

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Keith Specking
Keith Specking, Chairman

Date: *16 July 1979*

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT
Meeting of June 27, 1979
Homer, Alaska

The Advisory Panel to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council held its meeting jointly with the Scientific and Statistical Committee at 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, June 27, 1979. Chairman Keith Specking convened the meeting for the following agenda:

1. Estimating DAH
2. Consideration of Salmon/Herring closures in the Bering Sea
3. Status of Tanner Crab
4. Report on Limited Entry
5. Items to be considered for the FCMA oversight hearings

Agenda Item 16 - Tanner Crab fishery in the Bering Sea

Dr. Jerry Reeves reported to the joint SSC-AP group that the similarity in catch ratios for the C. opilio fishery, compared to last year, is similar and that the determination has been made that the fishery remains about the same this year as it was last year and there is no cause for concern regarding stocks. Preliminary figures show a total catch of:

C. bairdi 42-43 million lbs.
C. opilio 60-65 million lbs.

Dr. Donald Bevan (SSC) asked from the floor for a graph presenting the past three years' figures on both species as to total catch, CPUE and whatever else is necessary to enable a comparison to be made and predictions for the future outlook of the fishery. As estimate of OY will be available in July, according to Dr. Reeves. Member Sig Jaeger said a number of crabbers left the crab fishery to participate in competing resource fields. His view is that the domestic effort for 1980 will be 100 million lbs. and that it could have been a 100 million lbs. total harvest this year had those boats which left the fishery remained on crab. So far as can be determined, fishing patterns were generally the same this year as last year and the catch rates were similar. A conclusion has been made that a shift in population accounts for the good fishing, since recruitment alone would not have been responsible.

On the subject of water temperature and its influence on the fishery, Dr. Reeves reported that as of now the effects of temperature are inconclusive. Mr. Jaeger indicated that the domestic harvest this year was held up by the lack of processing facilities, and that indications are another 8-10 catcher processors will be at work in 1980. Crabbers are currently being held to a 100,000 lb/wk limit in the fishery, about half their capacity. Fleet expansion is predicted to be 30-40 new boats. The decision of the AP on this subject is to evaluate next month the OY-TALFF-DAH portion of the Tanner crab fishery.

Agenda Item # 10 - Reduction of DAH in the Gulf of Alaska

A sub-committee was named to explore methods of fine tuning the determination of DAH. The committee is:

Sig Jaeger Chairman
Jeffrey Stephan
Chuck Jensen
Joe Kurtz

Agenda Item #19 - Preliminary Report from the Limited Entry Workgroup

Concerning the subject of limited entry, the joint AP-SSC group heard a report from the Executive Director of the Council, Jim H. Branson, on the results of the workshop limited entry group meeting on June 4. Mr. Branson indicated two possible courses of action on the subject for short term solutions:

1. None (acceptance consequences of entry into the fishery)
2. Cut the amount of fishing time (by all participants)

Other, long-range solutions are still the subject of discussion and include the installation of a limited entry system within the Comprehensive Salmon FMP now in progress.

Member Stephan called for a representation on the Limited Entry working group of at least 50 percent AP members. In later discussion, members Lauber, Stephan and Alverson were named to the group.

Agenda Item 15 - Bering Sea Salmon/Herring Savings Area

Dr. Loh-Lee-Low (NW&AFC) reported to the group on the desirability of salmon/herring closures in the Bering Sea/Aleutian area. His report is available in the agenda books and the conclusion by Dr. Low was that the proposed closures are not biologically necessary, but may be desirable from a social or economic standpoint.

Chairman Specking asked what type of research is underway on herring, so that FMP's might be better formulated. Dr. Reeves indicated one person (Vidar Weststad) is working full-time on herring, there are studies on the deposit of roe-on-kelp and hydro-acoustic studies currently in progress. He was told that test gill netting gives an unbiased age class structure and that such netting indicates the stocks in the Pribilof wintering grounds are Western Alaska herring stocks. Sig Jaeger opposed

the present State of Alaska proposal to ban offshore trawling by Americans while there is a foreign effort.

The meeting recessed for lunch and resumed at 2:00 p.m. in the Elks Hall.

Agenda Item # 10 - Reduction of DAH for 1979 in the Gulf of Alaska

The Advisory Panel passed a motion to accept the NMFS survey to reassess the DAH in the Gulf of Alaska. A portion of the rationale included the fact that the domestic effort will be less in the months to come than in the past, and the DAH as reassessed seems capable of satisfying U.S. needs.

Agenda Item # 11 - Recommendations for the Release of Groundfish Reserve in the Gulf of Alaska

Phil Chitwood (NMFS) reported to the AP on the release of reserves, and pointed out that a timely release of reserves is necessary to allow the foreign nations to gear up for the fishery. Kim White, NOAA legal counsel told the AP it could make a decision to release part of the reserved amount and then the remaining as soon as possible, and such action would be within the intent of the law. Following extended discussion, the AP adopted the following motion:

"That the AP inform the Council of a decision to release the following reserve amount of the listed species:

Pollock	50%	of remaining reserve amount	
Flounder	90%		"
Sablefish	50%		"
Pacific Cod	0		"
POP	0		"
Atka Mackerel	90%		"
Squid	90%		"
Rockfish	0		"
Others	90%		"

The release is to be made on July 2 and the sablefish reserve release is to be made only west of 140 degrees West longitude."

Agenda Item #14 - Extend Provisions of GOA FMP Thru 1980

On the subject of extending the provisions of the Gulf of Alaska FMP through 1980, the AP wants to study this further before making a recommendation to the Council. Concerning the portion of the subject dealing with joint venture restrictions, Phil Chitwood reported that the individual Councils are to tailor the necessary restrictions as it fits the fishery involved. Chairman Specking asked if permits could be used to restrict activities and Chitwood indicated that the Secretary of Commerce would prefer that the permit not be the instrument of regulation; restrictions are better made a part of the FMP than a condition of permit granting.

Sara Hemphill addressed the AP to thank its members for being supportive of the work of the Alaska Bottomfish Development Corporation.

A motion by member Alverson requests the AP to have the Council support such action as is necessary to allow the Halibut Commission (IPHC) to stop the issuance of new halibut permits and begin the formation of limited entry concepts for the halibut industry through the Council's limited entry study committee. The motion was adopted.

A second motion by Alverson was adopted: "The AP requests that the Council, through the SSC and AP begin the examination of alternative fishing methods for sablefish, including but not limited to exclusive longlining, exclusive trawling or some combination of the two methods."

Agenda Item # 17 - Extend Provisions of Tanner Crab FMP Thru 1980

Concerning the extension of the provisions of the Tanner Crab FMP through 1980, the AP will study the plan and suggestions concerning the OY-DAH for comment at a later time.

Agenda Item #18 - Disapproval of ban on Hand Trolling

On the subject of hand trolling and the SOC's determination to exercise the severability clause in the plan and implement it without the hand troll ban for the FCZ, the AP will determine the feasibility of developing a system of limited entry on hand trolling in the FCZ and reaffirms its decision of May, 1979, to ban hand trolling in the FCZ.

ADVISORY PANEL

EXPANDED AGENDA

June 27, 1979
Homer, Alaska

Agenda items 9-15-16 and 19 will be discussed with the SSC at 9 a.m. in the Elks Hall.

Priority AP topics to be considered during the AP meeting are:

#10 - REDUCTION OF DAH FOR 1979 IN THE GULF OF ALASKA

The April, 1979 NMFS survey of processor intent indicates that the DAH of 44,500 mt as shown in the GoA FMP is possibly twice that of a realistic DAH based on performance to date and projections until the end of the fishing year. Agenda #10 information has been developed to indicate the reduction of DAH by species-by-area and an assignment from DAH to TALFF of those amounts considered excess to the present DAH.

#11 - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RELEASE OF RESERVES IN THE GULF OF ALASKA

A release of reserves is scheduled for July 2. Information to support the release of groundfish reserves has been made. Included is the recapitulation of reserve releases since January, the amounts which remain in reserve, the expected DAH/DAP, joint venture estimates of catches through Oct. 31 and the new TALFF.

#12 - JOINT VENTURE CLOSURES IN THE GULF OF ALASKA (Possible amendment)

This agenda item is a preliminary discussion to explore the options which exist for a possible amendment to close certain areas of the Gulf of Alaska to joint venture operations. The purpose of such closures is to protect American shore-based processors from whose areas fish would be taken if joint ventures efforts were to be allowed.

#14 - EXTENSION OF GULF OF ALASKA FMP PROVISIONS THROUGH 1980

#17 - EXTENSION OF TANNER CRAB FMP PROVISIONS THROUGH 1980

Provisions of both plans which can be carried forward for the 1980 fishing year have been identified. Those which can not have similarly been identified, as have questionable portions which will require modification in the FMP proper or (1) deletion (2) insertion into Annex materials for the foundation of a "framework" FMP.

#18 - SECRETARY OF COMMERCE'S DISAPPROVAL OF HAND TROLL PORTION OF SALMON FMP

(Preliminary report from Limited Entry Workgroup discussed in joint AP-SSC meeting can be used.)

Topics 13,20,21,22,25,26 will be discussed as time permits.

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