

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jim Brennan, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, will join us on Wednesday morning and stay through Friday. He and others are coming in from a National Fisheries Institute meeting early this week in Nevada. Mr. Brennan will have the honor of administering the oath of office to the Council members. We also invited Governor Cowper to spend some time with us, but between the oil spill and the legislature, he could not spring loose any time this week.

New Staff Members

We've hired two new staff members, top flight individuals to fill the plan coordinator and the fishery management analyst positions. Both are here with us this week though they won't formally start work on the staff until early May.

Dr. Hal Weeks will assume responsibilities for the Bering Sea and Aleutians groundfish plan. He now works for the State Department under Ed Wolfe and has seen action in the Pacific on tuna issues and the Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and then earned a Ph.D. at Cornell, graduating in 1985.

Our second new staff member is Marcus Hartley. Marcus will be helping with the analyses that support our plan amendments. Marcus holds a Bachelors from Lewis and Clark and will soon have his Masters in resource economics from Oregon State University. With his extensive background in computers and economics, he will be an ideal addition to the staff as we move further into allocative issues.

Picture Time

We'll be ready to roll on group pictures at 12:45 pm Tuesday. These annual portraits make great heirlooms, so don't miss it!

Executive Session

This week's executive session will be at noon on Wednesday. There will be presentations on litigation over the OY lid in the Bering Sea and on international matters. The Council will hold working lunches the rest of the week.

Meeting Schedule for 1990

It seems like 1989 just got started, but here we are planning for next year already. We need your approval of the following tentative dates so we can go out for hotel bids:

Week of January 15 (Martin Luther King Day is January 15; the Salmon Commission meets January 22-26 in Juneau and February 4-10 in Vancouver; IPHC meets the week of January 29).

Weeks of April 23, June 25, September 24, and December 3.

Industry Heads for the Hill

Chairman John Peterson led an industry group to Washington, D.C. last week to carry forward concerns over the NOAA Fisheries budget as indicated in item B-1(a). The industry from Alaska and the Pacific Northwest and Oregon was well represented and Chairman Peterson can fill us in on the reception they got. He will be returning to Washington for the May 2 hearing on the Act. A letter from Congressman Studds and the Council Chairmen's combined position will be discussed under agenda item C-2.

ALASKA, OREGON, AND WASHINGTON NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES COALITION

**THIS IS AN URGENT CALL TO ALL SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN,
AND THEIR STAFFS INVOLVED IN BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS
FOR NOAA FISHERIES FOR FY 1990**

We need your help NOW! The Administration has submitted a fisheries budget for FY 1990 that will effectively gut NOAA's ability to provide data collection, research, management, and enforcement so critical to sustaining the long term health of the nation's rich, renewable fisheries resources.

NOAA Fisheries' responsibilities have sky-rocketed! A robust, new commercial fish industry has developed in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska more rapidly than ever expected. Fueled by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, we've wrestled our fisheries resources away from the foreign stranglehold of just ten years ago. This exponential growth, compounded by new laws and obligations, has vastly increased the mission of NOAA Fisheries.

We're particularly concerned with fisheries off Alaska. They are at a critical threshold: we've almost fully "Americanized" the fishery, the stocks are abundant, but domestic problems — bycatch, allocations, lack of data, increasing fishing power, uncontrolled foreign fishing outside 200 miles, illegal foreign fishing inside 200 miles — are cropping up rapidly, all in dire need of attention by NOAA Fisheries, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, and YOU!

The fisheries conducted in the waters off the Pacific Northwest and Alaska currently produce over 5 billion pounds of edible seafood which roughly equals that taken by all other states combined. It is particularly important to note that fishermen operating off Alaska alone catch more than 60 percent of all fish harvested from the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The wholesale value of these fish is close to \$3.5 billion, and the extensive resources of the region support over 30,000 fishermen and 16,000 processing workers from Alaska, Washington, and Oregon. These numbers are exclusive of those employed in shipbuilding and maintenance, and various other industries supporting the fishing industry.

Nowhere else in the U.S. has such an explosive growth in fisheries occurred since the passage of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA) in 1976. The vast bottomfish resources in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and off Washington and Oregon which were largely exploited by foreign vessels at that time, are now almost totally Americanized. The Pacific Northwest and Alaska whitefish industry, which was almost non-existent in 1980, now consists of over 42 modern factory trawlers and motherships, 140 joint venture and shoreside trawlers, and 1,560 longline vessels with a capitalized value of over 1.52 billion dollars. About one-half of this investment has occurred in the last three years. These U.S. fleets alone landed over 4 billion pounds of cod, pollock, flounders, and other whitefish in 1988 worth over \$675 million.

The aggregate of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska fisheries now support an export industry worth over \$1 billion — nearly 70 percent of the nation's total fishery exports. The significant growth and contribution to the economy of the region and nations can only be continued and expanded if there are adequate funds for research and management. It is rather frustrating and ironic that the explosive growth in the fisheries of the region has been parallel with cuts in NOAA support for fisheries research, vessels, field programs, and general fisheries research. The continued development and conservation of the U.S. fisheries desperately needs your support to ensure their long-term productivity and rational and wise use of the fisheries and other living resources of the region.

The North Pacific Fisheries Coalition represents the major fishing, processing, and marketing associations of Alaska, Washington, and Oregon whose members operate off Alaska. The three California industry associations listed below also support the seven critical funding needs highlighted in this document. These groups represent the vast majority of the industry and are adamant in their request that proper funding be made available to properly manage the aquatic resources upon which their livelihood depends:

Alaska Crab Coalition
American High Seas Fisheries Assn
Alaska Groundfish Data Bank
Fishing Vessel Owners Assn
Kodiak Longline Vessel Owners Assn
North Pacific Vessel Owners Assn
Oregon Trawl Commission
United Fishermen of Alaska
Eureka Fisheries
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's
Associations

Alaska Factory Trawlers Assn
Alaska Draggers Assn
Bering Sea Fishermen's Assn
The Highliners
Midwater Trawlers Cooperative
Northwest Fisheries Assn
Pacific Seafood Processors Assn
United Fishermen's Marketing Assn
Fishermen's Marketing Assn

**WE SEEK YOUR VIGOROUS AND CRUCIAL SUPPORT FOR AN EFFECTIVE
NOAA FISHERIES BUDGET FOR FY 1990 AND PARTICULARLY FOR THE SEVEN
HIGH PRIORITY FUNDING NEEDS OUTLINED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES!**

SEVEN CRITICAL FISHERIES FUNDING NEEDS FOR FY 1990

Critical Activities	1989 Currently Available	1990 Administration Request	1990 Needs Total	1990 Additions Requested
Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska Groundfish and Crab Research	\$ 1.0 million	\$ 0	\$ 4.1 million	\$ 4.1 million
Regional Fishery Management Councils	\$ 7.23 million	\$ 3.47 million	\$ 8.7 million	\$ 5.23 million
Domestic Observers	\$ 130,000	\$ 0	\$ 7.5 million	\$ 7.5 million
Enforcement and Surveillance	\$ 7.23 million	\$ 7.37 million	\$ 9.37 million	\$ 2.0 million
High Seas Salmon Interceptions	\$ 140,000	\$ 0	\$ 170,000	\$ 170,000
Pacific Fisheries Information Network	\$ 700,000	\$ 0	\$ 3.0 million	\$ 3.0 million
West Coast Groundfish Research	\$ 940,000	\$ 0	\$ 1.45 million	\$ 1.45 million
TOTAL SEVEN CRITICAL NEEDS	\$ 17.37 million	\$ 10.84 million	\$ 34.29 million	\$ 23.45 million
These seven add-ons are \$16.92 million over funds currently available for 1989 and \$23.45 million over the FY 1990 Administration request.				

BERING SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH AND CRAB RESEARCH (\$4.1 million is needed but the Administration has requested nothing!)

Biological information on the health and abundance of the fisheries resource is critical for sound management. Data on stock structure, life history, population dynamics, ecosystem interactions all are crucial to the mosaic of information needed to truly understand the effects of fishing and to make competent management decisions.

Two million dollars is needed for research on the pollock stocks being hit extremely hard by the uncontrolled foreign fishery of more than one hundred vessels outside 200 miles in the Donut Hole of the central Bering Sea. *Over 1.3 million metric tons of pollock have been taken in that uncontrolled, unmonitored fishery alone — equivalent to the U.S. pollock fishery inside 200 miles!* What are the impacts on our stocks, on our markets, on the future of U.S. industry?

We gain the upper hand in negotiations if we have vital resource information.

Answers are needed now! Resource surveys will provide the background for sensitive negotiations with the Soviets, Japan, China, Poland and Korea on controlling that fishery.

The resources cannot be properly managed without stock assessment information. The other \$2.1 million will be used for charter and research surveys to replace foreign cooperative research. It will support triennial groundfish and crab surveys, acoustic and midwater trawl assessments, bycatch surveys, crab surveys in the US-USSR transboundary area of the Bering Sea, Eastern Gulf of Alaska groundfish surveys, particularly for sablefish, and Western and Central Gulf of Alaska pollock surveys.

REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCILS
(\$8.7 million is needed; the Administration has requested only \$3.47 million)

The Regional Fishery Management Councils have proven their worth since being established by the Magnuson Act to carry out the stewardship of the nation's marine resources. Any doubts whether the Councils would toe the mark in conserving and managing the fisheries wealth of the nation have been dispelled as they have grappled with more and more difficult and contentious issues such as bycatch, allocations among domestic fishermen, expanding fishing power, and competition for fishing grounds.

The work loads have increased tremendously as the fisheries have developed: more information to be analyzed, more meetings, public hearings, and workshops! Critical long-range planning to develop sound management systems for the fisheries! The need for more and better data collection.

The Pacific and North Pacific Fishery Management Councils now have increased responsibilities and commitments to resolve all the problems that go hand-in-hand with an ever-expanding, dynamic U.S. fishery.

Full funding for the Councils is needed to carry out their responsibilities. The fishing industry itself spends its hard earned money to participate in the Council process. This money is wasted if the process itself cannot function due to lack of funds.

DOMESTIC OBSERVER PROGRAM
(\$7.5 million is urgently needed; the Administration requested nothing!)

Data sources from the mandatory observer program on the foreign fleets are quickly drying up. Foreign joint ventures with observers in the Bering Sea ended in early March, leaving the fishery for the rest of 1989 as a totally domestic effort with very little data coming in from the fishing grounds.

The Councils need observer data to manage the fisheries! In January the North Pacific Council declared that the lack of observer data was preventing the Council from meeting its obligations under the Magnuson Act. The Council petitioned the Secretary of Commerce to prepare and implement an observer program and provide the necessary funding.

Data gathering is one of our most critical issues.

There is no way around the problem — either the data are made available or managers make uninformed decisions that may jeopardize the resource or become very conservative and establish regulatory schemes that cost the industry efficiency and their competitiveness on the world market. There can be no elegant solutions to problems such as bycatch if the Councils do not have the information with which to manage.

Recent amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act mandate observers on commercial fishing vessels. The agreement between the commercial fishing industry, the environmental community, and the administration contemplated sufficient funding to satisfy that mandate. Congress concurred in that agreement and understood that without additional funding observers will not be available and needed mammal and fishery data will not be collected. \$7.5 million is the minimum needed to facilitate a nation-wide living marine resource observer program and constitutes a new add-on funding requirement. This observer program is of high priority for the collection of vital fisheries information and at least half of this amount may be needed in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska.

ENFORCEMENT AND SURVEILLANCE

(\$9.37 million is needed; the Administration requested \$2 million less)

What is the merit in having the soundest management regime and well crafted regulations if no one is there to enforce them? Enforcement and surveillance are critical to the well being of the industry and the resource. They ensure fair play and also deter foreign fishermen from attempting to fish illegally within the U.S. 200-mile limit. It took a privately chartered aircraft to find the seven Japanese trawlers raiding our Zone last January. We need to beef up enforcement.

The additional \$2 million will buy more NOAA Fisheries enforcement agents who contribute to the welfare of America's vast fishery resources by investigating violations of the Magnuson Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and all other federal statutes that govern our fisheries.

Without adequate enforcement, all management efforts and international agreements designed to conserve marine resources are exercises in futility!

These agents provide on-the-grounds monitoring of catches, species data, biological information, and bycatches. They are heavily relied upon by the U.S. Coast Guard to provide continuity in training for their crews so that they can carry out their enforcement mission.

HIGH SEAS SALMON INTERCEPTIONS

(\$170,000 is needed but the Administration has requested nothing!)

The high seas interception of North American salmon by driftnet fleets from Taiwan, Korea and Japan is perhaps the most explosive issue now facing North Pacific fisheries. And yet the Administration has not seen fit to earmark any extra funds for collecting data on the impacts of these pirate fisheries.

Fishermen up and down the Pacific Coast have voiced great concern over these interceptions, especially with returning salmon runs being so poor last year. Their outcries have received national press coverage and the attention of environmentalists, all deploring the continued use of miles long driftnets that indiscriminately catch and kill everything from marine mammals, to fish, to birds, often breaking loose but continuing to ghost fish. They also can foul props and be a hazard to navigation.

The North Pacific Council is seeking to amend the Magnuson Act to strengthen their ability to stop the high seas interceptions. They are urging the Departments of Commerce and State to take immediate action to control the foreign fleets that are capturing salmon returning to North American streams.

The United States urgently needs to find a solution to the high seas interception problem.

The \$170,000 will support studies on the origin of the salmon in high seas catches which will in turn help to structure the settlement of this grievous problem.

PACIFIC FISHERY INFORMATION NETWORK (PACFIN)
(\$3 million is needed; the Administration requested nothing!)

Another information problem! *There can be no really effective management without adequate, timely information.* PacFIN provides such information — not only for managers, but for industry to track the catches in statistical areas and better plan their operations.

PacFIN is the first regional data network — drawing together data streaming in from the fisheries off Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California, into a central data base accessible to all.

It was no easy task building this unique data acquisition, management, and reporting system. Many years of hard effort went into it on the basis that it would help the Councils and in turn NOAA Fisheries and the States to better manage their fisheries. The Pacific States alone have contributed over \$25 million in data collection and processing for this multi-agency, cooperative effort which includes the Pacific States and Islands and NOAA.

NOAA has patchworked funding for this program at inadequate levels in the past. *It is now time to step up to the plate to support this regional data base so critical for managing the fisheries under Council and NOAA Fisheries jurisdiction.*

WEST COAST GROUND FISH RESEARCH
(\$1.45 million is needed; the Administration has requested nothing!)

The largest fishery on the West Coast off California, Oregon, and Washington is the rockfish and whiting fishery. A large industry depends on these stocks. The fishing effort could increase dramatically if trawlers, closed out of the joint venture fisheries off Alaska, head south for additional opportunities.

To maintain these groundfish stocks, funds are needed for the Tiburon Laboratory and NOAA Fisheries Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center for:

- continued research and surveys on rockfish and whiting
- annual estimates of stock abundance and recruitment
- assessment of the sablefish resource
- assessment of the Dover sole resource

These valuable resources are managed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council.