EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

New Council staff

Mr. Sam Cunningham joined the Council staff in July in the position of Fisheries Economist. As I mentioned in June, Sam has a unique background, including professional baseball and working as a policy analyst with the Fisheries Leadership and Sustainability Forum. Sam graduated from Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment, where his thesis title was "*A Policy Impact Analysis of New England Groundfish Sectors and Effort Redirection into Mid-Atlantic Fisheries*". Welcome aboard Sam!

New AP member (Council action necessary – Executive Session)

Mr. Joel Peterson, with Clipper Seafoods (resume and nomination letter attached as Item B-1(a)), has been appointed by Chairman Olson to fill the remaining term of former AP member Craig Cross, subject to Council confirmation. Mr. Peterson is attending this meeting, and subject to Council approval would also attend the December meeting. In December the Council will consider all expiring AP terms.

Visiting Korean Delegation

As part of an ongoing collaboration between NOAA and the Korean Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, there is a delegation of visitors who will be attending portions of this week's Council meeting. The individuals are: Ms. Lee Kyusun; Mr. Cho SamKwang; Mr. Ko KyoungMan, and Mr. Lim YoungHoon. They will be meeting with various agency representatives during their visit, and would also benefit from discussions with members of the fishing industry and the Council family. Welcome!

Plan Team nominations (Council action necessary – Executive Session)

The ADF&G has nominated two persons for membership to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team, to replace outgoing Plan Team members (Item B-1(b)). Mr. Mark Stichert is the recently appointed Kodiak, Chignik, and Alaska Peninsula Shellfish/Groundfish Area Manager, and Ms. Elisa Russ is currently the acting Area Management Biologist for the Central Region commercial groundfish and shellfish fisheries. Chairman Olson has approved these appointments on an interim basis, for purposes of this fall's Plan Team meetings, pending formal approval by the Council. The SSC will be reviewing their nominations and providing their recommendation to the Council this week.

Subsistence/personal use sablefish permit required

To follow up on an issue discussed at previous Council meetings under the B management reports, Item B-1(c) is a news release from ADF&G announcing the requirement for a subsistence/personal use permit to take sablefish in Southeast Alaska. This will provide additional information relative to overall mortality when assessing sablefish stock status.

NPFC/ICC meetings

In August, along with Dave Benson, I attended the 3rd Preparatory Conference for the North Pacific Fisheries Commission held in Juneau, Alaska. Much of this meeting focused on administrative details relative to the establishment and location of a Secretariat for the Commission (likely to be housed in

either Korea or Japan). The agenda for the meeting (including the agenda for the Scientific Working Group) is included for your information as Item B-1(d). This was my first experience with this relatively new RFMO, as a member of the delegation by invitation from the State Department. Mr. Benson is currently the Council's official representative to the delegation.

In September I also attended the 23rd session of the U.S-Russia Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) in Saint Petersburg, Russia. I have participated in this forum since 2001 as a member of the delegation by invitation from the State Department. Several members of the Bering Sea Fisheries Advisory Body were also in attendance, including Council member Dan Hull who was recently appointed to the BSFAB. In addition to the usual topics (such as mutual fisheries enforcement cooperation; reciprocal exchange of scientific and fisheries research information; and, Donut Hole Convention), we also exchanged information on Steller Sea Lion stocks, crab fisheries, and Chinook salmon bycatch, and discussed aspects of a number of international fisheries commissions. Additional progress was made on an IUU agreement between the U.S. and Russia, and the Russians are further considering a U.S. proposal on the regulation of fishing in international Arctic waters. The Protocol (or meeting summary) is included for your reference under Item B-1(e).

NS1 Guidelines – comment period extended to October 12 (potential Council action)

In early September I distributed to the Council a DRAFT comment letter in response to the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) for potential revisions to the NS1 guidelines. This comment letter was accompanied by more detailed comments from our SSC, which were developed over the summer by a subgroup of the SSC. The comment deadline has been extended once again, to October 12, and I have a revised DRAFT comment letter under Item B-1(f). Members of industry have indicated to me they would like to address the Council on this issue, and perhaps make suggestions relative to our comment letter, which needs to be finalized by next week.

Meetings attended/Publications

Just to recognize some of the extra effort by our outstanding staff (and Council members), I wanted to note a few events (beyond the standard staff, plan team, and committee meetings), or notable publications, which have occurred over the summer and early fall. In July Diana Evans attended, by invitation, the meeting of the NOAA Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group and provided a detailed presentation on our Council's efforts in these regards. Item B-1(g) is the written input she provided to the Working Group. Diana also assisted in a presentation for the 2012 annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society, given by Mr. Bill Tweit, at the session titled "The NOAA Habitat Blueprint: Improving Fisheries, Marine Life, and Coastal Communities through Habitat Conservation". Bill's presentation was "Experience of the North Pacific Council for Setting Criteria to Focus Use of Existing Habitat Conservation Authorities", and included a description of the structured process we recently adopted to incorporate Council consideration of habitat related activities.

In late September, myself, David Witherell, and Jane DiCosimo met with representatives from Global Trust Certification, to discuss with them the ASMI certification initiative they are currently undertaking. We specifically discussed, and provided detailed information for, the Pacific cod fisheries in the BSAI and GOA, as well as sablefish fisheries in both areas. And, last week, Jane and I met with Mariana Nahas, an officer with the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry, to discuss the evolution of our halibut fisheries IFQ program and our more recent catch share plan. They are facing similar issue with their near-shore tuna fisheries and were on a learning mission to Alaska. And, in early September, Jane attended the West Coast Fisheries Sustainability and Leadership Forum (along with some of our Council members). The topic of this Forum was OY and NS1 – I look forward to seeing the report from this meeting, particularly as we are grappling with potential revisions to the NS1 guidelines. In November, Jane will be addressing the 2012 Maritime Industry Economic Forecast Breakfast, as part

of the Pacific Marine (Fish) Expo in Seattle, specifically to describe Council issues and stock assessment forecasts.

In a recent Council mailing I included IPHC Technical Report No. 57 – the Report of the 2010 Halibut Working Group, co-authored by Jane DiCosimo. Next month, look for a paper by Dr. Mark Fina and Tyson Kade, titled "Legal and Policy Implications of the Property Right Status of Catch Shares" pending publication in the University of Washington's Journal of Law and Environmental Policy.

Finally, I want to mention an initiative at the staff level aimed at enhancing our operations at all levels. In mid-August Council staff held a two-day 'staff retreat' (at our offices here in Anchorage!) to discuss and brain-storm various aspects of our operations, including administrative, personnel, and communication issues; document preparation; office logistics; meeting preparation; analytical consistency and quality; project tasking; etc. In the area of communications, expect to see in the near future a 'Weekly (or bi-weekly) Update' from me describing various Council related activities, meetings, and current issues, (and events such as those described above) which will be distributed to staff and Council members.

Following our Council staff 'retreat', David Witherell and myself, as well as Nicole Kimball from ADF&G, participated in a three-day facilitated, inter-agency workshop in Juneau, organized by Sally Bibb and Glenn Merrill (Alaska Region Joint Planning Workshop – Improving the Fishery Management Plan and Regulatory Amendment Process). Key personnel from the Sustainable Fisheries Division and from the Office of General Counsel were in attendance. The essence of this workshop was to scrutinize how we do business, identify what works well, and identify specific areas of operation which we can improve upon. You may recall Mr. Merrill's presentation on process from the April 2012 meeting which touched upon many of the issues we discussed. Our goal is to work with NMFS to improve (and streamline!) our process at all stages, from tasking to setting priorities to document preparation to review to implementation. We are following up on various initiatives stemming from that meeting, including consideration of a Regional Operating Agreement (between the Council and NMFS Region) which would, among other things, outline expectations and timelines for all stages of fishery management actions. Stay tuned, as we will necessarily be bringing some of this back to the Council for your consideration and endorsement.

Halibut Area 4CDE and Bering Sea Closed Area (potential Council action)

Item B-1(h) is a letter from the IPHC regarding a potential re-opening of the IPHC closed area (CA) on the Bering Sea shelf. This area is closed to commercial halibut fishing, but other fishing (trawling included) occurs in this area. The IPHC is considering opening this area to commercial halibut fishing, and if so would incorporate this area within Area 4E, with no changes anticipated to the Council's catch sharing plan for Area4CDE. The IPHC is asking the Council whether they see any problems with this approach, and are looking for our input prior to their interim meeting in late November.

CCC follow-up actions

In June I reported to you on the May 2012 annual meeting of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), including a number of action items to be pursued by the host Council (WPFMC). Item B-1(i) contains three recent letters from NMFS, responding to CCC requests: (1) regarding establishment of a national SSC, the agency agrees with the utility of this initiative, and recommends it be established as a sub-committee of the CCC, with the CCC establishing the terms of reference for this group, with participation from NMFS; (2) regarding the processes and feedback mechanisms for Council 5-year research priorities, the agency is encouraging each Council/Region to coordinate mechanisms for establishing priorities – based on suggestions from the SSC in June, and your direction, we are working on a specific plan to more explicitly address this issue in terms of prioritizing and tracking research progress in our region against our 5-year research priorities; (3) regarding the CCC request to be more

explicitly involved in ESA consultations, or settlement negotiations, the agency response recognizes the need to move in that direction, and are working to develop recommendations relative to increasing transparency and stakeholder involvement in ESA consultations. Related to this issue, Item B-1(j) is a recent letter from the WPFMC to the House Committee on Natural Resources, requesting Congress to conduct a review of the ESA and the MMPA with respect to their impacts on fisheries and ocean users, including a field hearing in the State of Hawaii.

ADF&G Chinook Salmon Symposium

Item B-1(k) is a news release announcing a two-day scientific symposium (October 22-23) to discuss necessary research and stock assessment to better understand abundance and productivity trends for Chinook salmon in Alaska. This symposium will be held at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage.

STAMP report

Darcy Dugan with Alaska Ocean Observing Systems (AOOS) will provide the Council with a brief presentation on the 'Spatial Tools for Arctic Mapping and Planning' (STAMP) project, for which AOOS is the project manager (Item B-1(l) is a one-page summary of the project). This project was funded through the 2010 NOAA RFP for development of CMSP projects around the country, noting that the intent of this specific project was to develop tools which could be used for all aspects of Arctic research and management, whether part of a formal CMSP initiative or otherwise. Steve Maclean of our staff is part of the steering committee for this project.

Events this week

On Tuesday, October 2 there will be a SSL EIS scoping meeting beginning at 5:30 pm in the AP room. On Thursday, October 4 there will be an Electronic Monitoring (EM) Pilot Project Workshop conducted by NMFS beginning at 5:30 pm in the AP room.

Freezer Longline COALITION

ph: 206.284.2522
fax: 206.284.2902
2303 West Commodore Way, Suite 202, Seattle, WA 98199

August 2, 2012

Mr. Bill Tweit
Mr. Craig Cross
Mr. John Henderschedt
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 W 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Re: Joel Peterson

Dear Mr. Tweit, Cross and Henderschedt,

The Freezer Longline Coalition represents thirty active catcher processor vessels operating in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. This is a Washington and Alaska based and owned fleet. The Freezer Longline Coalition member vessels are 124-180 ft long catcher processor longliners operating within the jurisdiction of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). Please find this request on behalf of the Freezer Longline Coalition to nominate and endorse Joel Peterson of Clipper Seafood's to the interim WA state seat for the NPFMC Advisory Panel.

The Freezer Longline Coalition has both personal and professional experience working with Joel Peterson. Working with the Freezer Longline Coalition has allowed Joel to further his interest to work in the Council process. Joel understands the commitment and has agreed if appointed to set aside the time to be fully prepared for and active in each of the five meetings per year as well as other AP duties. Joel is uniquely qualified; in addition to his fishing experience Joel has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Colorado State University, he is well familiar with the council process and items set forth on the current NPFMC agenda.

Joel Peterson is a third generation fisherman. His father was an original partner of Clipper Seafoods, a company that owns and operates six freezer longline vessels. Joel's fishing experience includes purchasing supplies, coordinating crew, reporting catch and supervising all processing operations onboard the F/V Clipper Endeavor. Joel started as a deckhand over ten years ago; he has demonstrated excellent leadership skills while serving as a first mate onboard the vessel.

Your support for this nomination would be much appreciated. As you know it has been over five years since the departure of Lisa Butzner from the AP and since that time the freezer longline sector has been without direct representation on the AP. We are proud to bring forward a candidate with such strong qualifications as Joel. Mr. Peterson's work experience in commercial

fishing and education credentials make him an excellent candidate to serve on the Advisory Panel. Do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions or concerns regarding this request.

Sincerely,

Kenny Down
Executive Director
Freezer Longline Coalition

JOEL PETERSON

24222 100th Ave W Edmonds, WA, 98020 United States (206)817-2991 joelpeterson71@yahoo.com

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Clipper Seafoods, Seattle, WA United States

Mate, Sep 2009 – present

- Interpret weather and vessel conditions to determine appropriate responses.
- Record in logbooks specifics of fishing activities such as dates, harvest areas, yields, and weather and sea conditions.
- Coordinate and organize crew activities to ensure efficient operations.
- Estimate costs of operations and plan fishing season budgets accordingly.
- Remove catches from fishing equipment and measure them to ensure compliance with legal size.
- Locate fish, using fish-finding equipment.
- Direct fishing operations, and supervise fishing crew members.
- Delegate duties and tasks to crew members.
- Maintain fishing gear, and other on-board equipment; and perform minor repairs.
- Compute positions and plot courses on charts to navigate vessels, using instruments such as compasses, sextants, and charts.
- Participate in wildlife management, disease control, and research activities.
- Steer vessels and operate navigational instruments.
- Return undesirable or illegal catches to the water.
- Oversee the purchase of supplies, gear.
- Perform quality assurance duties on fish products by observing critical control points, and promoting proper fish handling techniques.

Clipper Seafoods, Seattle, WA United States

Deck Hand F/V Clipper endeavor, Mar 2003 – Aug 2009

- Club or gaff large fish to enable hauling them into fishing vessel.
- Wash decks, conveyors, knives, and other equipment, using brushes, detergents, and water.
- Haul gear
- Sort, pack, and store catch in holds.
- Load and unload vessel equipment and supplies, by hand or using hoisting equipment.
- Stand lookout for steering and engine-room watches.

EDUCATION

Colorado State University-Pueblo, Pueblo, CO United States

Completed coursework towards Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 2004

Crawfords Nautical School, Seattle, WA United States

Merchant Mariner Credential, 100 Master, 200 Mate, 1600 Mate/Fishing, July 2011

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Experience managing in a culturally diverse atmosphere.
- Experience learning and adapting to different managing styles.
- Streamline operations processes on board boat to maximize efficiency.
- Lead by Example.
- Experience working long hours, minimum 16.5 hrs/day.

THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Fish and Game

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
1255 West 8th Street
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Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526
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Fax: 907.465.2332

RECEIVED
AUG 20 2012

August 15, 2012

Mr. Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Chairman Olson: Eric,

I would like to nominate Ms. Elisa Russ for appointment to the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Groundfish Plan Team to replace Dr. Kenneth J. Goldman, who resigned his position from the plan team in January 2012. Ms. Russ is currently the acting Area Management Biologist for the Central Region commercial groundfish and shellfish fisheries, which includes Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound Management Areas. She also serves as the regional commercial groundfish and shellfish biological sampling coordinator, which requires analyzing harvest data and relative catch per unit effort in-season and post-season to manage and evaluate commercial fisheries. Ms. Russ also participates in multi-species trawl research surveys to estimate abundance and biomass, oversees the groundfish aging program, and evaluates age composition of groundfish stocks. These data allow us to better understand growth and population dynamics used in groundfish stock assessments and in determining appropriate harvest rates.

With her interest and experience, Ms. Russ will be a valuable addition to the GOA Plan Team. Please see the enclosed curriculum vitae. Thank you for considering her appointment at the upcoming October Council meeting.

Sincerely,

Cora Campbell

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

cc: Nicole Kimball, Federal Fisheries Coordinator, ADF&G

Elisa Russ

PO Box 15152, Homer, AK, 99603
907-399-1721 cell/elisa.russ@alaska.gov

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, NY: Biology and Biopsychology, B.S. 1990
Humboldt State University, CA: Extension courses-Animal Physiology, Organic Chemistry

WORK EXPERIENCE

Acting Area Groundfish and Shellfish Management Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), Commercial Fisheries (CF) Division, Homer, AK **08/12 – present**

Oversee management of all commercial and subsistence groundfish and shellfish fisheries including Pacific cod, sablefish, lingcod, skate, pollock, rockfish, Tanner crab, king crab, hardshell clams, shrimp, and scallops in the Cook Inlet (CI) and Prince William Sound (PWS) Management Areas that are regulated by the State of Alaska.

Regional Sampling Coordinator, Groundfish and Shellfish Management Biologist, ADF&G CF, Homer, AK **04/09-08/12**

Oversee dockside biological sampling program for commercial groundfish and shellfish fisheries in the CI and PWS Management Areas. Manage the commercial groundfish ageing program. Serve as Vice-President of Committee of Age Reading Experts, a Technical Subcommittee (TSC) working group. Act as department observer. Place department observers. Participate in department research surveys. Supervise staff. Manage budget. Serve as assistant area groundfish and shellfish management biologist for the CI Area including writing Fishery Management Reports, and preparation of materials and presentation to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF). Work with Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) on enforcement issues. Issue emergency orders (EO) and news releases (NR). Serve as a point of contact for the public.

Shellfish Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G CF, Dutch Harbor/St. Paul, AK **10/08-04/09**

Acted as crew leader and conducted biological sampling operations and fisherman interviews for the commercial crab fisheries of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area including king, Tanner, snow, and Dungeness crab. Management duties included vessel inspections, IFQ/CDQ registrations, and checking out vessels. Worked with AWT on enforcement issues.

Assistant Area Salmon Management Biologist, ADF&G CF, Kodiak/Cold Bay AK **7/07-9/08**

Assisted with management of the Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands commercial and subsistence salmon fisheries. Conducted aerial surveys to monitor salmon escapement and commercial fishing effort. Operated field office in Cold Bay. Issue EOs and NRs. Serve as a point of contact for the public. Work with AWT on enforcement issues. Write reports. Manage budget. Participate in BOF.

Hatchery Manager, Armstrong-Keta, Inc. (AKI), Port Armstrong, Baranof Island, AK **3/01-12/03**

Oversaw operation of remote hatchery facility in Southeast Alaska with annual release of 85 million pink, 1.8 million coho, and 100,000 Chinook salmon. Implemented chum salmon program in 2003 with 15 million eggs collected & transported to facility. Managed budget. Prepared Annual Report and Annual Management Plan for ADF&G. Responsible for issues of transportation, living conditions and mediation for community of four households and bunkhouse.

Assistant Hatchery Manager, AKI, Port Armstrong, Baranof Island, AK **9/99-3/01**

Responsible for all aspects of salmonid fish culture. Adjusted rearing strategies for optimal fish health. Conducted plankton tows, collected environmental data, and assessed water quality. Trained & supervised fish culturists and technicians. Designed & performed experiment on the effect of rearing density on the marine survival of coho salmon, *Onchorynchus kisutch,* and presented findings. Annual installation & removal of 500 ft barrier seine as SCUBA diver.

Owner, Funky Planet, Homer, AK **4/04-12/06**

Opened and oversaw all operations of retail shop. Managed all accounts and prepared all taxes and profit & loss statements; acquired all necessary permits and insurance. Designed and produced all printed materials.

Fish & Wildlife Technician, ADF&G, Sport Fish Division, Homer, AK **6/99-9/99**

Conducted razor clam surveys. Solely operated weir including biological sampling and maintenance of remote camp. Sampled for mark and recapture study of Chinook salmon upriver from weir. Assisted with transfer, maintenance, and release of Chinook salmon for enhancement project.

Environmental Educator, Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, Peterson Bay Field Station, AK **4/99-6/99**
Oversaw operation of remote educational field station; led school groups and visitors on interpretative hikes of coastal forest and marine ecosystems; presented slide shows; taught educational seminars and led activities.

Owner, Big E's Eatery, Homer, AK **2/97-2/99**
Opened and oversaw all operations of café/bakery specializing in fresh bagels. Created menu and recipes. Designed and produced all printed materials. Prepared all taxes and profit & loss statements.

Histotechnologist, Southeast Alaska Pathology Lab, Juneau, AK **12/95-12/96**
Responsible for all aspects of processing tissue specimens and cytology samples. Other duties included maintaining database, issuing reports, policy and procedures.

Laboratory Technician, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Auke Bay Laboratory, Juneau, AK
11/95-1/96; 11/94-5/95
Removed and read coded wire tags and maintained database. Created new databases for other projects. Created comprehensive reports for Pacific Salmon Commission. Participated in all aspects of salmon tagging operations.

Fisheries Research Assistant, NMFS, Little Port Walter Field Research Station, Baranof Is., AK
5/95-11/95; 3/94-10/94
Responsible for all aspects of salmon broodstock management, fish culture, and tagging operations. Assisted with and maintained experiments. Solely responsible for off-site fish rearing facility. Trained seasonal employees.

Fisheries Technician, Douglas Island Pink & Chum, Juneau, AK **3/95-5/95; 11/94-1/95**
Performed duties related to fish culture including tagging and ponding of pink and chum salmon.

Fish Culturist, AKI, Port Armstrong Hatchery, Baranof Is, AK **10/92-11/93**
Maintained coho, king, and pink salmon including all aspects of eggtake, incubation, and rearing. Also performed necropsies, treated diseased fish, and conducted plankton tows. Assisted with seining and gillnetting during cost-recovery harvest. Administered coded wire tags and accountable for processing returning tagged fish. Trained seasonal employees.

Fish Technician, Prince William Sound Aquaculture, AFK Hatchery, AK **7/92-10/92**
Brail crew during pink salmon cost-recovery harvest; fish culture tasks including eggtake and incubation; sampled for fecundity; repaired net pens and egg baskets.

PUBLICATIONS

Trowbridge, C. E., E. Russ, and C. Russ. *In Press.* Cook Inlet Area groundfish management report, 2005-2011. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report, Anchorage.

Trowbridge, C. E., E. Russ, and C. Russ. 2011. Annual management report for Pacific cod fisheries in the Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet Management Areas, 2010. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 11-47, Anchorage.

Russ, E. A. 2008. Post-June salmon management plan for the South Alaska Peninsula, 2008. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-24, Anchorage.

Tschersich, P. and E. A. Russ. 2008. Annual summary of the commercial, subsistence, and personal use salmon fisheries and salmon escapements in the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands management areas, 2007. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-22, Anchorage.

Murphy, R.L., P. Tschersich, and E. A. Russ. 2008 North Alaska Peninsula commercial salmon annual management report, 2007. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-23, Anchorage.

Poetter, A. D., J. V. Jackson, and E. A. Russ. 2008. South Alaska Peninsula annual salmon management report, 2007. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-15, Anchorage.

Tschersich, P., and E. A. Russ. 2008. Aleutian Islands and Atka-Amlia Islands management areas salmon annual management report, 2007. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-11, Anchorage.

Bowers, F. R., M. Schwenzfeier, K. Milani, K. Herring, M. Salmon, E. Russ, J. Shaishnikoff, R. Burt, and H. Barnhart. 2008. Annual management report for the commercial and subsistence shellfish fisheries of the Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea and the Westward Region's Shellfish Observer Program, 2007/08. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 08-73, Anchorage.

PRESENTATIONS

Cook Inlet Area Tanner Crab Fishery Status, Kachemak Bay Science Conference, Homer, AK, March 2012.

Cook Inlet Area Tanner Crab Fishery Status, Interagency Crab Research Meeting, Anchorage, AK, December 2011.

Central Region Commercial Fisheries Groundfish Catch Sampling Program and Ageing Program, ADF&G Statewide Groundfish Meeting, April 2011.

North Alaska Peninsula Fisheries, North Aleutian Basin Energy & Fisheries Forum, ComFish, Kodiak, AK, March 2008.

RELEVANT SKILLS

ADF&G enforcement training, received peace officer badge, September 2008.
Computer skills including proficiency in MS Excel, MS Word, PowerPoint, MS Publisher, MS Access, Windows XP, R:Base 4.5, QuickBooks. Experience with networking software & hardware.
Proficient in using eLandings, Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI), and ADF&G Statewide Fish Ticket Databases.
Possess organizational skills, ability to communicate effectively, and speak publicly.
Commercial fishing gear experience and skiff handling.
SCUBA certified August 2001.
Ability to use most laboratory equipment, including extensive microscope work.
Type 60 wpm.
Hand and power tool use; ability to operate tractor, forklift, crane, pressure washer.
Trained in firearm operation and safety.
Current ASHI CPR & First Aid certification.

References available upon request.

THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Fish and Game

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
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Fax: 907.465.2332

July 31, 2012

RECEIVED
AUG - 7 2012

Mr. Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Chairman Olson: Eric,

I would like to nominate Mr. Mark Stichert for appointment to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team to replace Nick Sagalkin, who has taken a new position within the department. Mr. Stichert is the recently appointed Kodiak, Chignik and Alaska Peninsula Shellfish/Groundfish Area Manager. He was promoted from the assistant area management biologist position and assumed his new duties July 16.

Mr. Stichert has a strong understanding of the complex state and federal groundfish fishery issues, broad knowledge of the various species harvested and he interacts well with the fishing fleets in these areas. Additionally, he supervises staff responsible for dockside sampling and trawl surveys. With his interest and experience, Mr. Stichert will be a valuable addition to the GOA Plan Team. His curriculum vitae is enclosed for your review.

Thank you for considering his appointment at the upcoming October Council meeting.

Sincerely,

Cora Campbell

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

Enclosure

Mark Stichert
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Commercial Fisheries Division

211 Mission Rd Kodiak, AK 99615
907-486-1845
mark.stichert@alaska.gov

EDUCATION

1998	University of Wyoming	B.S. Biology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Area Management Biologist - Groundfish and Shellfish, ADF&G, Kodiak, AK ***2012-present***

- Regulate commercial and subsistence groundfish and shellfish fisheries in the Kodiak, Chignik and Alaska Peninsula areas by developing harvest strategies, establishing guideline harvest levels, assessing fishery performance, and implementing time and area closures
- Represent ADF&G during industry, fishery advisory, and Alaska Board of Fisheries meetings
- Direct staff responsible for dockside sampling and trawl survey programs

Assistant Area Management Biologist - Groundfish and Shellfish, ADF&G, Kodiak, AK ***2008-2012***

- Assisted management of commercial and subsistence groundfish and shellfish fisheries in the Kodiak, Chignik, and South Alaska Peninsula Management areas
- Directed staff responsible for collection and archival of commercial harvest and effort data

Chignik Area Management Biologist - Salmon, ADF&G, Kodiak, AK ***2006-2008***

- Regulated commercial and subsistence salmon fisheries by analyzing catch and escapement data
- Coordinated Chignik Area salmon escapement monitoring, test fishery, and Region IV SCUBA dive programs

Graduate Research Assistant, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK ***2003-2005***

- Developed, conducted, and analyzed research on seasonal distribution, abundance, and habitat use of juvenile salmonids in southeast Alaskan headwaters streams

Staff Biologist, USDA Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Petersburg, AK ***2000-2003***

- Implemented regional fishery monitoring projects assessing land use impacts on fish populations

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2009	ADF&G Directors Achievement Award for Outstanding Service
2003-2005	Graduate Research Assistantship, UAF School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences
2003-2004	President – Student Unit, Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
1996-1998	University of Wyoming Presidential Academic Honors Scholarship
1997	L. Floyd Clark Outstanding Undergraduate Research Fellowship

REFERENCES

Wayne Donaldson, Regional Shellfish and Groundfish Management Supervisor, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries Division, 211 Mission Road, Kodiak, AK 99615. (907) 486-1842. Email: wayne.donaldson@alaska.gov

Nick Sagalkin, Regional Salmon Research Supervisor, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries Division, 211 Mission Road, Kodiak, AK 99615. (907) 486-1873. Email: nick.sagalkin@alaska.gov

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE

Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director

Contact:
Mike Vaughn

Phone: (907) 747-6688
Fax: (907) 747-6239

Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street, Room 103
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Date: June 25, 2012
Time: 2:45 p.m.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE/PERSONAL USE SABLEFISH PERMIT REQUIRED

Sitka…The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) announced today that effective July 13, 2012, a personal use fishing permit will be required to take sablefish under personal use regulations (5 AAC 77.674) and a subsistence fishing permit will be required to take sablefish under subsistence regulations (5AAC 01.730) in Southeastern Alaska. One permit will be issued per household per year. Information required on the permit includes, but is not limited to: date of fishing, gear type used, fishing location, and number of sablefish retained and discarded. This information will allow the department to more accurately account for sablefish subsistence and personal use mortality when assessing sablefish stock status.

The permit requirement was adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in March 2012. Subsistence/personal use sablefish permits and subsistence and personal use groundfish harvest area maps will be available at local department area offices in early July 2012.

News releases web site: *http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main*.

Office	*Ketchikan*	*Petersburg*	*Wrangell*	*Sitka*	*Juneau*	*Haines*	*Hoonah*	*Yakutat*
ADF&G	*225-5195*	*772-3801*	*874-3822*	*747-6688*	*465-4250*	*766-2830*		*784-3255*
AWT	*225-5111*	*772-3983*	*874-3215*	*747-3254*	*465-4000*	*766-2533*	*945-3620*	*784-3220*
Groundfish Hotline				*747-4882*				

3rd Session of the Preparatory Conference for the North Pacific Fisheries Commission

Juneau, Alaska, United States
27-30 August 2012

Draft Annotated Agenda

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting

2. Election of Rapporteur

3. Adoption of agenda

4. Discussion on the budget for the first financial period of the Commission.

   Discussion will continue on the budget for the first financial period of the Commission. According to the Tentative Timeline for Future Work (ANNEX I to the Record of the First Preparatory Conference), participants are expected to conclude the discussion and adopt the budget for the first financial period of the Commission. Part of this discussion is related to the location of the Permanent Secretariat (see Item 6).

5. Discussion on the draft Staff Regulations

   Discussion will continue on the draft Staff Regulations. According to the Tentative Timeline for Future Work (ANNEX I to the Record of the First Preparatory Conference), participants are expected to conclude the discussion and produce a recommendation to the Commission.

6. Discussion on the Secretariat of the Commission

   Discussion will continue on the Secretariat of the Commission. As reflected in the Record of the 2nd Preparatory Conference, delegations from Canada, Japan and Korea identified themselves as interested in hosting the permanent Secretariat and will each make a presentation to the Conference. According to the Tentative Timeline for Future Work, if possible participants will take a decision.

   (1) The order of presentations will be determined by random lottery.

   (2) Canada, Japan and Korea will each be allowed one-half hour for its presentation.

7. Discussion on other issues as time allows

   (1) Begin discussion on criteria and procedures for recruitment of an Executive Secretary.

   (2) Discussion of format of an annual report to the Commission.

   Discussion will continue on the annual report to the commission, and the report will be adopted if possible.

   (3) Begin consideration of rules, standards, and procedures for the compilation and management by the Commission of accurate and complete data for effective stock

assessment.

(4) Begin consideration of rules, standards and procedures for collection, verification, and timely reporting to the Commission of all relevant information by members of the Commission.

8. Status of the Convention

Participants will receive a report from Korea, as depositary, on the status of the signature of the Convention.

9. Future work plan

Participants will consider whether to amend the Tentative Timeline for Future Work, taking into account the discussion and progress at the Third Preparatory Conference.

10. Other matters

Participants will consider ongoing issues, including implementation of Interim Measures and funding needs of the Interim Secretariat.

11. Date and place of the next meeting

Participants will decide the date and place of the Fourth Preparatory Conference.

12. Adoption of the Record of the Meeting

The Record of the Third Preparatory Conference will be adopted.

13. Adjournment

The Conference will be adjourned.

10th Scientific Working Group Meeting

Juneau, Alaska; August 2012

Draft Provisional Annotated Agenda

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting
   The United States will open the meeting and make opening remarks.

2. Election of Chair and Rapporteur
   The Facilitator and Rapporteur will be selected by participants.

3. Adoption of Agenda
   The draft agenda will be adopted with necessary modifications.

4. Discussion on the Development of Encounter Protocols on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in the North Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area
   Participants will discuss the following:
   a. *The assignment developed by the 9th Scientific Working Group of the Multilateral Meeting on Management of High Seas Fisheries in the North Pacific Ocean, including a report to be provided by the intersessional working group.*
   b. *Reports from the participants about their research and analyses on encounter protocols*
   c. *Next Steps*

5. Discussion on the Interim Measures on VMEs and Marine Species
   Participants will discuss and provide updates on the implementation of the interim measures for the northwestern and northeastern Pacific Ocean. This consistent with paragraphs 4(b) and 12 of the Interim Measures for Protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in the Northeast Pacific Ocean, and Paragraph 5(b) of New Mechanisms for Protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems and Sustainable Management of High Seas Bottom Fisheries in the Northwestern Pacific Ocean.

6. Stock Assessment Workshop for North Pacific Armorhead
   Participants will discuss the outcomes of the stock assessment workshop for the north Pacific armorhead (to be held in Shimizu, Japan from 27-29 March 2012).

7. Other matters

8. Adoption of the record of the meeting

9. Closing of the meeting

PROTOCOL
23rd U.S.-RUSSIA
INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ICC)

September 5-7, 2012 – Saint Petersburg, Russia

1. Opening Remarks; Introduction of Members of Delegations

Pursuant to Article XIV of the 1988 Agreement on Mutual Fisheries Relations, as amended, representatives of Russia and the United States conducted the 23rd Session of the ICC on Fisheries in Saint Petersburg, Russia, on September 5-7, 2012. The delegation of the Russian Federation (RF) was led by Dr. Alexandr Fomin, the Deputy Head of the Fisheries Agency of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Agriculture, and the delegation of the United States of America (U.S.) was led by Ambassador David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary of U.S. State Department for Oceans and Fisheries.

Opening remarks are provided in Attachment 1. A complete list of the U.S. and Russian delegation members is provided in Attachment 2.

2. Election of Chairman and Rapporteur

Dr Alexandr Fomin (RF) was elected as Chairperson of the 23rd session of the ICC. Dr. Alexander Glubokov and Dmitry Kremenyuk (RF) and Ms. Nicole Ricci (U.S.) were appointed as Rapporteurs.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The delegations adopted the agenda provided in Attachment 3.

4. Exchange of Information on Fisheries Enforcement Cooperation

U.S. Coast Guard Captain Phil Thorne (U.S.) presented an overview of cooperative maritime law enforcement efforts over the past year with the Federal Border Guard (RF), focused on stemming illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity in the vicinity of the maritime boundary line in the Bering Sea, as well as efforts focused on curtailing illegal large-scale high seas drift netting in the North Pacific. Overall, it has been exciting to watch the coordination and cooperation between the USCG District 17 and Northeast Border Guard Directorate (RF) throughout 2012. Both sides expressed interest in expanding fisheries law enforcement cooperation, especially in regard to investigations of potential illegal importation of Russian fisheries products into the United States. Such cooperation will include the involvement of NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement. Both Parties agreed to continue the strong partnerships between the U.S. and Russian enforcement agencies and to further cooperation through the signing and entry into force of the IUU Enforcement Agreement.

Mr. Balton (U.S.) expressed gratitude for Russia's cooperation on fisheries enforcement and

congratulated both sides on their productive working relationship.

The representative of the Russian Federal Border Service reported on activities carried out by the Russian side as part of the International Coast Guard schedule of protection in the area of the Convention on the conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean (hereinafter - the Convention Area) and the Border Service North-Eastern District Department of the Russian FSB, and 17th District of the U.S. Coast Guard Joint Action Plan in 2012.

In particular, information was presented on the results of patrolling the Convention area in 2012. During a patrol of fishing vessels engaged in fishing for anadromous fish, these species were not found.

RF stated that during the patrols of the Border Service North-Eastern District Department of the Russian FSB authority in the area adjacent to the maritime boundary between the Russian Federation and the United States in the Bering Sea, no fishing vessels conducting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities were detected.

According to Russian officials, the low "illegal activity" in the above areas is the result of a high level interaction between the Border Service North-Eastern District Department of the Russian FSB and 17th U.S. Coast Guard District.

It is noted that the important elements of Russian-American cooperation in preventing illegal activities at sea are mutual visits of delegations of Border Service North-Eastern District Department of the Russian FSB and 17 District U.S. Coast Guard, as well as the active use of the Automated System for the exchange of information.

5. Discussion of Issues Connected with Agreement on Mutual Fisheries Relations (1988). U.S. –Russia Cooperation in the Study of Living Marine Resources

5.1 2011-2012 Research on Status of Bering Sea and Sea of Okhotsk Pollock Stocks

The U.S. presented information on the following:

1. Summary on status of pollock stocks in the U.S. EEZ of the Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands Area;
2. Status of the groundfish stocks; and
3. 2012 survey of pollock in the Bogoslof Island area by the R/V *OSCAR DYSON*

Additional details on the status of pollock stocks in the Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands (BSAI) area can be found in the following website:
http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/assessments.htm

The dominant pollock stocks in the U.S. EEZ are located in the eastern Bering Sea-

Aleutian Islands and the Bogoslof Island area. In general, the 2012 exploitable biomass, 8.3 million metric tons (mt), of the eastern Bering Sea pollock stock is considered moderately high and the total allowable catch is set at 1.2 million mt. The pollock biomass in both the Aleutian and the Bogoslof areas is considered low by historical standards. The survey biomass of the Bogoslof area, 67,000 mt, is the lowest on record. The total allowable catch in the Aleutian area was set at 19,000 mt to allow a small fishery, but actual catches were less than 1,200 mt. The U.S. Bogoslof pollock fishery has been closed for 20 years, but a low total allowable catch is set to serve incidental catch needs in other groundfish fisheries. Approximately 100 mt of pollock is taken annually as incidental catch in other ground fish fisheries.

Dr. Glubokov made a presentation on the results of Russian studies of living marine resources in the Bering Sea conducted during the inter-sessional period. From September 2011 to August 2012, 13 expeditions were carried out in the Bering Sea. Studies of pollock in the Western Bering Sea zone and the Karaginsk subzone, showed a stable state of its reserves. It was noted that in the Western Bering Sea area pollock generation yields of the years 2006, 2008 and 2009 were above average. Due to the low number of pollock generations after 2009, TAC foreseen for 2013 will be below the TAC for 2012.

Dr. Stepanenko said that the abundance and biomass of pollock in the Okhotsk Sea continues to remain at a high level. In 2012, the total biomass is estimated at 9.8 million tons, up to 2.1 million tons less than in 2011 due to the reduction of biomass with a decline of many generations of 2004 and 2005.

Dr. Stepanenko, in response to a question from Dr Low, said that the information about the Russian pollock stock assessment was published in leading Russian magazines and posted on the website of the Marine Stewardship Council.

5.2 Sea birds

The U.S. presented research on the status of seabirds. Due to low population abundance, short-tailed Albatross (STAL) is listed as endangered under U.S. law. The species nests on volcanic islands off Japan. Tracking studies show their wide migratory range and their potential interactions with fisheries in the entire North Pacific Ocean, including the EEZ waters of Russia and the United States. Cooperating research organizations from Japan and the U.S. have relocated STAL eggs from the main breeding location on Torishima Island to nearby Mukojima Island, which does not have volcanic activity. The program, which started in 2008, is beginning to show success. To date, 70 STAL eggs were relocated, 69 chicks have fledged and the satellite data from tagged STAL show that the birds have successfully migrated and returned to their new (relocated) breeding island.

The U.S. conservation program to monitor and regulate potential bycatch of STAL in

trawl and longline fisheries in the U.S. EEZ continues. Two STAL were taken in the demersal longline cod fishery in the Bering Sea in August and September 2010. A third STAL was taken in the Bering Sea demersal cod fishery in October 2011. It had been tagged on Torishima Island in 2010. One STAL was taken in 2011 in the Pacific Coast longline fishery. The U.S. is continuing to work with Russia on introducing seabird avoidance gear and mechanisms in the longline fisheries in Kamchatka, Russia.

5.3. Marine mammals, including Status of Steller Sea lion stocks, interactions with fisheries, and protection measures around rookeries and haul-outs

The U.S. presented research on the status of domestic and trans-boundary Steller sea lions. The eastern and western stocks constitute the two main stocks of Steller sea lions in the North Pacific. Between 1990 and 2011, the population of the eastern stock shows an increase but concerns remain for the western DPS. The National Marine Fisheries Service conducts surveys of Steller sea lions every other year, weather permitting. Currently, the largest rookeries and major haulouts in the western population occur in the eastern Aleutians and western Gulf of Alaska. Steller sea lion populations in these areas are increasing. By contrast, the rookeries and haulouts in the western and central Aleutians are much smaller and continue to experience declines in pup counts. It is the decline in pup production and resultant decline in the western and central Aleutians population that is negatively affecting a range-wide recovery of the western Distinct Population Segment (wDPS) of Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*). However, despite the declines in the western and central Aleutians, the U.S. portion of the western DPS, as a whole, has shown an increasing trend between 2005 and 2011. In 2011, NMFS counted 11,547 pups in the wDPS, which results in an estimated population of 51,557.

As a result of precipitous population decline between the 1970s and 2000 and a lack of population-wide recovery in the past decade, the western DPS of Steller sea lions is designated as endangered under U.S. law. Under this designation, the population that constitutes the western stock also includes sea lions in Russian waters. Therefore, the status of those sea lions within the Russian EEZ is taken into account when considering U.S. management measures for fisheries off of Alaska. Monitoring of these stocks is a high priority for U.S. fisheries management. The U.S. appreciates the routine, joint U.S.-Russia surveys of sea lion rookeries and haulouts conducted in our respective waters to monitor population trends.

Before 2011, in the U.S., measures designed to mitigate potential effects of commercial fishing included prohibiting fishing within areas up to 20 nautical miles from a designated rookery, major haulout, and some offshore foraging areas. In January 2011, protection measures in the western Aleutian Islands changed to prohibit any retention of Atka mackerel and in the western Aleutians, and Atka mackerel fishing is prohibited in most designated critical habitat areas in the central Aleutians. All retention of Pacific cod is prohibited in the western Aleutians, with varying time and area closures for Pacific cod trawl and non-trawl fishing in critical habitat in the central and western

Aleutians. In its presentation, the U.S. noted concerns regarding impacts to Steller sea lions in the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatka area due to daily tourists and resident visits to this population's hallout areas and requested information on any regulations or measures to mitigate disturbances in these critical habitat areas. In addition, the U.S. noted the general lack of information on incidental take of sea lions in Russian fisheries and fisheries management or measures taken to protect SSL and requested more detailed data on this issue.

On fur seals, the U.S. presentation showed graphs of pup trends declining in the Pribilof Islands and increasing in Bogoslof Island area.

Dr. Vinnikov reported on the study of marine mammals. He noted that the number of sea lions is established by natural factors rather than fishing. In particular, in the Bering, Chukchi and East Siberian seas number of marine mammals which are the objects for hunting of Indigenous Peoples of the North (Pacific walrus, beluga and four species of seals) is based, above all, on a reduction of the ice cover in the Arctic.

The Russian side proposed to exchange information on the status of straddling stocks of marine mammals for which quotas are established for aboriginal fishery.

5.4 Status of Crab Species: snow, *blue and red king crab, and Tanner*

The U.S. presented information on the status of the major Bering Sea crab stocks: snow crab, red and blue king crab and Tanner crab. Directed harvest of snow crab, of one blue king crab stock and two red king crab stocks occur annually. The biomass of Bering Sea snow crab has increased in recent years. Of the three red king crab stocks, the biomass of the largest king crab stock, Bristol Bay red king crab, has declined in recent years, while more minor stocks of Norton Sound red king crab and Pribilof Island red king crab have increased or remained stable. There are two stocks of blue king crab. Of these the St. Matthew blue king crab stock biomass has increased while the Pribilof Island blue king crab stock remains closed to all harvest but has not yet shown any sign of recovery. A revised rebuilding plan is being implemented for that stock. The Tanner crab stock was declared overfished in 2010 and a rebuilding plan is being developed. The biomass of snow crab, St. Matthew blue king crab and two of the red king crab stocks are all above target biomass thresholds. The Pribilof red king crab stock is below the target biomass but above the overfished threshold, while the Pribilof blue king crab stock and the Tanner crab stock are both at biomass levels below the overfished threshold. Both stocks have rebuilding plans either approved or under development.

Dr. Melnikov reported on the status of stocks of crabs in the Russian part of the Bering Sea. He noted that in the western part of the Bering Sea they catch three kinds of crabs - blue, snow crab opilio and Baird snow crab. TAC for blue crab is 1000-1100 mt and developed by 95-100%. Other species are harvested at 50-60%. The status of stocks is

stable. He also noted the decline of only Byrd snow crab because of natural causes.

5.5 Status of Chinook salmon stocks, information on monitoring efforts, fisheries interactions within ground fisheries, and salmon catch data, including data on retained or discarded incidental catch

The U.S. presented information on the status of Chinook salmon stocks in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska and the incidental catch of salmon in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The Chinook runs have been generally poor statewide in recent years in Alaska and in particular in 2012. Escapement goals were only met in some rivers, if at all, due to the closures and restrictions in the commercial, sport and in some cases subsistence fisheries. Total sport and commercial Chinook harvest in 2011 statewide was approximately 573,000 fish. These numbers are preliminary and do not include subsistence harvest. Incidental catch of Chinook and chum salmon in the offshore groundfish fisheries occurs primarily in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. By law, salmon bycatch cannot be retained or sold, although some fish are donated to food banks. Chinook bycatch in the pollock fishery has varied over time, reaching an historic high in 2007 at 122,000 fish. Chinook bycatch in 2011 was 25,500 fish. A new Chinook bycatch management program was implemented in 2011 places a cap on the amount of Chinook that may be taken overall in the pollock fishery. This annual cap of 60,000 fish is divided between the two pollock seasons, winter and summer, and among the four fishing sectors of this fishery. When a sector-specific cap is reached, all pollock fishing by that sector must cease. Additionally each sector participates in a sector-specific incentive program designed to keep overall catch well below these levels. The Bering Sea pollock fishery is 100% observed. Additional monitoring provisions ensure that there is a complete census of all salmon caught in pollock tows. Furthermore, increased and systematic genetic sampling of these fish is occurring in order to have consistent annual reports to the NPFMC of the stock of origin of the Chinook (and chum) bycaught in the pollock fishery.

Dr. Melnikov reported on the status of stocks of Chinook salmon in Russia. He noted that the number of salmon in the rivers on the Asian coast is low. In 2012, it is recommended to catch 854 tons. The only area - Big River in eastern Kamchatka is determined for directed fishing, in others it is produced as a by-catch in the fishery for other species of Pacific salmon. In recent years, there has been decline in its numbers because of natural causes, the reduction of size indicators in the age groups and the rejuvenation of the stock.

6. Exchange of Views on Fish-industry issues that are of multilateral interest

6.1 Review of results of the 16th annual virtual Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering

Both sides noted the importance of the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Central Bering Sea to Russia and the United States as coastal States and continuation of the pollock fishing moratorium to rebuild pollock stocks in the Central Bering Sea. Both sides expressed concern that the Republic of Korea has not yet fulfilled its obligation to host the 2012 17th Conference of Parties of the Convention. As a possible step, the Russian side proposed that, in the event that a Party fails to meet its obligation to host the annual meeting in the future, the Rules of Procedure be amended to state that in such an event, the previous year's conservation measures are carried forward for the following year.

RF agreed to reach out to Korea and encourage it to fulfill its commitment to host the virtual meeting of the Conference of the Parties. If Korea is unresponsive, RF agreed to then reach out to the People's Republic of China, who is the next in line to host, and request that China host the 17th meeting.

6.2 Arctic Fisheries

6.2.a Exchange of information on ongoing and planned domestic and international research on Arctic fisheries and ecology;

The U.S. presented information on its "Arctic research plans and projects on fisheries, ecosystems, and marine mammals". The Arctic area includes both the lower Arctic (south of the Bering Strait) and the high Arctic. The U.S. has a new "Arctic Ecosystem Integrated Survey program" for 2012 and 2013. Surface, mid-water, and bottom trawls are used to study ocean physics, plankton, fish, and invertebrate communities. Bottom trawl surveys will be conducted in two high Arctic areas for the first time in 20-35 years. A pelagic survey spanning from the northern Bering Sea to the Arctic Ocean is also planned as part of a northward extension of the U.S. survey for the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission, Bering and Aleutian Salmon International Survey program. In addition, the U.S. is also focusing research to study "loss of sea ice" and ocean acidification in the Arctic. A food-web modeling project of the Chukchi and the Beaufort Seas is also ongoing.

The Russian delegation presented the results of its Arctic research in the last decade. It was noted that in the last two years due to lack of funding, planned fisheries research in the Chukchi and East Siberian seas failed.

6.2.b Discussion of US proposed Arctic fisheries agreement

The U.S. reminded the RF that the United States had hosted a meeting of scientists from the five Arctic coastal States in July 2011 to discuss international collaboration in Arctic fisheries science and research. The report from that meeting contained a number of recommendations that should be considered by

policymakers. The U.S. suggested that a meeting of such policymakers should take place in the near future to consider those recommendations and also to agree on next steps on both scientific research and policy development.

The U.S. and the RF also discussed the U.S. proposal for an international agreement relating to potential fisheries in the high seas portion of the Central Arctic Ocean. The U.S. reiterated that it wanted to avoid a repetition of the experience both nations had in dealing with the collapse of the Aleutian Basin pollock stock in the Central Bering Sea. For that reason, the U.S. proposal would defer commercial fishing in the high seas of the Central Arctic Ocean until there is an adequate scientific understanding of that area on which to base proper fisheries management and until a multilateral management mechanism is in place to carry out such management. The U.S. proposal would also commit Parties to undertake the scientific research in question on a collaborative basis.

The Russian side expressed its appreciation to the U.S. side for the preparation and submission of the draft agreement on the regulation of fishing in the Arctic outside the maritime areas under national jurisdiction. The Russian side noted that the proposal reflects the high level of trust and cooperation between the Parties on issues related to the marine living resources of the Arctic. The draft of this agreement is being considered by the competent Russian agencies.

The Russian side attaches great importance to the regulation of fish stocks in the high seas of the Arctic Ocean and shares the desire of the American side to avoid a situation of uncontrolled commercial fishing by distant water fishing nations. At present, however, due to some reasons, the Russian side cannot support the American project or become a co-sponsor.

A detailed comment from the Russian side to the U.S. proposal would be presented after consideration by the competent Russian authorities by November 1 of this year, if possible.

The Russian side considers the U.S. proposal of convening a meeting of representatives of five Arctic States to discuss the management of living marine resources in the Arctic to be worthy of attention. Russia is ready to take an active part in such a meeting.

6.3 North Pacific Fisheries Commission – Status and Secretariat

The United States signed the NPFC Convention earlier this year and is currently in the process of submitting the Convention to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification. The U.S. Congress will need to pass legislation to implement the Convention. The United States asked where the Russian Federation was in its process for the Convention.

The U.S. noted that the signatories to the NPFC Convention, including the United States and Russia, will decide soon where to establish the Secretariat for this organization. At this time, only two of the governments have proposed to host the Secretariat (Japan and South Korea). At the third NPFC Preparatory Conference, held last week in Juneau, Alaska, both Japan and the Republic of Korea presented proposals indicating their interest in hosting the Secretariat for the NPFC. The United States has not publicly expressed a view yet on where the Secretariat should be located but asked whether Russia has a preference for the location of the Secretariat.

The Russian side noted that it currently is working on the implementation of internal procedures required for signing and approval of this Convention. The Russian side has not officially informed of its position on the preferences as to the location of the Secretariat of the Commission for Fisheries in the North Pacific Ocean. However, the Russian side has noted the importance of the bilateral dialogue between the Republic of Korea and Japan on the issue.

6.4 South Pacific Fisheries Commission – Status

The Convention establishing South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO) has now entered into force. The United States has signed but not yet ratified the Convention. As with the NPFC Convention, the United States is in the process of submitting this to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification. Congress will also need to pass implementing legislation. The United States inquired about the status of this convention in Russia.

The Russian side has notified the Depositary of the Convention on the completion of all internal procedures for the approval of this Convention (May 17, 2012).

Currently, Russia is concerned over the regular adjustment of retrospective and current fishery statistics in catching mackerel by some coastal countries in their EEZ adjacent to the area of SPRFMO regulation.

6.5 Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) – Ross Sea

The United States supports the decision that CCAMLR recently made to establish a network of marine protected areas (MPA) in the Southern Ocean. Last year, the U.S. submitted a proposal to create an MPA in the Ross Sea region; New Zealand submitted a similar, though different, proposal for the same region.

The Russian side has stated that, in accordance with the strategic plan of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), should complete the work on the creation of a marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Convention Area by the end 2012. Russia has consistently maintained the position that

the establishment of MPAs in the Antarctic should not violate the basic provisions of CCAMLR, in particular, the principle set out in Article 2: conservation implies rational use. In addition, Russia has maintained a position on the need to preliminary scientific evaluation of the desirability of establishing MPAs.

The Russian side confirmed its willingness to participate in the elaboration of the proposals of the American side for the establishment of MPAs in the Regulatory Area of CCAMLR.

6.6 North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission –Executive Director

The U.S is aware that the current Executive Director of the NPAFC, Mr. Vladimir Fedorenko (Russia), will be retiring from his position effective June 30, 2013, after serving 14 years in this capacity. The application deadline for the position ended on June 1, 2012. Three applications were received—one each from Russia, the Republic of Korea and Japan. The U.S. is aware that a selection Committee consisting of one delegate from each of the five NPAFC Parties (Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States) will meet during the annual meeting in St. Petersburg to be held on October 7 – 12, 2012 to interview applicants and recommend one of the applicants to the Commission. The Commission is expected to select the new Executive Director at the meeting.

The United States is pleased with the field of applicants for the NPAFC Executive Director. The United States has not made any decisions at this time as the interview process at the NPAFC annual meeting in St. Petersburg will be a deciding factor in identifying the new NPAFC Executive Director. The U.S. stated that Japan has been actively campaigning for its candidate. The U.S. inquired about Russia's position on the candidates.

The Russian side expressed thanks for the U.S. statement that it would give the Russian candidate applying for the post of NPAFC Executive Director its highest consideration.

6.7 Global Issues: Rio 2012, Food and Agriculture Organization Committee on Fisheries (CoFI)

Overall, the U.S. was pleased with the outcomes of Rio 2012. Regarding the issue of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ), the U.S. was pleased to work so closely with Russia throughout the Rio + 20 negotiations. It was again clear to the U.S. that the international community holds divergent views on whether a new international instrument is necessary. The U.S. believes that the text in the Outcome Document on BBNJ was reasonable in that the countries committed to addressing the issue of conservation and sustainable use of marine BBNJ by the end of the 69th meeting of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015, including taking a decision on the development of an international instrument under the Law of the Sea Convention.

This result allows the process already underway at the United Nations to continue, while emphasizing the importance of the issue and providing a timeframe in which to take a decision on future steps. The U.S. believes that the upcoming workshops proposed for 2013 will provide opportunities for substantive, focused, and informal discussions of the issues. The U.S. looks forward to participating in the workshops and views them as an important tool to better understand what proponents of an implementing agreement envision. The U.S. is open to discussing all aspects of these issues in that informal setting.

The U.S. expressed interest in learning whether the Rio+20 text changes expectations that Member States have regarding the work of the working group. In order to better understand the perspectives of all States as well as identify common ground it will be important for the workshops and the expert panels to discuss a broad range of views. The U.S. also stated that it looks forward to discussing issues related to biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction in greater depth with Russia perhaps during the upcoming Moscow meeting of the Major Maritime Powers and during the informal consultations on the UNGA oceans and law of the sea resolution.

The U.S. stated that it was particularly pleased to see the recognition of the need to make progress to discipline subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity, and hope that the U.S. and RF will be able to work together to advance this effort.

The U.S. stated that it welcomed the progress in revitalizing the COFI agenda and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of COFI. The U.S. believes COFI is the body with the technical expertise, mandate, and scope to develop global fisheries and aquaculture governance. The U.S. stated it was pleased to learn of Russia's announcement that work is proceeding within Russia to ratify the Port State Measures Agreement. The U.S. reported it has begun a similar process within the United States. The U.S. informed RF that it is still working to provide funds to support a resumed session of the Flag State Performance Technical Consultation, and understand that a meeting for this purpose may be scheduled for early next year. The U.S. expressed its interest in having RF continue to actively participate in this process.

The Russian side gave a generally positive assessment of the results of the conference "Rio +20" on the issue of marine biological diversity and confirmed its interest in working together to exchange of views between the U.S. and Russia during the upcoming UN workshops on this issue.

7. Discussion of the Draft Agreement Between the Government of the Russian Federation and the U.S. Government on Conservation and Management of Living Resources in the Northern Bering Sea

The Russian side confirmed that it maintains its position that is reflected in the Protocol of the 22nd ICC. Dr. Fomin agreed that due to differences in approaches related to this

issue we currently do not have a way to solve this matter.

7.1 Presentation and Discussion on joint U.S. – Russia research program and data exchange

The U.S. thanked Russia for again authorizing the U.S. *R/V OSCAR DYSON* to access Russian waters for the purpose of conducting pollock surveys. At the 21st ICC the U.S. presented a concept paper on a joint U.S.-Russia research program. The purpose of the program is to obtain a better understanding of pollock distribution, abundance, and size composition on and around the maritime boundary line. Following the 21st meeting, an intersessional meeting was held in January 2011 in Seattle, Washington, to outline the steps of planning for this endeavor. At the 22nd ICC held in Monterey, California, a special session of the science meeting discussed the status of this work and further outlined next steps. The U.S. believes the information exchanged on metadata, to date, has been useful and informative. The U.S. also thanked the RF for providing information on Russia's observer program. The U.S. had sent RF follow-up questions. The U.S. presented the RF with a list of questions regarding the Russian observer program and just recently received a partial response. Next steps on this effort should focus on actual exchange of historical survey and catch data, with a particular emphasis on 2012 information. As discussed at the special science meeting during the 22nd ICC, the U.S. and Russia have agreed to conduct complementary surveys in our respective waters. The U.S. thanked the RF for collaborating with U.S. scientists on this work. The U.S. proposes the following: after both U.S. and Russian scientists have had the opportunity to review the data from their respective surveys in 2012, the U.S. would like to invite a Russian scientist or two to travel to the U.S. to work together to review the collective results. The time period suggested for this to occur is around January to March of 2013. The U.S. suggests that after reviewing the results, the scientists propose the next steps in this program.

The Russian side confirmed its readiness to consider proposals prepared by the American side concerning further data exchanges.

7.2 Presentation by U.S. on the U.S.-Russia Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Concerning Interaction and Cooperation in Detecting, Deterring, and Combating Illegal Harvesting and Commercial Trade of Marine Resources (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing)

The Russian side stated that some matters of principal importance were noted during the interagency review process of the US draft IUU agreement. It noted that the draft agreement is specific to one agency, which does not allow for consideration of this agreement as an intergovernmental document. In additon, in order to broaden the scope of the draft agreement the Russian side expressed its interest in having the Agreement include measures that would ensure effective mechanisms in control over

seafood products originating in Russia that enter US markets (certification). As a basis for completing this work, the Russian side proposed using its IUU agreements with other Asian Pacific countries as a basis for this new language. The RF expressed its willingness to provide a new version of the draft agreement and send it for review to the US side.

The U.S. stated that at the 2011 meeting on negotiation of the US-Russia IUU agreement, held on the side of the 22nd ICC in Monterey, CA U.S.A, both sides had reached an agreement in principle on the draft text of the agreement. Both sides agreed to review for final edits and legal review. The U.S. has provided its edits to RF. The U.S. is still awaiting edits from RF. RF has agreed to provide edits when it's ready. The U.S. stated that if the RF wanted to significantly alter the agreement beyond its current scope, it would prefer to first conclude this law enforcement agreement and afterwards enter into negotiations on any additional text as a separate agreement. However, the U.S. is open to receiving the edits from the RF, including some additional language. The U.S. stated the current IUU agreement is an intergovernmental agreement that involves multiple agencies on both sides and it is up to the Government of Russia to identify all of the Competent Authorities needed to implement the current agreement. It was noted that in the meeting of technical experts on the IUU agreement that took place the day before 23rd session of ICC, that in addition to its edits, RF agreed to provide a point of contact on the IUU agreement for Russia who could communicate directly with the U.S. lead for the agreement, Nicole Ricci.

NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement (NOAA OLE) provided an overview of the recently concluded US vs. Harbor Seafood case. This case involved Harbor Seafood's unlawful importation of 112mt of cooked, frozen King crab in December, 2010 and January, 2011. The product, valued at $2,753,713, was seized pending investigation by NOAA OLE. With the substantial assistance of personnel from the Russian Border Guard, NOAA OLE developed evidence that the crab was unlawfully harvested by Russian flagged-vessels from Russian waters. Harbor Seafood was charged with violations of import laws, the Lacey Act, and food importation laws. However, mid-way through the prosecutorial process, the flow of information and requested documents from the Russian side needed for court presentation ceased. NOAA OLE was advised by the Russian Government that all requests for information must follow the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty protocol, a much more lengthy process. The MLAT protocol was inconsistent with the needs for an expedient civil adjudication of the case, so the US Government proceeded without this documentary evidence, though from a weaker prosecution position. Fortunately, the case was settled without trial. Harbor Seafood forfeited $2.14 million in proceeds, and agreed to undertake a review of its internal compliance and training policies, and provide 12 hours of remedial training to all personnel who are import specialists or who are involved directly with the negotiation or purchase of international seafood products. This case resulted in an immediate reaction from the industry to improve their

documentation and attention to the legal purchase and transportation of Russian crab; however whether this increased compliance will continue is less certain without continuing investigations and successful prosecution of these types of cases.

This case also underscores the imperative need for the United States and the Russian Government to sign an enforcement agreement that will facilitate the exchange of information to support investigations and prosecutions of illegal crab harvest and importation by both countries.

7.3 Russian presentation on its recent bilateral illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing agreements with other countries

The Russian side provided information regarding its bilateral work on reaching agreements to prevent IUU catch with Japan, the Republic of Korean, Canada, North Korea, and the People's Republic of China.

8. Other matters: logistics planning for future ICC meetings

No other issues were discussed.

9. Time and place for holding the 24th ICC meeting

Mr. Balton (U.S.) proposed holding the 24th ICC during the week of September 9, 2013 in the USA.

10. Signed on September 7, 2012 in Saint Petersburg, Russia

David Balton
Head of Delegation
United States of America

Alexander Fomin
Head of Delegation
Russian Federation

Attachment 1

23rd SESSION OF THE U.S.-RUSSIA INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

September 5-7, 2012
St. Petersburg, Russia

DELEGATIONS

DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES

U.S. Department of State

Ambassador David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries and Head of Delegation, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Washington, D.C., *BaltonDA@state.gov*

Nicole Ricci, Foreign Affairs Officer, Office of Marine Conservation, Washington, D.C., *RicciNM@state.gov*

Nikolai Sorokin, Interpreter, *nvsoro@gmail.com*

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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7/26/12

DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Federal Agency for Fisheries

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Oleg Rykov, Representative of Russian Fisheries to the United States, *rusfishatt@starpower.net*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dmitry V. Gonchar, Deputy Director of the Legal Department

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A.I. Safronov, Inspector, State Marine Inspection Department, FSB

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DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

September 26, 2012

ATTENTION: Wesley Patrick

National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA

1315 East-West Highway

Room 13436

Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910

SUBJECT: Comments on Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for revisions to National Standard 1 Guidelines

Mr. Patrick:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council regarding potential revisions to the NS1 Guidelines. We understand that any process to revise the guidelines would provide additional opportunities for more specific comments; therefore, these comments represent our initial, general thoughts on several categories specified in the May 3, 2012 Federal Register Notice. We also requested our Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to review the guidelines, and a subgroup of our SSC worked over the summer to formulate their initial comments – these comments are attached to this letter. The SSC comments focus on technical aspects of the guidelines, while the Council's comments (below) are intended to focus more on the policy-oriented aspects of the guidelines. We encourage you to consider both our SSC comments as well as the Council's more general comments, noting that there are a few instances where the Council's comments diverge from, or provide clarification to, the SSC comments as they relate to key policy issues – these will be noted below.

Stocks in a fishery

As noted in the SSC comments, the guidelines should be clarified with regard to when a species may be included in the Ecosystem Component (EC) of an FMP; i.e., if a stock is the target of a particular fishery and is managed under the FMP for that fishery, it should be permissible to list that stock in the EC of a different FMP, even if the stock is considered 'overfished'. This is currently the case for two crab species in the North Pacific, which are listed in the EC of the BSAI groundfish FMP, even though they are determined to be 'overfished' under their primary (crab) FMP. We believe the guidelines need to be clarified to explicitly allow this situation. We are concerned that the four criteria for allowing a stock to be included in the EC are overly constraining in a general sense, above and beyond the example cited above, and as such force some stocks 'in the fishery' which are more appropriately included in the EC

(octopus is one example in the North Pacific). We believe that our current process, which includes an annual Ecosystems Considerations Chapter in our Stock Assessment/Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) documents, allows us to review information on each species and detect changes in its status that may necessitate a move from the EC to 'in the fishery'.

Regarding the SSC comments "that stocks can and should be protected without being "in" the FMP" (in an ecosystem context), the Council agrees with this general intent. In fact our current FMPs and management process provide for a high degree of ecosystem consideration for all stocks, whether 'in the FMP' or not, and ecosystem factors may be an important factor in considering OY determination (relative to MSY). However, this point is somewhat off target of the basic question of whether and how stocks are 'in the fishery' or not, and the Council does not believe it necessary to alter the guidelines to specify an explicit ecosystem standard for species outside of the FMP.

Overfishing and multi-year impacts

No comment at this time.

ACLs and optimum yield

Regarding the relationship between ACLs and OY, a critical component of the current guidelines is the allowance for an overall OY (as in our multi-species groundfish FMPs). Any requirement for species-specific OY determinations would be extremely difficult to implement, and detrimental to our overall FMP approach. The guidelines could perhaps be clarified in this regard.

Regarding the SSC comments on this issue, the Council agrees with the overall sentiment that "a focus on 'maximum economic yield' should not inappropriately overshadow social and ecological considerations in the specification of TACs and OY". However, the key word for the context of this statement is "inappropriately", within which are important value and policy judgments. The mandates of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, including NS1 itself, emphasize the attainment of OY and indeed maximizing the economic yield from the fisheries, while appropriately considering non-market/non-consumptive uses and other social and ecological considerations in both the determination and attainment of OY (as noted in issue #1 above). However, our SSC and the Council have witnessed some very questionable attempts to quantify non-consumptive use, resulting in "less than stellar" value determinations. While we agree that it is critically important to continue to allow for these types of social and ecological considerations in OY and TAC determinations, we strongly oppose any additions to the NS1 guidelines which would attempt to require explicit quantification of such values. Doing so would be a contentious, subjective exercise, likely resulting in endless fodder for litigation. We encourage the development of better approaches to 'account' for the social effects of management when analyzing management actions and specifying TACs and OY, but believe the current guidelines provide sufficient flexibility to consider social and ecological uses, and do not believe the guidelines should be altered to require explicit quantification and consideration of non-consumptive uses in setting ACLs.

Mixed-stock fisheries and OY

Our only comment is that the guidelines should be clear on what constitutes a 'mixed-stock fishery' for purposes of ACL requirements (i.e., is it permissible to establish a single ACL which contains several species of fish), versus a multi-species FMP wherein ACLs are specified for each species within the FMP.

Scientific and management uncertainty

In the North Pacific the current SAFE/TAC-setting process already accounts for considerable scientific uncertainty, in both the use of a Tier system to categorize the level of information associated with each stock, and in the setting of TACs themselves. While the current guideline provide for some flexibility in

the face of uncertainty, it is worth explicitly including the ability to evaluate and use options other than the somewhat rigid 'Pstar' approach to determine appropriate buffers and the probability of overfishing (see SSC comments under this topic and under ABC control rules), including the 'decision theoretic' approach. Given the very evolved, real-time, in-season management processes in pace for fisheries in the North Pacific, there should not be only one approach to determining and addressing management uncertainty in the guidelines.

Data poor stocks

In the North Pacific, many of our stocks are designated as 'in the fishery', as non-targets, because they do not qualify under the overly restrictive criteria for EC (see comment on issue #1 above); therefore, we are forced to set ACLs for these species, largely based on average historical catch rather actual scientific information. As noted in the SSC comments, the guidelines should be revised to clarify that not all data-poor stocks require Federal management, and should not be required to be categorized as 'in the fishery' in the FMP, or, in some cases, in the FMP at all.

ABC control rules

No comments at this time

Catch accounting

The SSC comments contain several specific comments in this regard, which underscore the need for clarification in the guidelines. From the Council's more general perspective, the key issue needing clarification has to do with how various sources of fishing mortality must be accounted for in setting ACLs. While the ACL requirements (and current NS1 guidelines) on their face require that all sources of mortality be accounted for, it is somewhat ambiguous as to how 'accounted for' is defined. For example, in the North Pacific small amounts of fish are typically necessary each year to support Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) for cooperative research projects, often on short timelines and most often for critical research activities such as bycatch reduction projects. Per our approved FMPs and associated ACL provisions, these small amounts of fish are not deducted from the TAC; rather, these removals are accounted for in the subsequent year's annual stock assessment process. This approach has been called into question by the agency, with the assertion that the Council should be setting aside a specific portion of the TAC for EFPs (and/or fish harvested as part of the annual NMFS stock assessment surveys, which are similarly accounted for). To require the Council to set aside portions of the TAC, for unknown, future EFP needs, could result in fish being left uncaught, at the unnecessary expense to the commercial fisheries. It would also inherently create further allocation issues within the TAC-setting process. This issue should be clarified in any revisions to the NS1 guidelines, preferably in a manner that allows the current practice of accounting for such fish in the subsequent stock assessment, rather than requiring a specific set-aside.

Accountability measures

No comments at this time

ACL exceptions

The North Pacific Council went through a lengthy process of revising and amending our Salmon FMP, partly in response to the ACL requirements (which on their face required us to set ACLs for every salmon stream in Alaska, even though salmon is managed at this level entirely by the State of Alaska). While we ultimately addressed this issue through the 'alternative approach' mechanism allowed in the NS1 guidelines (justifying the State's escapement-based management approach as a legitimate alternative to ACLs), a more straightforward exemption would have been a much more appropriate mechanism. The

guidelines should be revised to recognize these unique situations and allow for greater flexibility (including exemptions) in addressing them.

Rebuilding progress and revising rebuilding plans

We believe there is considerable room in this category for improvements to the existing guidelines, including greater flexibility, on a fishery by fishery basis, rather than strict timelines and strict requirements for rebuilding in cases where fishing does not appear to be a factor in rebuilding. The poster child for this situation is the Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab in the North Pacific. This fishery has been closed to directed fishing for decades, and is now in the second iteration of a rebuilding plan after the stock failed to recover after the first ten year rebuilding plan, even though it is projected that elimination of all harvest (even small bycatch amounts) will not result in rebuilding. With the recent Council action to close the area to fishing for groundfish with pot gear, virtually all human impacts have been eliminated or minimized, and environmental factors appear to be the only variable affecting (or effecting) rebuilding of this stock. To require yet another rebuilding plan (every ten years) in this situation is simply a waste of Council and agency staff and fiscal resources. It makes more sense to allow an existing FMP (rebuilding plan) to be extended in cases where fishing mortality can be demonstrated to be *de minimus*.

Other

The ANPR also request comments on the appropriateness and utility of using 'technical guidance reports' or 'policy directives' to clarify aspects of the NS1 guidelines, as opposed to amending the guidelines themselves. This raises some interesting policy and legal questions. While it may be more expeditious to effect changes in interpretation of the guidelines through 'policy directives', this approach can also be seen as circumscribing public process to some degree, and allowing the agency to make changes to the guidelines in a subjective manner. On the other hand, it may provide for greater flexibility in the interpretation of existing portions of the guidelines, some of which are 'one-size fits all' and would benefit from a more flexible application. Indeed, situations such as the Salmon FMP described above would have benefitted greatly from a simple policy directive. If it is possible to provide 'technical guidance' or 'policy directives' outside of the guidelines, why has the agency not done so in the numerous occasions to date where such an approach could have expedited the process greatly? This also raises the broader question of what 'force of law' do the guidelines contain? To date, the agency has strictly interpreted the guidelines as having the force of law, though this appears contrary to Congressional intent. We believe that the question of whether to utilize 'policy directives' hinges upon the greater question regarding the force of law contained within the current, or future revised, guidelines.

Conclusion

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these initial comments on potential revisions to the NS1 guidelines. We understand that if the agency proceeds to revise these guidelines, there will be ample opportunity for the public, and the Council, to provide additional, more specific comments regarding proposed revisions.

Sincerely,

Chris Oliver

Executive Director

Comments in response to the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding potential revision of the National Standard 1 guidelines

The Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) published on May 3, 2012, requests comments on potential revisions to the National Standard 1 Guidelines. The ANPR is wide-ranging in scope and lists 11 topics that have been identified for possible revisions. The SSC formed a working group to review each of these issues, provide more specific suggestions and identify any additional issues that may help clarify the NS1 guidelines.

The SSC provides the following comments on each of the issues identified in the ANPR.

Issue 1: Stocks in a fishery

The guidelines should clarify that stocks can and should be protected without being "in" the FMP
The MSFCMA requires fishing to be regulated such that the *entire marine ecosystem* is protected, and both the MSFCMA and the guidelines imply that regulation is not limited to the fishery's impacts on stocks that are "in" the respective FMP (which, in the parlance of the guidelines, means either "in the fishery" or in the EC). However, these facts continue to be widely misunderstood. Therefore, the guidelines should be amended to clarify further not only that stocks do not have to be moved into an FMP in order to receive protection from the activities of the associated fishery, but, in fact, the law *requires* that they be given an appropriate measure of protection regardless of their inclusion in an FMP. MSFCMA texts that speak to this issue include the following: Every FMP must contain "conservation and management measures" (section 303(a)(1)) and an "optimum yield" specification (section 303(a)(3)). Conservation and management measures are defined, in part, as those which are "useful in rebuilding, restoring, or maintaining, any fishery resource and the **marine environment**" and which are designed to assure that "irreversible or long-term adverse effects on fishery resources and the **marine environment** are avoided" (section 3(5), emphasis added). The specification of optimum yield is defined, in part, as the amount of fish which "will provide the greatest overall benefit to the Nation, particularly with respect to food production and recreational opportunities, and taking into account the **protection of marine ecosystems**" (section 3(33), emphasis added). Thus, the definitions of both "conservation and management" and "optimum yield" allow for the imposition of measures designed to maintain/protect the marine ecosystem apart from measures designed to maintain fishery resources or to produce food and recreational opportunities. Furthermore, section 303(b)(12) gives explicit allowance for an FMP to "include management measures in the plan to conserve target and non-target species and habitats, considering the variety of ecological factors affecting fishery populations...."

Existing guideline texts that speak to this issue include the following:
§600.310(e)(3)(iv)(C): "*Ecological factors.* Examples include impacts on ecosystem component species, forage fish stocks, other fisheries, predator-prey or competitive interactions, marine mammals, threatened or endangered species, and birds...." (Note that a species does not have to be in the EC in order to receive protection.)

Response to Comment 15: "...MSA does not compel FMPs to include particular stocks or stock complexes, but authorizes the Councils or the Secretary to make the determination of what the conservation and management needs are and how best to address them...."

§600.310(d)(1): "This section provides that a Council may, but is not required to, use an 'ecosystem component (EC)' species classification."

§600.310(d)(5)(iii): "EC species may be identified at the species or stock level, and may be grouped into complexes. EC species may, but are not required to, be included in an FMP or FMP amendment for any of the following reasons: For data collection purposes; for ecosystem considerations related to specification of OY for the associated fishery; as considerations in the development of conservation and management measures for the associated fishery; and/or to address other ecosystem issues...."

The guidelines should not ban overfished stocks from inclusion in the ecosystem component

The guidelines state that a stock cannot be included in the ecosystem component (EC) of an FMP if the stock is subject to overfishing, is approaching a condition of being overfished, or is overfished (§600.310(d)(5)(i)(B)). However, if a stock is the target of a particular fishery and is managed under the FMP for that fishery, it should be permissible to list that stock in the EC of a *different* FMP even if the stock is overfished (e.g., it should be permissible to list a salmon stock in the EC of a groundfish FMP, even if the salmon stock is determined to be overfished under its own FMP). Indeed, the NPFMC currently lists two crab stocks in the EC component of the BSAI groundfish FMP, even though they are determined to be 'overfished' under their primary FMP (Crab FMP). The guidelines should be clarified to remove this apparent conflict.

The following text is among those that are problematic in this regard:

§600.310(d)(5)(i): "To be considered for possible classification as an EC species, the species should: (A) Be a non-target species or non-target stock; (B) Not be determined to be subject to overfishing, approaching overfished, or overfished; (C) Not be likely to become subject to overfishing or overfished, according to the best available information, in the absence of conservation and management measures; and (D) Not generally be retained for sale or personal use."

Issue 2: Overfishing and multi-year impacts
No comments

Issue 3: Annual catch limits and optimum yield

The guidelines should provide additional guidance on how to account for the social and ecological effects of management actions
We are concerned that micro-economic considerations (e.g., a focus on "maximum economic yield" or profit maximization), may inappropriately overshadow social and ecological considerations in the specification of TACs and OY. While commercial fishery economic performance is of legitimate interest, it may on occasion conflict with competing objectives, needs, and purposes provided for under OY. The guidelines should emphasize the necessity of considering all three dimensions of "optimum yield" (i.e., economic, social, and ecological) when evaluating its dimensions; and, in particular, should provide additional guidance on how to account for the social effects of management actions on relevant impacted populations (e.g., fishery dependent communities, non-market and/or non-consumptive users). The concept of OY, as articulated in the original language of the Act, expressly recognizes the multi-dimensional characteristic of marine resource management. While placing commercial economic success *first among equals* is a reasonable interpretation of MSA mandates regarding fishery management application, attainment of OY (i.e., maximum benefits to the Nation) cannot be achieved without explicit consideration of the other dimensions.

Issue 4: Mixed-stock fisheries and optimum yield
No comments

Issue 5: Scientific uncertainty and management uncertainty

Additional clarification regarding the concepts of risk and uncertainty should be provided.
As currently written, the guidelines all but prescribe the use of the so-called P^* approach (e.g., Shertzer et al., 2008, *Fish. Bull.* 106:225-232) to account for scientific and management uncertainty, without explicitly considering associated risks and trade-offs. Other approaches for dealing with risk and uncertainty should not be precluded from being considered. See related comment under **'Issue 7. ABC control rules'**.

Issue 6: Data poor stocks

The guidelines should clarify that not all data-poor stocks require Federal management
The guidelines should give increased emphasis to the fact that some data-poor stocks are data-poor because there is not actually a fishery for them that warrants Federal management. The solution in such cases is either to remove them from the FMP or move them into the EC rather than "inventing" a fishery for them and trying to guess the values of all the management quantities that would be required to manage this imaginary fishery if it actually existed. The Council would still, of course, be responsible for ensuring that any such stocks are afforded appropriate protection from all Federally managed fisheries that impact those stocks.

Existing texts that speak to this issue include the following:

MSFCMA section 303(h) requires the Council to prepare an FMP "for each fishery under its authority that requires conservation and management...," not each stock in its geographic jurisdiction.

§600.310(c): "...As described in further detail in paragraph (d) of this section, Councils may review their FMPs to decide if all stocks are 'in the fishery' or whether some fit the category of 'ecosystem component species.'"

Issue 7: ABC control rules

The guidelines should not require use of P* in setting the buffer between ABC and OFL

Except for cases where the available data are insufficient, the guidelines state that the only acceptable method for specifying the buffer between ABC and OFL is the P* approach. Such a restriction is not required by the MSA and precludes approaches, such as those based on decision theory, that result in statistically optimal yields. Given that achievement of optimum yield constitutes half of NS 1, it is illogical to preclude approaches that result in statistically optimal yields. Moreover, staff of the NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries have indicated that the guidelines were never intended to exclude decision-theoretic approaches (Mark Millikin, pers. commun., 3/27/09). Therefore, the guidelines should be revised to allow approaches other than P^* in setting the buffer between ABC and OFL.

The following texts are among those that are problematic in this regard:

§600.310(f)(4): "The determination of ABC should be based, when possible, on the probability that an actual catch equal to the stock's ABC would result in overfishing. This probability that overfishing will occur cannot exceed 50 percent and should be a lower value."

Response to Comment 31: "NMFS believes that uncertainty in SDC, OFL, and other fishing level quantities is best dealt with by fully analyzing the probability that overfishing will occur and that the

stock might decline into an overfished condition, but we recognize that such a full analysis is not possible in many data-limited situations."

Response to Comment 42: "The SSC must recommend an ABC to the Council after the Council advises the SSC what would be the acceptable probability that a catch equal to the ABC would result in overfishing. This risk policy is part of the required ABC control rule."

Response to Comment 63: "...The determination of ABC should be based, when possible, on the probability that catch equal to the stock's ABC would result in overfishing, and that this probability cannot exceed 50 percent and should be a lower value."

Issue 8: Catch accounting

The guidelines should clarify what it means to "account" for all fishing mortality

The guidelines state that all sources of fishing mortality must be accounted for. However, a number of points remain ambiguous, particularly with respect to removals from sources other than the directed fishery (hereinafter referred to as "other" catches). Specifically, the guidelines should clarify each of the following points:

- When considering use of "other" catches in assessment and management, it will be necessary to distinguish between:
  - i. listing those catches but not using them for determination of catch limits,
  - ii. using those catches to estimate reference fishing mortality rates (F35%, etc.),
  - iii. using those catches to estimate reference harvest amounts (maxABC, OFL, etc.) given the reference fishing mortality rates, and
  - iv. including those catches in the total against which harvest specifications are compared.
- It will also be necessary to determine whether the use of "other" catches should differ depending on the source of the removals (e.g., should research catches be treated differently from catches taken in non-directed commercial fisheries?).
- In the event that "other" catches will be used to estimate either reference fishing mortality rates or reference harvest amounts, methods will need to be devised for doing so (e.g., does the calculation of F35%, etc., assume that "other" catches are zero, that they are equal to the long-term average, or something else?).
- What to do about years for which "other" catches were known to have occurred, but for which no direct estimate of magnitude is available (e.g., years in which surveys occurred but from which data no longer exist).
- What to do about sources for which "other" catches were known to have occurred, but for which no direct estimate of magnitude is available (e.g., catches taken in recreational fisheries).
- Can Councils preempt scientific research by allocating the entire ACL to the commercial fishery?

The following texts are among those that are problematic in this regard:

Response to Comment 35: "NMFS agrees that all sources of fishing mortality, including dead discards and post-release mortality from recreational fisheries must be accounted for, but believes that language in §600.310(e)(3)(v)(C), (f)(2)(i) and (f)(3)(i) in both the proposed and final action sufficiently explains that catch includes fish that are retained for any purposes, mortality of fish that have been discarded, allocations for scientific research, and mortality from any other fishing activity...."

§600.310(e)(2)(ii)(A)(2): "*Catch exceeds the OFL.* Should the annual catch exceed the annual OFL for 1 year or more, the stock or stock complex is considered subject to overfishing."

§600.310(e)(3)(v)(C): "All catch must be counted against OY, including that resulting from bycatch, scientific research, and all fishing activities."

§600.310(f)(2)(i): "*Catch* is the total quantity of fish, measured in weight or numbers of fish, taken in commercial, recreational, subsistence, tribal, and other fisheries. Catch includes fish that are retained for any purpose, as well as mortality of fish that are discarded."

§600.310(f)(3)(i): "*Expression of ABC.* ABC should be expressed in terms of catch, but may be expressed in terms of landings as long as estimates of bycatch and any other fishing mortality not accounted for in the landings are incorporated into the determination of ABC."

§600.310(g)(2): "*Inseason AMs.* Whenever possible, FMPs should include inseason monitoring and management measures to prevent catch from exceeding ACLs...."

§600.310(g)(3): "...If catch exceeds the ACL for a given stock or stock complex more than once in the last four years, the system of ACLs and AMs should be re-evaluated, and modified if necessary, to improve its performance and effectiveness...."

§600.310(l)(5): "*National Standard 9 (see §600.350).* Evaluation of stock status with respect to reference points must take into account mortality caused by bycatch. In addition, the estimation of catch should include the mortality of fish that are discarded."

Issue 9: Accountability measures

The guidelines should clarify that not all accountability measures relate to ACLs

The guidelines should clarify that FMPs necessarily contain a variety of accountability measures, and avoid giving the impression that the only accountability required is to prevent ACLs from being exceeded or to correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur. The fact that the MSFCMA requires accountability measures for specifying ACLs such that overfishing does not occur (section 303(a)(15)) does not mean that this is the only thing for which Councils are accountable under the Act.

The following text is among those that are problematic in this regard:

§600.310(g)(1): "(1) *Introduction.* AMs are management controls to prevent ACLs, including sector-ACLs, from being exceeded, and to correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur."

Issue 10: ACL exceptions
No comments

Issue 11: Rebuilding progress and revising rebuilding plans

Additional guidance on revising rebuilding plans for stocks with inadequate rebuilding progress should be provided

As noted in the ANPR (page 26240) "... the guidelines do not address the situation that occurs during the course of a rebuilding plan when rebuilding progress is determined to be inadequate. Inadequate progress can result from a number of factors, including:
a. Management measures that do not adequately control the fishery.

b. Environmental factors that limit stock growth.
c. Significant changes in the rebuilding target (B_{msy}) resulting from a new stock assessment.
NMFS intends to improve guidance on evaluating the progress of stocks in rebuilding plans and on revising the rebuilding plans in these situations."

In improving its guidance on situations of inadequate progress, NMFS should consider situations in which management measures ***do*** adequately control the fishery and when there are ***no*** significant changes in the rebuilding target resulting from a new assessment. The Pribilof Island blue king crab stock may offer one such example.

As stated on page 3 of the NOAA summary flyer on the Status of Stocks for 2011 (http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2012/05/docs/status_of_stocks_2011_4pager.pdf), "Although it is often assumed that a fish stock is overfished due to too much fishing, many other factors can influence the health and abundance of a fish stock. These factors can include natural mortality, disease, natural population cycles, habitat degradation, and environmental changes such as climate, ocean acidification, and land-based pollution. For example, the fishery for Pribilof Island blue king crab has been closed to directed fishing since 1999 and a number of other measures have been implemented to protect this resource, but the stock has made no progress towards rebuilding. This failure to recover is likely due to environmental conditions that are unfavorable to the blue king crab's reproduction and survival rates."

As further background on the example of the Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock, in 2002 NMFS declared the stock to be overfished. A rebuilding plan was implemented in 2003 that included a provision that prohibited directed fishing until the stock was rebuilt. However, the directed blue king crab fishery has been closed since 1999 and the rebuilding plan has constrained bycatch to low levels. In 2009 NMFS notified the Council that the current rebuilding plan would not achieve adequate progress to rebuild the stock by 2014. To comply with section 304(e)(7) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Council was required to develop a new rebuilding plan. Analysis of the impacts of the alternative closure configurations on the rebuilding potential for the PIBKC stock showed limited effect on rebuilding between the ranges of alternative closures. Nevertheless, the Council recommended Alternative 2b as its preferred alternative, which closes the Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone (PIHCZ) to fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear. The PIHCZ has been closed to trawling since 1995. Whereas the action was justified because it will further reduce fishing mortality on the blue king crab stock, we can envision situations (perhaps Pribilof Islands blue king crab in another 10 years) in which all forms of fishing mortality on a stock are sufficiently controlled to the extent that fishing cannot be the cause of lack of stock rebuilding. In such cases, where it can be clearly demonstrated that fishing mortality is sufficiently controlled (i.e., no directed fishery and bycatch is *de minimus*) and there is no change in the rebuilding target, new guidelines might consider some expedited process to "roll over" the existing rebuilding plan, thus avoiding the need to expend limited staffing and fiscal resources for situations in which environmental factors are likely responsible for the lack of stock recovery.

The guidelines should also address data-poor situations where information is lacking to inform rebuilding progress. Qualitative analysis (e.g., SWOT analysis, scenario planning) may be considered as an alternative tool to develop the rebuilding plan when quantitative rebuilding models are limited by available data.

Meeting of the NOAA Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group

Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management in NOAA

Diana Evans, North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Wednesday July 11, 2012
10:45-11:30 AM

In Alaska, and in the context of the last 5-6 years:

1. **How much have you been pushed by CLIENT demands to broaden the range of ecosystem considerations going into your management decision-making?**

   The Council's inclusion of ecosystem considerations in management decision-making is primarily client-driven (that is, responding to Council member, constituent, or stakeholder requests), rather than a response to institutional demands. The Council has a long history of bringing ecosystem factors into decision-making, and designing conservation and management measures that recognize the breadth of fishing impacts on the environment. The Alaska fisheries are currently managed under an ecosystem approach to fisheries. The Council has developed a multi-objective ecosystem policy for the fisheries, and a broad suite of management measures to address ecosystem impacts of the fisheries. All species or species groups are managed with conservative individual annual catch limits (ACLs), and in many cases, bycatch limits are also implemented for species outside of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Extensive area and seasonal closures exist throughout Alaskan Federal waters, protecting sensitive habitat areas such as deep sea corals, areas where the risk of encountering bycatch species is high, and marine mammal haulouts. Gear restrictions are also used extensively, especially for bottom trawling, as well as gear modification requirements to reduce adverse interactions (such as biodegradeable panels and excluder devices, seabird deterrents, and elevation devices on trawl sweeps). For some species, retention requirements exist to reduce discards and waste. Protection measures are built into limited entry and catch share programs to preserve fishing opportunities for coastal communities.

   The development of these conservation measures has primarily been in response to issues that have been identified by the Council or its stakeholders. The Council has an ethos of striving to be at the forefront with respect to national discussions on fishery management best practices. Consequently, in the last decade, the Council has frequently initiated efforts to develop pilot programs for ecosystem initiatives, as well as to uphold a strict policy of science-based decision-making that appropriately balances fishery yield with conservation needs. The Council maintains an active Ecosystem Committee, which makes recommendations on such initiatives. In 2007, the Council developed and adopted a Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Aleutian Islands, and in 2009, an Arctic FMP, also modeled on ecosystem principles.

   Since 1995, the Council has had an Ecosystem Considerations Report presented as an appendix to the groundfish Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) reports for groundfish management. Over the years, this section has evolved and expanded to include an ecosystem assessment for each region, in addition to reporting of ecosystem indicators, which is used in the discussion of annual harvest specifications. Beginning this year, a targeted Ecosystem Considerations report is also being included with the crab management SAFE report.

   Council constituents also provide impetus for the Council's consideration of ecosystem issues. For example, the fishing industry has invested in Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for the majority of groundfish stocks managed by the Council (and more recently in the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute initiative for a more generic certification program). The principles which must be met for MSC certification are for the fisheries to have sustainable fish stocks, mitigate environmental impacts, and have effective management. Members of the fishing industry are therefore active

stakeholders in maintaining a management system that allows for continued certification. The Council also responds to constituents when new information suggests a need for conservation. Most recently, the Council has requested an evaluation of new information about fish associations in productive shelf-break zones of the Bering Sea, specifically the Pribilof and Zhemchug canyons, with a view to determining whether further habitat protection and management measures in these areas are appropriate.

2. **How much have you been pushed by INSTITUTIONAL demands to broaden the range of ecosystem considerations going into your management decision-making?**

There are, however, institutional demands that also affect the Council's management process. Primarily, these demands are related to compliance with applicable law. Relevant statutes include the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and its 2006 revisions, as well as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Executive Order 12866, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, and others. Together, these statutes define the scope of analytical considerations that the Council must address in any decision-making.

There are instances when these institutional requirements do not match well with a regional management issue. For example, the blanket requirement for annual catch limits has proved incompatible with the Council's Alaska Salmon FMP, which establishes joint management with the State of Alaska. In that instance, it has, at length, been determined that the State's approach of escapement-based management is an acceptable alternative to annual catch limits. In the Council's development of the Arctic FMP, the Council initially ran into difficulties in trying to establish an FMP that would prohibit fishing in the short term, on the basis that insufficient information was available to understand its impacts in the Arctic. This challenge was eventually overcome by using alternative ecosystem and assessment modeling tools, and the funding of a fishery survey in the area.

There are also some instances when NMFS' national interpretations of statutory requirements have proven difficult in implementation. One example is the national guidance on the implementation of the essential fish habitat (EFH) provisions of the MSA. The level of information that is available about the productivity of habitat areas for particular species, or the dependence of species on certain habitat types, is insufficient to be able to assess EFH in the manner that is directed in the guidelines. Nor has research been able to materially increase the knowledge of these relationships in the last five years, despite specifically funding EFH research over that time period. In another illustration, NOAA has moved forward with the establishment of the national marine protected area (MPA) system, and the nomination of sites to the MPA registry, without defining the obligation to 'avoid harm' to listed MPAs. The NOAA guidance on this provision was originally promised in 2010. This has prevented the Council from being willing to nominate any of its many MPAs to the registry, lacking an understanding of what responsibilities will consequently be incumbent on the Council and other agencies, as a result of the listing.

ESA continues to be a major driver in the Alaska fisheries, particularly with respect to groundfish fishery interactions with Steller sea lions. It does not currently appear that this requirement is necessarily broadening the range of ecosystem considerations that go into management decision-making, although there is certainly a wealth of new information on Steller sea lions to be assimilated and understood. One challenge has been to assess new information specifically as relates to the relationship between the decline of the species and fishery interactions.

3. **If the pressures from the two directions are not working in harmony, how do you manage the discrepancies?**

Overall, there is no discord between client and institutional demands for addressing ecosystem considerations. There is, occasionally, discord between Council and NMFS interpretations of how

requirements need to be addressed with respect to specific issues. Some examples are identified in the response to Question 2.

4. **What are the major changes you have observed in the science advice you have been receiving over that period?**

We have not identified major changes in the science advice over the last five to six years, but rather improvements to the existing advice we have been receiving. There have been improvements in modeling, both for ecosystem modeling and stock assessment. The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has been actively trying to get Center of Independent Expert (CIE) reviews for all its stock assessments over that time period, which has also resulted in improvements to the assessments. The use of management strategy evaluations has also been increasingly used as a tool in the assessments. Additionally, the annual ecosystem assessments that are produced as part of the SAFE reports are continually being fine-tuned to try to synthesize practical management considerations that are directly relevant to harvest specifications and other fishery decision-making.

There has also been an increasing effort in Alaska to develop climate change research, including the loss of sea ice program, and research into ocean acidification. An extension of the annual trawl survey into the Northern Bering Sea, which has not been conducted since the 1970s, provided a useful basis for the Council in assessing the potential for northward movement of fish stocks, and Council priorities relative to developing a research plan for the area. Collaborative research with the National Science Foundation and the North Pacific Research Board on Integrated Ecosystem Research Programs (IERPs) is underway. For the most part, however, the products of this research are still in the developmental stages, and have not yet been fully integrated.

5. **How much of the new components of the science advice have you actually been able to use in your decision-making?**

As mentioned above, the majority of changes in the science advice are incremental improvements to existing advice. Ecosystem modeling output was used extensively in the Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan and the Arctic FMP, and is regularly made accessible to stock assessment authors for their use in the annual assessment process. Similarly, recommendations from CIE reviews and management strategy evaluations are incorporated in stock assessments by authors, and at the request of the fishery management plan teams and the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee.

The direct use of information from the annual ecosystem assessment, and sources such as the Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan, continues to be a challenge. There have been instances when such information has been directly used, for example, to justify adjusting total allowable catch from the maximum allowable, based on uncertainty or ecosystem factors. The challenge is in interpreting what indicators or trends mean for the relevant management decision, which is difficult without a defined, quantitative threshold.

As described in Question 4, with respect to the agency's climate research, there have yet to be many tangible products that affect Council decision-making. The data from the survey did provide an immediate result by indicating that fishery development in the northern Bering Sea is not a matter of urgency. The Council's SSC has received presentations on the management output component of the Bering Sea IERP project, which is currently in the final synthesis phase. The Council expects useful output at some point in the future.

6. **What are NOAA's successes and shortcomings in providing the kind of management guidance you are looking for?**

Groundfish stock assessment continues to be an area of excellence in integrating NOAA's science into fishery management. In recent years, progress has been achieved at incorporating ecosystem information directly into stock assessments through a quantitative variable into a single species

model (e.g., varying survey catchability (q) based on water temperature, or a threshold limiting fishing at low biomass levels for the protection of marine mammal predators). Some species have age-varying natural mortality because of age-varying predation mortality. Moreover, climate regime shifts factor into decisions about what years to select for estimating stock-recruit parameters and MSY. All the groundfish stock assessment authors include a section describing ecological interactions for their species, in each of their stock assessments. These are primarily qualitative in nature and may be used in the annual assessment of whether ABC should be reduced below the maximum allowable. These are also used to identify stocks that are highest priority for multispecies modeling and assessment.

The annual ecosystem assessment that is developed is also presented during the groundfish harvest specifications discussions. Information from that assessment is also available to the stock assessment authors, for direct use in their assessments. A staff member from the ecosystem assessment group at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center sits on each of the groundfish Plan Teams, to provide expertise in the harvest specification discussions. As noted above, the ABC deliberations by the Plan teams and SSC may include consideration of whether there is a trend in natural mortality due to predation or whether there is sufficient forage for a target species that may be exhibiting reduced recruitment trends. This may play a role in deciding whether the ABC should be reduced below the maximum allowable.

With the implementation of ACL requirements, the Council has devoted much time in recent years to bringing crab stock assessments to the same level of expertise. The crab FMP is managed jointly with the State of Alaska, and there have been institutional and logistical challenges to overcome in mirroring the groundfish assessment process for the crab stocks. Nonetheless, the Council and NOAA have worked together to pioneer assessment methodologies for these data-poor stocks.

Funding is always a limitation where research for management issues is required, and tradeoffs among management needs have to be considered. For several years now, however, the Council's primary annual research priority has been the continued funding of the annual fishery-independent surveys. In addition to providing the necessary basis for stock assessment, these surveys also form the basis for understanding ecosystem relationships throughout the Alaska ecosystems.

There are some areas that can be considered shortcomings for management guidance to the Council. The response to Question 2 referenced the lack of available data for habitat productivity linkages for fish species, necessary for protecting EFH, despite ongoing research. Even more basic, there is a continued lack of basic habitat mapping in Alaska, which would provide a considerable benefit in understanding fishing impacts on the benthos.

One institutional issue with NOAA may be that there are times when a new program is implemented before its complications have been completely resolved. The MPA program, referenced in Question 2, may be an example of this, where the program has been implemented without all participants fully understanding its purpose. Another example is the implementation of economic data collection, which is universally recognized as a critical need for understanding the fisheries. The Alaska crab economic data reports (EDR), a Congressionally mandated data collection program, were implemented simultaneously with the implementation of a catch share program in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab fisheries. The program's objective is to collect comprehensive economic data (most importantly cost data) to allow more comprehensive analyses of the crab fisheries and the effects of the catch share program. Since its outset, however, there have been discussions about the utility of the program. These have included questions about the accuracy and consistency of the data, whether it is redundant with other programs, and the costs of the program to both industry and the agency. There is an ongoing discussion in the Council concerning the appropriate scale of economic data collection programs for fisheries analyses.

7. **Are you not getting some advice that you need to complete an EAF (and do you think you have communicated those needs clearly)?**

The Alaska fisheries are currently managed under an ecosystem approach to fisheries, with a comprehensive conservation and management program. That being said, EAF is a continuum, not an endpoint, and there are certainly areas where the Council is developing and will continue to develop its approach. For example, the Council has recently taken action to restructure its observer program, in order to institute observer coverage on some unobserved sectors of the fisheries (e.g., vessels under 60 ft, and the halibut fishery), as well as to reduce bias in the observer data through random selection for coverage.

The Council has identified many key items on its annual research priority list that will inform the Alaska EAF. These include research into stock assessment needs, such as life history parameters and biomass indices for data-poor stocks; fishery management issues, such as improved catch monitoring methods on small vessels; habitat assessment, such as baseline habitat mapping; and protected species interaction concerns, such as assessing the impact of seabird bycatch in fisheries on bird populations.

8. **Most of the key documents on EBFM discuss FOUR facets to its implementation. How much appetite do you see in the Management circles for each of the four components:**

   a. **Taking more complete account of the main environmental drivers (physical oceanography, species interactions habitat quality, etc.) affecting the productivities of the stocks being managed**

   The Council likely has a lower appetite for addressing environmental drivers, because while the Council has interest in addressing these when there is information available, environmental drivers are harder to define in terms of their impact on fishery management decisions. It is difficult to assess what action to take to address potential future changes that are difficult to define. Where a specific action or prediction can be identified, the Council is likely to move it forward, but without a clear direction, this is unlikely to be a Council priority.

   b. **Taking more complete account of the impact of the fishery on the ecosystem (bycatch, habitat impacts, changes in community structure, etc.)**

   The Council has demonstrated a high interest in this aspect of EBFM, particularly in recent years. Bycatch issues have dominated the Council's agenda in the recent time period, and the Council has devoted much attention to improving its understanding of the groundfish fishery's impact on incidentally affected species, primarily targets of other fisheries (salmon, halibut, crab), or marine mammals such as Steller sea lions. The Council has established (and reevaluated) bycatch limits for many of these species, as well as seasonal and spatial closures. The Council has tried to understand both the change in status of an affected ecosystem component, as well as the specific impact of the fishery in contributing to that change.

   For example, bycatch of Chinook and chum salmon in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries has been on the Council's agenda in various analyses for several years, and discussion of this issue encompasses many ecological factors. The Council and NMFS have developed an adult equivalency model to estimate what proportion of the salmon caught as bycatch would otherwise have returned to their streams of origin, based on ocean mortality estimates and regular genetic analysis of the stock composition of salmon caught as bycatch in the pollock fishery. Continuing research is being undertaken to evaluate the environmental factors that cause pollock and salmon to be collocated (e.g., water temperature), or the differences in their swimming behavior, in order to help fishermen develop fishing practices or gear

excluder devices to avoid salmon bycatch. Because salmon has a high subsistence and cultural value in Alaska, as well as being important for coastal commercial fisheries, the impact of foregone salmon on these constituents is also a matter for discussion and research. In 2009, the Council adopted a bycatch limit for Chinook salmon, which closes the fishery once it is reached. The Council is now considering similar protection measures for bycatch of chum salmon, however pollock fishermen are facing difficulties in maximizing avoidance of both Chinook and chum salmon simultaneously.

In addition to bycatch impacts, the Council addresses fishery impacts on the ecosystem in other areas. As discussed above, the Council actively supports the continued development of annual ecosystem assessments for its fishery management regions, which evaluate the available ecosystem indicators and attempt to synthesize them for management advice, particularly related to annual harvest specifications. As part of the 5-year review of EFH provisions, the Council identified candidate sites for habitat areas of particular concern areas, in this case to protect skate egg concentrations. A review of the need to protect the productivity of Bering Sea canyons is currently underway.

c. Making the management process more stakeholder inclusive (and empowered, not just consultation)

In recent years, inclusive stakeholder involvement in the Council process has been a medium to high priority. The Council developed and adopted an outreach policy in 2008, to improve its practice of making sure that affected stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. The Council has evolved a formal outreach and education strategy for several of the high profile issues that have been addressed in recent years, particularly those that affect a stakeholder constituency that is not normally directly involved by the Council process. This has involved both staff presentations of relevant issues, as well as Council members traveling to remote communities, and having the Council meeting take place in a new community.

The Council's outreach efforts with respect to specific issues have also generally increased awareness of all of the Council issues among this broader stakeholder constituency, and have also sparked an increase in dialogue and direct relationships between the fishing industry and potentially affected coastal community stakeholders. For example, the trawl industry has effectively made an agreement with community members to stop fishing in an open area in Bristol Bay after a certain period in June, in order to minimize the risk of halibut interactions; and they are currently negotiating with other community stakeholders about extending the boundary of a habitat conservation area around Nunivak Island where trawling is prohibited.

d. Integrating decision-making in fisheries with decision-making in other ocean-industry sectors

This is generally a lower priority EBFM issue in Alaska, as there are fewer cross-jurisdictional issues compared to other regions. While truly integrated decision-making is not really being practiced in Alaska, the Council is making efforts to improve coordination with other ocean-industry sectors. In 2006, the Council orchestrated the creation of the Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum, bringing together 10 Federal and 4 State agencies, along with the Council, which have jurisdiction over activities in marine waters. The memorandum of understanding for the forum identifies that its purpose is to improve coordination and communication among the agencies in order to achieve sustainable management and use of Alaska's marine ecosystems in the most effective and efficient manner, consistent with the missions of those agencies. The forum meets one to two times per year. More recently, the Council also adopted a formal policy for its involvement in the EFH consultation process. EFH consultation is undertaken by NMFS on activities by other Federal agencies which may affect habitats of

direct concern to the Council. The purpose of the Council's policy is to ensure that activities that are of relevance to the Council are brought to their attention in a timely fashion, and not overlooked.

The Council is, however, keenly aware of the National Ocean Council initiatives regarding coastal and marine spatial planning. While the Council has documented its concern about the implementation of the initiative as currently proposed, if it goes forward, the Council anticipates having an active role on the Alaska Regional Planning Body, and this aspect of EBFM may take on a higher Council priority.

9. How well is NOAA collaborating with academia, external researchers, and other agency partners in ecosystem-based plans for fisheries? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

The Council is represented with NOAA in several research forums. The Council Chairman is currently also chair of the North Pacific Research Board (NPRB), as well as on the Advisory Council for the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (UAF SFOS). Council staff are also represented on the Alaska Sea Grant Advisory Board, the Rasmuson Foundation Fisheries Excellence Committee (for UAF SFOS), and the NPRB Science Panel. The Council also periodically hosts interns from various university graduate programs, and maintains close relationships with UAF SFOS and the University of Washington Schools of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, and Marine Affairs.

Generally, NOAA is effective at coordinating with our Council, and is responsive to specific research or science requests that the Council makes. However, the feedback loop with respect to addressing Council research priorities is an area that is in need of improvement. To address this issue, the Council is currently revising its process for identifying and tracking research priorities, in order to better follow how those priorities are addressed by research partners, and how they feed back into management needs. Once the Council's process has been revised (scheduled for this summer), the Council may be able to improve its effectiveness both at communicating research priorities to partners, and following up on important issues that falling short of decision-making needs.

Another area where NOAA may be able to take a more effective role is in providing a central clearing house for the various conferences, workshops, and research trips that are occurring in the Alaska marine ecosystems. In particular with the recent interest in the Arctic, there are now dozens of conferences and workshops every year on some aspect of the Arctic, with a multitude of different governmental organizations involved. It would be far more productive to have a central inventory of these various events, and some idea of what researchers are doing, individually or collectively. NOAA seems like an obvious organization to take on this role of coordination.

10. To what extent do other drivers like the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, etc., play into the development of regional fisheries management approaches?

The Endangered Species Act in particular is a key driver in the development of Alaska fisheries management. Groundfish fishery interactions with Steller sea lions have dramatically shaped conservation and management measures in the Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska. Interactions with other marine mammal and seabird species are also important, and closely monitored. While interactions with endangered salmonid species are also of concern, the bycatch of these species in Alaska is a small proportion of their bycatch mortality, and declines in Alaska salmon species (which are not endangered) are a far more prominent motivation for mitigating bycatch.

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AGENDA B-1(h)
OCTOBER 2012

August 9, 2012

Mr. Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Dear Eric,

The Commission has been contemplating potential actions on the Closed Area (CA) on the Bering Sea shelf. The CA was created by the Commission in 1967 to protect a nursery area for juvenile halibut from mortality arising through bottom trawling by foreign fishing vessels. Bilateral agreements between the U.S. and foreign governments led to fishery closures which included the IPHC CA. Throughout the late 1960s until the early 1970s, the CA provided significant protection for juvenile halibut, with bycatch mortality dropping to an estimated low of approximately 4.2 Mlb in 1985. However, with the Americanization of the fishery after extension of fisheries jurisdiction in 1977, the bilaterally-based closed areas were reopened and the IPHC's intent of protection for juvenile halibut afforded by the IPHC CA was lost. Mortality on halibut again increased substantially in the 1985-1991 period, reaching a peak of approximately 10.7 Mlb in 1992. Bottom trawling within the CA accounts for a significant proportion of the halibut mortality in the Bering Sea. The CA currently remains open to all fishing except directed commercial halibut longline fishing.

Halibut bycatch mortality is currently managed through Prohibited Species Caps for various directed fisheries, often with time and area specificity, and the IPHC CA plays no meaningful role in the management of bycatch mortality. Therefore, from a halibut assessment and management perspective, the Commission is reviewing the continued purpose in maintaining the current CA in the eastern Bering Sea. As part of this discussion, the Commission is considering how directed commercial halibut fishing within the area of the current CA would be managed under the Council's IQ framework.

Although the Commission has treated Area 4CDE as a single management unit since 1998, the Council uses a Catch Sharing Plan to divide the IPHC catch limit for Area 4CDE into individual catch limits for Areas 4C, 4D, and 4E, for domestic allocation purposes. Should the Commission choose to open the CA, the IPHC staff has recommended it be incorporated as part of Area 4E and, since the data from the CA are already included in the stock assessment and catch limit determination, that there be no changes to the catch limit assigned to Area 4CDE. However, the Commission seeks the Council's comments on whether it perceives a requirement for any action to the Council's Catch Sharing Plan for Area 4CDE, should the CA be opened. The Commission would be grateful to receive your commentary on this issue prior to its Interim Meeting, scheduled for November 28-29, 2012.

Sincerely,

Bruce

Bruce M. Leaman, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: IPHC Commissioners

Updated Review of the IPHC Bering Sea Closed Area

Bruce M. Leaman

Background

The IPHC Bering Sea Closed Area (Fig. 1) was created by the Commission in 1967 to protect a nursery area for juvenile halibut, in response to severe declines in halibut abundance. The current Closed Area is slightly smaller than the original definition due to reductions that occurred when Areas 4C and 4E were created. The Closed Area had historically accounted for a relatively small percentage (<10%) of the directed halibut landings in the Bering Sea but was a source of significant halibut mortality from foreign vessel bottom trawling. The Commission recommended the closure to both directed halibut fishing, which was under Commission jurisdiction, and to bottom trawling, which was not under Commission jurisdiction. However, through negotiations within the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission and bilateral agreements with foreign governments, the Closed Area was also closed to foreign bottom trawling. Throughout the late 1960s until the early 1970s, the Closed Area provided significant protection for juvenile halibut, with bycatch mortality dropping to an estimated low of 4.21 Mlb in 1985. Coincidentally, halibut abundance improved dramatically, fuelled in part by strong year classes of the mid 1970s.

However, as Americanization of the Bering Sea trawl fisheries occurred in the early 1980s, following promulgation of the U.S. Extended Economic Zone, the protection to juvenile halibut afforded by the Closed Area diminished for domestic fisheries under exclusive U.S. jurisdiction. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council did attempt to control bycatch mortality by instituting gear and fishery-specific limits and closures within the Closed Area, throughout the 1980s. However, mortality on halibut again increased substantially in the 1985-1991 period, reaching a peak of 10.72 Mlb in 1992. Bottom trawling within the Closed Area accounts for a significant proportion of the halibut mortality in the Bering Sea. The Closed Area remains open to all fishing except directed halibut longline fishing.

The Commission requested a review of the Closed Area in 1998 (Trumble 1999). That review examined the purpose of the Closed Area and its value to halibut management. The summary of that review is reproduced below:

> The closed area does not reduce halibut bycatch mortality. Bycatch is managed with bycatch mortality limits through the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, and with quota reductions and harvest rate reductions by the IPHC.
>
> Ecosystem effects from the IPHC closed area have little benefit. The fishing by other gear types throughout the Bering Sea-Aleutian Island area, especially on the Bering Sea shelf, preclude an undisturbed ecosystem. A small no-trawl zone occurs on the eastern edge of the IPHC closed area. Evaluation of ecosystem stability in the Bering Sea must include the other fisheries, both in and out of the IPHC closed area and the no-trawl zone.
>
> Of the issues favoring development of MPAs, only uncertainty of the stock assessment and concomitant management program apply to Pacific halibut. Stock assessment results in the Bering Sea are currently inadequate because of insufficient time series of catch and survey data (Sullivan and Parma 1998), and because exploitation rates are low. Questions still remain on stock assessment issues in the Gulf of Alaska.

Evaluation

As noted in the 1998 review, the sole perceived purpose of the Closed Area was as a hedge against uncertainty concerning assessment and management of halibut in the Bering Sea. Since 1998, the Commission has accumulated sufficient data and has been able to generate stock assessments for the Bering Sea with considerably greater confidence than was possible in 1998. Therefore, the staff no longer sees a purpose for the Closed Area as such a guard against uncertainty.

Halibut bycatch mortality is currently managed through Prohibited Species Caps for various directed fisheries, often with particular time and area specificity, and the IPHC Closed Area plays no role in the management of bycatch. Therefore, from a halibut assessment and management perspective, the staff perceives no continued purpose in maintaining the current Closed Area in the eastern Bering Sea.

Should the Commission choose to open the Closed Area, the staff recommends it be incorporated as part of Area 4E and, since the data from the Closed Area are already included in the assessment, that there be no changes to the catch limit assigned to Area 4CDE. This would also not require any action on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Catch Sharing Plan for Area 4CDE.

Reference

Trumble, R.J. 2009. Evaluation of the maintaining the IPHC Closed Area in the Bering Sea. Int. Pac. Halibut Comm. Report of Assessment and Research Activities 2008: 243-248.

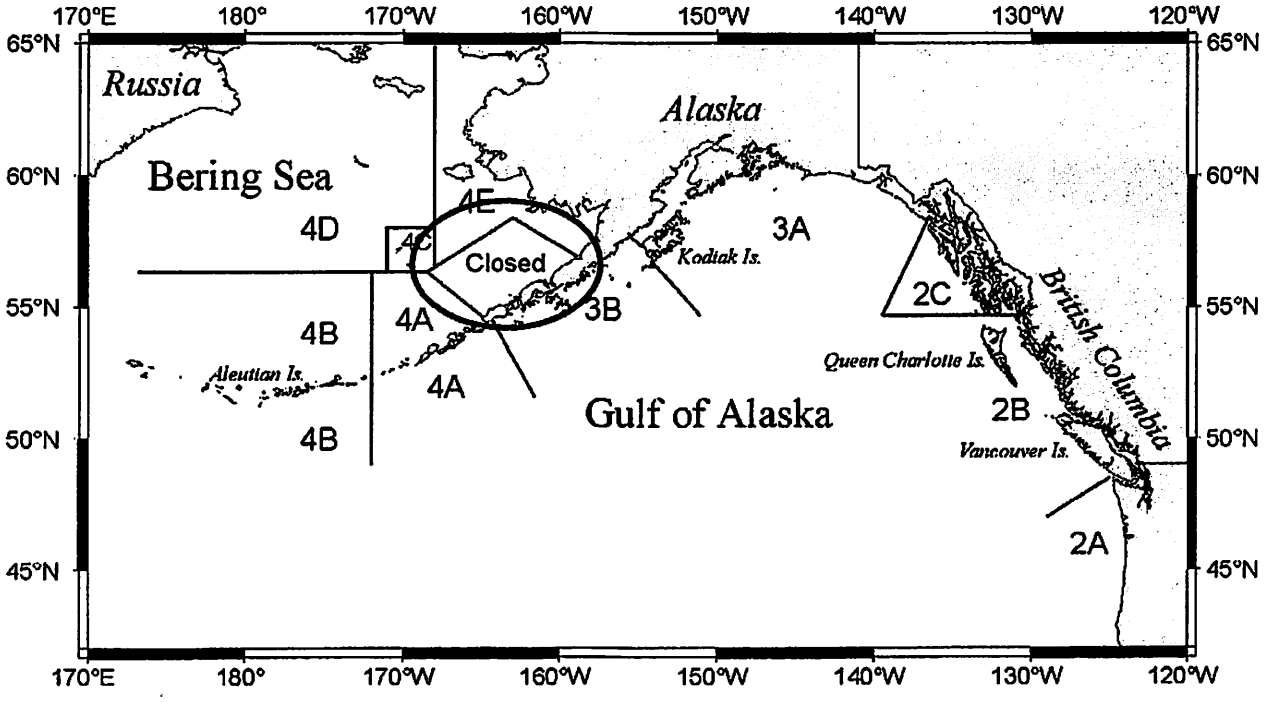

Figure 1. Eastern Bering Sea Area currently closed to halibut fishing.

AUG 1 5 2012

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

Mr. Manuel P. Duenas
Chairman
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Duenas:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) requesting the formation of a National Scientific and Statistical Committee (National SSC). We agree that a National SSC could provide coordination of best practices among the Councils' SSCs, help establish topics for future national SSC workshops, and recommend creation of specific topical working groups. The National SSC could also serve as a pathway for improved communication with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) fishery science program.

We recommend that a National SSC be established as a subcommittee of the CCC, and that the CCC establish Terms of Reference for the National SSC rather than separate SOPPs. The CCC can revise its Terms of Reference to formally establish the National SSC, specify the role of the SSC, and detail how the CCC expects to engage with the National SSC. This process is similar to the way Council SSCs are organized and would accomplish the same objective. We would be interested in participating in the development of these Terms of Reference, including ensuring that they satisfy the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act and any other legal requirements.

We are pleased that the CCC is interested in having a senior NMFS scientist serve as an ex-officio member of the National SSC. The new NMFS Lead Scientist for Stock Assessments is expected to be selected soon and would be an ideal candidate for this role with the National SSC.

Your letter describes a process by which the results of National SSC working group results could be reviewed, published, and then considered as best practices. Rather than respond specifically to the proposed process now, let us take that up as we develop and review the draft TORs. In particular, we should work together to clarify the level of review needed for a document to serve as a statement of best practices among the SSCs, versus the more extensive review and approval required for more formal technical guidance.

I appreciate your interest in this matter and look forward to continued engagement between the Councils and NMFS on the important science issues affecting marine fisheries.

Sincerely,

Samuel D. Rauch III
Deputy Assistant Administrator
for Regulatory Programs,
performing the functions and duties of the
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FOR FISHERIES

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

THE DIRECTOR

JUL 23 2012

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WESPAC

Mr. Manuel P. Duenas
Chairman
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Duenas:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) regarding the process in which the Councils' 5-year research priorities are considered by their respective National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Science Centers.

Section 302(h)(7) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that each Council establish research priorities for five-year periods and that these priorities be updated as necessary. These priorities are to be provided to the Secretary and the NMFS regional Science Centers for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets for the region of the Council.

The Science Centers begin developing their annual operational plans in May or early June each year. These operational plans establish core science priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Therefore, we recommend that the Councils submit their 5-year research priorities to their respective Science Center early in the annual strategic planning process to ensure consideration. We also recommend that the Councils provide some degree of prioritization when identifying their research needs, including pertinent time frames.

Recognizing that the Science Centers do not operate on matching planning cycles and that the Councils each have their own meeting schedules, I encourage each Science Center and Council pairing to develop additional specific mechanisms for exchange of priorities. Although it is pragmatically easier for each pair to determine the timing of such exchange, there are good lessons learned for how such information exchange can be best facilitated. For example, NMFS membership on council advisory bodies (e.g., Scientific and Statistical Committees) allows for routine communication and can be used to develop joint research priorities. In addition, sharing or presentation of the operating plan and science activities by the Science Center during a Council meeting provides opportunity for feedback and exchange.

I appreciate your interest in improving the process by which scientific requirements are collectively identified and welcome any suggestions you may have for this process.

Sincerely,

Samuel D. Rauch III
Deputy Assistant Administrator
for Regulatory Programs,
performing the functions and duties of the
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FOR FISHERIES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

JUL 26 2012

Mr. Manuel P. Duenas
Chairman, Western Pacific Regional
Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Duenas:

Thank you for your letter regarding the panel convened at the Council Coordination Committee's (CCC) May 2012 meeting to discuss Endangered Species Act consultations on fishery management plans. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) looks forward to working closely with the panel and the CCC on this issue, and shares the CCC's goals of ensuring a high level of transparency and increasing stakeholder confidence in the consultation process.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is in the process of determining an approach that will best facilitate achieving these goals. NMFS participated in two conference calls with the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) Chair Keith Rizzardi and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds, Protected Resources Coordinator Asuka Ishizaki, and Senior Scientist Paul Dalzell. As a result, MAFAC agreed to engage on these Endangered Species Act issues. MAFAC discussed the concerns raised by the CCC during its May 2012 meeting and we are working with them on identifying next steps.

In addition, NMFS' Offices of Protected Resources and Sustainable Fisheries are working with NOAA General Counsel to develop recommendations regarding policy and guidance for increasing transparency and stakeholder involvement in Endangered Species Act consultation on fishery management plans. NMFS shared this information at a June 28, 2012, MAFAC Executive Committee Meeting and said that it will work with MAFAC to ensure the two processes achieve the stated goals, inform one another, and are not duplicative.

NMFS will communicate with the CCC regarding progress. I appreciate the CCC's interest in working with both MAFAC and NMFS to improve our processes under the Endangered Species Act.

Sincerely,

Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D.
Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Western
Pacific
Regional
Fishery
Management
Council

August 23, 2012

RECEIVED
SEP 20 2012

Honorable Doc Hastings
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Hastings:

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council ("WPRFMC") requests that Congress conduct a review of the Endangered Species Act ("ESA") and Marine Mammal Protection Act ("MMPA") with respect to their impacts on fisheries and other ocean users. WPRFMC also requests that the House Committee on Natural Resources ("Committee") conduct a hearing in the State of Hawaii to discuss these issues in greater detail.

Over the past three decades, we have seen the increasing imposition of management restrictions under the ESA and MMPA to Hawaii's fisheries and other users of coastal waters, with similar trends increasingly extending to American Samoa, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Environmental organizations have made no secret of the fact that they intend to use these laws to pursue their own agendas, often at great cost to the people of Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Islands. Fish and fisheries are important to the Pacific Islands both culturally and economically. Honolulu consistently ranks among the top ten fishery ports in the U.S. in terms of landed fish value. Even though our population is small, Hawaii ranks among the top five States in terms of recreational fisheries catches.

We are encouraged by the recent series of hearings conducted by the Committee that have examined how excessive ESA-related litigation impacts species recovery, job creation and the economy. Here, we offer additional aspects of the ESA and MMPA that would benefit from Committee review, and request that the Committee consider these matters in conjunction with its ongoing review of the ESA.

ESA and MMPA Actions Impact Fisheries with No Added Benefit to the Species

Hawaii-based longline fisheries, managed under the Fishery Ecosystem Plan for Pacific Pelagic Fisheries of the Western Pacific Region ("Pelagic FEP"), have been subject to multiple lawsuits under the ESA and MMPA due to incidental takes of protected species. The shallow-set sector of the longline fishery targets swordfish that supplies the U.S. domestic market. This sector of the longline fishery continues to be targeted by several environmental organizations through

litigation on sea turtle incidental take levels. This onslaught of litigation resulted in a court-ordered closure of the fishery from 2001 to 2004. Despite extremely effective sea turtle mitigation measures implemented in 2004 under the Pelagic FEP, which reduced incidental takes by 90%, the fishery continues to be plagued by lawsuits, threatening the continuity of the most environmentally responsible longline fishery in the Pacific. Moreover, the court-ordered closure of the fishery resulted in more impacts to sea turtle populations overall in the form of transferred effects, as U.S. demand for swordfish did not change during the closure period, and more swordfish were imported from fisheries with higher levels of sea turtle bycatch. In addition, these legal challenges have a depressive effect on investment in the fishery stemming from the potential of another lawsuit closing the swordfish fishery.

Similarly, a lawsuit filed by environmental organizations required the National Marine Fisheries Service ("NMFS") to implement the Take Reduction Team ("TRT") process for the tuna-targeting deep-set sector of the Hawaii longline fishery due to its interactions with false killer whales. The TRT provisions set forth under the MMPA include a timeline for developing a draft Take Reduction Plan ("TRP"), with a short-term goal of reducing the incidental take of MMPA species (in this case, false killer whales) to below the potential biological removal ("PBR") level for the species within six months after the development of the TRP. These unrealistic timeframes contained in the MMPA forced the False Killer Whale TRT to develop a draft TRP that included emergency measures to close a large portion of the longline fishing area that would significantly impact the fishery. However, such a measure will likely have no demonstrable conservation benefit as it would only push impacts to outside of the closure area.

These direct impacts to U.S. Pacific fisheries are now compounded with numerous new ESA listing petitions by environmental organizations. These listing petitions have the potential to further constrain fisheries management in the Hawaiian Islands. The list of new petitions has continued to grow, and it includes a proposed critical habitat revision for Hawaiian monk seals, and listing petitions for Hawaii insular false killer whales, bumphead parrotfish, scalloped hammerhead, great white shark, and 82 species of coral. For many of these species, it is questionable whether ESA listing would provide any benefit because their ranges extend far beyond U.S. jurisdiction, and existing management measures are sufficient to protect the species in U.S. waters. In addition, the time and resources spent acting on these petitions detracts from our ability to develop conservation programs that will provide demonstrable benefits for the species.

Duplication and Discrepancies between the ESA and MMPA

Duplication between the ESA and MMPA is another significant issue impacting management of fisheries in Hawaii. For example, North Pacific humpback whales are currently listed as Endangered under the ESA, while also protected under the MMPA. Humpback whales rarely interact with Hawaii-based longline fisheries, but the rare potential for interactions requires the longline fishery to comply with take authorizations for both ESA and MMPA. Take authorizations for ESA and MMPA must follow different requirements, and the fishery was not able to obtain an incidental take statement for humpback whales under the ESA until the agency issued a negligible impact determination for the MMPA permit.

The ESA and MMPA also require separate sets of requirements for assessing population status. This became evident while simultaneously navigating two false killer whale issues in Hawaii – the TRT process under the MMPA and the listing petition for the Hawaii insular population. The MMPA requires that stock assessment reports for all marine mammal stocks are published on a

regular basis, under which impacts from fisheries and other human activities are evaluated against the PBR. The ESA, on the other hand, requires that species considered for listing be evaluated for its extinction risk. Different guidelines and standards exist under the ESA and MMPA for conducting these assessments, making it difficult for the general public to review information and provide constructive comments in the limited time available during public comment periods.

Furthermore, there are discrepancies between the ESA and MMPA with respect to the minimum unit of species management. Under the ESA, species may be managed at the distinct population segment ("DPS") level, which is determined on the basis of the population segment's discreteness and significance to the species. Congress intended the DPS to be used sparingly and only when biological evidence indicates that such action is warranted. However, under the MMPA, marine mammals are managed as "stocks", which is simply defined as "a group of marine mammals of the same species or smaller taxa in a common spatial arrangement, that interbreed when mature." As a result, species are increasingly subdivided into smaller stocks under the MMPA, requiring island-by-island evaluation of human impacts on marine mammals in some cases.

These examples point out that when a marine mammal is listed under the ESA, substantial duplication and conflict arises under the MMPA. This duplication and conflict is unnecessary, and could be easily addressed by exempting species protected under the MMPA from listing under the ESA.

ESA and MMPA Lack Transparency and Public Engagement

Many actions required under the ESA and MMPA have the potential for adverse socioeconomic impacts on fishermen. At the same time, protection of species requires support and cooperation from affected communities to ensure necessary actions are successfully implemented. However, as currently written, the ESA and MMPA require very little public engagement and participation. This creates an impression that regulations are not based upon community knowledge and experience, and that ultimately, decisions to list species are based on political pressure and not scientific information.

The ESA and MMPA lack a transparent decision-making process unlike the Regional Fishery Management Council process under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Public comment periods are typically conducted only when the proposed rule is published, and information is withheld from the public prior to the publication. Many of the list actions are announced to the public only through the publication of Federal Register notices, which are not commonly read by the general public. Public hearings for proposed rules, if conducted, provide no room for productive discussion between the members of the public and the agency.

The process of revising the Hawaiian monk seal critical habitat, initiated by a petition by environmental organizations, exemplified the lack of public engagement in ESA decision-making processes and the resulting public discontent. Prior to the publication of the critical habitat proposed rule in June 2011, the only opportunity to provide comment into the revision process was when the 90-day finding to the petition was issued in October 2008. The geographic scope of the critical habitat revision and its potential impacts were never brought to the public's attention in the first two and a half years of the process until the proposed rule became available. Thus it is no surprise that the critical habitat became a controversial subject when the proposed rule revealed that the revision would include most coastal areas in the State of Hawaii, from shoreline out to 500 meters depth. At

public hearings following the proposed rule, many criticized NMFS for the lack of transparency and opportunity to provide input earlier in the process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

WPRFMC has long supported protected species conservation through bycatch mitigation in our fisheries, contributing to species recovery activities, and transferring bycatch technology to other countries. With our ecosystem approach to fishery management, we have the responsibility of caring for protected species, and ensuring that fisheries do not negatively impact other components of the ecosystem. We have also supported implementation of conservation programs that benefit listed species, while maintaining fishing opportunities for the people of Hawaii. We believe that the ESA and MMPA, if properly implemented can contribute to species conservation; however, increasingly, the application of these laws is driven by special interest organizations that oppose any use or management of natural resources. This detracts from the intended purposes of the ESA and MMPA, and it results in unnecessary economic impacts and lost conservation opportunities.

We request that the Committee critically review these two statutes to ensure that they are functioning in ways that protect not only the species but also people and their livelihoods. To assist the Committee in understanding issues unique to Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Islands, we request that the Committee conduct a field hearing in Honolulu, Hawaii to discuss these matters in greater detail.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff Paul Dalzell, Senior Scientist, at (808) 522-8220 if you have any questions regarding these matters.

Sincerely,

Kitty M. Simonds
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Daniel Inouye
Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
Honorable Don Young
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Samuel Rauch, National Marine Fisheries Service

Cora Campbell
Commissioner
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

Nancy Long
Information Officer
Public Communications Section
907.465.6166
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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 20, 2012

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
Symposium Information Contact:
Nancy Long, 907-465-6166
nancy.long@alaska.gov

ADF&G ANNOUNCES CHINOOK SALMON SYMPOSIUM

Symposium to address abundance and productivity trends for Chinook salmon in Alaska, to take place in Anchorage, October 22-23.

In accordance with efforts outlined by Alaska Governor Sean Parnell and Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) Commissioner Cora Campbell to address declining Chinook salmon abundance, ADF&G will convene a two-day scientific symposium in Anchorage October 22 – 23 to discuss necessary research and stock assessment to better understand the observed trends.

The symposium will feature scientific presentations and panel discussions from a wide variety of experts from private, state, federal, and academic backgrounds. The goal is to discuss gaps in knowledge of Chinook salmon abundance and productivity, and seek input on a targeted list of research priorities to fill these gaps. A draft analysis of knowledge gaps and associated research recommendations has been constructed by ADF&G scientists and will be made available prior to the symposium so the presenters, panelists, and the public will have the chance to review and provide constructive input on the research recommendations.

"All Alaskans have a stake in the health of our Chinook salmon resources," said ADF&G Commissioner Cora Campbell. "This Chinook Salmon Symposium will provide an opportunity for an exchange of information and ideas between top fishery scientists and stakeholders to further inform our comprehensive research plan. I greatly appreciate the commitment and efforts of all those engaged in this symposium and have a keen interest in the results."

More details about the symposium and the Chinook Salmon Research Plan will be available in the following weeks, and will be posted at: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hottopics.chinooksalmon

Interested Alaskans are encouraged to attend in person or stream it online via the link provided.

WHAT: **CHINOOK SALMON SYMPOSIUM**

WHEN: **MONDAY AND TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22-23, 2012**

WHERE: **EGAN CONVENTION CENTER: 555 W. FIFTH AVE. ANCHORAGE, AK**

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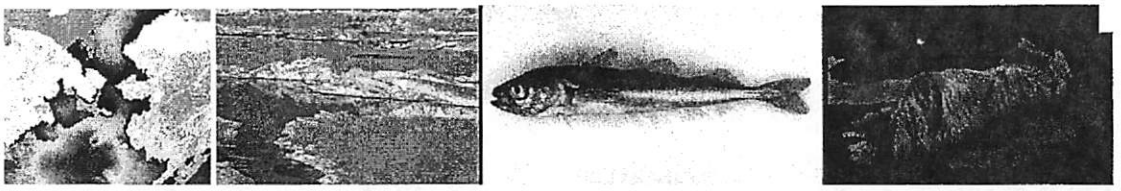

STAMP: Spatial Tools for Arctic Mapping & Planning

AOOS and a team of partners have received funding from NOAA to develop data visualization tools for Alaska's Arctic. The collection and synthesis of spatial data into a suite of visualization tools is a critical step for long-term collaborative planning in Alaska for a wide range of coastal uses.

Goal: Develop data integration and visualization tools that could be used to for future decision-making relating to potential commercial fisheries in the Arctic
Focus Area: Northern Bering and Chukchi Seas
Timeline: 1.5 years, starting Jan 2012

Objectives

- Scoping: assess what data and information products people would like for planning related to future Arctic commercial fisheries, and identify data layers that currently do not exist in Alaska. Scoping will occur through key informant interviews, focus groups, and an online survey.
- Documentation: document existing data products and decision support tools used in Alaska, and review new products and tools and their potential applicability to Alaska.
- Tool Development: incorporate existing data layers into the AOOS Arctic Ocean Portal, and add new functional capabilities identified through the scoping efforts.
- Assessment: Review the AOOS Arctic Portal (enhanced with the new datasets and capabilities) for use in planning and decision-support for Arctic commercial fisheries, and determine whether it has successfully addressed user needs.

Funded Partners

AOOS - *project manager*, contributing its extensive marine data resources and infrastructure
Axiom Consulting & Design - *technical lead*, managing the data and building the tools
ISER (UAA) – specializing in social and economic data
ACCAP (UAF) – providing downscaled climate model data
The Nature Conservancy of Alaska – sharing experience with decision support tools

Collaborators

Serving in advisory capacities or as contributors of data and information:
NOAA Regional Collaboration Team, NOAA Fisheries, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, University of Alaska, State of Alaska resource management agencies, US Arctic Research Consortium, US Coast Guard, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Western and Arctic Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, USGS Alaska Science Center and Regional Climate Science Center, CDQ groups, tribal entities and co-management organizations, conservation organizations, and others.

For more information, visit http://www.aoos.org/stamp/, or email Darcy at dugan@aoos.org

THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Fish and Game

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
1255 West 8th Street
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526
Main: 907.465.4100
Fax: 907.465.2332

RECEIVED
SEP 27 2012

September 24, 2012

Mr. Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear ~~Chairman Olson~~ Eric,

I would like to nominate Dr. Christopher Siddon for appointment to the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Groundfish Plan Team to replace Mr. David Carlile, who is soon retiring from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Dr. Siddon recently accepted the position of Chief Scientist for Marine Fisheries within the Commercial Fisheries Division (division). This position oversees the division's statewide marine fisheries research and stock assessment programs and helps ensure that research is well integrated with fisheries management. This position serves as the principle scientific advisor to the Director of Commercial Fisheries for marine research activities, such as setting annual catch limits, developing stock assessment programs, and strategic research planning. The marine fisheries program includes crab, scallops, groundfish, herring, and dive fishery species.

With Dr. Siddon's extensive experience, I believe he will be a valuable asset to the BSAI Groundfish Plan Team. Please see the enclosed curriculum vitae. Thank you for considering his appointment at the upcoming October Council meeting.

Sincerely,

Cora Campbell

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

Enclosure

Curriculum Vitae of

Christopher E. Siddon

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Address: Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Commercial Fisheries Division
Juneau, AK 99801
Tel: (907) 465-6115
E-mail: chris.siddon@alaska.gov

Nationality: U.S.A.
Place of Birth: Massena, New York
Date of Birth: 24 September 1971
Languages: English, Spanish

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Brown University, Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. 2004
Advisor: Dr. Jon Witman

Northeastern University, East/West Marine Biology Program. 1994

B.A. Hamilton College, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. 1993

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Chief Scientist for Marine Fisheries, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game 2012-present

Shellfish Biometrician III, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game 2008-2012
Region I, Southeast Alaska

Shellfish Biometrician II, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game 2005-2008
Region I, Southeast Alaska

Affiliate Faculty, University of Alaska Fairbanks 2011-present
School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences

Credit Faculty, Shoals Marine Laboratory 2005-present
(Cornell University and University of New Hampshire)

Adjunct Faculty, University of Alaska Southeast 2007

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, University of Alaska Fairbanks
Juneau Center, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences
Advisor: Dr. Terry Quinn II 2004-2005

Research Technician, University of Washington
Friday Harbor Laboratories 1994-1997

FUNDING AWARDS

2010-2012 North Pacific Research Board (NPRB). Cooperative Research with Fishing Industry:
Comparison of Red King Crab biomass estimates. ($177,000)
In-kind support from State of Alaska and Fishing Industry ($155,000)

2005 Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game. Geoduck stock assessment critique. ($22,000)

PEER- REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Siddon, C.E., J.A. Bednarski. 2010. Variation in size at maturity of Tanner crab in southeastern Alaska. In: G.H. Kruse, G.L. Eckert, R.J. Foy, R.N. Lipcius, B. Sainte-Marie, D.L. Stram, and D. Woodby (eds), Biology and Management of Exploited Crab Populations under Climate Change. Alaska Sea Grant College Program, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Bednarski, J.A., **C.E. Siddon**, G.H. Bishop, and J.F. Morado. 2010. Overview of bitter crab disease in Tanner crabs, *Chionoecetes bairdi,* in Southeast Alaska from 2001 to 2008. In: G.H. Kruse, G.L. Eckert, R.J. Foy, R.N. Lipcius, B. Sainte-Marie, D.L. Stram, and D. Woodby (eds), Biology and Management of Exploited Crab Populations under Climate Change. Alaska Sea Grant College Program, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Bishop, G.H., **C.E. Siddon**, and J.M. Rumble. 2010. Change-in-ratio and Index-Removal Population Estimation of Dungeness Crab in Southeastern Alaska. In: G.H. Kruse, G.L. Eckert, R.J. Foy, R.N. Lipcius, B. Sainte-Marie, D.L. Stram, and D. Woodby (eds), Biology and Management of Exploited Crab Populations under Climate Change. Alaska Sea Grant College Program, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Siddon, E.C., **C.E. Siddon**, and M.S. Steckoll. 2008. Community level effects of *Nereocystis leutkeana* in southeastern Alaska. JEMBE. 361(1):8-15.

Siddon, C.E. and J.D. Witman. 2004. Behavioral indirect interactions: multiple predators and prey switching in the shallow rocky subtidal. Ecology. 85(11):2938-2945.

Siddon, C.E. and J.D. Witman. 2003. Influence of chronic, low-level hydrodynamic forces on subtidal community structure. Marine Ecology-Progress Series. 261:99-110.

Eckman, J.E., D.O. Duggins, and **C.E. Siddon**. 2003. Current and wave dynamics in the shallow sudtidal region of the San Juan archipeligo, Washington (U.S.A.): Implications to the ecology of understory and surface-canopy kelps. Marine Ecology-Progress Series. 265:45-56.

Duggins, D. O., J.E. Eckman, **C.E. Siddon** and T. Klinger. 2003. Population, morphometric and biomechanical studies of three understory kelps along a hydrodynamic gradient. Marine Ecology-Progress Series. 265:57-76.

Bruno, J.F., **C.E. Siddon** and J.D. Witman. 2001. El Niño related coral bleaching in Palau, Western Caroline Islands. Coral Reefs. 20: 127-136.

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OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Stratman, J., G. Bishop, A. Messmer and **C. Siddon**. 2011. 2012 Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries on Southeast Alaska/Yakutat Tanner crab fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Management Report No. 11-57, Anchorage.

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PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Science Panel for the North Pacific Research Board

Manuscripts reviewed for:

Ecology, The Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, Canadian Journal of Zoology, Journal of Phycology, Marine Ecology Progress Series

Graduate Student Committees:

Daniel Okamoto (M.S. completed 2009)
Competition and recruitment in Southeast Alaskan subtidal kelp communities

Miranda Westphal (M.S. completed 2011)
Growth physiology of juvenile Red King Crab, *Paralithodes camtschaticus*, in Alaska

Courtney Lyons
Examining Pribilof Island Blue King Crab recovery failure from social and ecological perspectives

Zac Hoyt
Recolonization, prey selection, and resource competition by sea otters, *Enhydra lutris*, in southern southeast Alaska

Undergraduate Mentor:

Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), Shoals Marine Laboratory (2000-2002), University of Alaska Southeast (2004, 2005).

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2000, 2002 **Offshore Research**, Joint research with Drs. D.M. McNaught and J.D. Witman to examine Cod abundance and community dynamics on offshore pinnacles in the Gulf of Maine, U.S.A.

1998-2000 **Research Assistant** to J. D. Witman. Brown University. NSF funded research to study marine biodiversity. Research conducted in Palau, Western Caroline Islands, Capetown, South Africa and Galápagos, Ecuador.