

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke  
Executive Director

DATE: November 20, 1995

SUBJECT: Staff Tasking

ESTIMATED TIME  
1 HOUR

The attached Item D-3(a) summarizes the current status of Council projects, including ongoing analyses of plan and regulatory amendments and the status of previous Council actions. In September, the Council did not explicitly review the 39 groundfish proposals received over the summer, but did initiate analysis of trimester allocations of GOA pollock to improve NMFS's ability to manage small seasonal pollock quotas. Review of the BSAI Pacific cod gear allocations has also been identified by the Council as a priority item, and is scheduled for discussion at this meeting.

Major analyses currently underway include: BSAI pollock IFQs; IBQs for groundfish fisheries; Improved Retention/Utilization; follow through on License Limitation program; northern Bristol Bay groundfish closure to protect crab and PSC cap adjustments; and, miscellaneous sablefish/halibut IFQ program amendments. Major analyses not yet underway, but also expected to require substantial staff time in the near future, include: BSAI Pacific cod gear allocations; Halibut Charter boat issue; and, skipper licensing program.

**STATUS OF COUNCIL TASKING**

December 4, 1995

<b><u>ACTION</u></b>	<b><u>STATUS</u></b>	<b><u>TASKING</u></b>
<b>REPORTS:</b>		
1 Halibut Charter Management	Report in January 1996 Initial analysis in April 1996	Council
2 Improved Retention/Utilization	Report in December 1995 Analysis in April 1996	Region/Council/Center
3 Sablefish/Halibut IFQ Fisheries Analysis	Report in April 1996	State/RAM Division
4 Research Plan/Observer Program	Decision in December 1995	Region/Council/OOC
5 Individual Bycatch Quotas (IBQs)	Report in December 1995 Analysis in April 1996	Center/Council/Region
6 Salmon Foundation Report	Report in January 1996	Salmon Foundation
<b>REGULATORY AMENDMENTS:</b>		
1 Seamount Restrictions	Proposed Rule in preparation	Region
2 Halibut Grid Sorting	Final action in January 1996	Council/IPHC
3 Electronic Reporting Requirements	Proposed Rule on August 31 Comments until Sept 29	Region
4 AI extended sablefish season	Proposed Rule in preparation	Council/Region
5 Allow IFQ fishing in multiple areas (interim Final Rule)	Effective August 25, 1995 Final Rule pending	Region
6 Mesh Size Reg. Amendment	Proposed Rule pending	Council/Region
7 GOA Pollock Trimester allocations	Initial action in Dec 1995 Final action in Jan 1996	Region/Council
8 Overhaul of Recordkeeping & Reporting requirements	Proposed Rule on Sept 8 Comments by Oct 20	Region

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>TASKING</u>	
<b>PLAN AMENDMENTS:</b>			
1	Moratorium	Final Rule on August 10 Effective January 1, 1996	Council/Region
2a	Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Buydown	Initial review in Dec 1995 Final action January 1996	Council/Region
2b	Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Sweep-up	Initial review in January 1996	Council/Region
3	Research Plan - Amendment 1 (delay until 1997)	Proposed Rule on Sept 11 Comments until Nov 6	Council/Region/Center
4	Salmon Retention/Delivery	EFP extended through 1996 pollock 'A' season	Region
5	Chinook Salmon /Bycatch Closure Areas (Am 21b)	SOC approved Nov 20, 1995 Effective January 1, 1996	Region
6	Comp. Rationalization Plan (a) License Limitation (b) IFQ Program for BSAI pollock	(a) PR in preparation (b) Discuss in Jan 1996	Council
7	Scallop FMP/Amendment 1	FMP Final on Aug 29, 1995 Am 1 PR in preparation	Region/Council
8	Total Weight Measurement in Groundfish Fisheries	Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking pending	Region
9	Inshore/offshore continuation and Pollock CDQ program	PR on Sept 18 Comment until Nov 2 Day 95 is December 2	Council
10	CDQ Compensation exemption & one-time transfer (32/36)	Proposed Rule on Oct 13 Comments due November 24	Council/Region
11	Allow freezing of non-IFQ species/prohibit halibut catcher QS use on FLs	Proposed Rule in preparation	Council/Region
12	Bristol Bay Red King Crab Trawl Closure Area	Final Action in Sept 1995 Implemented by in-season authority through March 1996	Council/ADFG
13	Distribute halibut PSC savings	On hold pending other actions.	Council

	<u><b>ACTION</b></u>	<u><b>STATUS</b></u>	<u><b>TASKING</b></u>
14	Demersal Shelf Rockfish License Limitation Program	Report in January 1996	ADFG
15	Amend Overfishing Definitions	Initial review January 1996	Center/Council/Region
16	Forage Fish Prohibition	Initial review in January 1996	Region
17	Amend POP Rebuilding Plan	Final review in Dec 1995	Council/Region
18	Crab PSC Cap Analysis	Analysis in preparation	Council/ADFG/Center
19	Northeast Bristol Bay Closure	Analysis in preparation	Council/ADFG/Region
20	Inseason flexibility to adjust Tanner crab PSCs	Review in January 1996	Region
21	BSAI cod gear allocations	Discuss in Dec '95 (Expires in December '96) Analysis due April 1996	Council
22	Halibut Area 4 Catch Sharing Plan	Final action December 1995	Council/IPHC

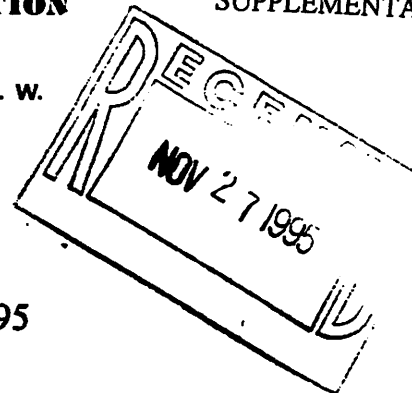
**OTHER ACTIONS:**

1	April 24, 1994 Scallop Control Date	Published on June 15, 1994	Region
2	Halibut Charter Control Date	Never published in F.R.	Region
3	Halibut Discard Mortality Rates	Review in December 1995	IPHC
4	Joint Council/Board of Fish Meeting	January 1996	Council/BOF
5	Skipper License Program	Report in January 1996	Council/Region
6	Council Operations	Discuss in January 1996	Council

**FISHING VESSEL OWNERS' ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED**

ROOM 232, WEST WALL BUILDING • 4005 20TH AVE. W.  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98199-1290

SINCE 1914



November 20, 1995

Mr. Rick Lauber  
Chairman  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306  
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Dear Chairman Lauber:

At the last North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting held in Seattle, the Council took action in modification of the Eastern Bering Sea crab closures. This action was taken with regards to crab habitat protection; however, there is an important issue of juvenile halibut and crab bycatch in the Eastern Bering Sea that we would like the Council to consider.

In order to illustrate the Association's concern, I have attached the survey chartlet from the 1995 bottom trawl survey conducted by NMFS this last summer, specific to yellowfin Sole. The survey is conducted annually between June and August. I request that the Council look at it in relationship to concerns of juvenile halibut bycatch along the 100 fathom curve near the Unimak Island area, 55 N. latitude, and between 166', and 162 longitude.

The Yellowfin Sole trawl fleet has had significant problems being closed down due to attaining their halibut caps and/or crab caps. The trawl survey clearly shows that the Yellowfin Sole fleet, between June and August, would only find commercial concentrations of YFS far to the north of the prime crab habitat. The survey also clearly shows that there would be no need for the YFS fleet to operate in the high juvenile halibut areas of concentration during the early spring in the southern areas of the Bering Sea if the YFS season were to begin in June.

In fact, the Council, at the urging of the trawl fleet, moved the Yellowfin Sole

FAX  
(206) 283-3341

LATITUDE: 47° 39' 36" NORTH

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(206) 283-7735

LONGITUDE: 120° 22' 56" WEST

opening date to May, a few years ago, in order to maximize the catch of YFS and minimize halibut and crab bycatch. The Council then changed the date back to January 1st at the request of the trawl fleet. This reversal of action has been a great puzzlement to many in the crab and halibut industry.

The Association's members request that the Council reconsider the YFS opening date. The bycatch data and report from Natural Resource Consultants three years ago, clearly indicates a strong logic for a June opening to minimize the impact on crab and halibut and maximize the harvest of Yellowfin Sole. Your attention to this seasonal date change would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. D. Alverson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Robert D. Alverson**  
Manager

RDA:cb

cc: IPHC  
U.S. Commissioners

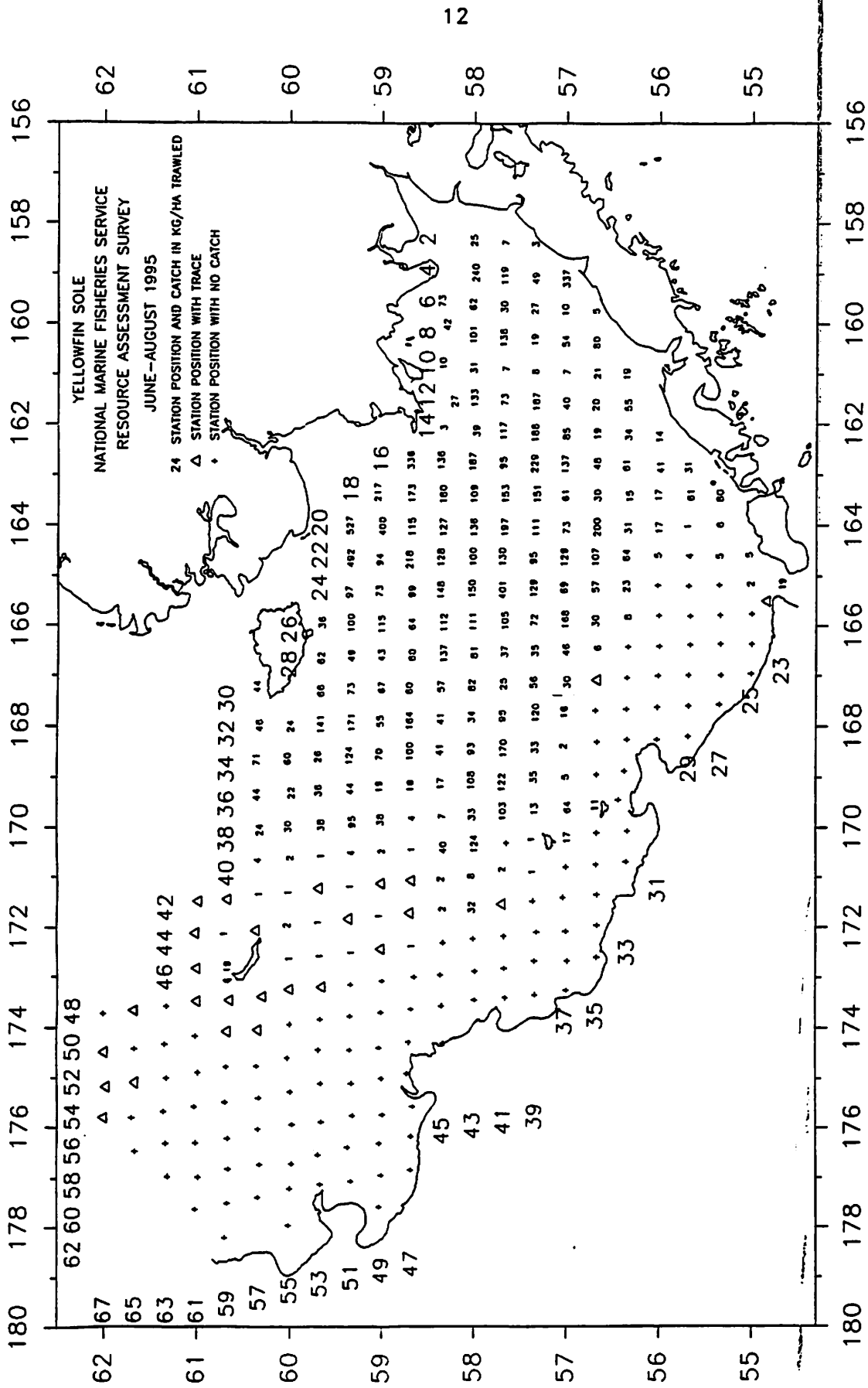


Figure 6.--Catches of yellowfin sole (kg/ha) during the 1995 eastern Bering Sea summer groundfish survey.