

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Richard B. Lauber, Chairman
Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director

605 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501



Mailing Address: P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Telephone: (907) 271-2809
FAX (907) 271-2817

ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES JANUARY 17-18, 1993 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Approved by John Bruce
Date 4-20-93

The Advisory Panel for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met on January 17-18, 1993, at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska. Members in attendance were:

Al Burch	Dave Little	John Sevier
John Bruce	Pete Maloney	Harold Sparck
Phil Chitwood	Dean Paddock	Michael Stevens
Phil Drage	Penny Pagels	Beth Stewart
Dan Falvey	Bryon Pfundt	John Woodruff, Chairman
Dave Fraser, Vice Chair	Perfenia Pletnikoff	Robert Wurm
Kevin Kaldestad	John Roos	

Minutes for the December 1992 meeting were approved.

C-1 COMPREHENSIVE RATIONALIZATION PLAN

The AP heard a staff presentation on the comprehensive rationalization plan including a report on the committees recent meeting.

The AP concurs with the committee's recommendation for action and development of this plan. The AP adds the following recommendations:

1. Industry groups should be set up to explore options in their fishery (by gear type and perhaps by major species groups).
2. We support clarifying the list of issues related to the ground rules of the comprehensive rationalization plan sent to NOAA-GC, specifically whether processors are participants.

(This motion passed 19-1).

The AP spent much of its discussion trying to see how the data set would be established to deal with a rationalization plan. It sees there are a lot of things that need to be resolved before an acceptable data set can be developed completely. It also sees that many industry participants will have a hard time participating in the discussions about rationalization before they know generally where they stand. The AP urges the Council to direct the development of the data set as soon as possible.

The AP thinks these industry groups should be formalized by the Council and include staff. This way, meetings could be held to develop strawmen proposals and these could be analyzed by the staff. What the AP wants to avoid is fragments of the industry working independently and heading down different paths as well as the staff coming up with options that don't make sense to industry.

C-2 MAGNUSON ACT REAUTHORIZATION

The AP received a report on the Magnuson Act reauthorization issues but took no action on this item.

C-3(B) SABLEFISH & HALIBUT IFQ PLAN

The AP heard a report from Ben Muse and Kurt Schelle on the block proposals and the 1000 lb. floor proposal.

The AP **unanimously** recommends the Council continue development of the Sitka block proposal with a maximum of 3 blocks per person and 5 blocks per vessel. It also recommends continued development of the full/partial block proposal using a 20,000 lb. increment for full blocks. Both of these proposals should retain the existing option of vessel size classes. The sweep-up component should be a part of both plans as well. It's the AP's intent that a draft Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review (EA/RIR) be developed that could be reviewed by the Council family at the April meeting and then sent out for public comment. Furthermore, the AP hopes that a decision on those 2 proposals can be made timely so the implementation of IFQs will not be delayed.

The AP sees that these amendments to the IFQ plan will help keep the quota shares from being consolidated too much and still allow for enough IFQ to be accumulated by individual fishermen for a viable operation. The amendments will also encourage crew members to be owners. The AP thinks the 3 blocks per person, 5 blocks per boat, as well as partial blocks under 20,000 lbs. should allow lots of opportunity for fishermen to both increase and decrease their quota shares. The AP is also aware that in developing these proposals into draft EA/RIRs, there will be continued discussion and refinement.

C-6 MARINE MAMMALS

The AP heard staff reports on the National Marine Fisheries Service's plan for harbor seals and the Marine Mammal Protection Act amendments but took no action on these items.

D-3(A) BSAI SALMON BYCATCH AMENDMENT ANALYSIS

The AP heard a report on the draft EA/RIR from Dave Ackley (ADF&G). It recommends the Council send the document out for public comment but not before it is expanded to include an analysis of the impact current levels of salmon bycatch have on the domestic fisheries and escapement.

(This motion passed 13-3)

The AP is in favor of securing and hearing the public input during the comment period but we think the analysis needs to be expanded enough to allow the public to assess the benefits that would potentially accrue to the salmon fisheries compared to the costs that would potentially accrue to the groundfish fisheries. The AP would further like to see a table in the EA/RIR that regards statistical areas (especially those along the contour) in terms of importance to salmon bycatch.

MINORITY REPORT

D-3 (A)

The following members of the AP voted against sending Amendment 21B (Salmon Bycatch) out for public review for a variety of reasons. The stated purpose of the proposed action is to reduce the bycatch of chinook salmon in the BSAI groundfish fisheries. The stated need for the proposed action is to help alleviate conservation problems in the North America chinook spawning populations, particularly on the Nushagak, Yukon, Kushkokwin, and Kenai Rivers.

The analysis fails to demonstrate that there is a conservation problem. The average of the past 5 years chinook bycatch in the BSAI is about 30,000 fish/year with the total annual Western Alaska chinook run in the state of Alaska being about 711,000. This equates to about 4 percent taken as bycatch. While this number may be higher than most want it to be but it does not constitute a conservation problem. The bycatch of halibut is about .20 percent of the total annual halibut taken.

The model used in the analysis can not duplicate the present bycatch levels. The model was not intended to cost/benefit analysis. The model predicts 100,000 tons less pollock catch under certain scenarios. There is no assessment of what it cost to fish off the edge or out of the horseshoe. Thus the model is an inadequate tool for conducting a cost/benefit analysis.

The analysis fails to take into account the Council's recent action delaying the "B" pollock season start to August 15th, and such things as the CDQ fisheries for pollock which recently took a significant amount of chinook.

The analysis doesn't go far enough into the administrative and enforcement costs of the alternatives and in one case suggests that the alternative is unenforceable with present resources.

The analysis needs a model that works and reflects the current status of fishery and future status if these alternatives were implemented.

Signed: Dave Fraser
 Pete Maloney
 Mick Stevens

D-3(B) SUBDIVIDING ALEUTIAN REGION

The AP heard a NMFS report on the EA/RIR. The AP recommends the Council adopt alternative 3 of the EA/RIR for Atka mackerel only.

(This motion passed 16-2)

The AP was concerned about applying the geographic split to other species at this time and without securing how things might be affected. At the same time, the AP clearly recognizes the need to protect the Eastern Aleutian mackerel stock from over-exploitation, and the need to spread the harvest out over the geographic range of the specie. The AP understands this action is only to establish the sub-areas and does not increase the mackerel TAC. The AP expects to have the opportunity to address this for 1993 if it comes up at a later date.

D-4(A) GULF OF ALASKA ROCKFISH REBUILDING PLANS

The AP **unanimously** recommends the Council send the draft document to the full plan team for review. The AP wants to see the Plan Team review and develop a full range of options and alternatives into the draft document. Specifically, the AP would like to see:

1. A 75 percent probability of rebuilding success.
2. Various rebuilding schedules that are time-certain with variable exploitation rates.
3. An analysis of benefits of the rebuilding and to whom they will accrue.
4. An analysis of costs of the rebuilding including where displaced rockfish vessels will go.

D-4(B) TERRA MARINE REQUEST FOR EXPERIMENTAL FISHING PERMIT

The AP reaffirms its action in September 1992 which was support of this project.

(This motion passed 12-5).

Although some members expressed concern that this program could get out of hand, most think it's a good pilot project that should proceed since the maximum allowed retention is 30 m/t each of salmon and halibut, and that these fish are otherwise totally wasted. Some members also think this retention will be a disincentive for bycatch, and all see the value in providing resources to food banks.

Further on this item, the AP recommends the Council request the Secretary of Commerce to provide clarification of the issues between the proposal and the International Pacific Halibut Commission, so that they can be resolved.

(This motion passed 12-6).

The AP heard from Terra Marine that requests for legal clarification of certain points from NOAA-GC had not been given and we think these issues should be resolved so the project doesn't languish.

D-4(C) TRAWL MESH REGULATIONS

The AP unanimously recommends the Council direct staff to proceed with trawl mesh regulations.

There is a clear feeling amongst AP members that the industry in the current system is too tied up in maximizing catch to develop and use better gear.

D-4(D) BYCATCH MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The AP took no action on this item.

D-4(E) COD ALLOCATIONS BY GEAR AND SEASON

The AP took no action on this item.

D-4(F) OPEN ALL GEAR SEASONS SIMULTANEOUSLY ON JANUARY 1 OR JANUARY 20

The AP recommends the Council stick with status quo.
(This motion passed 12-6).