

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members

FROM: Jim H. Branson *JHB*  
Executive Director

DATE: March 15, 1985

SUBJECT: Status of Contracts and Proposed Projects

ACTION REQUIRED

- (a) Final approval of Contract 84-1: Sea Lion Pup Census.
- (b) Final approval of Contract 84-6: Bering Sea Herring Scale Analysis - Part II.
- (c) Review of FY/85 programmatic funds.
- (d) Review of FY/86 programmatic research needs.

BACKGROUND

Current Council contracts are listed below with information on the contractor, funding amount, percent expended to date, duration, objective, and status.

Current Council Contracts

83-2: ADF&G Plan Maintenance  
(ADF&G, \$60,000, 67%, July 1, 1983 to June 30, 1985)

Objective: To support liaison between ADF&G and the Council by funding personnel travel to Council activities and providing support for such other activities as computer compilation and data analysis, etc.

Status: Work is proceeding satisfactorily; no progress reports are required.

83-4: Joint Venture Trawl Logbook Program  
(ADF&G, \$33,400, 0%, September 1, 1983 to June 30, 1985)

Objective: To provide interview coverages at three major ports (Kodiak, Akutan, and Unalaska/Dutch Harbor) to support the joint venture logbook program.

Status: Logbooks are being distributed to the fleet and retrieved as the opportunity arises. An interim report is under item E-1(a).

\*84-1: Sea Lion Pup Census Adjacent to Shelikof Strait  
(ADF&G, \$16,548, 0%, October 1, 1983 to February 28, 1985)

Objective: To provide an estimate of the total number of sea lion pups produced at the major sea lion rookeries in and adjacent to Shelikof Strait for comparison with similar counts made in 1978 and 1979.

Status: A draft final report has been given to the SSC for approval.

84-3: Origin of Chinook Salmon Incidentally Caught in Foreign Trawls  
- Part II (FRI/UW, \$40,000, 48%, July 1, 1984 to June 30, 1985)

Objective: To provide additional information on stock separation of chinooks caught incidentally to the foreign trawl fisheries.

Status: A progress report for October-December 1984, was sent to the SSC for review on January 10.

84-4: Domestic Groundfish Data Monitoring  
(ADF&G, \$145,000, 0%, March 1, 1985 to April 30, 1987)

Objective: To enhance the ability of ADFG to provide timely, high quality fisheries catch data from shore-side deliveries and offshore catcher/processors of groundfish. The information will be aggregated by ADF&G and input to PacFIN for reporting to state, federal and Council groundfish managers.

Status: Contract specifications by the Groundfish Data Workgroup have been drawn up and a contract has been submitted to ADF&G for signature.

\*84-6: Bering Sea Herring Scale Analysis - Part II  
(FRI/UW, \$62,465, 43%, April 1, 1984 to March 31, 1985)

Objective: To provide additional information on stock composition of herring stocks in the Eastern Bering Sea, North Alaska Peninsula and Aleutians using scale pattern characters.

Status: The draft final report has been given to the SSC for approval.

\*Requires Council action at this meeting.

Review of FY/85 Programmatic Funds

In December the Council forwarded to NMFS the following projects, in order of priority, for programmatic funding for FY/85:

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. <u>Halibut Management Options Workshops</u>  | \$ 90,000 |
| Conduct workshops in the major fishing ports to explain halibut management options available to the Council.                                    |           |
| 2. <u>Fishery Data Coordinator</u>  | \$ 90,000 |
| Design, implement and maintain an Alaska groundfish data reporting system responsive to Council, state and federal groundfish management needs. |           |
| 3. <u>ADF&amp;G FMP Development</u>   | \$ 60,000 |
| Provide support for ADF&G personnel to participate in Council activities.   |           |
|   | <hr/>     |
|   | \$240,000 |

On December 21 the Alaska Regional Office asked if making up the Council's administrative budget shortfall of \$80,000 had as high priority as programmatic support. We responded that the administrative shortfall and the halibut project both had high priority and because of salary overlaps, a total of \$128,000 was needed.

At the Council Chairmen's meeting in late February, NMFS indicated that, of the three requests above, only the halibut project was recommendable for funding (Tables 1-2). They concluded that the Data Base Coordinator should be funded through the NMFS Region and NWAFC, and FMP Development funds should come from the administrative budget.

NMFS also provided the budget status in Table 3 which shows that after meeting additional needs of the administrative budgets for the eight Councils, only \$97,000 is left to meet \$263,300 in programmatic research needs. Carmen Blondin then asked the Councils to decide among themselves who would get what. Council Directors conferenced and pared their requests to those amounts in the right column of Table 3. The \$48,000 for halibut derives from certain salaries and benefits being covered in the administrative budget augmentation. Even with this significant paring, the Councils still need \$94,000 which NMFS says is absolutely not available.

Our Council still needs \$48,000 to cover the following in the halibut project [item E-1(b)]:

Travel	\$19,200
Contractual	20,000 (computer programming etc.)
Supplies and Equipment	<u>8,800</u>
	\$48,000

The Council should discuss how rapidly this project should proceed and whether the required funds should be allocated from the administrative budget if programmatic funding is not forthcoming.

### Review of FY/86 Programmatic Funds

The outlook for programmatic funds in FY/86 is not good. The Councils will probably be funded somewhere around the \$7.5 million level and most, if not all, will go toward the administrative budgets. For FY/81-FY/84 the North Pacific Council annually received on average \$214,000 for programmatic research. As noted above, we went in for \$240,000 for FY/85. It is NMFS's view that only the halibut project is recommendable for programmatic funds and even then, has little chance of support in the current budget environment.

Thus far we have one programmatic request submitted by Will Barber of University of Alaska, Fairbanks, to study the utility of using otoliths to identify Bering Sea herring stocks. The SSC is reviewing this proposal now.

Council policy is to initially review project proposals in March, give final approval in May, and submit the funding request to NMFS in July. The Council needs to decide whether proposals should be submitted and, if so, which ones. The SSC will review our research needs and have suggestions.

Table 1. Recommendable Programmatic Projects for FY 1985  
(in order of NMFS priority)

<u>Council</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Original Request</u>	<u>Revised Request</u>
Mid-Atlantic	Surf clam/ocean quahog FMP monitoring	\$ 24,000	\$15,000
Gulf of Mexico	Reef fish survival	15,000	15,000
Western Pacific	Bottomfish size and composition of catch	20,000	20,000
New England	New Hampshire Lobster gauge increase impact study	46,264	40,000
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South Atlantic	Swordfish data collection	25,000	
North Pacific	Halibut package	90,000	
Caribbean	Reeffish bio stat data	28,000	
South Atlantic	Billfish Rec. survey	<u>15,000</u>	<u>          </u>
		\$263,264	\$90,000

Table 2. Programmatic Requests Submitted but not Recommended

North Pacific	Data Base Coordination	\$90,000*
	Writing and Developing FMPs	60,000**
New England	Computer Processing and Analysis	25,000
	Short Run Supply Model for New England Groundfish Fishery	31,982
	Lobster Marketing Survey	36,555
Gulf	Charter Boat Survey	30,000
Western Pacific	Two projects withdrawn (mobility considerations- Bottomfish/shellfish & cultural influences study)- substituties not yet received	?

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\*F/AKR - F/NWC should fulfill this function.

\*\*Approvable as Administrative need - doesn't meet programmatic criteria.

Table 3. Council Funding - FY 1985 (\$1,000)

<u>Council</u>	<u>Administrative Budget</u>		<u>Recommended Programmatic Requests</u>	
	<u>Presently Funded*</u>	<u>Additional Requests</u>	<u>Original</u>	<u>Revised</u>
New England	759.8	66.9	46.3	40
Mid-Atlantic	583.7	51.8	24.0	15
South Atlantic	684.0	20.0	40.0	25
Caribbean	475.7	10.0	28.0	28
Gulf of Mexico	702.0	49.0	15.0	15
Pacific	690.4	61.1	--	
Western Pacific	551.6	--	20.0	20
North Pacific	<u>982.2</u>	<u>80.0</u>	<u>90.0</u>	<u>48</u>
	5,429.4	338.8	263.3	191
				<u>-97</u>
				94 still needed

Total Funds Available                         \$7,126

Committed:

Administrative	5,430
Liaison: States	850
Commissions	110
Programmatic	300
<b>Total Committed</b>	<u>\$6,690</u>

Balance Available	\$ 436
Administrative needs	339
Remainder Available	<u>\$ 97</u>

(to be applied above to programmatic needs)

\*Liaison funds not included.

JOINT VENTURE TRAWL LOGBOOK INTERVIEW

AND

COLLECTION PROGRAM

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

March 12, 1985

BY

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This report covers progress to date by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) groundfish staff relative to the contract (83-4) with the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC). This contract is designed to provide for distribution and recovery of trawl logbooks to the foreign joint venture groundfish fleets in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and Bering Sea. Contract specifications stipulate that all logbooks collected be edited for accuracy and completeness, and that they be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seattle for data entry. This contract was originally signed in October of 1983, with work commencing in January of 1984 in spite of funding not being received until the following May. An interim progress report dated April 30, 1984 was submitted to the NPFMC outlining accomplishments to that time, as well as a discussion of problems encountered and a general evaluation of the JV logbook program. This report covers the activities, accomplishments and problems of JV logbook data collection since that April 30 report. Discussed also are various problems and techniques found through actual experience to be necessary considerations in performing the required work.

Certain shifts were made in the personnel responsible for this contract beginning in September 1984. In addition, the long awaited seasonal biologist position was added to the ADF&G staff in Dutch Harbor. These changes, especially implementation of the position in Dutch Harbor, should enhance the overall groundfish data collection effort including JV logbooks. Since that time, docks have been patrolled in both the morning and afternoon; and the skippers of any groundfish vessels not recently contacted are interviewed. At this time, state or JV logbooks are distributed and/or collected, depending on the vessel's activity. A length frequency sample of the catch and/or age structures may also be obtained at this time if the vessel is delivering to a domestic processing facility. In addition to the logbook and/or catch sampling data obtained during these vessel contacts, this interview process provides an excellent opportunity for keeping abreast of fleet locations and movements, the vessels involved in the different fisheries, any problems being encountered, as well to discuss any pending or potential regulatory changes. These contacts also provide an excellent opportunity to explain the various groundfish management programs to the skippers and how the data they provide are

utilized to monitor stock status. This intensified vessel contact effort has resulted not only in more vessels participating in the logbook program but in renewed interest and enthusiasm by skippers who had previously participated to only limited degrees.

Between April 1984 when the first progress report was submitted and September 1984, only one logbook was distributed and none were collected. This was due in part to the inability to contact JV vessels as they went through Kodiak on their way to and from the fishing grounds and the fact that no bottomfish personnel were in Dutch Harbor. Since September 1, 1984, however, 50 joint venture logbooks have been distributed in Kodiak and Dutch Harbor. In addition, joint venture logbooks containing records of approximately 5,577 tows have been collected in Kodiak and Dutch Harbor from 16 different vessels. These logbooks have been edited and submitted to NMFS in Seattle for data entry. An additional 32 joint venture vessels were contacted during this period who either already had logbooks and/or had sent their data directly to NMFS in Seattle.

Cooperation of the individual joint venture vessels, as well as the U.S. companies they fish for, has generally been excellent. Only one fisherman contacted has flatly refused to cooperate with the program, while most have been interested if not enthusiastic. A request voiced by several vessels is distribution of a summary of JV logbook results by major geographic areas such as the Pacific cod and pollock fisheries in Shelikof Straits and Bering Sea. Although summaries of this nature pose certain confidentiality problems, they could potentially yield considerable benefits in terms of continued fleet cooperation and support if approached properly. Confidentiality of fishing locations in the Pacific cod fishery, at this time at least, does not appear to be a real problem. Confidentiality could be a significant problem, however, in certain more area specific species such as the Pacific Ocean perch (POP).

Basically, the JV logbook data collection program is considered a success. The quality of data received, while initially marginal in several cases, has improved as skippers gain experience in filling out the forms. A problem in this regard, however, is the several skippers who will not fill out the JV

logbooks provided but are quite willing to allow ADF&G personnel to copy data from their personal logbooks. While data obtained in this manner are of excellent quality, obtaining it in this way is quite time consuming. When several vessels are in port simultaneously and need to be contacted, the time effectiveness of copying these data is questionable. More than one skipper on the other hand, has apologized for the condition of his log and subsequent logbooks showed considerable improvement. It appears that once vessel skippers see that the fisheries management agencies are seriously interested in obtaining these logbook data and understand how they are used in monitoring stock condition, cooperation improves significantly. Cooperation, therefore, requires continual vessel contact, even with those skippers who are initially unreceptive.

Two problems of note have been encountered with this work to date. The first is the inherent problems involved in contacting the JV vessels who are seldom in port and operate on unpredictable schedules. Solutions to this problem are twofold: first, maintain regular contact with the U.S. joint venture companies so as to know when their fleets can be expected in port and intensify dock coverage at that time; and second, maintain regular dock coverage as described above. The second problem is with the construction of the JV logbooks themselves. In many cases logbook entries did not come through the carbonless carbon sheets onto the removable pages making interpretation of recovered data difficult. Problems of this nature, while seemingly minor, make the job of editing and preparation of data for entry difficult and time consuming. The problems mentioned here with the logbooks could probably be solved with an improved grade of carbonless carbon and an improved backup sheet in the logbooks to prevent entries from going through more than one page.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING REQUEST  
HALIBUT MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The North Pacific halibut fishery in U.S. waters has experienced a phenomenal increase in fleet size and decrease in season length in the past few years. In 1974 the fishery lasted 121 days during which time 2,073 vessels landed 13.9 million pounds. In 1984, approximately 4,400 vessels landed 25 million pounds of halibut in less than one week.

Numerous problems arise out of the prosecution of a fishery in such a short time and intense manner as in the halibut fishery. Processing capacity is overtaxed when all the product is delivered at the same time. Less than 5% of the product is sold as fresh and fish is often stored on the processor's floor under ice for over a week before it is frozen. The quality of the product naturally suffers from handling the fish in this manner.

Despite the almost continual increase in total allowable catches since 1977, the average gross earnings in constant dollars in the halibut fishery have actually decreased during this period. In 1977 average gross earnings per vessel in the U.S. halibut fishery were \$7,620.79. In 1983, average gross earnings in 1977 dollars were \$5,994.07. Although the total allowable catch during the period 1977-83 had increased over 150%.

Because of these problems in the fishery, several fishermen's organizations began calling for implementation of limited entry in the fishery in the late 1970s. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council began an investigation into the feasibility of such an action in 1979 by commissioning a study of halibut limited entry and formation of a limited entry workgroup.

The Council intended to implement a moratorium on new entry into the fishery in 1980; however, there was some question regarding the Council's legal authority to take such an action since the fishery was managed by the International Pacific Halibut Commission pursuant to a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. The Council was advised to postpone any regulatory action until legislation was enacted implementing the 1979 Halibut Protocol between the U.S. and Canada. This legislation, enacted under the title North Pacific Halibut Act of 1982, gave the Council authority to implement regulations (even limited entry regulations) in the halibut fishery as long as those actions did not conflict with International Pacific Halibut Commission regulations.

The North Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 did not become effective until after the start of the 1982 halibut season. For this reason, the first formal Council attempt to implement regulations in the halibut fishery was a proposed moratorium on new entry in 1983. This measure proved quite controversial with many who had only been in the fishery a short time and those who were thinking about entering the fishery. Some of these individuals viewed the moratorium as the first step in removing all newcomers and small-boat fishermen from the fishery. Even though this was an erroneous view, the moratorium was disapproved partially as a result of the opposition from the industry.

Since the summer of 1983, the Council has been studying its various management options in the fishery. There has been a continuing controversy fueled by gross misconceptions regarding the Council's actions and intentions for the fishery. Local government resolutions have been passed condemning the Council

for acting to remove at least 50% of the current participants from the fishery and to transfer the fishery as a private resource to a few wealthy fishermen through some form of limited entry.

The Council has not selected any management scheme, either limited entry or non-limited entry, for implementation in the fishery but is continuing to study the options available. This process would be a great deal more efficient if the industry was not mistrustful of the Council's intentions. The Council believes that the atmosphere of suspicion could be dispelled through a series of workshops held in Alaska and Washington State to explain the options the Council is considering and to solicit input from the fishing communities on the best means to resolve the problems in the halibut fishery.

### Objectives

Because of problems discussed above, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council is proposing to conduct public workshops in Anchorage, Homer, Kodiak, Sitka and Petersburg, Alaska, and Seattle, Washington, during a six-month period to explain the management options available to the Council for implementation in the halibut fishery.

### Statement of Work

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will:

- (1) Prepare material - handouts and visual aids - explaining the regulatory options for the North Pacific halibut fishery;
- (2) Present this material at a series of public workshops;
- (3) Analyze input from these workshops and prepare a report for use in Council deliberations on management actions in the halibut fishery.

### Procedures

Council staff will prepare briefing material outlining the various management options available to the Council for implementation in the halibut fishery. This briefing material will include a presentation, using visual aids such as slides and overhead projections, of the recent history of the Pacific halibut fishery and the events which have prompted the Council to take an active role in management of the Pacific halibut fishery. The presentation will also include material on the expected economic effects of the different management options the Council is considering (including status quo management, license limitation, and a quota share system with auction or grandfather rights).

The Council believes that the best way for members of the public to fully understand the implications of each management option is to have a "hands-on" approach. A microcomputer will be programmed with information on the halibut fishery (total quota, numbers of vessels by size class, costs of operations), and an interactive program will be used to allow the individual fishermen to input their own costs of operation, history of halibut participation and participation in other fisheries (such as salmon and crab). This interactive program would then compute and display the effects on the individual (in terms of expected future profits) of each of the several management options. This would be similar to existing work done by the Extension Service and others on

financial feasibility analysis for fishing vessels, using budget simulators. The purpose would be to illustrate possible business decisions and their effects on the individual fisherman under each of the Council options for halibut management.

The Council intends to conduct two-day workshops in Anchorage, Homer, Kodiak, Sitka and Petersburg, Alaska, and Seattle, Washington, to fully brief the fishing industry on the various halibut management options. The first half of these workshops will be devoted to briefings on the options and how each one may affect the various segments of the local halibut fleet. The second half of each workshop will be devoted to roundtable discussions with members of the local fishing industry to solicit their suggestions for possible solutions to the problems in the halibut fishery.

After the public workshops are held, the Council staff will analyze all the comments submitted in reaction to the various management options and prepare a report containing this information for submission to the Council. This report is expected to provide all Council members with a comprehensive overview of the halibut fleet's responses to the various management proposals.

#### Program Costs

North Pacific Fishery Management Council and staff will conduct a series of public workshops over a six-month period in Anchorage, Homer, Kodiak, Sitka and Petersburg, Alaska, and Seattle, Washington. Primary expenses include six man-months of staff time, travel and lodging.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Personnel - Special Advisor & Support	
Salary + Benefits (6 months)	\$ 42,000
Travel	19,200
Contractual	20,000
Supplies & Equipment	<u>8,800</u>
TOTAL	\$90,000