

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Certified by John Bruce
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ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES JUNE 10-12, 1996 PORTLAND, OREGON

Advisory Panel members in attendance:

Bruce, John (Chair)	Jones, Spike
Benson, Dave	Lewis, John
Burch, Alvin	Madsen, Stephanie (Vice-Chair)
Cotton, Bruce	Nelson, Hazel
Cross, Craig	Paddock, Dean
Falvey, Dan	Roos, John
Fanning, Kris	Sevier, John
Fraser, Dave	Wurm, Robert
Fuglvog, Arne	Yeck, Lyle
Gundersen, Justine	Yutrzenka, Grant

Advisory Panel members, Ragnar Alstrom and Scott Highleyman were absent.

C-1 Sablefish/Halibut IFQs

The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 2, Option B modified to 1½% and including language that would allow initial quota share holders who currently exceed the second generation cap level to trade and sell their QS in the Area 4 region for halibut but not such that they may exceed their initial allocation. Motion carries 16/3.

MINORITY REPORT C-1 BSAI Halibut Ownership Caps

We, the undersigned members of the AP, are concerned about the extent of the AP's action on this issue. The language in the motion concerning quota trading appears to fully address the stated problem. To additionally increase the ownership caps will only further consolidate and upset the original balance of concerns crafted by the Council. Finally, the AP motion introduces too large a shift in the program given uncertainty over future action by the IPHC affecting Area 4.

Signed: Hazel Nelson Dan Falvey Stephanie Madsen

C-3 BSAI Pacific Cod Allocations

The AP recommends that the Council approve the agreement reached by the industry negotiating committee. Motion carried unanimously.

C-4 Crab Bycatch Issues

Bristol Bay Red King Crab Savings Area

The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 2, Option B with a modification allowing the ability to set a sub-area cap for the area bounded by 56° to 56° 10' of 35% of rocksole red king crab bycatch cap. The motion carried 12/7.

There was an additional motion to provide an opening for yellowfin sole between April 15 - May 15 in the area west of 163°, 56°30' N with a sub-area cap not to exceed 15,000 red king crab. (This opening would only occur during the years following a year in which a guideline harvest level for Bristol Bay red king crab is established). This motion failed 8/10.

Northern Bristol Bay Trawl Closure Area

The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 3, Option A with modifications proposed by the Crab Plan Team — to prohibit all trawling on a year-round basis in the area east of 162°W with the exception of an area bounded by 159° to 160° W and 58° to 58°43' N that would remain open to trawling during the period April 1 to June 15 each year.

The AP further recommends rescinding the regulations allowing trawling for Pacific cod off Port Moller. Motion carries 14/3.

PSC Bycatch Limits

Snow Crab: The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 1, status quo, no action. Motion carries 10/8.

Red King Crab: The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 1, status quo, no action. Motion carries 10/9.

Tanner Crab: The AP was unable to pass a motion recommending an action on Tanner crab caps. Listed below is the sequence of motions attempted.

A motion recommending the Council adopt a floating cap based on 1% of the NMFS survey population estimate and will be based on a three-year rolling average. The rolling average will be buffered by assigning double weight to the most recent year when that year is below the average of the prior two years. The most recent year will be assigned a lesser weight by double weighting the prior two years when the most recent year is higher than the average of the preceding two years. (Distribution between Zone 1 and Zone 2 would remain the same.) A maximum limit on the cap will be 5 million animals. Motion failed on a 9/9 tie.

A motion to amend the percentage to 1.5% of survey population failed 7/11.

A motion to recommend Alternative 1, status quo, no action, failed on a 9/9 tie.

Additional Recommendations:

The AP supports the Crab Rebuilding Committee's recommendations on the necessity of re-evaluating closures and caps on a regular basis because crab abundance and distribution change over time. Motion carries unanimously.

The AP further recommends that all fishing for groundfish in the Red King Crab Savings Area and the 159° to 160° area will require 100% observer coverage. Motion carries unanimously.

C-5 Improved Retention/Improved Utilization

The AP remains committed to developing a workable IR/IU program in a timely manner. However, we recognize that some of the issues raised in the draft EA/RIR require further development and identification of alternatives before final action can be taken.

We, therefore, request that the Council release the draft EA/RIR for public comment during the month of July. We further request the Council refer the draft EA/RIR, and the public comments received, to the industry IR/IU Committee to explore some of these unresolved issues in August in order to take further action in September.

We specifically request public and committee comments on:

1. Implications of target fishery switching caused by IR/IU.
2. Effects of IR/IU on VIP rates.
3. Extent of conflict between IR/IU and moratorium/license limitation upgrade provisions.
4. Monitoring of the IU portion of the program.

Motion carries unanimously.

C-6 Ban on Night Trawling for Pacific Cod

The AP recommends that the analysis move forward with the following considerations:

1. Night should be defined as 11:00 pm until 5:00 am.
2. Check-in requirement for Pacific cod fishery (to deal with enforcement concerns).
3. Halibut bycatch data rates to be looked at by area (EBS, Aleutians, North of Pribilofs).
4. Enforcement issues about what constitutes a violation, i.e., doors on surface, bag in water, cod on board, short-wiring).

C-9 Electronic Reporting

The AP recommends that the Council recommend that NMFS implement electronic reporting requirements using a "phased" method which brings small segments of the industry on-line sequentially rather than bringing all segments on-line at the same time. This process would reduce start-up problems.

The AP also recommends an industry group of management, end-users and NMFS enforcement be formed to guide NMFS on the design and implementation of any program. Also NMFS retain a computer industry specialist who would assist NMFS in designing a competent program. The AP feels industry approval prior to implementation is critical.

AP notes the following concerns that should be addressed by an industry/NMFS group:

1. Observer reporting and the halibut/sablefish reporting should be incorporated with any electronic reporting plan to provide a comprehensive approach.
2. Any program should be cost-effective in transmission ability, i.e., report to NMFS simultaneously sent to home office.
3. Transmitted strings should avoid duplicative input, i.e., default fields for certain information.
4. Any program should interface with existing data entry software industry currently utilizes.

Motion carried unanimously.