



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Action Memo

**File Number:BYC 16-001**

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**Agenda Date**2/1/2016

**Agenda Number:**C2

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**Chris Oliver, Executive Director**

**SUBJECT:**

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management - Discussion Paper

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sam Cunningham

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Review staff paper on selected program elements; Receive feedback on Alternative 3.

**BACKGROUND:**

Since 2012, the Council has been engaged in the development of a revised management structure for the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish trawl fisheries. The Council first established a Purpose & Need Statement and a list of program Goals & Objectives in October 2012; the Purpose & Need Statement was most recently revised in February 2013 to include the Western GOA area in addition to the Central GOA and the West Yakutat district. The motivation for this action is to provide the fleet with a structure under which it can minimize prohibited species catch (PSC), better utilize the allowed amount of PSC to harvest more groundfish, create additional value from the resource, and provide stability for dependent GOA fishing communities.

The Council most recently reviewed a discussion paper on program elements in October 2015. At that meeting the Council added a third action alternative, bringing the total number of alternatives to four. Alternative 1 is a 'no action' alternative. Alternative 2 defines a program wherein groundfish and PSC access privileges are allocated to voluntary cooperatives based upon the fishing history associated with the Federal licenses that are enrolled in each cooperative. Those elements include measures that are intended to promote stability in trawl-dependent fishing communities (consolidation limits, quota regionalization, and active participation requirements). Alternative 3 (added in October 2015) defines a program wherein PSC is allocated to voluntary cooperatives but groundfish quotas are not. PSC would be allocated on the basis of vessels as opposed to licenses, and could be allocated according to either 'equal shares' or vessel capacity. Additional elements limit consolidation through transfer restrictions, and direct cooperatives to develop contract terms that promote active participation. Both Alternatives 2 and 3 include elements that require 100% observer coverage and that would revise pollock seasonal harvest apportionments and season dates for both pollock and Pacific cod. Finally, Alternative 4 includes two options for an additional program element that could provide additional community protections (Community Fisheries Associations (CFA) or Adaptive Management Program).

The discussion paper provided for this meeting addresses the following topics: historical activity of trawl LLP licenses, the use of vessel capacity as a basis for PSC allocation, active participation requirements, and a comparison of Alternatives 2 and 3 in terms of how they address the defined Purpose & Need and Goals & Objectives. The analysts' review of these items is meant to support discussion and stakeholder feedback, and does not constitute a completed analysis that would underlie a management decision at this time.

Appendices to the document include:

- (1) The most current set of alternatives, as well as the Purpose & Need Statement and list of

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- program Goals & Objectives;
- (2) An overview of the GOA Trawl Economic Data Report (EDR) tool;
  - (3) An updated table comparing elements across the alternatives, organized by topic;
  - (4) A letter referenced by the USCG in its recommendation concerning the use of vessel tonnage specifications as the basis for PSC allocation.

Council representatives attended an outreach meeting with Western GOA stakeholders on January 19, 2016 in Sand Point, AK. A written summary of that meeting will be posted to the Council's electronic agenda.

**Errata:** A revised version of Section 1 (GOA Groundfish Trawl LLP Licenses) is provided as an attachment. The purpose of this replacement language is to provide readers with a better explanation of how to interpret the tables in that section. The analysts received early feedback that some readers did not clearly understand how to interpret the number of licenses that had a particular endorsement for each GOA area. No substantive analytical changes have been made.