

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke
Executive Director



ESTIMATED TIME
2 Hours

DATE: January 22, 1996

SUBJECT: Groundfish Amendments

ACTION REQUIRED

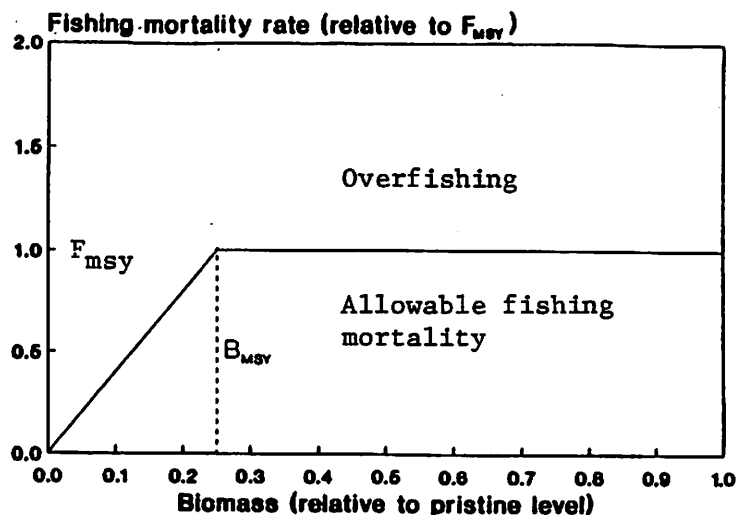
- (a) Initial Review of plan amendment to revise the overfishing definition for BSAI and GOA groundfish.

BACKGROUND

In 1990, the 602 Guidelines mandated that overfishing be defined in FMPs as follows:

"Overfishing is a level or rate of fishing mortality that jeopardizes the long-term capacity of a stock or stock complex to produce maximum sustainable yield on a continuing basis", and that "Each FMP must specify, to the maximum extent possible, an objective and measurable definition of overfishing for each stock or stock complex covered by that FMP, and provide an analysis of how the definition was determined and how it relates to reproductive potential."

The Council added overfishing definitions to the GOA (Amendment 21) and BSAI (Amendment 16) fishery management plans in 1990, defining a maximum fishing mortality rate that declines at low stock sizes. Specifically, for any stock or stock complex under management, the maximum allowable mortality rate is set at the level corresponding to maximum sustainable yield (F_{msy}) for all biomass levels in excess of the level corresponding to maximum sustainable yield (B_{msy}). For lower biomass levels, the maximum allowable fishing mortality rate varies linearly with biomass, starting from a value of zero at the origin and increasing to a value of F_{msy} at B_{msy} , consistent with other applicable laws. These relationships are shown in the figure below.



If data are insufficient to calculate F_{msy} or B_{msy} , the maximum allowable fishing mortality rate will be set equal to the following (in order of preference):

- (1) the value that results in the biomass-per-recruit ratio (measured in terms of spawning biomass) falling to 30% of its pristine value;
- (2) the value that results in the biomass-per-recruit ratio (measured in terms of exploitable biomass) falling to 30% of its pristine value; or
- (3) the natural mortality rate (M).

If data are insufficient to estimate any of the above, the TAC shall not exceed the average catch taken since 1977.

The current overfishing definitions do not necessarily provide a buffer between acceptable biological catch (ABC) and the overfishing level (OFL). The Plan Teams and SSC have expressed concern about harvesting stocks to the OFL level as an acceptable target. In January 1995, the Council adopted for analysis a Scientific and Statistical Committee proposal (Item D-1(a)(1)) to evaluate the OFL and amend the plans as necessary. Grant Thompson, NMFS-AFSC will be on hand to present his analysis.

AGENDA D-1(a)(1)
JANUARY 1996

GROUND FISH FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT PROPOSAL
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Name of Proposer: Scientific and Statistical Committee
Address:
Telephone:

Date: 12/7/94

Fishery Management Plan: GOA/BSAI Groundfish

Brief Statement of Proposal:

Reconsider overfishing definition to provide buffer between ABC and OFL and to respond to "Scientific Review of Definitions of Overfishing" prepared for NMFS.

Objectives of Proposal: (What is the problem?)

Problems have occurred in the groundfish specification process when ABC and OFL turn out to be the same. Conceptually, ABC should be a "target" and OFL should be a "threshold" level to be avoided, so that there should be a buffer between them.

Need and Justification for Council Action: (Why can't the problem be resolved through other channels?)

The OFL process is specified in the plans. The Teams sometimes adjust the ABC downward to provide a buffer. The SSC does not agree with this approach and the desirability of the downward adjustment has not been evaluated. The "Scientific Review" claims that the NPFMC overfishing definition is somewhat ambiguous and may not be conservative in some cases. It recommends an evaluation mechanism based on recruitment falling to 1/2 the pristine level that may not be appropriate. The Council should be proactive in addressing overfishing.

Foreseeable Impacts of Proposal: (Who wins, who loses?)

Evaluation of the OFL process is needed to provide credibility for the desired conservatism of the NPFMC TAC's, ABC's, and OFL's. Overfishing is one of the most important issues in fisheries management at the current time, and the Council needs the assurance that its management avoids overfishing.

Are There Alternative Solutions? If so, what are they and why do you consider your proposal the best way of solving the problem?

NO

Supportive Data & Other Information: What data are available and where can they be found?


"Scientific Review of Definitions of Overfishing in U.S. Fishery Management Plans" by A. Rosenberg, et al. (1994).

Signature:

Thomas J. Z. II, Chair, SSC

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke 
Executive Director

DATE: January 2, 1996

SUBJECT: Pollock Trimester Seasonal Allocations in Gulf of Alaska

ESTIMATED TIME 8 Hours (For All D-1 Items)
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ACTION REQUIRED

Final review of Amendment 45 to the Gulf of Alaska groundfish FMP to set pollock trimester seasonal apportionments.

BACKGROUND

At its December 1995 meeting, the Council reviewed Draft Amendment 45 to the Gulf of Alaska groundfish FMP to combine the third and fourth quarter pollock allowances in the Western/Central (W/C) Regulatory Area of the GOA. Under this proposal, the first and second quarter allowances would remain unchanged and would be released on January 1 and June 1. However, the third and fourth quarter allowances would be combined into one release of 50 percent of the TAC. The initial review draft included options of September 15 and October 1. The Council added September 1 as an option for a third release date. The analysis was revised to include this additional alternative and was released for public review on December 14, 1995.

This proposal has several management objectives: First, to reduce bycatch of "other" salmon which has been excessively high in recent years during the third quarter (July 1) opening; second, to eliminate conflicts with salmon processing which peaks for GOA processors in July; third, to reduce the potential for harvest overruns and other difficulties associated with managing extremely short fourth quarter openings; and finally, to limit effort by reducing the incentive for Bering Sea-based vessels to crossover and participate in GOA pollock openings.

The FMP is very specific with respect to how seasonal allowances of pollock TAC in the W/C Regulatory Area must be made. Amendment 19 to the FMP, implemented as a measure to prevent roe stripping, requires that the W/C Regulatory Area pollock TAC be divided into four equal quarterly allowances. Consequently, an FMP amendment is required to delete the quarterly allowance system, and provide the Council with greater flexibility in setting seasonal allowances of pollock TAC. New plan language would allow, but not compel, the Council to divide the pollock TAC by seasons. A regulatory amendment then would follow to implement the current proposal to allocate the W/C GOA pollock TAC in trimesters.

The Council further recommended that the analysis include a provision that whenever the GOA pollock TAC is 80,000 mt or higher, the GOA pollock seasonal allocations would return to a quarterly system. This proposal will be analyzed as a separate regulatory amendment because it will not be needed this year.

The following alternatives are included in the analysis.

Alternative 1: No Action. The pollock TAC in the W/C Regulatory Area would continue to be released in four equal quarterly allowances as required by the FMP.

Alternative 2: Amend the FMP to framework greater flexibility in setting seasonal allowances of pollock TAC, and combine by regulatory amendment the third and fourth quarterly allowances into a single release of 50 percent of the TAC. The first and second quarterly allowances of 25 percent of the pollock TAC in the W/C Regulatory Area would remain unchanged.


Option 1: Establish a September 1 opening date for the combined third and fourth quarter allowance. Analysis of this option was requested by the Council at the December 1995 meeting.

Option 2: Establish a September 15 opening date for the combined third and fourth quarter allowance. This option reflects the proposal submitted to the Council by representatives of the GOA pollock fishery.

Option 3: Establish an October 1 opening date for the combined third and fourth quarter allowance. This option was included at the request of an organization of catcher vessels that participate in both BSAI and GOA pollock fisheries.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke
Executive Director 

DATE: January 3, 1996

SUBJECT: Final Review of Halibut Grid-Sorting Regulatory Amendment

ESTIMATED TIME (8 Hours) (for all D-1 Items)
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ACTION REQUIRED

Final review of a regulatory amendment for grid-sorting of Pacific halibut in the non-pelagic trawl groundfish fisheries.

BACKGROUND

At its September 1995 meeting, the Council approved the draft analysis for requiring grid-sorting of Pacific halibut in the non-pelagic trawl groundfish fisheries, after adding another suboption: a proposed incentive wherein any halibut released overboard in the first 20 minutes after the net comes on board would not count against bycatch mortality limits. The draft analysis previously had been revised to (1) address SSC comments from January 1995 on the effects of grid sorting on: bias and variability of catch and bycatch estimates; the viability of the VIP program; and calculation of vessel and across vessel halibut bycatch; and (2) incorporate potential improvements in halibut mortality rates based on comments from an ad hoc halibut grid-sorting working group. The revised analysis was released to the public on December 14, 1995.

The proposed action was originally suggested by industry to evaluate methods of increasing survival of halibut taken as bycatch in bottom trawls. In October 1993, staff of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and NMFS-AFSC and representatives of the Highliners Association conducted an experiment aboard the F/T *Northern Glacier* which sorted halibut from the groundfish catch more rapidly than currently practiced. The experiment intended to target on Pacific cod, but ended up targeting pollock because Pacific cod was not available in large schools as had been expected based on the commercial fishery in the spring. In June 1994, IPHC staff evaluated changes in halibut discard mortality rates and presented the results and implications of their study. The Council recommended preparation of a regulatory amendment for grid-sorting of Pacific halibut in the non-pelagic trawl groundfish fisheries.

This regulatory amendment would require the deck crew on all factory trawlers and catcher boats that dump groundfish directly to a stern tank before sorting to use a grid over the entrance to the hold and sort out as much halibut bycatch as practicable for immediate return to the sea. The analysis also provides information to help the Council select the species for which grid-sorting would be required.

The following alternatives are considered in the analysis:

Alternative 1. Status quo. Normal sorting in the factory below deck. Typically, a single, short conveyer leads from the hold to the exit chute.

Alternative 2. Require that the deck crew on all factory trawlers and catcher boats that dump groundfish directly to a stern tank before sorting use a grid over the entrance to the hold and sort out as much halibut bycatch as practicable for immediate return to the sea. Specific fisheries may be selected. Openings in the grid must be at least 9 inches by 11 inches.

Option 1: Require vessels to grid-sort all halibut, but observers would not collect data for grid-sorted halibut.

Suboption 1: Use special projects to establish discard mortality rates.

Suboption 2: Establish a window for the first 20 minutes after the net comes on board during which bycatch would not count against bycatch mortality limits.

Option 2: Require vessels to grid-sort only the hauls that the observer does not intend to sample.

Option 3: Require vessels to grid-sort all hauls, and observers count, measure, and determine viability on a subsample of grid sorted halibut.

Suboption 1: Vessel deck crews would be required to sort halibut for the entire catch, regardless of time to sort.

Suboption 2: Vessel deck crews would be required to sort halibut only for the first 20 minutes of dumping, and could not sort after 20 minutes; the observer would be on deck for all sorting.

Suboption 3: Vessel deck crews would be required to grid-sort halibut on deck only for the first 20 minutes of dumping, and additional sorting would be voluntary; the observer would be on deck for all sorting.

Enforcement Committee comments are attached as Item D-1(b)(1).

Enforcement Committee Report

The Enforcement Committee discussed grid-sorting of halibut on November 28-29, 1994. At their April 18, 1995 meeting, the committee confirmed their earlier comments regarding the grid-sorting proposal, recognizing that grid welding requirements were unlikely. An excerpt of their November minutes follows:

- (1) The Enforcement committee concluded that a requirement for grid-sorting of halibut by all trawlers could be enforced more effectively than requirements for specific fisheries.
- (2) A safety issue concerning a possible requirement to weld the grid in place was raised. The inability to offload by smaller boats with the grid in place was discussed. The committee indicated that compliance concerns would be minimized if the grid was welded in place. However, vessel safety might be compromised because some small vessels could become unstable if large catches cannot be dumped below the deck quickly; offloading would be made very difficult if sorting grids were welded in place.
- (3) The committee was greatly concerned with the obvious conflict grid-sorting has with the Vessel Incentive Program, which requires standardized observer sampling of the entire catch. Pre-sorting of halibut precludes sampling protocols required for the VIP.
- (4) The program may foster additional noncompliance with VIP, and increase handling mortality, if a captain believes that the grid will sort out unwanted halibut bycatch. The committee acknowledged that the grid facilitates pre-sorting of the catch by slowing its transfer below deck, but does not sort the catch directly.
- (5) Fishery-specific grid-sorting requirements may be difficult to enforce because target fishery can not be identified by catch composition until the end of the fishing week.
- (6) A grid sorting requirement will increase sampling and compliance monitoring responsibilities for observers. To accommodate this, some current sampling activities would have to be reduced, or additional observers would be required. The requirement could also increase observer exposure to safety hazards and sampling interference. Delays in initiation of factory processing would occur because observers would have to complete on-deck sampling before beginning data collection in the factory. The committee agreed that the Council should address these concerns in evaluating appropriate action on grid sorting.
- (7) Since NMFS still supports VIP, the Council may need to balance the benefits of that program with the potential benefits of decreased halibut bycatch mortality and increased groundfish catches associated with the grid sorting requirement. The Council may wish to encourage continued research into alternative methods of reducing halibut discard mortality.

COMMISSIONERS:

RICHARD J. BEAMISH
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RALPH G. HOARD
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RICHMOND, B.C.

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY A CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

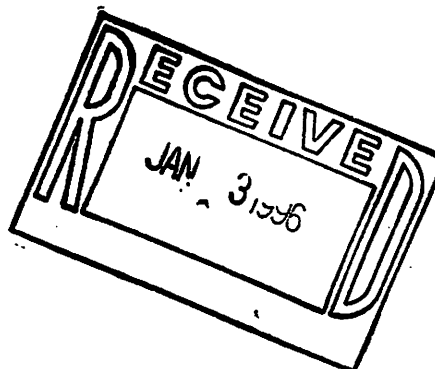
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January 3, 1996

Dr. Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director
NPFMC
605 W 4th Avenue, Room 306
Anchorage AK 99501



Dear Clarence:

The International Pacific Halibut Commission reviewed with Commission staff the proposal to require a grid to sort and discard Pacific halibut from the deck of factory trawlers. The Commissioners developed the following policy and directed me to provide it on their behalf. While the Commission strongly supports the concept of more rapidly returning halibut to the sea to reduce discard mortality rates, it does not believe that the proposal should be approved at this time.

We agree with the analysis that discard mortality rates of halibut would be lower with grid sorting, and that some savings of bycatch could occur. However, the magnitude of the projected savings are not sufficient to overcome problems identified in the analysis. Approving grid sorting would degrade bycatch estimates and would conflict with the Vessel Incentive Program. Enforcement would be more difficult if grid sorting were limited to selected fisheries. Grid sorting would offer an opportunity to presort other species in advance of observer sampling, and make compliance problematic during unobserved hauls.

The Commission supports individual vessel incentives to reduce bycatch mortality. It may be possible to combine some aspects of grid sorting with incentive programs to overcome the problems identified. We recommend that the Council hold onto the grid sorting concept as a possible enhancement to future bycatch reduction programs, but recommend against implementing it as a stand alone requirement.

Sincerely,

Donald A. McCaughran
Director

cc. Commissioners

AMENDMENT 45 - TEXT TO AMEND THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GROUND FISH OF THE GULF OF ALASKA

In Chapter 4.0, section entitled "4.2.1 Setting harvest levels", step 3 is amended to read as follows:

- (3) The annual TAC established for pollock in the combined Western and Central Regulatory Areas shall be divided into seasonal allowances. Seasonal allowances of the pollock TAC will be established by regulation. The Council will consider the criteria described in Section 4.3.3 when recommending changes in seasonal allowances. Shortfalls or overages in one seasonal allowance shall be proportionately added to, or subtracted from, subsequent seasonal allowances.

4.3.3 Fishing Seasons

Fishing seasons are defined as periods when harvesting groundfish is permitted. Fishing seasons will normally be within a calendar year, if possible, for statistical purposes, but could span two calendar years if necessary. Changes to fishing seasons can be recommended by the Council at any time. In consultation with the Council, the Secretary will establish all fishing seasons by regulations that implement the FMP to accomplish the goals and objectives of the FMP, the Magnuson Act, and other applicable law. Season openings will remain in effect unless amended by regulations implementing the FMP.

The Council will consider the following criteria when recommending regulatory amendments:

- (1) Biological: spawning periods, migration, and other biological factors;
- (2) Bycatch: biological and allocative effects of season changes;
- (3) Exvessel and wholesale prices: effects of season changes on prices;
- (4) Product quality: producing the highest quality product to the consumer;
- (5) Safety: potential adverse effects on people, vessels, fishing time, and equipment;
- (6) Cost: effects on operating costs incurred by the industry as a result of season changes;
- (7) Other fisheries: possible demands on the same harvesting, processing, and transportation systems needed in the groundfish fishery;
- (8) Coordinated season timing: the need to spread out fishing effort over the year, minimize gear conflicts, and allow participation by all elements of the groundfish fleet;
- (9) Enforcement and management costs: potential benefits of seasons changes relative to agency resources available to enforce and manage new seasons; and
- (10) Allocation: potential allocation effects among users and indirect effects on coastal communities.

4.3.4 Generic

4.3.4.1 Observers

As in the need for reporting requirements, the Council and NOAA Fisheries must have the best available biological and socioeconomic information with which to carry out their responsibilities for conserving and managing groundfish resources. To augment this information, the Secretary, in consultation with the Council, will require each U.S. fishing vessel that catches or receives groundfish from the EEZ, and each shoreside processor that receives fish caught in the EEZ, to accommodate an observer certified by NMFS. Such accommodation may be exempt from this requirement under an Observer Plan prepared by the Council according to regulations implementing this FMP. The purpose of the at-sea observer requirement is to verify catches, including those discarded at sea, and collect biological information of types required in the Observer Plan, which will include information on marine mammals and birds. Observers associated with the Marine Mammal Protection Act Observer Program will be considered to be observers for purposes of the Observer Plan if they meet requirements of observers for this Program.

On August 15, 1994, the Secretary approved the North Pacific Fisheries Research Plan, which was developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to promote management, conservation, and scientific understanding of groundfish, halibut, and crab resources off Alaska. The existing Observer Plan will remain in place during the first year of the Research Plan only.

JANI, BLAKE BURN
Curry

February 2, 1996

Mr. Richard Lauber, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Anchorage, Alaska

Re: Agenda D-1(c)
Pollock Trimester Seasonal Allocations in Gulf of Alaska

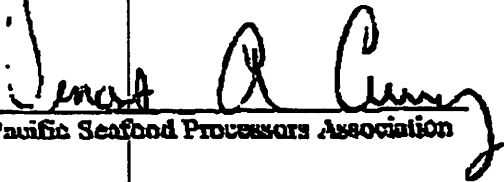
The undersigned represent the vast majority of Alaska's shorebased pollock processing industry operating in both the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea. We are in uniform agreement regarding the details outlined in this recommendation. Collectively, we respectfully request the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to approve our proposed pollock trimester seasonal allocation system which is intended to promote effective and fair conservation based management of GOA pollock stocks. Our recommendation is fundamentally based upon achieving NMFS implementation of the trimester system during the 1996 season, with sequential trimester release dates of January 1, June 1, for areas 630, 620, and 610. The third trimester quota should be released September 1 in areas 630 and 620, and October 1 for 610. Implementation of the October 1 third trimester release date for area 610 is specifically recommended as a substitute for the proposed TAC based "trigger mechanism" returning the system to quarterly apportionments. We request that the Council initiate an analysis an area-based TAC trigger mechanism which would require a reconsideration of opening dates in the future.

Implementation of this plan will achieve several conservation and appropriate fishery management purposes. The recommended trimester system will reduce bycatch of "other" salmon which has historically occurred during the third quarter. Spreading use of pollock quota throughout the year will prevent over fishing in management areas 630, 620 and 610, eliminate any threat of an excessive concentrated harvest level of roe bearing female pollock and reduce roe stripping concerns. The proposed trimester allocation will also eliminate conflicts with salmon processing which peaks for GOA processors during July. Under the system we are requesting, the trimester system in the Gulf ensures no one operating in the Gulf of Alaska or the Bering Sea will have an excessive share of available pollock resources. An October 1 release date for the Western Gulf (area 610) should increase pollock catcher boat fishing days and expand market opportunities for pollock harvested during the third trimester in the Gulf of Alaska.

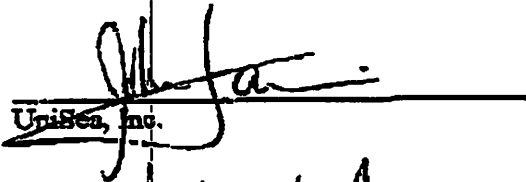
We have been advised by NMFS the GOA FMP allows for both the trimester system, different release dates in separate management areas, and that our recommendations are within the scope of the EA RIR analysis. We believe the proposed system will be in the long term best interests of the North Pacific pollock industry.

Letter NPFMC
Agenda D-1(c)
2/2/96
Page 2


Thank you for considering our request.


Pacific Seafood Processors Association



Alaska Groundfish Data Bank


UniSea, Inc.


Westward Seafoods, Inc.


Victor Seafoods


United Catcher Boats


Midwater Trawlers

D-1c

PENINSULA MARKETING ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 248

SAND POINT, ALASKA 99661

PH(907)383-3600 FAX(907)383-5618

January 26, 1996



Richard B. Lauber, Chairman
Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

Dear Mr. Lauber and Mr. Pautzke,

The Peninsula Marketing Association would like to go on record in support of the proposal for Pollock trimester allocations for the Gulf of Alaska. We are also supportive of the proposed delay of the Bering Sea Pollock B season to September 1st. These changes would prevent a large increase in vessels with very large harvest capabilities from participating in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska fisheries simultaneously. This increase would cause a substantial reduction in fishing time and is an economic burden to the coastal communities of our area.

A delay in the Bering Sea Pollock B season until September 1st would also be beneficial to our pink salmon fishermen. The record return of pinks last season were left largely unharvested. This season change would allow the factory trawlers to process salmon longer, thus providing alternative markets with the capability for product diversity.


Our organization is also in support of the halibut "buydown" proposal that allows small boat fishermen to purchase shares from larger vessel size categories. We also support the proposed increase in the block sweep-up levels for halibut and sablefish.

Sincerely,

Melanie Gundersen
President

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke 
Executive Director

DATE: January 2, 1996

SUBJECT: Delay of the BSAI Pollock 'B' Season

ESTIMATED TIME 8 Hours (for all D-1 items)
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ACTION REQUIRED

Provide direction to staff on alternatives to be examined between now and April.

BACKGROUND

Beginning in 1993 the opening of the BSAI pollock 'B' season was delayed from June 1 until August 15 for two primary reasons: (1) to allow the opportunity for catcher/processors to participate in salmon processing during the summer months, and (2) to move the pollock 'B' season to a period when product yields and flesh quality are higher than in the summer months. A proposal was received in this past groundfish amendment cycle to further delay the opening date until September 1, to more fully realize both increased value from the pollock fishery and increased salmon processing and marketing opportunities. Item D-1(d)(1) contains that proposal and letters in support. In September, the Council directed staff to include a 'B' season delay in their current tasking priorities.

In addition to industry input, the Council's original decision to delay the season until August 15 was based on an analysis prepared under contract by the University of Alaska's Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER). That analysis included a cost/benefit assessment and an economic impact (distributional) assessment, both based on a fairly extensive modeling exercise. Intrinsic to that modeling exercise was an examination of potential bycatch implications for both non-target and PSC species. Other factors examined in the analysis included:

- seasonal weather considerations and effects,
- impacts to the pollock resource itself,
- potential impacts to marine mammals,
- yield, price, and market effects,
- timing of salmon runs,
- potential increases in salmon processing, and
- impacts to existing processors and communities.

The analysis explicitly examined three alternatives to the status quo, June 1 opening date: July 1, August 1, and September 1, and also covered any intermediate dates which might be chosen by the Council (August 15 was the

date finally chosen). However, the results of that analysis rapidly lose their applicability to any opening dates later than September 1. If the date being considered by the Council at this time is limited to September 1 (only a two-week change from the current status quo), we intend to use the existing analysis as the basis for the Council's decision in April 1996. The following issues will need to be re-examined to supplement the existing, baseline analysis:

Marine Mammal Interactions

The original analysis discussed possible marine mammal interactions, though no formal Section 7 consultation was performed. Of all of the alternatives examined, the September 1 opening date was found to be the most likely to impact marine mammals, particularly Steller sea lions. Because of this finding in the original analysis, and due to the current status of sea lions, this iteration of the analysis will likely require a formal Section 7 consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.

Salmon Bycatch Implications

Since the time of the original analysis the Council has adopted and implemented bycatch measures (caps and closure areas) for both chum and chinook salmon. Though the original analysis examined PSC and other bycatch implications of a 'B' season delay, the models concentrated on halibut, crab, and herring, species for which caps existed. This time we would examine recent spatial/temporal trends in salmon bycatch information collected by the Observer Program for 1993, 1994, and possibly 1995.

In addition to the two specific issues identified above, we may also endeavor to identify the number of processors which have to date taken advantage of the current August 15 opening, and the amount and types of salmon processing opportunities developed. A final Council decision in April may allow for this measure, if approved, to be in place for 1996. For SSC members, the original analysis and your previous minutes on this issue are included in your notebooks.

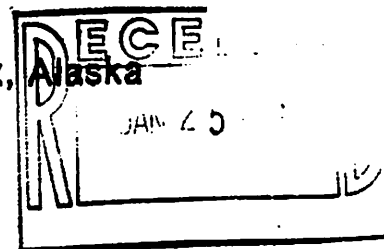
AGENDA D-1(d)
JANUARY 1996
Supplemental

907-486-3910
Box 991



Kodiak, Alaska
99615

FAX 486-6292



January 25, 1996

Richard B. Lauber, Chairman
Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

Dear Mr. Lauber and Mr. Pautzke,

Alaska Dragger Association has voted to support the September 1 opening for Pollock in the Gulf of Alaska.

We also support moving the Pollock B season in the Bering Sea to September 1.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Al Burch
Executive Director

AB:pp

Harvesting Alaskan Shrimp and Whitefish

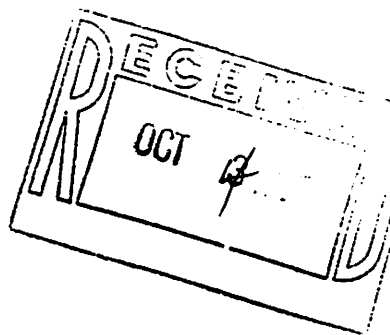
Chignik Seiners Association

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Chignik AK, 99564
Phone (907) 749 2286
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614 Irving st
Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone (360) 647-5540
Fax (360) 733-4744

September 28, 1995

Dr. Clarence Pautzke
Executive Director
North Pacific Management Council
605 West 4th Ave.
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, AK 99510
Phone (907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817



Dear Dr. Pautzke:

It is my understanding that one of the issues before the council concerns whether to move the "B" Season forward several weeks to begin on about September 1 on an annual basis. I support this change based on the following assumptions and reasoning.

Moving the B season to September 1 would significantly increase the opportunity for the factory/trawler fleet to become involved in the salmon industry. If the B season had begun on September 1 in 1995, then many millions of Alaska pink salmon could have been harvested that instead went unharvested because of limited processing capacity and marketing ability by the traditional processors. In Chignik alone, which has the smallest pink resource on the Alaska Peninsula, nearly two million pink Salmon went unharvested this year. In times of such challenge in the industry it is shame to leave salmon resource unharvested. As president of Chignik Seiners Association I am interested in anything that could improve the business climate for Chignik salmon fishermen and increasing the chances that all the available salmon resource is harvested is a very basic and important way to improve our situation here.

The factory/trawler fleet includes some of the most aggressive, well capitalized, and innovative Seafood processors in the business. The salmon industry could well expect to benefit by the increased availability and involvement of the factory/trawler fleet in the salmon business.

I am assuming that given the opportunity to become involved in the Salmon industry that a significant number of factory/ trawlers will want to become involved in the salmon industry. While I have not personally been investigating this avenue of improving our salmon business here in Chignik, those that are working on this are coming to me with names of those who are. I am further assuming that for those involved in the B season who elect not to be involved in the salmon industry, that moving the B season back to September 1 will not be a problem for them.

Assuming that there is no biological reason the B season could not be postponed to September 1 and accepting the above reasoning and assumptions that it could be expected to increase salmon utilization and could generally improve the salmon business while having no impact on the pollock fishery, it seems reasonable to me to support this idea of moving the opening of B season to September 1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles McCallum". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

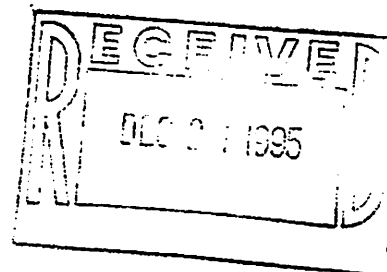
Charles McCallum
President, CSA



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

211 Fourth Street, Suite 112
Juneau, Alaska 99801
907/586-2820
Fax: 907/463-2545

December 18, 1995



Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

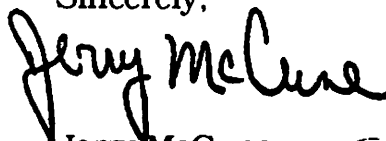

Dear Mr. Pautzke:

At a recent United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) Board of Directors Meeting, we discussed a proposal to delay the Pollock B season in the Bering Sea. We understand this issue is on the Council's agenda for the January meeting.

UFA is supportive of means to improve the market and product development for the Alaskan salmon industry. We recognize that factory trawlers may play a significant role in helping to alleviate market related problems if allowed to process salmon by delaying the season to at least September 1. At the same time, however, we are aware that by-catch related issues may be raised by delaying the B season.

We welcome the Council's revisiting the B season start up date and look forward to reviewing the alternatives for action that are developed by the Council in January.

Sincerely,


Jerry McCune
UFA President 

cc: UFA Board of Directors

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition • Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Trollers Association • Area K Seiners Association
Bristol Bay Driftnetters Association • Concerned Area "M" Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association
Cordova District Fishermen United • Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association • Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association
North Pacific Fisheries Association • Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • Peninsula Marketing Association
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation • Purse Seine Vessel Owners Association
Seafood Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Seiners Association • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • United Cook Inlet Drift Association



Cordova District Fishermen United

P.O. Box 939
Cordova, Alaska 99574
(907) 424-3447 FAX (907) 424-3430

December 21, 1995

Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Dear Mr. Pautzke:

We want to present our position to the Council concerning the pollock B season opening date in the Bering Sea. We understand this issue is on the Council's agenda for the January meeting.

We believe market and product diversification opportunities that factory trawlers could offer, if allowed to process salmon for an additional two weeks, could be very beneficial to the salmon industry. We are currently plagued by high production that has heavily taxed traditional processors and flooded traditional markets.

CDFU encourages the Council to review the issue and we look forward to participating in the decision making process.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number above. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED

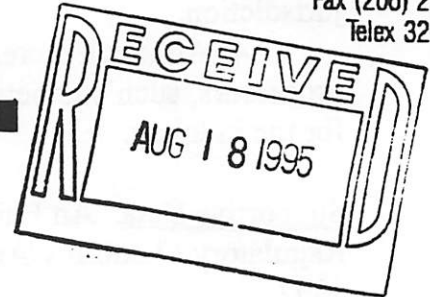
Dorne Hawxhurst, Executive Director

GLACIER FISH COMPANY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

1200 Westlake Avenue North
AGC Building, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98109



Phone (206) 298-1200
Fax (206) 298-4750
Telex 320221



18 August 1995

Clarence Pautske, Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Fax: 907-271-2817

Re: Groundfish Fishery Management Plan Amendment Proposal

Dear Mr. Pautske:

Please accept this as a proposal to amend the FMP for 1996, submitted pursuant to the Council's Call For Groundfish Proposals dated June 28, 1995.

Brief Statement of Proposal. Delay pollock "B" Season to September 1, or, in the alternative, delay offshore pollock "B" Season to September 1.

Objectives of Proposal. Allow for salmon processing opportunities; additional markets for salmon fishermen; development of new products from salmon and new markets for such products. Increase value of pollock harvest - recovery rates and flesh quality are better in the fall.

Need for Council Action. The Council sets openings for the pollock seasons.

Foreseeable Impacts.

1) Catcher-processors and their crews would increase the opportunity to participate in salmon processing, including large pink runs that occur later in the summer, and to apply their processing technology to develop new forms of frozen products from salmon.

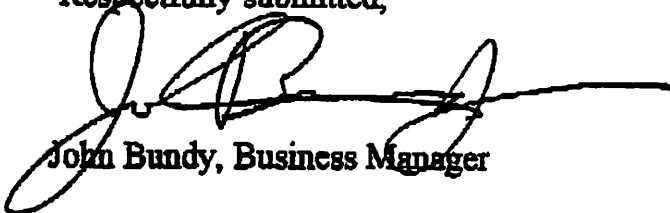
2) Local salmon fishermen, who continue to suffer from a general decline in ex-vessel prices for their salmon, would have new markets and increased competition among processors.

3) The State of Alaska would benefit from a better economic environment for local fishermen, processor workers and additional processors doing business within its jurisdiction. ...

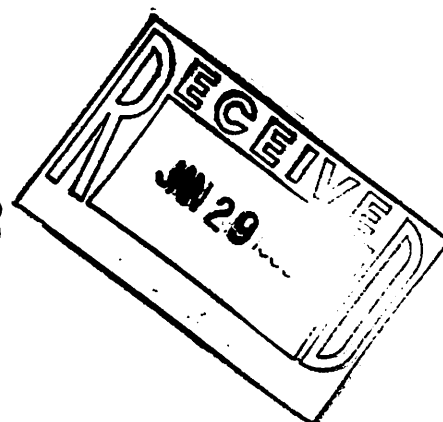
4) Although increased competition may be viewed as detrimental by some salmon processors, such competition and development of new products will be generally positive for the industry.

Supportive Data. An Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis was done for the Council on this issue in November 1992.

Respectfully submitted,



John Bundy, Business Manager



Petersburg Office:
P.O.Box 805
Petersburg, AK 99833
Phone: (907) 772-4446
Fax: Same

January 29, 1996

Mr. Richard Lauber, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

SENT VIA FAX

Dear Mr. Lauber,

It is our understanding that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will be considering a proposal to delay the start of the pollock B season when they convene this week in Anchorage. I would like to take this opportunity to convey our position on this proposal.

The Southeast Alaska Seiners Association represents over 400 purse seine boat owners, operators, and crew members that commercially harvest salmon in the waters of Southeast Alaska. Our fleet harvests pink and chum salmon. We are very concerned with the growing amount of salmon that is being produced worldwide and Alaska's shrinking market share. We recognize the importance of product diversity for marketing our salmon and the need for adequate processing ability to insure good product quality. By delaying the pollock B season until early September, factory processing vessels could be utilized in our area for salmon processing. We believe this fleet could be of great benefit by providing a wider variety of products to the consumer which may help us to recover our market share.

We realize that concerns regarding marine mammal interactions and salmon bycatch have been voiced when a delay in the pollock B season was considered several years ago. We believe these issues are very important to consider and are unclear whether they still pose an obstacle. We believe that the proposal needs to be analyzed and urge you to task the staff accordingly. In the event that the analysis shows no significant increases in marine mammal interactions and salmon bycatch or other highly negative biological implications, we would endorse the delay of the pollock B season until early September.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kris Norosz".

Kris Norosz
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke
Executive Director



ESTIMATED TIME
8 Hours
(For all D-1 Items)

DATE: January 3, 1996

SUBJECT: Salmon Foundation Report

ACTION REQUIRED

Status report on Salmon Foundation.

BACKGROUND

The Salmon Research Foundation, a non-profit corporation, uses income generated from salmon bycatch assessment payments to develop a salmon bycatch avoidance program for the BSAI trawl fisheries. The Foundation also funds research on stock origin of salmon taken as bycatch. The Council received its last report from the Foundation in April 1995. The Foundation will provide an update of its activities at this meeting.

Bycatch of salmon in the Bering Sea was much lower in 1995 than in recent years. As of December 14, 1995, bycatch in BSAI trawl fisheries totaled 23,901 chinook salmon and 21,722 "other" (chum) salmon. An additional 14,662 chinook salmon and 69,955 "other" salmon were taken in GOA trawl fisheries. Salmon bycatch in the past few years is shown in the table below.

Two plan amendments were implemented recently to control bycatch of salmon in the Bering Sea. Amendment 35 authorized closure of a special area to trawling from August 1 through August 31 to control chum salmon bycatch, beginning in August 1995. The closure continues through October 14 in years when a 42,000 non-chinook (chum) salmon bycatch limit is reached. Amendment 21b authorizes closure of three areas to trawling through April 15 once a 48,000 chinook salmon bycatch limit is reached. This amendment became effective on January 1, 1996.

Salmon bycatch in trawl fisheries by area, 1991-1995.

YEAR	BSAI		GOA	
	<u>chinook</u>	<u>other</u>	<u>chinook</u>	<u>other</u>
1991	48,821	31,987	37,592	13,288
1992	41,903	38,919	15,694	10,126
1993	45,964	240,776	19,193	85,834
1994	44,437	96,402	13,990	40,482
1995	23,901	21,722	14,662	69,955

Salmon Research Foundation
Report to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
February 2, 1996

The Foundation was formed in connection with the salmon bycatch policy that the Council adopted as an alternative to caps and closures, to perform certain quasi-management activities such as identifying bycatch hot-spots and vessels with unusually high bycatch rates. The Council has since adopted chum and chinook salmon savings areas. In light of these Council actions, the Foundation board has concluded that the organization should not be advocating bycatch management alternatives or attempting to perform a co-management role in connection with salmon bycatch.

In connection with that decision, the Foundation Board has recommended that the Foundation's Articles of Incorporation be amended to give the organization an arm's length relationship with the Council. When the Foundation was formed, the individuals serving on the Council were named as its "members," which gave them the right to select its directors and approve its budget. The Member's Consent we circulated to Council members would change the structure of the organization to one under which the Foundation Board would elect directors and exercise full control over the organization. The amendment would also bring the Foundation into compliance with the NOAA General Counsel request that there not be a direct relationship between Foundation membership and Council member status. We will be following up with the Council members who have not yet signed the Consent.

Foundation Board members believe areas such as genetic stock identification of salmon taken as bycatch, peer review of NMFS sampling and estimation methodologies and development of salmon bycatch reduction techniques deserve further work. The Foundation Board is in the process of determining whether the Foundation is the appropriate organization to pursue research in those areas and whether adequate funds will be available to do so. (Because salmon assessments were being paid on the condition that no cap and closure regime be imposed, the Foundation Board no longer considers them an available source of funding.)

Since we last reported to the Council, the Foundation has used a portion of the funds donated by the catcher boats that deliver to the UniSea plant in Dutch Harbor to augment the chum bycatch genetic stock identification research being performed by the NMFS lab at Auke Bay. The Foundation covered the cost of two additional observers for the 1995 pollock "B" season, and arranged to have those observers collect and forward to Auke Bay approximately 1500 samples for electrophoretic analysis. These samples represented approximately 10% of the chums taken as bycatch. Dick Wilmot, the lead researcher on this project, informs us that the number of samples is extraordinarily large relative to the number of chum taken as bycatch, and that the lab expects to be able to make a strong statement concerning its stock constituency. As the Council may be aware, Auke Bay analysis of the 1994 "B" season bycatch

showed that approximately half of the chums taken during that fishery were non-Alaskan in origin. The Foundation has enough funds remaining from chum stock i.d. contribution to augment sampling during another two to three seasons, and the Board is currently considering how to best program use of those funds.