



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:BYC 14-011

Agenda Date10/6/2014

Agenda Number:C7

John Henderschedt, Acting Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management: discussion papers; salmon genetics report; AFSC social survey update

ESTIMATED TIME:

6 Hours

ACTION REQUIRED:

- (a) Receive Council staff reports on discussion papers.
Provide direction on aspects that are identified as needing further Council input. Develop alternatives for analysis if appropriate.
- (b) Receive Auke Bay Laboratory report on 2012 GOA Chinook salmon genetics.
- (c) Receive Alaska Fisheries Science Center report on preliminary social survey results.

BACKGROUND

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Program Discussion Papers

In April 2014, the Council reviewed a discussion paper that examined elements of a voluntary cooperative structure meant to provide the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish trawl fisheries with tools to better manage bycatch and prohibited species catch (PSC). The Council passed three motions at that meeting.

The first motion provided an expanded framework for how the cooperative program might function, with the goals of avoiding PSC to the extent practicable, reducing groundfish bycatch or increasing utilization of bycatch, providing the fleet with tools to function under lower PSC limits, and mitigating adverse community impacts that might arise from the proposed fishery structure. The scope of the considered program was widened to include the CP sector, and other groundfish species that might be allocated to cooperatives (in addition to pollock and Pacific cod). Section 1 of the program framework discussion paper highlights elements that the Council has yet to fully define, notes several management trade-offs that the Council would face if it moved forward in the manner described by the April motion, and assesses how the current proposal is meeting the Council's stated objectives. Section 2 expands on the April discussion of how cooperatives would be formed, and includes NMFS input on what new monitoring and catch accounting procedures might be required. Section 3 contemplates how the allocation of target, secondary, and PSC species might interact with existing GOA trawl management structures, including the Central GOA Rockfish Program and Steller sea lion protection measures. Section 4 highlights data issues that need confirmation or clarification before allocations could be made; it also provides a discussion of the the species that may be considered for allocation if analysis alternatives are developed. Section 5 covers measures that the Council is scoping to promote stability in trawl-dependent communities, including consolidation limits and quota regionalization. Possible limits on eligibility to purchase trawl licenses, and the attendant catch history, are largely discussed in Section 1 under "Elements yet to be defined." Section 6 outlines the Council's proposals for how fishing privileges may be transferred - within cooperatives, between cooperatives, in the short term (leasing), or via permanent transfer

of licenses or severable catch history. Section 7 addresses a proposed element under which trawl cooperative quota could be fished with pot gear, focusing on license requirements, necessary clarification of catch accounting procedures, and observer coverage requirements. Section 8 examines existing sideboard protections that apply to GOA license holders, and new sideboards that might be considered as part of the proposed program. The section provides a preliminary evaluation of which sideboards might be necessary (or unnecessary) if a cooperative quota program is implemented. Section 9 briefly described flatfish eligibility restrictions that apply to Amendment 80 vessels in the GOA. Section 10 describes the timing of the required post-implementation program review, and notes that the Council will need to define the contents of that review once the proposal is more detailed. Finally, Section 11 describes the cost recovery and loan programs required under MSA; a table shows possible cost recovery elements for the program as it is currently proposed.

The other two Council motions from April directed staff to review a proposal for community fishing associations (CFA) and to examine the adaptive management (AM) quota element of the west coast groundfish trawl ITQ program implemented by the Pacific Fishery Management Council. Those topics are jointly covered in a second discussion paper. The CFA portion of the second paper looks at proposed means to protect fishing community residents, potential new entrants, and shore-based employment opportunities. The CFA proposal includes goals and objectives that would be established separately from those guiding the Council's action. The paper examines how well the CFA goals fit with the Council's proposed structure, highlights areas for input from NOAA General Counsel, and identifies CFA objectives that might be accomplished by the Council's cooperative quota program as it is currently proposed. Expected costs and benefits of CFA management are listed, though that list is a work in progress. The AM portion of the paper describes the PFMC's rationale for including AM quota in its program, and what would be required to deploy that quota in support of one or more of the five stated objectives for AM. PFMC is still evaluating the efficacy and impacts of its ITQ program, and this paper summarizes some of the refinements that have been made to the AM objective criteria. "Lessons learned", as communicated to staff by west coast managers and stakeholders, are also summarized.

2012 GOA Chinook Salmon Genetics Report

Genetic samples were collected opportunistically in 2012 from Chinook salmon taken as prohibited species catch in the GOA pollock trawl fishery. The genetic stock composition of those samples was extended to provide an overall stock composition for the fishery bycatch and stock-specific harvests. The opportunistic nature of the samples raised concerns about applying the proportional composition of the samples to the entire bycatch population because of unknown, but potentially significant, biases. This report investigates the most appropriate means by which the collected samples can be extended to provide overall bycatch composition.

AFSC GOA Trawl Social Science Survey

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) carried out a social survey of GOA trawl stakeholders. Data were collected before program implementation in order to provide a baseline description of the industry as well as allow for analysis of changes that the bycatch management program may bring for individuals and communities once implemented. When combined with data to be collected in planned post-program implementation follow-up surveys, this information will inform changes in the social characteristics over time and assist in a more comprehensive program evaluation and more informed consideration of potential post-implementation modifications of the program, if needed. The survey asked for opinions on a range of elements that may or may not be included in the final bycatch management program to assess different participants' preferences for various management options, which may change over time as well. AFSC surveyed participants including vessel owners, vessel operators, crew aboard groundfish vessels, catcher/processor owners, catcher/processor crew, shoreside and inshore floating processors, tender owners and operators, and other individuals who are stakeholders in the trawl fishery including any businesses that are directly tied to the

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groundfish trawl industry through the supply of commercial items to include, but not limited to gear suppliers, fuel suppliers, and equipment suppliers. The results of the survey highlight the differences in the people, sectors, and communities engaged in the fishery. Data from the survey demonstrate how different individuals and sectors depend on the GOA groundfish trawl fishery to sustain their businesses and families, and how they may be interconnected with one another.