

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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CERTIFIED:


Chairman

MINUTES

52nd Plenary Session
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
January 4-6, 1983
Baranof Hotel
Juneau, Alaska

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council convened its 52nd plenary session in conjunction with the Alaska State Board of Fisheries on Tuesday, January 4, 1983, at 9:15 a.m. in the Gold Room of the Baranof Hotel, Juneau, Alaska. The meeting continued until Noon on Thursday, January 6. The Council met independently in the Gastineau Suite beginning at 1:25 p.m. on Thursday, January 6, and adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee met on January 3-4, 1983, in the Gastineau Suite of the Baranof Hotel.

The Advisory Panel met on January 3-4, 1983, in the Capital Room of the Baranof Hotel.

The Council conducted a public hearing on the proposed Halibut Moratorium on Friday, January 7, 1983, at 1:00 p.m. in the Gastineau Suite of the Baranof Hotel in Juneau.

Council Members, Scientific and Statistical members, Advisory Panel members, and general public in attendance are listed below:

Council

Clement V. Tillion, Chairman
Harold E. Lokken, Vice-Chairman
James O. Campbell
Don Collinsworth
Chris Dawson, for Ray Arnaudo
Gene DiDonato, for Bill Wilkerson
Joe Demmert, Jr.

Dr. John Harville
RADM Richard Knapp
Robert U. Mace, for
John Donaldson
Robert McVey
Rudy Petersen
Keith Specking
Jeffrey R. Stephan

Scientific and Statistical Committee Members

Donald Rosenberg, Chairman
Dr. Richard Marasco
Dr. William Aron
Dr. Robert L. Burgner
Dr. John Clark

Larry Hreha
Dr. Steve Langdon
Dennis Austin, for
Al Millikan

Advisory Panel

Robert D. Alverson, Chairman
A.W. "Bud" Boddy, Vice-Chairman
F. Gregory Baker
Robert Blake
Alvin Burch
Larry Cotter
Barry Fisher
Jesse Foster
Ron Jolin
Eric Jordan

Joseph A. Kurtz
Richard B. Lauber
James O'Connell
Daniel J. O'Hara
Jack O. Phillips
Don Rawlinson
Walter J. Smith
Tom Stewart
Edward J. Wojeck

NPFMC Staff

Jim H. Branson, Executive Director
Clarence Pautzke, Deputy Director
Steve Davis
Jim Glock
Doug Larson

Judy Willoughby
Peggy McCalment
Helen Allen
Peggy Hough

Support Staff

Pat Travers, NOAA/GC
Bob Garrison, ODF&W
Eulalie Sullivan, ABoF&G
Milstead Zahn, ABoF&G
Dave Cantillon, ADF&G
Al Davis, ADF&G

Mel Seibel, ADF&G
Paul Larson, ADF&G
Bill Robinson, NMFS
Phil Chitwood, NMFS
James Brooks, NMFS
Lewis Queirolo, NMFS
Carl Rosier, NMFS

General Public

Robert Bosworth
Charles Jones
Nan Baker
Gary Slaven
George Lewin
Anthony Heard
Katie Tesar
Bert Adams
J. Schmiedtke
Charlie H. Jim, Sr.
N. Kathryn Brigham
S. Timothy Wopato
William Thomas

Lee Straight
Greg Shapley
Gary Davidson
H. Mitchell
Roy Martin
Jerry Durnil
Gordon Pederson
Leo Land
Maurice Ingman
Eric Widmark
Nathan Jim, Sr.
John Wilcox
Levi George

Devew Skan
Eric Jordan
Chris Sharpsteen
Don Martens
Vic Lane
John Eiler
Mark Bradley
Steve Meier
Martin Fredrickson
Stuart Robards
Eugene Holmstrand
Dolly Garza
Al Burch
George Matsuo
Joe Riederer
Elwood Strands
CDR Paul M. Blayney
Michael J. Mayo
Dr. Yorgi Bryskonorick
Diana Runde
Tom Jacobson
Clark Eaton
Jim Wild
Jeri Museth
Earl Krygier
Edward Wojeck
Geron Bruce
John DeBoer
Dick Carlton
Stanley Reddekagg
Russell Bartoo

Charles E. King, Sr.
Greg Cook
Paul MacGregor
R.B. Fisher
Walter Johnson
Jim Lewis
Scott Lewis
Walt Pasternak
Keith Hutchinson
Don Bierce
Rudy James
Kirk Beiningen
Greg Baker
Dennis Watson
Greg Howe
LTJG J.A. McKenzie
Bill West
Lonnie Thomas
Larry Cotter
David Nanney
Garri Constantine
Ed Bergeron
Paul Johnson
Joe Hotch
John Lecture
Barry McLelland
Tony Guggenbickler
Lee Krause
Dave Pitcher
Yakutat Delegation

A. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting with the Board of Fisheries was called to order at 9:15 a.m. on January 4, with Jim Beaton of the Board presiding. The Council met separately at 1:25 p.m. on Thursday, January 6, with Chairman Clem Tillion presiding. *The agenda was approved as submitted.* (Only item D-1 was taken up in the joint Board and Council meeting.) The December meeting minutes were not available for approval.

B. SPECIAL REPORTS

B-1 Executive Director's Report

Jim Branson announced that Peggy McCalment of the NPFMC staff has accepted the position of Executive Secretary for Governor Bill Sheffield. Helen Allen has been hired to replace Peggy.

The amendment to the MFCMA passed Congress the week before Christmas. Although Mr. Branson did not have the exact language passed, he understood it included definite time limits on review and implementation of FMPs and amendments and a 50 percent hold back on initial foreign allocations.

Because Rollie Schmitt has accepted the job of Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Spellman, Bill Wilkerson, Acting Director of the Department of Fisheries, will represent that Department on the Council. Gene Didonato will continue as the designated alternate for the Director.

B-2 AP and SSC Reports on Non-Agenda Items

Chairman of the Advisory Panel, Bob Alverson, reported on the Panel's meeting held January 4-5, 1983 in the Capital Room of the Baranof Hotel in Juneau. Dr. Steve Langdon reported on the Study of Perceptions for a Halibut Limited Entry Program. Dr. Langdon was requested by the Advisory Panel to attend as many hearings in Southeast and Southcentral as possible to be available for questions.

The AP requested that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council follow up on its last request to the Pacific Fishery Management Council regarding Ed Wojeck's participation on their Salmon Advisory Panel.

C. New Or Continuing Business

C-1 Confirmation of AP and SSC Officers

The Advisory Panel re-elected Robert Alverson as Chairman and A.W. "Bud" Boddy as Vice-Chairman.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee re-elected Donald Rosenberg as Chairman and Richard Marasco to serve as Vice-Chairman.

Jim Campbell moved that the Council confirm the election of SSC officers as reported. Keith Specking seconded the motion, and there being no objections, it was so ordered.

Keith Specking moved that the Council confirm the election of AP officers as reported. Bob Mace seconded the motion; there being no objections, it was so ordered.

C-2 Update on Moratorium and Public Hearings Schedule

The Council was informed of public and teleconference hearing dates for the halibut moratorium. Council members were scheduled to attend each hearing. Mr. Branson advised that the Council may have to meet early in March to make a decision on the halibut moratorium. He also advised that, without assurance of

additional funding, future public hearings and Council meetings will be impossible. Additional funding may be forthcoming to expand the schedule; however, this might be at the expense of some programmatic funding.

The Executive Director recommended to the Council that a full-time staff person be hired for a least one year, with the provision for extension, to work exclusively on limited entry.

Jim Campbell moved for approval of this request, pending available funding. The motion was seconded by Keith Specking. After discussion, the question was called. Hearing no objections, Mr. Tillion declared the motion carried and directed Mr. Branson to proceed to investigate the possibility of funding.

Included in the Council notebooks was an informational packet on the halibut moratorium, along with a schedule of public and teleconference hearings. Mr. Branson asked Council members to review the information and make comments on ways to improve the clarity and insure it is easily comprehended. RADM Knapp expressed concern that a explicit set of alternatives should be presented to the fishermen so that they would understand the whole situation. Mr. Branson responded that these hearings would address only the moratorium and that alternative proposals were listed in the proposal package sent to the public; separate hearings will be held on limited entry.

Pending the publication of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on January 12, 1983, the Council set March 8 in Anchorage for a meeting of the Council to make a decision on the proposed moratorium. Discussion followed on whether the Advisory Committee would need to attend the March 8 meeting. Bob Alverson indicated that those interested in the subject might be invited to attend.

Jim Campbell suggested that the Council formally approve travel for interested AP members to the March 8 meeting. It was the consensus of the Council that this be approved.

Rudy Petersen asked if public testimony would be heard at the March 8 meeting; Mr. Branson responded that public testimony will have already been taken and compiled for Council review; however the public will be invited to attend to observe. Mr. Petersen said that he has a problem with not giving the public a further chance to comment.

(A public hearing on the proposed Halibut Moratorium was held by the Council on Friday afternoon, January 7, 1983, in the Gastineau Suite of the Baranof Hotel in Juneau. A summary of testimony presented at the hearing is made a part of these Minutes as Appendix II.)

D. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

D-1 Salmon FMP

The Council met with the Alaska Board of Fisheries on Tuesday, January 4, 1983 to hear staff reports on the 1982 salmon troll fishery and to hear public testimony.

Staff Reports

Report on the 1982 Alaska Troll Season

Al Davis, ADF&G, presented a report on the 1982 Southeast Alaska Salmon Troll Fishery prepared by the Southeast Region of ADF&G. Preliminary in-season data indicate that the total 1982 commercial chinook salmon harvest by all fisheries was approximately 285,800 fish. This includes a total season (winter plus summer) troll fishery harvest of 241,300 and an incidental net fishery harvest of 44,500, approximately 26,000 (58%) of which occurred after the July 28 troll chinook closure. About 15 percent of the troll chinook catch was taken by hand trollers; 18 percent of the troll chinook catch was taken in the FCZ. In 1983 811 power troll and 1044 hand troll permits were fished.

Overall chinook salmon escapements to Southeast Alaska streams were slightly below 1981 levels although well above average escapements during 1975-1980. Current management goals were achieved in 1982 for three of the nine Southeast Alaska index systems - the Stikine, Keta and King Salmon Rivers.

Preliminary catch data for coho salmon indicate that approximately 525,000 coho salmon were harvested by the troll fishery from June 17 through July 29. Following a 10-day closure, an estimated 814,500 coho salmon were harvested through September 20. Additionally, 714,200 coho salmon were harvested by the net fisheries. The 1982 season total commercial harvest was approximately 2.1 million coho salmon by all gear types in Southeast Alaska. This represents the largest coho salmon harvest since 1951 when 3.3 million coho were harvested. In 1982, approximately 94 percent of the troll coho catch was from state waters.

Hook and release mortality of chinook salmon during the coho-only season from August 8 through September 20 presented problems in 1982. Preliminary analyses indicate that immediate chinook mortality resulting from hook and release appears to have been low, about 2-3 percent; however, the value of these fish as potential spawners and the value lost to the commercial fishery, approximately \$50-60 per fish, increase the significance of this mortality and raise doubts about the advisability of selective single-species closures for troll gear. The Board of Fisheries deferred action on this problem until review of the U.S.-Canada treaty has been completed.

Report on Chinook Salmon Stocks. Mel Seibel, biometrician for ADF&G, discussed the rebuilding of chinook stocks in three major systems--Alek, Taku, and the Stikine. Escapements for the Alek, Taku, and Stikine were 69; 51; and 147 percent of their respective goals. Because regulations were more restrictive than expected when the goals were set, and the salmon resources responded better than anticipated, the proposed 15-year rebuilding plan is well ahead of schedule. The average annual escapement to all systems in Southeast Alaska between 1975 and 1980 was 27,000; in 1981 the escapement was 51,000, and in 1982 it was 47,000. The rebuilding schedule could be advanced to ten years instead of fifteen if this trend continues. Council member Dr. Harville asked Mr. Seibel how much of this could be attributed to environmental factors. Mr. Seibel responded that it would be difficult to determine and would vary from area to area.

Report on Net-Marked Chinook and Coho Salmon

Al Davis, ADF&G, reported on the incidence of scarred chinook and coho salmon caught by troll gear in 1981 and 1982. Approximately 54,000 chinook and 165,000 coho salmon were randomly selected from Southeast Alaska troll fishery landings and examined for scars and marks. These samples represented 23 and 13 percent of the summer troll chinook and coho salmon catches, respectively.

Scars and marks were recorded for 2.03 percent of the chinook and 1.50 percent of the coho salmon sampled. The 1982 study did not determine the causes of the fishing gear-type marks observed on salmon harvested in the Southeast Alaska troll fishery. Potential sources are thought to include domestic net fisheries in Southeast and other areas and northern British Columbia and foreign and/or domestic ocean fisheries operating in the Gulf of Alaska.

Report on Sport Fishery in Southeast Alaska

Frank VanHuley, ADF&G, reported on the sport fishery in Southeast Alaska, and he stressed the importance of chinook stocks to the sport fishery in Alaska. In 1981 sport anglers fished over 250,000 angler days (5 hours = one angler day). Closures during critical periods are not generally used to diminish the effects of sport fisheries on stocks, but are necessary to simplify control. He suggested that opening/closing dates be standardized whenever possible. The variety of bag limits in Southeast also confuses fishermen. Regulations need to be exact and adequately described. The Board feels bag limits for chinook should be retained in Southeast. The sport regulations are adequate but can be improved and clarified.

Salmon PDT Report

Jim Glock, Salmon Plan Coordinator, reviewed proposals to the Board of Fisheries for seasons, boundaries, gear, harvest limits,

and size limits for the Southeast Alaska troll salmon fishery. Since many of these also pertain to the FCZ, they were discussed jointly by the Council and the Board. He said that Proposals 257 and 258, which would allow fishermen to troll for salmon west of Cape Suckling, are supported by fishermen who feel these areas should be re-opened in order for fishermen to survive economically. Prior to 1973 troll fishing was allowed in these areas.

Six public proposals included under Board Proposal #218 suggest liberalizing the "quota" or establishing a more "flexible" management system. The 1983 harvest guideline/OY will need to take into consideration the tentative agreement resulting from the U.S./Canada salmon interception negotiations. It was noted that one potentially critical point which should be discussed by the Council and the Board pertains to the harvest of hatchery-produced chinooks. Current state regulations add the hatchery surplus to the harvest guideline. Mr. Glock suggested that the Council should discuss with the Board the appropriateness of this addition.

The Salmon Plan Development Team proposed that the Council and Board establish a commercial harvest ceiling of 243,000 chinooks in accordance with the U.S./Canada salmon interception agreement. Three season options were developed by the PDT to achieve this ceiling. Careful catch monitoring will be required for each option and additional in-season, all-species closures may also be necessary. The options are designed to avoid premature closure of the chinook season and the potential impact on the coho harvest. The PDT feels that a chinook-only closure should be a "last resort" management measure. The PDT does not propose any changes in gear regulations or other management measures.

Each of the three alternative regulatory proposals developed by the PDT assumes a summer troll season harvest guideline of 206,000 chinooks and a total commercial catch of 243,000 (see calculations below). Each of the three alternatives is designed to achieve this harvest guideline, but each alternative may have slightly different biological and socioeconomic implications.

Calculation of the summer season harvest guideline is based on pre-season estimates of catches in the various fisheries. These estimates may be updated during the summer season and the troll fishery harvest guidelines will be revised, if necessary.

Calculations of Pre-Season Summer Troll Fishery Harvest Guidelines

263,000	total Southeast Alaska chinook harvest ceiling
<u>-20,000</u>	estimated sport catch
243,000	total commercial catch
-22,000	estimated net catch (based on 1975-82 average)
<u>-15,000</u>	estimated winter troll catch
206,000	estimated summer troll ceiling

The three options have both firm and flexible dates. The initial open periods for all three options are firm dates; the remaining flexible periods [in parentheses () below] are based on pre-season estimates of catch rates (i.e., average historical rates). The flexible dates are pre-season guidelines based on historical data and are subject to adjustment based on in-season monitoring. All three options assume a 10-day coho salmon closure from approximately August 1 to 10. This would be an all-species troll closure.

	<u>Open Dates</u>	<u>Closed Dates</u>
Option 1	May 15-June 5 (July 1-July 31) (August 11 -Sept. 20)	(June 6-June 30) (August 1-August 10)
Option 2	May 22-June 12 (July 1-July 31) (August 11-Sept. 20)	(June 13-June 30) (August 1-August 10)
Option 3	June 12-July 31 (August 11-Sept. 20)	(August 1-August 10)

The Team believes that either Option 1 or Option 2 would provide an earlier indication of the abundance or availability of chinook salmon than would Option 3. The basic approach utilized in developing the three season options is to regulate the early season chinook salmon fisheries in such a manner as to provide for sufficient chinook salmon to carry through the main coho management period. Additional management tools available to respond later in the season if catches are greater than expected include: (1) closures of certain outer coastal and FCZ areas to all troll fishing after mid-August (may be necessary to protect coho as well); (2) closure of certain selected areas known to produce significant chinook catches but whose closure would not significantly impact coho salmon fisheries; (3) early closure of the summer season for both chinook and coho prior to September 20; and, (4) closure of the troll fishery for chinook only prior to September 20. The PDT did not recommend a preferred option.

The Council may wish to recommend that the 10-day coho closure preferred by the ADF&G staff also be standardized in the FMP, with the exact dates to be determined in-season by the Regional Director in consultation with ADF&G. This action may provide for better manageability for spawning escapement by allowing substantial numbers of coho salmon to escape the outside fishery and transfer to inshore waters.

In regard to selected-species fisheries, the Team feels the occurrence of single-species closures (such as the July 28 chinook closure in 1982) should be avoided if possible and used only as a last resort to manage chinook salmon catches within the harvest ceiling.

The PDT recommended that established harvest guidelines for chinook salmon be treated as harvest ceilings. The PDT's working definition of a harvest ceiling is: "a level beyond which the catch is not allowed to rise (within the constraints of management precision)." Therefore, achievement of the ceiling catch level would require closure of the target fisheries for that species.

In regard to Southeast Alaska hatchery production, the PDT recommends the Council adopt a policy consistent with the chinook conservation language developed at the November 1982 U.S./Canada Pacific salmon interception negotiations. As long as major natural chinook stock conservation problems exist, supplemental production should be utilized not to increase harvest, but to lower ocean exploitation rates on depressed natural stocks without reducing the harvest ceiling.

The topic of juvenile chinook in the seine fishery for salmon was reviewed by the Team and it was concluded that a potential problem may exist. ADF&G data will be used to examine this question. Potential avenues for future problem identification will be examined and solutions recommended as appropriate.

Dennis Austin, Director of the Harvest Management Division of the Washington Department of Fisheries, presented a fourth season option which would be more conservative. The open dates would be June 29-July 31 with a flexible opening of August 11-September 20, and a closure of August 1-10. Mr. Austin also discussed the concept of harvest ceiling vs quota. He defined the two terms as follows. A quota implies management designed to achieve a specific goal. By definition, therefore, non-achievement of a quota in a given time period might trigger liberalization of the season to achieve the quota. Conversely, achievement of the quota would trigger a closure.

A ceiling is not a goal, but a level beyond which the catch would not be allowed to rise. Achievement of the ceiling catch level, therefore, would trigger immediate closure of the fishery for that species. Liberalization of the season would not be appropriate under this concept and any foregone harvest would

thus be "saved" for future escapement or catch. Due to the extremely depressed status of the north-migrating natural chinook stocks, there is little risk at this time of underharvesting these stocks under appropriately established catch quota or ceiling management regimes. It should be emphasized that a catch quota or ceiling is only as effective as the management means by which it is implemented.

Board Action

The Board of Fisheries deferred action on the means of addressing this problem until review of the U.S.-Canada treaty has been completed.

Report on U.S./Canada Salmon Interception Negotiations

Dr. Dayton L. Alverson, chief U.S. negotiator for the U.S./Canada Salmon Interception Negotiations, presented major provisions of the draft treaty to the Council and Board. Under the terms of the draft treaty, the total Southeast Alaska chinook catch could not exceed 263,000 fish in 1983, and the commercial ceiling would be 243,000 chinooks. The Canadian fisheries (except the west coast of Vancouver Island) would be limited to 868,000 chinooks in 1983. This is the first step in a ten-year rebuilding plan for the major natural chinook stocks coastwide.

Jim Beaton asked Dr. Alverson whether the figures would be constant or could be re-negotiated in the future. Dr. Alverson replied that the figure for 1983 is the only firmly established figure regarding chinook salmon in the treaty; numbers for 1984 and succeeding years would depend on recommendations by a chinook review team. Every two years the review team would analyze spawning escapement and harvest data and set new harvest goals which would reflect current stock conditions. Jim Campbell commented on the proposed commission discussed in the treaty under Article II of the proposed treaty.

Harold Lokken asked whether the draft had been sent to the Department of State. Dr. Alverson replied that it has been forwarded; however, if any of the states involved in the treaty indicated to him that they would not support it, he would not recommend endorsement by the Senate.

The Board and Council commended Dr. Alverson for his efforts in securing the draft treaty.

Public Testimony

A summary of public testimony received on the 1983 salmon management proposals is made a part of these Minutes as Appendix I. Forty people testified.

Governor Bill Sheffield Addresses Board and Council

Governor Sheffield announced that he would appoint a review committee to study the treaty and asked the Council and Board to take no action for at least 60 days to give him time to develop a position and make his final recommendation to the chief U.S. negotiator, Dr. Alverson.

The Governor announced that he plans to disband the Fisheries Policy Council and to appoint a new task force. He also announced that he would be appointing new members to the Board of Fisheries to replace members whose terms have expired. The Governor has not yet made a decision on the new Commissioner of Fish and Game; Don Collinsworth is acting Commissioner at this time. The Governor expressed the desire that all Council and Board members and related agencies work closely with Mr. Collinsworth, as the Governor would be in constant contact with him.

Board/Council Action

Chairman Beaton of the Alaska Board of Fisheries announced that the Board would honor Governor Sheffield's request and defer action on the treaty. Chairman Clem Tillion of the North Pacific Council said the Council would do the same.

ADF&G Presentation of Treaty Background Information

Mr. Beaton asked Steve Pennoyer, ADF&G, to give some background on facts and figures used in negotiating the proposed treaty.

Mr. Pennoyer stated that one of the problems is that the stocks do not respect national jurisdictional boundaries. Because of the myriad of fisheries, it is difficult to get all the user groups together and have them agree on the allocation question. The stocks under discussion are generally agreed to originate along the coast primarily from Oregon to Southeast Alaska. Chinook stocks up and down the coast are not in the same degree of trouble, but the major non-hatchery stocks are considered to be in serious trouble. Southeastern stocks have generally reacted very positively to measures already taken and the restrictions already accepted by our fleets. In 1981 there was an upsurge in escapements, mainly in the Taku; in 1982 escapements increased less because the Taku was recovering from a landslide that blocked one of the major spawning and rearing tributaries for a while. Within the limits of measurement, Southeastern streams seem to be responding and are probably ahead of schedule. If conditions remain favorable, the recovery of Southeastern streams will stay ahead of schedule.

Mr. Pennoyer reviewed catch totals and comparisons for several years, dating back to the 1960s. The British Columbia chinook catches during the 1970s were the highest in history. Figures show that Alaska catches now average around 290,000 to 320,000

fish and the B.C. catch has risen up to about two million. Ken Petrie (Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans) estimated that the total annual chinook escapement in British Columbia was about 150,000 fish in 1981 and 1982; the escapement goal is 350,000. Mr. Pennoyer said that from the statistics it has been fairly obvious to the Council, Board, and public that Alaska doesn't hold the key by itself to the conservation problems of stocks that are major contributors to the Alaskan fishery.

The U.S. went into discussions with Canada understanding that the fishery was dependent in part on Canadian stocks and that conservation goals and the long-term health and stability of the troll fishery could not be achieved without significant action by Canada. Establishing a starting point and a realistic reduction schedule to help rebuild the stocks were the crux of the problem. The original approach in the negotiations was to use the status quo based on 1981-82, a period when the Alaska fishery was lidded and had been reduced below the average catch of the 1970s. That was not acceptable from an Alaskan standpoint. So a common base period was agreed upon which would take into account reductions that already had been taken in Alaska.

The base period chosen for discussion was 1978-81. The average commercial and sport catch in Alaska during that period was 357,000 chinooks. After deducting 20,000 for sport, the total commercial catch would be 337,000. The 1981-1982 average commercial catch was about 275,000. So, the starting point would be somewhat above the 10-year average. In the Canadian case, there isn't much difference between the 1978-81 and 1981-82 catches. The catch for 1978-81 is actually a little higher than for 1981-82, but not as much higher, proportionately, as it was for Alaska. The reduction proposed would be 290,000 fish in all the Canadian fisheries, except the west coast of Vancouver Island, including recreational fisheries. A 94,000 reduction from the base period is proposed for Alaska. Questions about regulations, lids, and further actions to be taken cannot be answered at the moment. These regulations would have to be worked out by the respective regulatory bodies in both countries after the treaty is agreed upon. The primary agreement is that the Canadians would limit those fisheries which are judged to be impacting the natural stocks that are in trouble.

Dr. Alverson responded to several questions by Council members and the public. Treaty language implies to many people that 1981 and 1982, when the Alaskan catch was restricted, would be used as a base for determining catch proportions between countries and jurisdictions. Actually, 1981-82 refers to a technical document that was based on data before this year that indicated the total catch would require reduction in order to halt the decline in stocks. This is not mandatory. Anything done in the future will have to be based on the results of what happens in 1983. Also, at the end of 1983 a new catch balance between the various jurisdictions will be agreed upon. In essence, the commitment for 1983 is for an Alaska commercial catch of roughly 243,000

fish. Canada would take a very significant cut which would equate roughly to the same cut that Alaska has taken within about one percent. The primary obligation on the parts of both countries is to reach escapement goals.

Salmon Management for 1983

At 9:25 a.m. on Thursday, January 6, the Council and Board met to continue discussions of salmon management for 1983. The meeting was called to order by Clem Tillion, Chairman of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Report of the Advisory Panel

Bob Alverson, Chairman of the Council's Advisory Panel, reported that the Advisory Panel voted 16 to 1 to recommend that the Council go on record as opposing the U.S./Canada Treaty. The AP also advises the Council to request that the Department of Fish and Game design a season using historical catch data that result in a commercial catch of approximately 285,000 to 288,000 chinook salmon. This season would probably require a closure from April 15 to May 15 to benefit Alaskan systems, a closure in June to benefit systems in the lower 48, and a closure in August to benefit Canadian systems. This would not disrupt normal emergency power of the Secretary of Commerce. If the Council requires an option from the PMT report, the AP suggests option number two.

The Advisory Panel responded as follows to the Plan Development Team's suggestions:

Coho Salmon Management Proposal: The AP recommends the present system of coho salmon management be continued.

Selected Species Fisheries: The AP felt that Proposal #223 to the Board of Fisheries addressed this and recommended its passage. (There were four in opposition to selected-species fishing.)

Beginning with Board of Fisheries recommendation #208, the AP recommends adoption of the Board of Fisheries decisions on specific season and gear proposals.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC reviewed the report, "PDT Management Options for the 1983 Southeast Alaska Troll Fishery," and the January 3, 1983 addendum. Other reports reviewed by the SSC were: "Options for the 1983 Southeast Alaska Troll Fishery Season," prepared by the Southeast Regional Staff, Division of Commercial Fisheries, ADF&G, January 4, 1983; "Management of 1983 Southeastern Alaska Chinook Fisheries: A Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council," prepared by Harvest Management Division, Washington Department of Fisheries,

December 1982; and "Comments to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Alaska Board of Fisheries Regarding the 1983 Southeast Alaska Troll Salmon Fishery," prepared by the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission.

In reference to the 1983 harvest ceiling, the SSC found that 243,000 chinook, the lower end of the OY range, is an appropriate 1983 harvest ceiling for the Southeast Alaska commercial salmon fishery, given a reciprocal reduction in the British Columbia chinook fisheries as proposed in the U.S./Canada draft treaty. The Alaska catch distribution, set forth by the PDT, would result in a summer troll catch ceiling of 206,000 chinooks if the 1983 net fishery catch can be held to 22,000 chinooks and if an allowance of 15,000 chinooks is made for the winter troll fishery. The 206,000 summer troll catch ceiling in 1983 would represent a 10% reduction from the actual 1982 summer troll catch.

Regarding the five options for the 1983 summer season presented by the PDT, the SSC offers the following evaluations based on its concern for the potential of creating two situations which they considered biologically undesirable: an early chinook closure as occurred in 1982; and a major shift in the seasonal distribution of the troll fishery effort. The SSC's primary concern with Options 1 and 2 is that the reduced spring fishing period may not sufficiently reduce the catch to avoid an early closure of the chinook fishery and consequently another coho-only fishery situation as in 1982. The SSC found Option 3 less desirable since it would eliminate the late May-early June fishing effort by shifting to a June 12 opening. It also provides no closed period before the July fishery during which early season catch rate trends could be evaluated which may not provide sufficient reduction in catch to avoid an early chinook closure. Option 4, prepared by the PDT in response to the concern of WDF, would delay the troll season opening to June 29, eliminating a spring fishery. The season would remain open through July 31, close August 1-10, re-open August 11, and continue to September 20 (or close earlier if the combined troll-net fishery catch ceiling is reached). The main concern of the SSC with Option 4 is that the troll fishery would be shifted to a July - August fishery that would tend to concentrate on stocks most in need of conservation, e.g. Columbia River brights. The spring fishery, which tends to intercept Alaska chinook stocks, would be eliminated by Option 4. Since Alaska chinook escapements are showing satisfactory signs of rebuilding toward escapement goals, they do not appear to need the additional protection of a spring fishing closure. A further problem with Option 4 is that the recreational chinook fishery would not be affected as in the past by a competing spring commercial troll fishery and would probably exceed the 20,000 projected catch.

The fifth option, proposed by ADF&G Southeast Regional Staff, would establish the chinook fishing year as July 1 - June 30 instead of October 1 - September 30 as previously established by

FMP Amendment 2. Under this option chinook catches in the net and recreational fisheries would continue to be compiled on a calendar-year basis, with the January 1 - June 30 catches included in the current season (July 1 on) catch ceiling. The SSC does not recommend the new accounting year system because it potentially requires restriction of the winter troll fishery and the spring fishery would bear the brunt of curtailment (or complete closure) when the chinook catch ceiling is reached.

In view of their reservations over each of the five options, the SSC proposes a modification of Options 1 or 2 for consideration by the Council. The SSC would prefer the seasonal effort distributions provided by Options 1 and 2 over Options 3-5 because only Options 1 and 2 assure a spring fishery and the least chance of undesirable shifts in stocks and age groups fished. The SSC is concerned, however, that an early attainment of the chinook catch ceiling will result in a prolonged coho-only fishery as in 1982. To reduce this possibility the SSC proposes that the presently-scheduled 10-day August closure be increased to 15 days by beginning five days earlier. The SSC believes this would delay any needed closure of the chinook fishery resulting from catch ceiling attainment, and would assist management of the coho fishery by allowing additional time for movement of coho stocks into inside waters where there is a better opportunity to manage on a stock-by-stock basis.

The SSC concurs with the PDT that the Council should adopt a policy on hatchery production which is consistent with the chinook conservation policy adopted by the Council at the December meeting and the draft U.S./Canada Treaty.

The SSC also reviewed the specific Board proposals, but made no specific recommendations.

While discussions of the details of the U.S./Canada draft treaty were not completed, the SSC reached a consensus on a number of key points that should be considered in the critical examination of the treaty. These consensus points are summarized as follows:

1. The chinook salmon is the most migratory of the Pacific salmon; the species ranges nearly coastwide from northern California to northwestern Alaska. To manage these stocks effectively, there must be a coastwide management program involving all of those interested in the fishery. The proposed treaty provides a basis for such a management program.
2. The present status is that most chinook stocks are well below desired escapement levels. Southeast Alaska escapements are about 23 percent below desired levels, but rebuilding is presently ahead of the established 15-year schedule. British Columbia escapements are less than 50 percent of the interim management goals.

In Washington, Columbia River and Puget Sound stocks are below escapement goals. The Committee concurs with the PMT that many of the natural stocks that contribute to the Alaska fishery are experiencing extreme conservation problems and immediate action is necessary. The proposed treaty takes steps to correct this identified conservation problem.

3. The current status of the chinook salmon can be mitigated by rebuilding natural runs through careful management and/or through enhancement by hatchery production. Restoration of natural runs can only occur by the reduction of current catch levels. However, unless such reductions are coordinated between all of the participants in the fishery, substantial inequities are likely, thus making it difficult to implement necessary changes on a state-by-state basis. Proposed enhancement programs are expensive and will almost certainly not be undertaken unless there is assurance of a coastwide management program. Under the proposed treaty arrangement, one may anticipate that both Canada and the United States will undertake major enhancement programs that will benefit fishermen all along the coast. In the absence of a treaty arrangement, such enhancement programs are unlikely to occur, or if they do occur they are apt to be restricted to those actions that will only benefit local fishermen.

4. Any consideration of the desirability of the treaty should compare the short-term reductions with the long-term increases in catch. If new enhancement facilities can be rapidly brought on line as a result of a U.S./Canada agreement, the enhancement chinooks can be counted in catch allocation, permitting a greater escapement of natural runs and thus an accelerated rebuilding to escapement goals. This would achieve the long-term benefits of increased natural production in a shorter period of time.

After hearing considerable public testimony from Southeast Alaska fishermen, the Council discussed rescinding the ban on treble hooks. Jim Branson suggested the Council follow the preference of the State Board in this matter. *Bob Mace moved that the Council adopt a treble hook proposal comparable to that of the Board and to proceed on the amendment; if the amendment cannot be completed in time for the coming season, then the Council should exercise its emergency powers. The motion was seconded by Rudy Petersen; the motion carried unanimously.*

D-2 Tanner Crab FMP

Bob Alverson reported that the AP took no action on the Tanner Crab FMP as Steve Davis indicated that new developments have occurred and there was probably no need to take action at this time.

Don Rosenberg advised that the SSC reviewed Amendment #9 to the Tanner Crab FMP and the PMT review of the amendment. The major recommendation of the SSC in regard to the considerations used in setting closed seasons is that the seasons be set to maximize the reproduction potential of the Tanner crab populations, based on the following considerations:

1. Closed seasons should include molting and post-mating periods until the shells have hardened enough to permit handling with minimal mortality and damage.
2. Closed seasons should possibly include other sensitive periods of the life cycle of the crab when they become known.

The SSC concurs with the expansion of the section regarding the Council and Regional office interactions. Additionally, they have recommended the list of factors be identified as socioeconomic considerations and that an item 8 be added to the list: that of "development of a fishery." Although the SSC realizes that the Regional Office has indicated that the apparent need for this amendment has been reduced, the Committee still believes that the amendment answers an identified operational problem. The SSC believes that it lays out the procedure which the Council wished to have used in the establishment of fishing seasons, and therefore, subject to the above modifications and those proposed by the PMT, recommends that the Council forward the proposed amendment for Secretarial review.

The Council and Board received a summary from Plan Coordinator Steve Davis and Pat Travers on the present need for this amendment. Mr. Davis reviewed the problems the Regional Office of NMFS experienced this past fall when adjusting tanner crab season opening dates by field order. The Region at that time was of the opinion that pre-season adjustment of season dates utilizing field orders would no longer be allowed and that an alternative procedure needed to be developed. Amendment #9 was prepared by the Council and NMFS staff to address this problem. Mr. Davis also mentioned the importance of Council action at this meeting to allow sufficient time for review and implementation of the amendment by the fall tanner crab fishery.

Mr. Travers, NOAA/GC, said that while the Central office at NMFS and NOAA General Counsel support this amendment, they would suggest that the OY Section in the FMP be updated as well since they feel that the two management measures, seasons and OY's, are interrelated. He said he was also of the impression that the future use of field orders in adjusting season dates may be authorized in light of the Council's development of a more comprehensive amendment and that there was no need to submit Amendment #9 at this time.

Rudy Petersen added that he feels there are not enough checks and balances in the management system. Steve Pennoyer, ADF&G, replied that there are good checks and balances and the Commissioner can be petitioned to reopen a season if necessary.

John Harville suggested that Bob McVey check into the possibility of the continued use of field orders in setting fishing seasons. Mr. McVey agreed to do so.

Council Action

Bob Mace moved that the Council submit Amendment #9 for Secretarial review and implementation only if Bob McVey's upcoming discussions with NMFS officials indicate that field order authority cannot be used to set season dates next year; seconded by Bob McVey. The motion carried with Rudy Petersen opposed.

E. CONTRACTS, PROPOSALS, AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

Jim Branson advised that the December financial report will be mailed to the Council.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no further public comments.

G. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Council, Vice-Chairman Harold Lokken adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 6, 1983.