

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

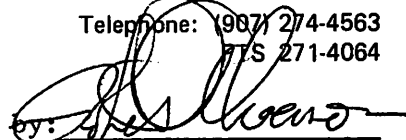
James O. Campbell, Chairman  
Jim H. Branson, Executive Director

411 West 4th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510



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

Telephone: (907) 274-4563  
TTS 271-4064

Certified by: 

Date: 4-15-85

## MINUTES

### ADVISORY PANEL

March 26-27, 1985  
Anchorage, Alaska

The Advisory Panel of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in the Aft Deck of the Captain Cook Hotel on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 26-27. Members present were:

Robert Alverson  
Terry Baker  
Alvin Burch  
Joseph Chimegalrea  
Barry Collier  
Larry Cotter  
Gregory Favretto  
Barry Fisher  
Ronald Hegge  
Oliver Holm  
Robert Hunter

Pete Isleib  
Nancy Munro  
Daniel O'Hara  
Alvin Osterback  
Don Rawlinson  
Julie Settle  
Cameron Sharick  
Walter Smith  
Richard White  
Dave Woodruff  
John Woodruff

#### B-1 Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director's report was presented by Jim Branson.

Other Action Items. The AP nominated Barry Fisher and Alvin Burch to the Permit Review Committee. Final appointments to other teams will be made at the May meeting.

#### C-1 Election of Officers

The AP elected Robert D. Alverson as temporary Chairman for the March meeting. Due to a significant number of new appointees on the AP, the members requested that election of a permanent AP chairman and vice-chairman be put off until the May meeting.

#### D-1/2 Crab Management

No action was required by the AP under these agenda items. Informational reports are to be presented at the joint Council/AP meeting.

Amendment 14 Package

1. Establish a gear and/or area restriction in the sablefish fishery. The AP recommends this alternative of the amendment topic be sent out for public review. However, concern was expressed that this section should include such options as pot-only, trawl-only and gillnet-only for certain areas. The alternative suggested may be too narrow to fully address the management issues on sablefish.
2. Establish rockfish areas and quotas. The AP recommended this alternative be sent out for public review but it was not unanimously adopted as it was felt inadequate stock analysis is available for public review.

Regarding Alternative 2 the AP is concerned that little or no documentation of resource decline or isolated resource depletion is actually taking place - and if it is, to what degree. The AP requested that a status of stock analysis be available for this section on other rockfish.

3. Implement new OYs for pollock, POP, rockfish, Atka mackerel and other species. The AP recommends this alternative go out for public review, however, it was not unanimous as it was felt there was inadequate accompanying data on the status of stocks.
4. Implement reporting requirements for catcher/processors. The AP recommends this section go out for public review. However, for any reporting to be effective, the Council, ADF&G and/or NMFS needs to be the lead agency for the vessels to report to and act as a point of dissemination of catch reports to other agencies. The AP requested this be done at their March 1984 meeting.

The AP would also point out, with respect to observers, three fundamental questions that need to be looked at and should include:

- (a) who will finance the observer;
  - (b) how is liability handled; and
  - (c) is the observer going to be a biologist or an enforcement agent.
5. Establish measures to control the Pacific halibut catch. The AP recommended that this section go out for public review with one abstention recorded.
  6. Implement NMFS Habitat Policy. A report was given by Daphne White regarding NMFS habitat policies. The AP recommends this be released for public review with one abstention recorded.

A general comment of criticism on socioeconomic analysis seems to continually stop short of economic impact to auxiliary industries. Economic analyses only are done to include the harvestors level and fail to mention shoreside labor impacts. The AP requests that in the future the economic impact studies be broadened to include socioeconomic shoreside impacts.

7. The AP recommends that the Council add to the possible changes to the Gulf of Alaska management plan reconsideration of an opening date for sablefish.

The following motion was adopted.

The Council is advised to reconsider the option for a change in the season opening date for sablefish being part of the amendment package that will be released in April.

The decision was voted 10 to 11 with one abstention to add this as a topic to the amendment package.

Arguments in support of this motion are as follows:

(a) Allocative: Larger boats are much more able to fish in January through March. This gives them (unfairly) more fishing time and precludes smaller vessels (under 50 ft.) from fishing in some areas due to weather. It's not too difficult to see that even the Central Gulf areas may be closed by March or April by 1986 if more large boats get into the fishery. This will keep the small local fleets out of the fishery entirely until 1987 when a new amendment would otherwise be able to address the problem. It wasn't but last year that these boats took a significant portion of the quota and in a short (two-year) period they could be shut out entirely.

(b) Safety: Because smaller vessels rely on sablefish as part of their livelihood and since they see putting early pressure on the fishery, they will begin to take more chances. Rougher weather months will be fished by smaller boats and it's only a matter of time before there is a serious accident. A late opening would mitigate the effects of rough weather and provide a fair start between different sized vessels.

(c) Biological: Catching fish that are in the process of spawning can't be good for the biomass of sablefish. It just makes sense that there will be more small fish if the spawners are allowed to complete their process before being fished upon. The analogy may not be a good one but we wouldn't consider a hunting season on does when they are carrying young. It would be the quickest way to reduce the size of the population of deer.

(d) Economical viability of coastal towns: Larger boats will tend to fish, process and deliver sablefish without landing in Alaskan ports. This is fish that was processed in coastal towns in 1984 and the revenue received is vital to those towns. A January 1st opening gives the larger boats an opportunity to catch a larger percentage of the OY and this has a definite negative impact on the economies of these coastal towns (reference Harold Thompson's testimony before the Council in February 1985).

(e) Product quality: Since fish are in a spawning condition, they have less fat content, thinner bellies and tend to be softer. While we are currently in a market condition that allows poorer quality product to be accepted (seller's market), this condition will not continue indefinitely.

(f) Conservation of stocks: A later opening would limit the amount of gear hauled in rough weather. This should reduce the amount of parted gear, lost gear, and small fish destroyed as they are hauled in by all gear. Even if time is not available to adequately substantiate market or conservation arguments, the argument of a fair start for larger vessels and smaller vessels due to weather conditions should not be hard to substantiate.

Arguments against this motion are as follows:

Those opposed felt that there was no compelling consensus achieved.

(a) Quality: Current markets don't reflect quality problems. Prices, demand and acceptance continue to rise. No biological substantiation was presented by staff to support a quality problem.

(b) Procedural question: Staff expressed strong doubt that adequate time exists to prepare the required documents to be submitted for public review. No date was given nor was a copy of Commissioner Collinsworth's letter available at the time the vote was taken.

(c) Underlying issues: Large boat/small boat question. An attempt to legislatively reduce or eliminate the built-in efficiencies of some larger vessels, capable of effectively competing under adverse operating conditions is blatantly evident. Regulatory measures that enhance inefficiencies are counter-productive. Allocation issues are being argued on other grounds.

The matter of coastal communities was touched upon with respect to the use of pots in harvesting sablefish and processing aboard. These are American stocks, from American waters, harvested and processed on American vessels, utilizing American crews.

#### Single Species OY Problem.

The AP feels the current management plan for the GOA is not sufficiently flexible and is becoming inadequate in the face of the rapid expansion of the domestic industry. The AP recommends that the Council overhaul the GOA FMP concerning the OY inflexibility problems.

The AP had the following possible solution for the 1985 season: When OY levels have been achieved or nearly achieved, the remainder of the 1985 season for these species would treat them as a prohibited species.

#### Clarify the Council's actions in February on Sablefish.

Western and Central Gulf. The AP recommends for the 1985 sablefish season the following emergency order for the Western and Central areas of the Gulf of Alaska:

Allow an all gear fishery up to 90% of the respective OY amounts and establish trip limits on all gear types of 500 lbs. round weight per vessel per week for the remaining 10% of the OY. This was supported 14 to 8.

Southeast Alaska and East Yakutat. Establish a maximum trip limit of 500/lbs. per vessel, per week up to remaining OY. It was pointed out the entire OY in the area east of 140°W. longitude may not have been taken or at least the upper end of the OY range. Most of the longline rockfish fishery in this area is conducted in less than 60 fathoms where little incidental catch of sablefish will take place.

#### D-4 Bering Sea Groundfish Plan

##### Amendment 10 Package

- A. Raise the upper end of the OY range. The AP recommends the Council eliminate section A from the Amendment 10 package to the Bering Sea FMP. There is inadequate data to support an increase in the upper limit of the OY in the Bering Sea.
- B. Reduce the incidental catch of salmon in joint venture fisheries. The AP recommends this section be sent out for public review. However, the second paragraph should be clarified such that it does not purport that the chum taken are solely from Western Alaska. Tag recovery indicate many of these fish come from Puget Sound. It was also suggested under Alternative 3 that the recent industry group on prohibited species in the Pot Sanctuary and their conclusions should be referenced.
- C. Reduce the incidental catch of fully-utilized domestic species by foreign trawlers. The AP recommends an Alternative 4 that would establish a zero TALFF for all species in INPFC Area 1 or the Aleutian area except for pollock. The rationale for a zero TALFF would be for the rapid expansion of the domestic fishery. With this additional alternative the AP recommends this section be sent out for public review.
- D. Require domestic catcher/processors to submit periodic catch reports. The AP has the same comments here as under the Gulf of Alaska sections.  
  
The AP recommends this section be sent out for public review. However, for any reporting to be effective to the Council, ADF&G and/or NMFS needs to be the lead agency for the vessels to report to and act as a point of dissemination of catch reports to other agencies. The AP requested this be done at their March 1984 meeting.
- E. Reduce the groundfish complex reserves. The AP felt there was no need for this proposal to be sent out for public review. There was no reason to change the existing situation.
- F. Implement NMFS Habitat Policy. The AP recommends the NMFS Habitat Policy be sent out for public comment.