

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

## *News and Notes*



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## Call for Nominations

The Council is calling for nominations to the Council's **Advisory Panel (AP)** the **Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)**. The SSC advises the Council on scientific and other technical matters relating to issues before the Council. The AP is composed of representatives of the fishing industry and others interested in managing the North Pacific fisheries, and provides advice from those perspectives. Members of these panels are expected to attend up to five meetings, three to six days in length, each year. SSC members serve one year appointments; members of the AP serve three-year terms.

Letters of interest or nomination, along with a resume of experience, for persons wishing to be considered for either of these panels, should be sent to the NPFMC, 605 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, #306, Anchorage, AK 99501, by 5:00 pm on Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. Appointments will be announced at the end of the next Council meeting the week of December 4<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage and will become effective in January 2007. For more information, contact the Council office.

## Dutch Harbor/Unalaska

The October Council meeting was held at the Grand Aleutian Hotel in Dutch Harbor. We would like to thank the City of Unalaska and the port of Dutch Harbor for their hospitality while we were there. The City hosted a reception, Frank Kelty hosted a swimming party which was enjoyed by many, and industry representatives gave tours of their facilities and also hosted a reception. We would also like to give a special thanks to Tom Enlow and his staff at the Grand Aleutian, who dealt with many of the logistics of hosting a meeting in a remote part of Alaska.

## Chair and Vice Chair Elections

The Council unanimously re-elected Stephanie Madsen to her fourth year as Council Chair, and John Bundy to his second year as Vice Chair. Both are long-time Council participants, and we welcome them again in their leadership roles.

## Vessel Incentive Program

The Council reviewed a draft EA/RIR/IRFA which assesses potential environmental and social impacts of removing regulations implementing the Vessel Incentive Program (VIP). The VIP was originally designed to reduce the rate at which Pacific halibut and red king crab are incidentally caught in trawl fisheries in the GOA and BSAI management areas. However, the program has not performed as intended because of problems associated with proving enforcement cases, and the relatively small number of vessels impacted by the regulation. The alternatives considered in the analysis.

- 1) Status quo. No regulatory action taken to change or abolish the VIP.
- 2) Notice of schedule. Reduce the frequency in which VIP rates are published to annual (option 1) or permanently established through a single rulemaking event (option 2).
- 3) VIP Program Elimination. Remove the regulatory authority for the VIP from the GOA and BSAI FMPs and Federal regulations (option 1) or leave the FMPs unchanged but remove the VIP from Federal regulations (option 2).

The Council identified alternative 3, option 2 as their preliminary preferred alternative and released the analysis for public review. Final action is scheduled for the December Council meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

## 30th Anniversary

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils established pursuant to that act. As such, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council intends to hold a 30th anniversary celebration on December 9<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with our regular council meeting. If you are planning to attend, a copy of the registration is included with this newsletter.

**Registration and payment MUST BE RECEIVED by November 22. Tickets WILL NOT be issued at the door.**

# Crab Cooperative Vessel Caps

The Council received a staff discussion paper concerning the potential application of use caps to vessels fishing cooperative allocations in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab fisheries subject to the rationalization program. The discussion paper examined impacts of the potential caps to crew, communities, and vessel production efficiency, focusing primarily on the Bristol Bay red king crab and Bering Sea *C. opilio* fisheries due to data availability. In response to the discussion paper and public testimony, the Council adopted a motion requesting staff to expand the discussion paper to include additional data from the first year of fishing under the program, including data from additional fisheries and data collected in the economic data collection program. In addition, the Council requested staff to inform it of any data gaps that limit the analysis of the fisheries. The revised discussion paper will be scheduled for Council review at the Council's February 2007 meeting. Staff contact is Mark Fina.

# Economic Data Collection

The Council received a staff discussion paper concerning the development of an economic data collection program that could be applied to all of the fisheries under Council management. The paper examined a broad range of issues, including potential rationale for the program, the types of data that could be collected, persons covered by the program, uses of the data, data verification, and confidentiality protections.

After hearing public testimony, the Council adopted a motion requesting NMFS Science Center staff to coordinate a workgroup of social and economic analysts and researchers from the NMFS, ADF&G, and Council staff to further develop the discussion paper on the structure of a comprehensive economic data collection program and survey formats. The Council requested that the draft survey formats be tailored to the sector specific data needs for revenue, ownership, employment, cost, and expenditure data. Shoreside processors and motherships are to be included in the discussion paper in the event statute authority is established for collection of data from those entities. The Council requested that particular attention be given to confidentiality issues and requested NOAA General Counsel be involved in the development of the discussion paper to identify and assist in resolving legal issues, including the extent of authority and issues of confidentiality under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The discussion paper and draft surveys will be brought back to the Council at a future meeting for review and further development with industry input. Staff contact is Mark Fina.

# Crab Management

The Council reviewed and approved the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands king and Tanner crabs. The SAFE report summarizes the current biological and economic status of fisheries, guideline harvest levels (GHLs), and analytical information used for management decisions or changes in harvest strategies. Of the six annually surveyed stocks, four remain under federally approved rebuilding plans: Pribilof Islands blue king crab, Saint Matthew blue king crab, EBS Tanner crab, and EBS snow crab. Of the two remaining surveyed stocks, biomass of Bristol Bay red king crab is well above the approved harvest threshold and thus is open for a directed fishery. Although at apparently high abundance levels, the Pribilof Islands red king crab stock remains closed due to imprecision of estimates and concerns about potential bycatch of blue king crab. Directed crab fisheries in 2006/07 will occur for the Bristol Bay red king crab, EBS Tanner crab, EBS snow crab and the AI golden king crab stocks. Copies of the SAFE report may be obtained through the Council office, or on-line at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/SAFE/SAFE.htm>

The Council was notified of progress on the analysis of revisions to the BSAI Crab FMP overfishing definitions. This amendment analysis is scheduled for initial review by the Council at the December 2006 meeting. A Crab Plan Team meeting to review the draft analysis will occur November 8, 2006 at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center in Seattle. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

# Pacific Cod Allocation Split

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on apportioning BSAI Pacific cod sector allocations between the BS and AI, should the TAC be split during a future specification process. The discussion paper provided updated information on the existing alternatives, the historical background on the issue, and a summary of the impacts of each of the existing alternatives.

Upon review of the paper and public testimony, the Council directed staff to continue to refine the discussion paper by adding 2004 and 2005 retained catch data to Alternative 4 and include in the catch data and analysis cod destined for fishmeal production. In addition, the Council added a new option that would convert separate BS and AI LLP area endorsements into combined BSAI area endorsements for the BSAI Pacific cod. The revised discussion paper is scheduled for review at the February 2007 Council meeting. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

## BSAI salmon bycatch

The Council received an update from staff on the bycatch of salmon species in 2006 A and B seasons, the implementation of amendment 84 and progress towards refining alternatives for the amendment package 84B analysis. Bycatch of salmon continues to be elevated, with the Chinook numbers in the A season the highest to date, causing the Chinook salmon savings area to trigger in the A season for the first time since the regulations for this area were crafted. B season bycatch of Chinook has been less than in previous years but the overall amount in 2006 remains the highest on record. Non-chinook bycatch is roughly half of the amount from the previous year but is still elevated from the long-term average. In October 2005, the Council took final action on amendment 84, electing to exempt vessels participating in a voluntary rolling hot spot (VRHS) system from regulatory salmon savings area closures and to exempt the non-pollock trawl fleet from the Chum salmon savings area (SSA) closure. Regulations to promulgate this action are delayed due to concerns regarding the potential promulgation of regulations that include key operational components of the salmon bycatch reduction Inter-Cooperative Agreement. As a short-term measure to evaluate the operational flexibility needed to efficiently reduce salmon bycatch under these key components, an exempted fishing permit (EFP) was issued effective August 3, 2006. This EFP exempts vessels participating in the VRHS system from the savings area closures until November 1, 2006. It does not, however, address the application of the Chum SSA closure to the non-pollock trawl fleet. The Council moved to bifurcate the Chum SSA exemption to the non-pollock trawl fleet from the amendment 84 exemption to the pollock fleet, and to pursue a separate FMP amendment to implement this action.

The Council further discussed the amendment package 84B which is intended to follow up on remaining measures that were not analyzed under amendment 84. The Council tasked staff to continue work on refining the alternatives under amendment package B-1 using input provided by the SSC. Given concerns raised by the SSC regarding the difficulty in crafting biomass-based caps for salmon at this time, the Council tasked staff to develop a discussion paper on the process by which interim salmon bycatch caps could be developed. This discussion paper will be focused on a range of process approaches for developing some form of interim/precautionary cap in conjunction with new area closures. This discussion paper will be presented to the Council at the February meeting. The Council further requested that another salmon workshop be convened at the SSC to evaluate the current status of knowledge with respect to stock origin of AYK salmon species and bycatch in the North Pacific trawl fisheries. A similar workshop was convened in April 2006 to provide the Council with the most up-to-date information for crafting salmon bycatch management measures. The range of alternatives under consideration for amendment package 84B as well as additional information on salmon bycatch are available on the Council website. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

## Proposal Ranking Tool

Over the past 8 months, the Council's Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee (SSLMC) has developed a draft Proposal Ranking Tool (PRT), which the Committee intends to use to review and evaluate proposals from the public to change Steller sea lion protection measures in pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. The Committee presented a first draft of the PRT to the Council's SSC in August 2006; after incorporating the SSC comments, a revised version of the PRT was presented to the SSC in October. The SSLMC intends to use the SSC comments to finalize the PRT at their October 30, 31, November 1 meeting in Seattle. After another SSC review in December, the SSLMC will use the PRT as one element in the Committee's process for proposal review. That process will include comparison of the proposals with the findings provided in the draft BiOp. The schedule for proposal review is partly dependent on completion of the PRT and the availability of the draft BiOp. The Council will make an initial review of the proposals in April 2007. Staff contact is Bill Wilson.

## FMP Consultation

The Council received an update on the ongoing ESA Section 7 consultation on the groundfish FMPs. NMFS has advised the Council that the draft Biological Opinion which will be produced from the consultation likely will not be available for review until early December 2006. However, NMFS has released a preliminary draft of several sections of the draft BiOp, and this document was made available to the Council for a preliminary glimpse of the agency's developing BiOp. The Council's Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee (SSLMC) reviewed that document at their September 12-13 meeting, and although the SSLMC did not prepare a report to the Council, SSLMC Chairman Larry Cotter informed the Council of several issues that the SSLMC intends to explore with NMFS at its next meeting (October 30, 31, November 1). The SSLMC will review the complete draft BiOp when it becomes available and will prepare a report for the Council, currently tentatively scheduled for the February 2007 Council meeting. Staff contact is Bill Wilson.

## Upcoming meetings

**Halibut Charter Stakeholder:** October 16-18, NPRB conference room, Anchorage

**Lowell Wakefield Symposium:** Resiliency of Gadid Stocks to Fishing and Climate Change, October 31-November 2, Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage, AK

**Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee:** October 30, 31, November 1, 2006 Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Seattle

**Crab Plan Team meeting:** November 8, 2006, AFSC Seattle

**Groundfish Plan Team meetings:** November 13-17, AFSC, Seattle

**Non-target species committee:** Mid March 2007, TBA

# CDQ Program

The U.S. Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006 (Act), approved on July 11, 2006, replaces all of the existing language in Section 305(i)(1) of the Magnuson Stevens Act. This legislation makes significant changes to all aspects of the CDQ Program, including: allocations, fisheries management, the allocation review process, and administration and oversight. Most of the provisions will require revisions to Federal regulations, and some necessitate amendments to the BSAI groundfish FMP and crab FMP.

At the October meeting, the Council received a report on the implications of the Coast Guard Act on the CDQ and non-CDQ fisheries, including the plan for implementing each of the provisions. The legislation includes provisions that maintain the current allocations to each CDQ group until such time that they are evaluated and potentially adjusted (starting in 2012 and then every ten years). The current CDQ allocations have been in place since 2003, and the CDQ pollock allocations are as follows: APICDA – 14%; BBEDC – 21%; CBSFA – 5%; CVRF – 24%; NSEDC – 22%; and YDFDA – 14%. NMFS published the CDQ and prohibited species quota allocations in a Federal Register notice on August 31, 2006, in accordance with the Act.

The report to the Council identified seven additional potential Federal vehicles for implementing the requirements of the Act. Changes to the TAC categories allocated to the CDQ Program in 2007 are being implemented through the rulemaking for the 2007/2008 groundfish specifications. Fisheries management issues will be implemented through two regulatory/FMP amendments. The provisions associated with the decennial review may be implemented through a regulatory/FMP amendment, or may not require any changes to Federal regulations or the FMPs, depending upon the State's authority to conduct the evaluation and allocation adjustments. All of the administrative and oversight provisions, including any regulations necessary to govern allowable investments, are proposed to be implemented through FMP/regulatory amendments (BSAI Am. 71/22). Finally, increases to the CDQ allocations for Pacific cod and the flatfish, Pacific Ocean perch, Atka mackerel and secondary species allocated under Amendment 80, must be incorporated into BSAI Amendments 85 and 80, respectively.

The Council had substantial discussion about NOAA General Counsel's interpretation of the portions of the Act relevant to Am. 85 and 80. Questions and concerns stemmed primarily from the need to provide the CDQ Program with a directed fishing allocation equal to 10% of the TACs for the species under these amendments, with an additional amount allocated as an incidental catch allowance (ICA). NMFS plans to establish the ICA annually in the groundfish specifications process, and the ICA would then be combined with the 10% directed fishing allocation to form the CDQ allocation for that species. The CDQ allocation would then be divided among the six CDQ groups based on the percentage allocations in effect under the MSA. NMFS would manage the total allocation to each group such that if a group reached its total allocation, it would be prohibited from retaining additional catch of the species. Members of the Council expressed uncertainty as to whether the Act required that the CDQ allocations no longer be managed as a 'hard cap.' The Council noted concern that the CDQ groups would not have incentive to stay within their total

allocations, and that discards would increase if a group harvested its total allocation for a species but continued to catch the species as bycatch in other directed fisheries for which it had quota. The Council recognized that new legislation may be proposed relevant to this issue and conveyed hope that these concerns would be alleviated.

The Council also received testimony from members of the newly constituted CDQ Panel, which was established under the Act and is comprised of representatives from each CDQ group. The Panel reported that it is moving forward with establishing a vision statement, standardized financial reporting requirements, investment policies, and a system for each group to weight the evaluation criteria to be used in the decennial review.

The Council also received testimony from the groups on the need to continue the Council's previous action (Dec. 2005) on allowing 'after-the-fact' transfers of CDQ. This action has been delayed, as it is currently part of a broader regulatory amendment that is no longer appropriate as a result of the MSA amendments. Public testimony related that the ability to transfer CDQ after a group's allocation is harvested is needed in the short-term, as the CDQ groups continue to be subject to hard caps for most target species, and may well be needed in the long-term, as the groups work to stay within their total allocations in the future. The Council thus recommended that staff determine the appropriate regulatory package through which to implement 'after-the-fact' transfers of CDQ in order to achieve implementation as soon as possible. The Council noted that implementation may be expedited by extracting this issue from the previous amendment package, or including it in Amendment 80, and that the Council does not need to review the revised analysis prior to submitting the proposed action to the Secretary of Commerce.

Finally, staff intends to provide a discussion paper that will propose to restructure the alternatives for BSAI Amendments 71/22 related to administration and oversight and identify potential options for the Council. The Council scheduled review of this paper in February 2007. The staff report from the October meeting is on the web. Council staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

## Staff Tasking

The Council reviewed the current staff workload, and added two new items onto the tasking list. Based on a recommendation by the AP, the Council directed staff to evaluate a proposal by the Alaska Groundfish Data Bank to change the maximum retainable allowances for the arrowtooth flounder target fishery. A discussion paper, developed as a first step in the analytical and decision making process, will be prepared for review at a future meeting. The Council also tasked staff to prepare a discussion paper that explores potential management approaches and measures necessary to control future development of fisheries in the Arctic Ocean.

## **Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area**

The Council received a staff report on proposed modifications to the the Aleutian Island Habitat Conservation Area (AIHCA), which was adopted in 2005 as part of a suite of conservation measures to minimize the adverse effects of fishing in the Aleutian Islands subarea. The AIHCA prohibits the use of non-pelagic trawl fishing gear in designated areas of the AI to reduce the effects of fishing on corals, sponges, and hard bottom habitats. Most fishing areas that have been trawled repeatedly in the past remain open.

During the June 2006 meeting, fishery participants requested that open area boundaries be slightly modified to allow fishing in areas historically fished and to prevent bottom trawling in areas that have not been repeatedly fished. One location near Agattu Strait had been historically fished and was included into the closure area. A second location near Buldir Island was included in the portions of the AIHCA open to bottom trawling but has some documented presence of sponges which is indicative of a fragile habitat. The proposed amendment would open the Agattu area and close the Buldir area.

The Council revised the analysis and tasked staff to resolve, in cooperation with the industry, questions regarding the appropriate boundaries of the Agattu area opening (using the same methodology as that used in the original analysis) and bring the document back for initial review in February. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

## **Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum**

The Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with 10 Federal agencies and 4 State agencies, to create the Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum (AMEF). The AMEF seeks to improve coordination and cooperative understanding between the agencies on issues of shared responsibilities related to the marine ecosystems off Alaska's coast. The initial focus of the AMEF will be on the Aleutian Islands marine ecosystem. A copy of the MOU, and a summary of the first meeting, are available on the Council's website. Staff contact is Diana Evans

## **Revising the Groundfish Workplan**

The Council received a status report on the implementation of the groundfish management policy, adopted in April 2004. In 2004, the Council developed a workplan of priority actions to implement the policy objectives. Many of these actions have since been achieved, others are ongoing. The Council will consider revisions to their workplan at the December meeting. The workplan is intended as a planning document for the Council, identifying priority actions for the next 2 to 3 years. A strawman revised workplan will be available prior to the December meeting, and posted on the Council's website. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## **Bering Sea Habitat Conservation**

The Council received a staff report on "open area" alternatives to minimize the effects of fishing on habitat in the Bering Sea. The analysis tiers off the action taken by the Council in February 2005 to conserve essential fish habitat (EFH) from potential adverse effects of fishing. The Council added options to the northern boundary of the proposed open area based on varying thresholds levels of historic fishing, and options for research openings in the Northern area.

The Council also tasked staff with providing the following information at the December meeting: A white paper to discuss current scientific information on the Pribilof, Middle, and Zhemchug canyons; a summary of current research on Skate nurseries and the degree of overlap of fisheries in the EBS; and a draft schedule for the next HAPC process. The motion and maps are available on the Council web site.

In December, the Council will also review the gear modification alternatives. Dr. Craig Rose from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center is scheduled to report on recent research on gear modification in the Bering Sea to reduce the impacts of bottom trawl fisheries. The preliminary results indicate that rollers on the sweeps may increase catches of some target species and that bottom contact could be reduced. The Council may finalize alternatives in December and conduct an initial review of this analysis in February, 2007. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

## **Ecosystem Plan for the Aleutian Islands**

Over the summer, the Council appointed an Aleutian Islands Ecosystem Team to develop and write the AI Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). The Team has now held its first meeting, and presented their proposed approach to developing the FEP in October. The Council concurs with the Team's approach and proposed schedule, which calls for an initial version of the FEP to be approved by the Council in June, 2007, with follow-up analyses to be incorporated into the FEP on a longer timeline. The Council also discussed stakeholder participation in the development of the FEP, and approved community outreach efforts in Adak, Atka, Nikolski, and Unalaska.

A list of Ecosystem Team members, and the Team report, are available on the website. The report includes the draft Table of Contents for the FEP. Draft sections of the FEP will be available for review at the February meeting. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

# BSAI & GOA Trawl LLP Recency

The Council reviewed two staff documents providing some preliminary results of the analysis of alternatives for application of harvest thresholds to groundfish harvests in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska. In reviewing the five alternatives for consideration, the Council adopted the following actions:

- 1) Under Component 2: Multiple LLPs on a single vessel ('stacking of permits') - the Council eliminated Options 2 and 3 for this component after reviewing an analysis presented at the meeting. This action leaves a single option for Component 2. The revised language says that in cases where multiple LLPs are assigned to a single vessel, the catch history of a vessel accumulated while licenses are stacked on the vessel will be fully credited to all stacked licenses, thereby preserving the qualifying endorsements and designations of both LLPs.

Under Component 5: An option for Aleutians Islands fisheries adds a new series of years to be considered, specifically 1995-2005 and 2000-2005. The new additions will allow specific determination of the effect of adding 2006 harvests to the application of threshold criteria.

- 2) The Advisory Panel recommendation was adopted by the Council to clarify that options for the BSAI apply to CVs and also to CPs not qualified to operate as trawl CPs under the AFA or Amendment 80. The concern addressed by adding BSAI CPs to the analysis is due to their ability to act as trawl CVs, thus potentially adding new non-AFA trawl CVs to the BSAI at some point in the future.

The revised alternatives for the LLP trawl recency amendment are posted on the NPFMC website. Council review of the analysis of alternatives will continue at the December meeting. Staff contact is Jim Richardson.

## Vessel Monitoring System

The Council received a staff report from Ben Muse on an initial draft of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) for Alaska. In June 2005, the Council requested an analysis of a broader VMS application in the GOA and BSAI in a manner that meets enforcement, monitoring, and safety issues. The Council adopted a statement of purpose and need in December 2005, and developed alternatives at the December 2005 and April 2006 meetings. In October, the Council received an initial review draft of the analysis. During the meeting, the Council prepared a problem statement to accompany the statement of purpose and need, and requested analysis of three new options: (1) exempt vessels deploying dinglebar gear; (2) exempt troll fishermen operating in federal waters who keep legal halibut as bycatch in their fishery; (3) exempt vessels with minimal annual landings of halibut or sablefish IFQ below the thresholds of 1,000, 5,000, and 10,000 pounds. The Council did not release the current draft for public review and comment at this time, but requested that a revised draft analysis be prepared for its February 2007 meeting, with final action scheduled for April 2007. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

## Groundfish Management

### ***Proposed Groundfish Harvest Specifications for 2007/2008***

The Council endorsed Alternative 2 of the TAC-Setting EIS as its preferred alternative and the proposed overfishing levels (OFLs), acceptable biological catches (ABCs), and total allowable catches (TACs) for BSAI and GOA groundfish for 2007 and 2008, associated with that harvest strategy. These recommendations will be incorporated into the proposed rule for setting 2007-2008 groundfish specifications. The Council also recommended (for the proposed rule) rolling over the annual and seasonal BSAI prohibited species bycatch allowances for halibut, crab, and herring in the BSAI trawl and non-trawl fisheries and the GOA halibut PSC apportionments, annually and seasonally, for 2007 and 2008. The Council adopted halibut discard mortality rates for the 2007 CDQ fisheries and the 2007-2009 non-CDQ fisheries, as recommended by the International Pacific Halibut Commission. **Note that the fisheries will begin in 2007 on the final specifications established by the Council in December 2005.** The purpose of establishing proposed specifications in the proposed rule is to better inform the public as to the likely final specifications that will be adopted by the Council during its December 2006 meeting. The OFLs, ABCs, and TACs that will start the 2007 fishing year in the GOA and BSAI and the proposed specifications adopted at this meeting are posted on the website. Final specifications will occur at the December Council meeting. Staff contacts are Diana Stram (GOA) and Jane DiCosimo (BSAI).

### ***Dark rockfish***

The SSC received an update on the availability of data to support the analysis of removing dark rockfish from the pelagic shelf rockfish (PSR) complex in the GOA FMP and the other rockfish complex in the BSAI FMPs and thus turning management of these species over to the State of Alaska. The SSC concurred with the Plan Team's recommendation that analysis of this amendment move forward. This analysis is scheduled for initial review at the February Council meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

### ***Survey Budget***

The Council was informed of impending budget constraints on survey funding for 2007. The Council expressed concern over the impact these budget constraints will have on the collection of information integral to assessing federally-managed species. The Council intends to send a letter to the National Marine Fisheries Service (with copies sent to the congressional delegates of all three states) requesting the restoration of survey funding to a level equivalent with previous years.

**DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 10/16/06**

December 4, 2006 Anchorage, Alaska	February 5, 2007 Portland, Oregon	April 2, 2007 Anchorage, Alaska
<p><b>30th Anniversary Celebration Dec. 9</b></p> <p>BOF actions: <b>Report and action as necessary</b>                      ESA Consultation on FMPs: <b>Action as necessary</b>                      AI pollock fishery EFP: <b>Receive report/review new EFP</b>                      List of Fisheries for 2007: <b>Report and action as necessary</b>                      Review SSLMC Proposal ranking tool (<b>SSC only</b>)                      Seabird Interactions EA/RIR/IRFA: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>                      NPRB Report</p> <p>Charter Halibut Mgmt: <b>moratorium discussion paper</b>  <b>Permanent solution discussion paper</b>  <b>5 fish limit/ State mgmt discussion papers</b>                      Halibut Separate Accountability: <b>Discuss/action as necessary</b>                      Halibut Subsistence Survey Report: <b>Review</b></p> <p>MRA adjustments: <b>Final Action</b></p> <p>GOA arrowtooth MRA: <b>Review discussion paper (T)</b></p> <p>Trawl LLP Recency: <b>Review Progress</b>                      Salmon Bycatch (B-1): <b>Report/Review EFP</b></p> <p>VIP Repeal: <b>Final Action</b></p> <p>GOA Rationalization: <b>Review analysis and refine alternatives</b></p> <p>Arctic FMP: <b>Review discussion paper</b></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Finalize alternatives</b></p> <p>EIS for TACs: <b>Summary of Comments on DEIS</b>                      Groundfish Specifications: <b>Adopt final specs for 07/08</b>                      Groundfish SAFE Report: <b>Review</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab Overfishing Definition: <b>Initial review</b></p>	<p>Draft BiOp and SSLMC Comments: <b>Review/Action (T)</b></p> <p>Seabird Interactions EA/RIR/IRFA: <b>Final Action (T)</b>                      BSAI sector split for Pacific cod: <b>Review discussion paper</b></p> <p>Charter Halibut Mgmt: <b>Initial review of moratorium</b>  <b>Permanent solution: action as necessary</b></p> <p>AFA Coop reports</p> <p>VMS Requirements: <b>Initial Review</b></p> <p>Observer Program: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Trawl LLP Recency: <b>Initial review (T)</b>                      Salmon Bycatch (B-1): <b>Discussion Paper (T)</b></p> <p>CDQ Am. 71/22: <b>Action as necessary</b>                      CDQ regulation of harvest: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>                      GOA Rationalization: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Crab Vessel Use Caps: <b>Review Information</b></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>EFH AI Open Area Adjustment: <b>Initial Review</b></p> <p>Dark rockfish: <b>Initial Review</b>                      Rockfish Management: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>AI FEP: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab Overfishing Definition: <b>Final Action</b></p>	<p>ESA Consultation on FMPs: <b>Action as necessary</b>                      SSLMC proposals: <b>Review/Action as necessary</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab 18 month review: <b>Report</b></p> <p>BSAI sector split for Pacific cod: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Charter Halibut Mgmt: <b>Final action on moratorium</b>  <b>Permanent solution: action as necessary</b></p> <p>Socioeconomic Data Collection: <b>Workgroup report</b></p> <p>VMS Requirements: <b>Final Action</b>                      Cost Recovery: <b>Discussion Paper</b>                      Observer Program: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Trawl LLP Recency: <b>Final Action (T)</b>                      Salmon Bycatch (B-1): <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>CDQ Am. 71/22: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>GOA Rationalization: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Crab Vessel Use Caps: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>EFH AI Open Area Adjustment: <b>Final Action</b>                      Other Species: <b>Discussion paper</b>                      Non-target species: <b>Update (T)</b>                      Dark rockfish: <b>Final Action</b>                      Rockfish Management: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>AI FEP: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Scallop SAFE: <b>Review</b></p>

TAC - Total Allowable Catch  
 BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands  
 IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota  
 GHl - Guideline Harvest Level  
 HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern  
 LLP - License Limitation Program  
 VIP - Vessel Incentive Program  
 PSC - Prohibited Species Catch

AI - Aleutian Islands  
 GOA - Gulf of Alaska  
 SSL - Steller Sea Lion  
 BOF - Board of Fisheries  
 FEP - Fishery Ecosystem Plan  
 CDQ - Community Development Quota  
 ESA - Endangered Species Act  
**(T) Tentatively scheduled**

**Future Meeting Dates and Locations**  
 February 5 - 13, 2007 in Portland  
 April 2 - 10, 2007 in Anchorage  
 June 4 - 12, 2007 in Sitka  
 October 1 - 9, 2007 in Anchorage  
 December 3 - 11, 2007 in Anchorage

# 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

NPFMC and Magnuson-Stevens Act  
December 9, 2006

## Registration

Pre-registration by mail with a check is required. Cost for registration is \$75 per person and includes dinner, music, entertainment, and a copy of the 30 Year Anniversary Celebration book and other commemorative items. Attendance is limited to 300 persons on a first-come, first-served basis, so please register early. **The deadline for reservations is November 22, 2006.** Guests are welcome.

## Hotel Information

Anchorage Hilton Hotel  
500 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 272-7411



## Room Rates

There are a limited number of rooms reserved for attendees, available on a first-come, first-serve basis. A special rate of \$96.00 (plus 12% tax) is available. To make your reservation, call 907-272-7411 and mention the North Pacific Fishery Management Council block to receive the special rate.

Please send by mail a check made out to 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, to:

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference  
c/o North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
605 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 306  
Anchorage, AK 99501

(please detach and send along with a check to the above address)

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## Registration Form for the 30th Anniversary Celebration



Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s), at \$75 per person, for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference under the following name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ to cover the individual(s) listed above.

--- OR---

I have enclosed a check for \$750 to reserve a table for 10 under the name of: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email or phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please retain a copy of this registration form for your records.  
WE REGRET THAT REFUNDS WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE.