

Executive Director's Report

Update on CCED meeting

On January 25th and 26th myself, Stephanie Madsen, and John Bundy attended the interim Council Chair and Executive Director (CCED) meeting with NOAA Fisheries leadership in Washington, D.C. We discussed a number of issues including national VMS policies and related AIS (Automated Information Systems) requirements; national observer program issues; NS1 guidelines, recreational data collection; NMFS and Council budget issues; and, MSA reauthorization. The full agenda is attached for your information as Item B-1(a). Our Enforcement Committee will also be getting a report on AIS implementation, and may have some recommendations for the Council on that issue, as well as VMS, to consider during our staff tasking discussion.

Much of the discussion centered around budget issues and MSA reauthorization. We discussed the current draft bill from the Senate Commerce Committee, including a comparison of that bill with the Administration bill. We discussed the provisions in the Commerce bill related to requirements for annual catch limits, noting some of the difficulties associated with the current language, particularly the provisions for reductions of subsequent year's catch limits when TAC for a fishery or sector is exceeded. We also discussed some of the aspects of the Administration bill which are not reflected in the Commerce bill, such as authority for the types of fee programs we are currently discussing relative to our observer program development. However, no new consensus positions were taken at this CCED meeting.

It is anticipated that some of these issues will be further addressed in a House bill that is expected to surface sometime this month. At some point later in the spring these two bills may go to conference, but it appears unlikely that actual adoption of a final bill by Congress will occur before this fall.

Right Whale educational campaign

Item B-1(b) is a letter from Dr. Hogarth to Mr. Dave Benton and the Marine Conservation Alliance, recognizing and congratulating the industry on its efforts to inform the fishing fleet and the public about right whales, and the need to protect them. This educational campaign is cited by Dr. Hogarth as a prime example of collaboration by the agency and the industry to proactively address a critical management issue.

Northwest Arctic Borough CDQ program request

Item B-1(c) is a letter from the Northwest Arctic Borough requesting Council consideration of inclusion of additional communities into the western Alaska CDQ program, including Shishmaref, Deering, Buckland, Kotzebue, Kivalina, and Point Hope. I discussed this proposal with their director, Mr. Lee Stoops, noting that at this time the Council does not appear to have the authority to take such an action involving communities north of the Bering Straits, based on current legislative and regulatory authority. If the Council wishes to consider this request, you would need to schedule it for consideration on a future Council agenda, at which time we could bring you more specific information to inform your consideration. As noted in Mr. Stoops' letter, I believe that we would also need legislative authority to take such an action. I am looking for Council direction, either today or under our staff tasking/scheduling agenda item, on how to respond to this request.

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2006 Smartgear Competition

Item B-1(d) is a message from the World Wildlife Fund announcing their 2006 Smartgear competition. This program is intended to inspire and reward innovative ideas by fisherman, gear manufacturers, scientists, and others to reduce bycatch, with cash rewards. Full details are available on their website at www.smartgear.org.

Crab Loan Program

In December Council member Fuglvog requested an update from NMFS Financial Services Division on the status of the crab loan program. Representatives from NMFS were unable to attend this meeting, and there is little new information to provide in any case. I received the following general status report:

Under the Federal Credit Reform Act, Federal loans require annually authorized loan ceilings. No loan ceilings have been authorized for BSAI crab QS loans. Consequently, NMFS can make no BSAI crab QS loans unless Congress authorizes a loan ceiling for this purpose. Additionally, the legislation authorizing the Program requires regulations to implement the loan program. Because regulations involve a lengthy development and approval process that is approximately 12 months duration, the loan program is unlikely to start in 2006 even if the loan ceiling were authorized.

Industry Reception on Friday night

Item B-(e) is a flyer for the industry sponsored 'gala' being held Friday night at Salty's on Alki from 6 to 10 pm. Directions are included.

Reminder for hotel room guarantees

For each Council meeting we provide a list of attendees (staff, Council members, AP, and SSC) to the hotel which they use to hold rooms. You are required to call and guarantee that room, but often the hotel holds the rooms until the last minute, even if you do not call (for example you are not attending the meeting for some reason). So, the reminder is to call and guarantee your room, or if you are not attending, please call and cancel your reservation.

Council Chairs and Executive Directors Meeting Agenda
January 25-26, 2006
Hotel Washington

AGENDA B-1 (a)
FEBRUARY 2006

Wednesday, January 25, 2006

9:30 am	<i>Continental Breakfast</i>	
10:00 am	Welcome	Alan Risenhoover
10:15 am	VMS and AIS	Mark Spurrier
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding policy and process for VMS mobile transmitting units (VMUs)• Development of a process to address VMS implementation challenges• VMS and AIS - Similarities and Differences	Robert Hendrickson
12:00 pm	<i>Lunch (on your own)</i>	
1:30 pm	Overview of National and Regional Observer Programs	Lisa Desfosse
2:45 pm	Status of Stocks Report	Galen Tromble
3:00 pm	<i>Break</i>	
3:15 pm	MPA Center Update: Development of a National Framework and Supporting Science	Joe Uravitch
3:45 pm	Annual Catch Limit Analysis	Mark Holliday
4:30 pm	Other Council Issues	Alan Risenhoover
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Status of Annual Report to Congress on Council Membership• IT Security	
5:00 pm	Adjourn	
6:00 pm	Reception at the Hotel Washington	



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 1315 East-West Highway
 Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
 THE DIRECTOR

JAN ; AGENDA B-1(b)
 JANUARY 2006

JAN 24 2006

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 JAN 24 2006
 N.P.F.M.C.

Mr. Dave Benton
 Marine Conservation Alliance
 P.O. Box 20676
 Juneau, AK 99802

Dear Mr. Benton:

At the October 2005 meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, the Marine Conservation Alliance (MCA) and NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service unveiled a joint initiative to protect the North Pacific right whale, one of the world's most endangered whales. The focus of this initiative is to initiate an educational campaign to inform the fishing fleet and the public about right whales and the need to protect them. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the MCA for their support of this project. When NOAA and industry groups work together on an important project like this, it shows Congress, the environmental community, and the rest of our constituents that we are trying to get a handle on many of the difficult problems facing us in terms of managing for healthy marine ecosystems that contribute to the social and economic welfare of the United States.

I am particularly pleased with the production of a North Pacific Right Whale Mariner Advisory. The advisory provides notice to mariners and federal fishery observers that the whales are highly endangered, describes the whales, and includes a chart of all sightings since 1941. The guide includes a list of DO's and DONT's for captains navigating fishing vessels and the back of the flyer has comparative photographs of right whales, humpback whales, and gray whales to ensure proper identification. The production of five thousand North Pacific Right Whale Mariner Advisories, which will be delivered to vessels fishing off Alaska, will certainly help inform an important constituent group about the importance of protecting this species in the North Pacific. I also strongly support the production of copies that will be translated into Russian and Japanese and provided to fleets around the Pacific Rim as well. If we can provide assistance in the translation or distribution of these "foreign" flyers, please don't hesitate to ask for my help.

Sincerely,

William T. Hogarth

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.



NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH**P.O. BOX 1110****KOTZEBUE, ALASKA 99752****(907) 442-2500 / FAX (907) 442-2930**

January 23, 2006

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

ATT: Chris Oliver

605 West 4th, Suite 306

Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of the Western Alaska coastal villages of Shishmaref, Deering, Buckland, Kotzebue, Kivalina and Point Hope, we would like to request your support for inclusion of these villages in the Western Alaska CDQ Program. In making this request, we acknowledge that some changes will have to be made to the Magnuson-Stevens Act in order to give the Council the ability to take such action. We are asking our Congressional delegation to make the necessary changes at this time, while that legislation is under review.

Both Senator Stevens and Congressman Young have expressed strong support for the inclusion of Western Alaska villages that lie to the north of the current program boundary line. These villages all have a great interest in developing the existing salmon fishery as well as fisheries for crab, halibut, and other species. The two alternatives that they have mentioned include adding our villages and at least six thousand residents to the existing Norton Sound group and creating an additional CDQ group for this group of villages. Senator Stevens has specifically asked us to work with your Council in this regard.

Our request for inclusion in the CDQ program is based on the following considerations:

- 1) There is no clear rationale or explanation as to why these Western Alaska villages were omitted from the program in the first place;
- 2) These villages have the same need for fisheries development related improvements as the current member villages had at the time they entered the program;
- 3) Fisheries-related development has been successful for existing eligible communities to the extent that existing CDQ Groups have now requested that program revenue use be expanded to include non-fisheries related development; and

4) Villages for which we are requesting eligibility would add approximately 6,000 residents to the number currently served, which would clearly improve the overall economic impact of the program for Western Alaska.

We have heard from some sources that the existing CDQ groups may oppose the addition of other communities to the program on the basis that it would reduce their individual shares of program revenue. While that may be true, we believe that such opposition should and would be taken with not just a grain, but a whole truckload, of salt. The program has been a windfall to those communities served, while neighboring communities on the Western Alaska coast to the north have not benefited.

As in rural villages throughout much of northern Alaska, unemployment is extremely high. The number of jobs in most villages normally equals 20% or less of the number of working age adults in those communities. Fishing is a highly valued activity both in terms of income and cultural popularity. Fish also represents one of the only resources that can be exported from rural Alaska to produce revenue.

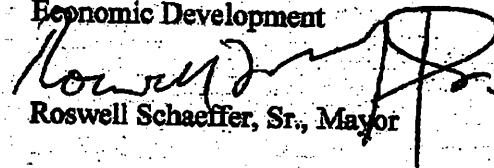
The first fishery awaiting development is the Kotzebue Sound summer Arctic Keta run. While the fishery has been reopened the last two years after a period of dormancy, there is no value-added capability at this time. We would like to develop the infrastructure needed to produce vacuum packed, skinless and boneless fillets and smoked products, and freezing capability to hold that product. We also envision production of salmon patties for sale to our entire regional school district and other school districts around the state and have already tested the product in school lunch programs with positive results.

We sincerely hope that the Council will take a great and immediate interest in advancing the benefits of the CDQ program to our villages. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Lee Stoops, Director
Economic Development



Roswell Schaeffer, Sr., Mayor

cc. Senator Ted Stevens
Senator Lisa Murkowski
Congressman Don Young
Dave Whaley, House Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries and Oceans

Subject: 2006 Smartgear Competiton- A request for your help
From: "Donadi, Rodrigo" <Rodrigo.Donadi@wwfus.org>
Date: Wed, 25 Jan 2006 15:12:13 -0500
To: <chris.oliver@noaa.gov>

Dear Dr. Oliver,

I am writing to you from World Wildlife Fund (WWF) just to make sure that you are aware of the 2006 International Smartgear Competition for the reduction bycatch. Below is a press release with some detailed information and you can also visit our website www.smartgear.org We would very much appreciate your help in forwarding information about the competition to anyone you think may be interested in knowing about or entering Smartgear.

I have attached some materials, (flyer, press release, article, etc.) in case you may be able to use them.

Kind regards,

Rodrigo Donadi

Marine Conservation Program

World Wildlife Fund
1250 24th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Tel. (202) 778-9757
Fax. (202) 293-9211
www.worldwildlife.org

<<Eng final materials zipped.zip>>

A SMART idea to reduce bycatch could net you \$25,000!

WWF and our partners launched the second International Smart Gear Competition today. Intended to inspire and reward innovative ideas to reduce bycatch, the competition invites entries from all over the world. The Competition will award a USD 25,000 grand prize and two USD 5,000 prizes. Entries for the 2006 Competition are due MARCH 15, 2006. PLEASE help us spread the word by sharing this information with anyone that you think might want to enter.

Visit www.smartgear.org for official rules, entry form and additional information. Please note that there are competition materials available in Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese, Russian and Mandarin. However, all entries must be submitted in English.

If you have questions about the competition, please contact me or Rodrigo Donadi at rodrigo.donadi@wwfus.org or 202-778-9757.

Thanks,

Kimberly S. Davis
Deputy Director
Marine Conservation Program
World Wildlife Fund
1250 24th Street NW
Washington DC 20037
202-861-8367
www.worldwildlife.org
kimberly.davis@wwfus.org

World Wildlife Fund Launches 2006 Competition for Fishing Gear that Reduce Accidental Marine Life Deaths

\$25,000 Grand Prize for "Smart Gear" that Lowers Bycatch Rate

For further information:

Sarah Janicke, 202/778-9685
or Kerry Zobor, 202/778-9509

WASHINGTON—World Wildlife Fund today announced the launch of the second WWF International Smart Gear Competition. The contest seeks innovative fishing gear that reduces marine bycatch—the accidental catch and related deaths of marine mammals, birds, sea turtles and non-target fish species in fishing gear such as nets and longlines.

"World Wildlife Fund's looking for real-world fishing solutions that allow fishermen to fish 'smarter'—better targeting their intended catch while safeguarding the dolphins, sea turtles and other marine life often caught unintentionally," said Ginette Hemley, vice president, species conservation, World Wildlife Fund. "This unique collaboration among conservationists, fishermen and scientists is designed to inspire new technologies for more sustainable fishing."

The international competition will award a \$25,000 grand prize and two \$5,000 runner-up prizes to the designs judged to be the most practical, cost-effective methods for reducing bycatch of any species. The competition is open to eligible entrants from any background—including fishermen, professional gear manufacturers, teachers, students, engineers, scientists and backyard inventors. Instructions for entry along with the competition rules are available at www.smartgear.org and completed entries must be submitted by March 15, 2006.

Conventional fishing gear does often not allow users to selectively target their catch. As a result, non-target fish species, marine mammals, birds, sea turtles and non-target fish species are caught and sometimes killed. More than 25 percent of what is caught in the course of fishing – as much as 20 million metric tons, annually—is thrown over the sides of fishing boats dead or dying. This bycatch is the leading threat to many endangered marine mammals, sea turtles and sea birds around the world.

"The WWF International Smart Gear Competition aims to stop one of the biggest threats to healthy marine ecosystems and related economic losses to fishermen," said Hemley of World Wildlife Fund. "We hope this competition harnesses the creativity and ingenuity of fishermen, scientists and the public to reduce the waste caused by inefficient gear."

Last year, WWF awarded three new practical solutions to marine bycatch: a system for keeping

longlines away from sea turtles by a former high-school biology teacher and commercial fisherman; changes to the chemical properties of fishing ropes and nets by a North American team; and modified trawls to reduce bycatch of undersized shrimp and fish by a team of Indian scientists.

The winner of the WWF International Smart Gear Competition will be decided by a diverse set of judges, including fishermen, researchers, engineers and fisheries managers from all over the world.

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Known in the United States as World Wildlife Fund and recognized worldwide by its panda logo, WWF leads international efforts to protect endangered species and their habitats and to conserve the diversity of life on Earth. Now in its fifth decade, WWF, the global conservation organization, works in more than 100 countries around the world. For more information on World Wildlife Fund, visit www.worldwildlife.org

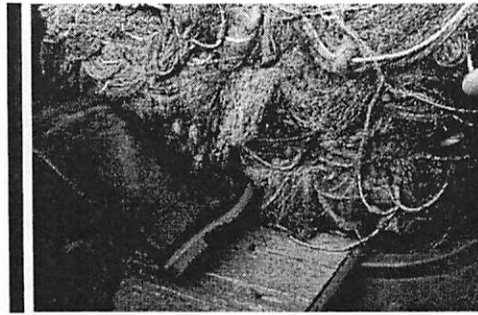
For official competition rules and to learn how to enter, please visit www.smartgear.org The competition begins on November 29, 2005, and ends on March 15, 2006. Employees, agents, current contractors, and relatives of employees of World Wildlife Fund, Inc. or any WWF National Organization are ineligible. Judges and relatives of Judges are also ineligible. The competition is void where prohibited. Odds depend on number of entries received. No purchase is necessary.

Note to editors: High resolution photographs (2005 winners in the field and head shots, bycatch, dolphins, whales, and sea turtles) and video (bycatch, dolphins, whales, sea turtles, fishing boats) are available to accompany press stories mentioning World Wildlife Fund or WWF. If used, appropriate credit must also be given to the photographer.

For more information on the WWF International Smart Gear Competition, go to www.smartgear.org

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KICK
OFF
YOUR
BOOTS
AND COME TO THE



2006 FISHING INDUSTRY GALA

IN APPRECIATION OF THE
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FRIDAY
FEBRUARY
10TH
6-10

**SALTY'S
RESTAURANT
ON ALKI**
(Skyline Ballroom)
1936 Harbor Ave. SW
Seattle, WA 98126
(206) 937-1600

HORS D' OEUVRES, HOSTED BEER & WINE, CASH BAR.

DIRECTIONS: FROM THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL (SEATAC), EXIT FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE PARKING LOT, TURN LEFT ONTO 188TH STREET AND TRAVEL EAST IN THE LEFT LANE TO I-5, FOLLOW SIGN TO GO NORTH ON I-5. TAKE EXIT 163 TO WEST SEATTLE/FREWAY BRIDGE, THEN EXIT FOR HARBOR AVE. FOLLOW HARBOR AVE TO SALTY'S ON RIGHT.

INDUSTRY SPONSORS:

- ★ Alaska Crab Coalition ★ Aleutian Spray Fisheries ★ American Seafoods ★
- ★ At-sea Processors Assn. ★ Fishing Vessel Owners' Assn. ★ Freezer Longline Coalition ★
- ★ Groundfish Forum ★ Icicle Seafoods, Inc. ★ North Pacific Crab Assn. ★ North Pacific Longline Assn. ★
- ★ North Pacific Seafoods, Inc. ★ Pacific Seafood Processors Assn. ★ Peter Pan Seafoods, Inc. ★
- ★ United Catcher Boats ★

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- ★ Alaska Boat Co. ★ Alaska Ocean Seafood ★ Alyeska Seafoods, Inc. ★ Arctic Storm, Inc. ★
 - ★ Fishing Company of Alaska ★ Glacier Fish Company ★ Golden Alaska Seafoods, LLC ★
 - ★ NorQuest Seafoods ★ Trident Seafoods Corp. ★ United States Seafoods ★
 - ★ Yardarm Knot ★

PLEASE RSVP TO ALLISON RHYDER AT
ARHYDER@ATSEA.ORG OR (206)285-5139
BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH, 2006



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
THE DIRECTOR

AGENDA B-1
FEBRUARY 2006
Supplemental

JAN 27 2006

Ms. Stephanie Madsen
Chair, North Pacific Fishery
Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2252

RECEIVED

FEB - 2 2006

Dear Ms. ~~Madsen~~ *Stephanie*:

N.P.F.M.C.

Thank you for your letter to Vice Admiral Lautenbacher regarding the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's progress on ecosystem approaches to management (EAM). The Council's leadership is a significant accomplishment in bringing together government agencies at all levels to share information and facilitate well-informed management decisions.

I am pleased about your efforts to include NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region and the Alaska Fisheries Science Center in the various committees and activities focusing on EAM initiatives. I support the recommendation to assess the Aleutian Islands as a pilot ecosystem area for the development of an Ecosystem Forum. The Aleutian Islands seems ideally suited for this initial effort, and I hope that a positive experience in this endeavor can inform similar efforts in other ecosystem areas.

I am also pleased to hear about your plans for the pilot Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) framework for the Aleutian Islands. Development of the FEP as an overarching strategic planning document to inform decisions in individual fishery plans would broaden the available information by considering aggregate fishery effects and non-fishery effects on the ecosystem.

We are very supportive of the Council's efforts and remain committed to working in partnership with the Council as it pursues its initiatives toward the EAM principles. We look forward to future reports as these projects are implemented.

Sincerely,

Bill

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.

