for our purposes, given the management plans which we must produce, and given the difficulty and cost of collecting relevant data, are: 1) What are the minimal requirements for producing each particular FMP? 2) What particular community characteristics are important?

The SSC therefore recommends that the Council establish an ad hoc working group consisting of Messrs. Crutchfield, Miles and Rogers of the SSC, Messrs. Hart, Marasco, Martin and Stokes as economists involved in the preparation of FMP's or other relevant activities, the chairmen of the plan development teams and two members of the Advisory Panel.

The task assigned to this group should be to evaluate the draft FMP's which have been prepared to date in terms of the following questions:

- 1) What socioeconomic information would have been useful but is missing?
- 2) What sources of information were utilized with what effectiveness?
- 3) What information on community characteristics appears to be necessary independently of particular FMP's?

It is expected that this group will be convened during the period of April/May 1979 and deliver a report by June 1, 1979.

SHRIMP FMP

The Management Plan Development Team for the Bering Sea Shrimp FMP discussed the plan with the SSC. Paul Anderson of the Team pointed out the FMP was for the Bering Sea and not just the Pribilof Area as in the January 8, 1979 title of the draft. The team stated the plan's historical harvest and biological data, EY's, OY's, etc., refer to the Pribilof grounds. The intent is to prohibit fishing outside of the Pribilof area, except by special permit from Department of Commerce and the Council for an exploratory fishery if requested.

The SSC recommends the Council approve the Plan, after recommended editing changes, to go out for public review and commended the MPDT on their drafting of the Plan.

SSC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The SSC expressed their concern of not having sufficient time to review the documents directed to it for comment. They request that if possible they would like one month's lead time to review first drafts of the FMP's, and two weeks lead time to review second drafts. On contract reports they would like three weeks to one month's time. They also talked about agenda development and stated they will try to identify when they are going to discuss each subject, so the concerned public, team and agency personnel could better schedule their time.

The SSC established a procedure of appending to their meeting minutes a list of all documents reviewed at each meeting. This will provide a permanent record of all documents reviewed by the SSC.

US/USSR SCIENTISTS MEETING

Dr. Bevan presented the SSC with a brief report of the meeting of December 20-24 held in Seattle. He pointed out the Soviets were using ground survey techniques to verify aerial surveys on herring. He stated it would be worthwhile to look into their methodology and its possible application to Alaskan fishery management problems.

Mr. Larkins commented that NMFS is following up to some extent on this. Dr. Bevan stated papers would be forthcoming when they are edited and translated.

GROUND FISH OBSERVER PROGRAM

Phil Rigby reported that a U.S. bait fishery had started prior to Christmas in the Davidson Bank area and took about 250,000 pounds, primarily of Pacific cod. It is planned to send out observers on trips in the westward region in the next two weeks. He stated 5-6 boats should be fishing for bait in the next month. He also stated Alaska Packers and New England Fish Company indicated they would be starting a fishery this month on Kodiak.

TETRA TECH DRAFT FINAL REPORT ON EFFECTS OF HYDRAULIC CLAM HARVESTING IN THE BERING SEA

Mr. Tom Kawling of Tetra Tech made a slide and TV presentation on their draft final report. He reviewed the scope, field study, sampling plan, etc. The report is not complete and a final draft will be available in March. The SSC suggested clarification of the section referring to marine mammals and recommended that consideration of future research studies emphasizing the clams and the fishery impact on the clams. The SSC suggested that Tetra Tech add a conclusion section, referencing pertinent results to the objectives of the contract. The SSC is to direct their individual comments thru Mark Hutton in writing, to Tetra Tech.

TANNER CRAB REPORT

The SSC reviewed a NMFS report entitled "Assessment of Tanner Crab Stocks in the Eastern Bering Sea for the 1979 Fisheries from the 1979 NMFS Trawl Survey" and discussed it with the author, Jerry Reeves. The ABC range for C. bairdi is given as 42.8 to 70.0 million pounds reflecting the uncertainty of current stock conditions. Jerry Reeves pointed out that warmer water temperatures in the last two years may have increased mortality or decreased availability of bairdi to the survey gear. Regarding the projected long term decline in C. bairdi abundance, he stated this should bottom out in 1982.

C. opilio: Jerry Reeves reported NMFS had compared the 1979 survey to the 1975 OCS survey. He noted the decline in large size male opilio and the significant shift in distribution of large C. opilio to south of 58°. In 1975, distribution of opilio south and north of 58°N latitude was about 50-50, while in 1978 about 90% of legal opilio were south of 58°. This may pose very substantial problems for the Japanese Tanner crab fleet in taking the 15,000 mt TALFF north of 58° in 1979, since it appears there may not be sufficient large males in that area. There is some uncertainty regarding the accuracy of the survey results. Additionally we could not predict at this time the ice conditions in the Bering Sea or U.S. fishery desire to fish for opilio concentrations in the area from 57°-58°N. It was pointed out that there is some evidence from current price negotiations of an increased U.S. interest in opilio.

The SSC indicated the need to base any changes in regulation should be judged on fishery performance, but felt that NMFS/ADF&G should discuss the report and develop the criteria upon which regulation changes in 1979 could be based if required to enable Japan to take her 15,000 mt TALFF allocation. The SSC requested NMFS/ADF&G report back to the SSC regarding the alternatives and possibilities at the meeting in February.

The Committee discussed briefly exploitation rates and management strategies. It was pointed out again that we had requested that in view of the projected long term decline in bairdi abundance (through at least 1982) that the team and appropriate agencies had been requested to present further analysis on size limits and exploitation rates later this spring. For the current season the managing agencies intend to keep the Council informed on in-season fishery progress and management strategies.

GULF OF ALASKA AMENDMENTS

The SSC heard presentations and reviewed documents from Carl Mundt and Paul MacGregor, representing the North Pacific Longline/Gillnet Association and also from Jay Hastings representing the Japan Trawl Association.

The Committee worked from the Council Action Paper of January 25-26, 1979 (Agenda Item #12). Bert Larkins and Phil Rigby of the plan development team were available for questions.

Deferred Amendment #1: Change the sablefish OY. The SSC reviewed the document entitled "(DRAFT) GENERAL PRODUCTION MODELS ON SABLEFISH IN THE NORTH PACIFIC" by Loh-Lee Low and Vidar Weststad. Bert Larkins' analysis based on it indicated an EY of 14,000 - 20,000 mt for 1979. Mr. Larkins' analysis indicates an OY of 13,000 mt would be conservative and appropriate because the CPUE in 1977 was very reduced and 78, while showing no further decline, did not increase. Mr. Larkins pointed out that the conservative approach is further helped by the fact that some 3500 mt if supposedly by available harvest was not taken in 1978 and will carry over in the stock to this year. It was also pointed out that there has been an apparent increase in juvenile abundance in the Gulf as one sign that declining trends may be leveling or reversing. The Committee concurred with Mr. Larkins' assessment.

Deferred Amendment #2: Open Davidson Bank to longlining. The SSC reviewed this matter and feels this is not a scientific problem. The main problem is with gear conflict and promoting development of the U.S. fishery and not with the status of stocks. There is only a small U.S. fishery there at present and we were not given any data on the likelihood of any major expansion at this time.

Deferred Amendment #5: Reduce the number of regulatory areas in the Gulf of Alaska. Mr. Larkins' position remains that grouping of the areas would not have any significant impact on status of stock. He provided a chart which suggested that if the areas were cut to three that they be Southeast and Yakutat, Kodiak and Chirikof, and that Shumagin stand alone as the third area. He feels that with existing boundary lines and what is known of stock concentrations that this proposal is reasonable. As stated at the last meeting, the Committee feels that this is a bandaide approach to the operational problems engendered by minute foreign allocations of some species in some areas. The real answer still probably lies with examination of the need for different area OY's for individual species plus some added flexibility for the Council and Regional Director to implement these changes. We feel the team should reexamine this problem and suggest appropriate plan amendments. The SSC feels that it would be acceptable at this time to cut the areas and that the Council should use Bert Larkins' recommendation which is based at least in part on NMFS oceanographic data for the Gulf.

Deferred Amendment #4: Eliminate the special joint-venture reserve amount of Pacific Cod (3,000 mt). The Committee felt that the total question of DAH, reserves and TALEFF for this and other species needs to be reexamined. In the Gulf the 1979 cod DAH is given at 15,500 mt plus a reserve of 10,000 mt, even though only a very small portion of this total tonnage was taken by U.S. fishermen in 1978. At present there is no provision in the plan for reallocation of unused DAH even though reserves can be reallocated 25% every two months with possible total

reallocation by July 2. Phil Chitwood reviewed the NMFS telephone survey of industry groundfish processing intent for 1979 that led to identical DAH estimates to those used in 1978. No actual data was presented to the Committee in support of these estimates. After considerable discussion the Committee recommended that the Council:

- (a) Appoint a working group to consider how to arrive at DAH. We feel a standardized way to arrive at a reasonably accurate DAH should be derived. This group could consist of two people from the SSC, (Rogers and Crutchfield suggested), someone from the NMFS Regional Office, Phil Chitwood, and some AP members, etc. This information could be used to help standardize DAH determination and documentation on the national level as well.
- (b) Request that the Regional Office soon resurvey the U.S. industry to try to verify their estimates of what they expect to take this year.
- (c) The Council amend the FMP to allow release of DAH to reserve with Council approval. This would not be an automatic release. This would apply maximum flexibility in both allowing U.S. fishing of its DAH and transfer to TALFF if US capacity/intent is overestimated.

Figures given us indicate about 3,500 mt of cod were taken by all US fisheries in 1979, against a present DAH of 15,500. The Council may wish to consider transfer of some of this DAH to reserves although this could probably be handled at the time amendment (c) was approved.

Deferred Amendment #6: Allowed a directed foreign longline fishery for Pacific cod between 157° West longitude and 140° West longitude landward of the 500 meter isobath during the off-season for U.S. halibut fishermen. The SSC reviewed this amendment but felt they did not have enough information

to make a recommendation to the Council. They recommended a small study group, with SSC members Bevan and Milliken to meet with Bert Larkins and Phil Rigby, and members of the Halibut Commission to discuss this matter. They recommend the matter be deferred until this group meets and the team collects more data and information. They asked the group to meet within the next week or two and the team to have information available at the next meeting.

Deferred Amendment #3: Restrict the incidental catch of sablefish in joint-venture catches and allocations to 0.5% of the total pollock catch: We did not consider this amendment, as it was approved by the Council in December. As requested by the Council, we did look into the feasibility of a directed trawl fishery for sablefish. Past foreign fishing performance and data from Washington, Oregon and California indicates that a directed trawl fishery can occur but economics and fishing area will probably restrict this. Generally trawl caught fish are smaller and command a lower price.

Atka Mackerel: There is presently no OY or TALFF for Atka mackerel in the SE region. The Japanese currently harvest mackerel incidentally to other species and requested a small TALFF to accommodate legitimate by-catches. Bert Larkins stated that the 0 OY estimate was inappropriate and simply reflected a lack of data. Foreign harvests indicate substantial Atka mackerel off SE. The Committee would endorse an OY for this species to sufficient to alleviate the incidental catch problem but not to sponsor an expanded fishery until further data is available.

BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN GROUND FISH FMP

The public comment period for this plan has just ended. The draft plan, public comment summaries and a number of public and agency documents were given the Committee. Public testimony was also received and the items contained in the January 25-26 Council Decision Paper (Agenda Item #10) were noted. Team members Rigby and Larkins commented on various items.

The status of the plan drafting process based on Committee comments and recommendations coupled with Council direction and AP comments, the Team would rewrite the draft for final approval, and submission to the Council in March.

The Committee notes that the plan development team has not had time to meet since the public comment period and has not been able to review the comments or supportive documents. The Committee does not feel that the best solutions would be reached by the SSC trying to do the data analysis, organize research results, dig out appropriate reference material or initially recommend the appropriate management strategies. These are team functions and they will carry them out given the time to do so. They can, of course, benefit from SSC, AP and Council comments or questions on the major issues to assist them in this task.

The Committee chose to follow this course. We will make no recommendation to the Council for adoption or rejection of the various decisions and options at this time. We did review each of the items in the decision paper and the various other documents related to them with the team members present and gave them our comments on further data or analysis which might be required or the course to follow in responding.

Some items discussed:

1. Pot Sanctuary Closures - Some discussion of whether proposed area is adequate to cover recent expansion in king crab fishing areas and pot storage. Jack Lechner to report at next meeting.
2. Winter Halibut Savings Area Closures - Referred to same Committee on halibut incidental catch and mortality as for Gulf Plan. Particularly applicability of 500 mt restriction in Bering Sea, consolidation of recent observer data on incidental harvest and mortalities were discussed.

3. Statistical Reporting Requirements - Committee recommended evening session at next meeting between team, SSC and AP selected members to square differences between ADF&G/IPHC statistical systems.

4. Limited Entry - The Committee questioned the statement that no program is presently necessary or should be implemented until all foreign fishing is terminated. Council may in fact wish to institute a study on when and what form of limited entry may be desirable in this fishery before it is actually needed. It is possible that a limited entry program may be desirable before all foreign fishing for all species are terminated.

5. A number of time/area closures based on the actions taken in previous bilateral agreements were discussed. Rationale for these closures was not given in the plan. The Committee agrees that it is reasonable to assume that these past measures were based on management needs such as protection of U.S. subsistence and developing commercial fisheries. The Committee recommends that the team make every effort to explore the background for these measures and perhaps resubmit closures in these areas for public input. The consideration of longline sanctuary provisions was delayed until the team could examine all the documents submitted. The question of halibut incidental catch and mortality engendered by trawl vs longline gear was to be addressed in conjunction with similar considerations in the gulf and the halibut savings area.