

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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MINUTES

206th Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
February 1-7, Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA

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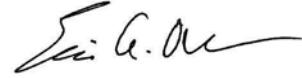
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MINUTES
NPFMC MEETING
February 2012

MINUTES

206th Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
February 1-7, Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA

APPROVED: _____



DATE: April 3, 2012

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in Seattle, WA during February 2012. The following Council, SSC and AP members, and NPFMC staff attended the meetings.

Council Members

Eric Olson, Chair
Dave Benson, Vice Chair
Sam Cotton
Ed Dersham
Duncan Fields
Dave Hanson
John Henderschedt

Roy Hyder
Dan Hull
Cora Campbell/Dave Bedford
Jim Balsiger/Glenn Merrill
Bill Tweit
CAPT Greg Sanial/LT Tony Keene

NPFMC Staff

Gail Bendixen
Jane DiCosimo
Diana Evans
Mark Fina
Peggy Kircher
Steve MacLean

Jon McCracken
Sarah Melton
Chris Oliver
Maria Shawback
Diana Stram
David Witherell

MINUTES
NPFMC MEETING
February 2012

Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC met from January 30th through February 1st, 2012 at the Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA.

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

Farron Wallace, Vice Chair
Wash. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Robert Clark
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Alison Dauble
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

Anne Hollowed
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

George Hunt
University of Washington

Gordon Kruse
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Kathy Kuletz
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Seth Macinko
University of Rhode Island

Lew Queirola
NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region

Terry Quinn
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Kate Reedy-Maschner
Idaho State University Pocatello

Ray Webster
International Pacific Halibut Commission

Members absent were:

Jennifer Burns
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Jim Murphy
University of Alaska Anchorage

Franz Mueter
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Advisory Panel

The AP met from January 30-February 2, at the Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA.

The following (19) members were present for all or part of the meetings:

Kurt Cochran

Jan Jacobs

Lori Swanson

Craig Cross

Alexus Kwachka

Anne Vanderhoeven

Julianne Curry

Craig Lowenberg

Ernie Weiss

Jerry Downing

Chuck McCallum

Tom Enlow

Matt Moir

Absent: Andy Mezirow,

Tim Evers

Theresa Peterson

John Crowley

Jeff Farvour

Ed Poulsen

Becca Robbins Gisclair

Neil Rodriguez

Appendix I contains the public sign in register and a time log of Council proceedings, including those providing reports and public comment during the meeting.

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting from December, 2011. Motion passed unanimously, with Mr. Fields making one correction.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eric Olson called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30 am on Wednesday, February 1, 2012.

Mr. Bill Tweit participated in the entire meeting in place of Phil Anderson, WDF Director.

AGENDA: The agenda was approved as written.

B. REPORTS

The Council received the following reports: Executive Director's Report (B-1); NMFS Management Report (B-2); ADF&G Report (B-3); USCG Report (B-5); USFWS report (B-6); and Protected Species Report (B-7).

Executive Director's Report:

Chris Oliver reviewed his written report. He commented briefly on many issues, including the scheduled halibut workshop on April 24-25. Mr. Oliver noted that scheduling presenters and panelists are still in process, but that he, along with other agency staff members, will be finalizing the agenda shortly. Mr. Oliver noted other upcoming meetings and highlighted the Council Coordination Committee meeting as well as the Joint Protocol meeting. There were a few comments on the NMFS/Council operations and the pending inspection by the Inspector General. Mr. Oliver noted that he would try to get more detail on the timing of the inspection. He noted the availability of the draft for Climate Adaptation Strategy and it is available to Council members for comments before the November deadline.

NMFS Management Report

Glenn Merrill briefed the Council on the status of FMP and regulatory amendments and gave an overview of NMFS in-season management. He noted this is the first year of implementation of sector splits for Pacific cod in GOA, and final numbers will be available as well as trends in the fishery in following NMFS reports. There were brief comments regarding current litigation, and Mr. Merrill, along with NMFS General Counsel Lisa Lindeman, answered questions from the Council members. Jon Kurland (NMFS) briefed the Council on habitat and EFH issues and establishing EFH designation criteria, and Dr. Chris Rooper (AFSC) gave an overview of deep sea coral issues and research.

ADF&G Report

Karla Bush (ADF&G) provided the Council with a review of the State fisheries of interest to the Council and answered general questions from the Council Members.

NOAA Enforcement Report

There was no NOAA Enforcement report.

USCG Report

LT Tony Keene of the USCG provided the Coast Guard Year in Review report and an update on the ice breaker coordination effort in Nome. CAPT Sanial highlighted the cooperation between the state, federal and tribal efforts and thanked everyone involved for a job well-done. There was brief discussion regarding whether or not there are additional resources available to the USCG, and CAPT Sanial discussed the role of the Coast Guard and the focus of allocation of resources and where there can be coordinated efforts. He reaffirmed the commitment of the USCG, and District 17, to the fisheries mission. Mr. Tweit noted that the Council would also like to confirm that any new missions not come at an expense to those that are already in place, and offered the Council's assistance in any way possible to clarify that message.

USF&W Report

There was no USF&W report.

IPHC Report

Dr. Bruce Leaman of the IPHC gave a report to the Council regarding its annual meeting and an update on bycatch issues. Gregg Williams, also of the IPHC, reviewed the upcoming workshop and the topics to be discussed. He noted that the prospective outcome of the workshop is a sort of evaluation of how the Commission deals with bycatch, and that any consensus and/or recommendation would be captured in the written report following the workshop.

Protected Species Report

Steve MacLean gave an update on his written report. He also updated the Council on recent items not included in the Council packet, including a permit for incidental take under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. He also highlighted a draft MOU related to conservation of migratory bird populations. Mr. Tweit suggested that coastal states be included in the distribution of the Memorandum of Understanding for public comment. Additionally, there was brief discussion regarding the status of the Western Distinct Population Segment Steller sea lion and Mr. MacLean reminded the Council that they will be discussing the Center for Independent Experts Terms of Reference at this meeting. He also noted that he has a variety of published papers available on the Steller sea lion and to email him if interested.

Public comment was taken on all B items.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Chairman Olson noted that many items will be taken up during staff tasking, however if there are time-sensitive items, the Council should address them under the B items.

Mr. Tweit moved to approve draft TOR with two modifications: 1) Bottom of page 9 of the draft statement of work, delete the words “as practicable.” 2) Re-word chapter 1 to highlight that remarks and public comment are important. The motion was seconded by John Henderschedt. Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that the re-working of TOR did not provide more information, which made Chapter 1 and 2 necessary, and that NMFS needs to press forward. Dr. Balsiger noted NMFS will keep the Council informed as it suggests changes. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tweit noted for discussion during the Staff Tasking agenda item to request the EFH Committee adopt formal criteria for EFH designation. Additionally, Mr. Tweit requested discussion of support for the USCG, and what the Council can do to ensure resources for enforcement and monitoring of the North Pacific. Lastly, Mr. Tweit would like the Council to discuss during Staff Tasking, taking a sponsorship role in development of the halibut management strategy evaluation and the peer review assessment model. He noted the outcomes of both tools are critical to the Council, and the Council should take ownership in the development. Dr. Balsiger noted that NMFS and Canada may also like to sponsor some of the IPHC issues upcoming in the workshop.

C-1 CQE in Area 4B

BACKGROUND

The Council approved the Gulf of Alaska Community Quota Entity (CQE) Program as an amendment to the halibut and sablefish IFQ Program in 2002 (GOA Amendment 66), and the program was implemented in 2004. Under the original IFQ Program, only persons who were originally issued catcher vessel quota

share (B, C, and D category QS) or who qualify as IFQ crew members¹ were allowed to hold or purchase catcher vessel quota share. Thus, only individuals² and initial recipients could hold catcher vessel quota share. The CQE Program was developed to allow a specified set of small, remote coastal communities located in the Gulf of Alaska to purchase halibut and sablefish catcher vessel quota share, to maintain access to these fisheries. In order to participate, eligible communities must form non-profit corporations called Community Quota Entities to purchase catcher vessel QS, and the IFQ resulting from the QS is leased to community residents annually. The existing program is limited to IPHC regulatory Area 2C, Area 3A, and Area 3B.

In February 2010, the Council reviewed an IFQ proposal from the Adak Community Development Corporation (ACDC), to create a CQE Program in the Aleutian Islands in Area 4B. The Council reviewed a staff discussion paper on the issue in December 2010, and approved a problem statement and a suite of alternatives and options for analysis. Given the proposed problem statement and criteria for eligibility, the intent is to allow ACDC to become a CQE representing the community of Adak for the purpose of purchasing a limited amount of Area 4B halibut and AI sablefish catcher vessel QS, for lease to eligible fishermen. Adak is the only community that meets the proposed eligibility criteria for the program.

The proposed action would require an amendment to the BSAI FMP (Am. 102) and associated regulatory amendments to the halibut and sablefish regulations. The analysis examines two primary alternatives, one of which is the no action alternative (Alternative 1). The action alternative (Alternative 2) is structured such that all of the components of the original Gulf CQE Program are included, with differences specified by the Council included under the appropriate component. Many components of Alternative 2 are comprised only of provisions describing the program rules; other components include options from which the Council would select at final action.

The Council conducted initial review in October 2011 and selected Alternative 2 as its preliminary preferred alternative. At this February meeting, the Council is scheduled to review the revised analysis and take final action, if desired.

Diana Evans gave the staff report on this agenda item. There were questions from the Council, and neither the AP nor the SSC had a report. The AP did address this agenda item during its December 2011 meeting, and the minutes from that meeting were referenced. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded by Mr. Cotten, a written motion, which is attached as Attachment 5. He noted that he is indicating the Preliminary Preferred Alternative with one exception and one clarification. Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, noting the analysis was comprehensive and identified Adak as a unique community in need of programs that will allow development of fishery infrastructure. There were general questions of clarification from the Council members and it was confirmed that currently, annual CQE reports are filed with NMFS, and are available to the Council. Mr. Fields remarked that it is not his intent to make changes in the way the CQE program is run in the GOA. He also noted that this motion creates sustained participation of the community of Adak in Area 4B halibut fisheries, and it is consistent with National Standards 8, 9 and 10, as many people will not have to travel so far from home port to prosecute the fishery. Mr. Fields continued, noting that the motion incorporates Adak into the IFQ program, which does support all other National Standards. Mr. Cotten

¹IFQ crew member means any individual who has at least 150 days experience working as part of the harvesting crew in any U.S. commercial fishery, or any individual who receives an initial allocation of QS (50 CFR 679.2).

²Per 50 CFR 679.2: Individual means a natural person who is not a corporation, partnership, association, or other such entity.

noted his support for the motion, and recognizes Adak as a unique community. Mr. Balsiger noted there are no negative impacts relative to sustainable impacts and resources, and that it meets many of the National Standards.

Mr. Tweit noted his support for earlier comments and that Adak faces unique challenges in history and geography. **Mr. Tweit moved to amend the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hull, that the Council deems proposed regulations that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of this motion to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303(c). Additionally, the Council authorizes the Executive Director and the Chairman to review the draft proposed regulations when provided by NMFS to ensure that the proposed regulations to be submitted to the Secretary under section 303(c) are consistent with these instructions.** Mr. Tweit noted that while some of the regulations for this action are under the Halibut Act, and some are under the Magnuson Stevens Act, the likely rulemaking is generally understood, and he is comfortable having the Executive Director and Chairman review the regulations, with the understanding that if there are changes, the Council will review the regulations at a later date. **The amendment passed without objection.**

The amended main motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

C-2 GOA Halibut PSC Limits

BACKGROUND

The Council is scheduled to take an initial review of an analysis that examines proposed changes to the management of commercial groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) that would occur through an amendment to the GOA Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. Prohibited species catch (PSC) limits on removals of Pacific halibut can limit fishing activity on targeted groundfish fisheries or affect fishing practices. The fisheries that result in the highest halibut PSC in the GOA are the 1) Pacific cod trawl and longline fisheries, 2) shallow-water flatfish complex and arrowtooth flounder trawl fisheries, and 3) rockfish trawl fishery. In some target fisheries, PSC limits are not typically fully utilized, while other fisheries are 'typically' closed prior to attainment of the target TAC because they have fully utilizing its PSC allowance.

Current halibut PSC limits concern the Council because these limits have remained unchanged since their implementation in 1986 for trawl fisheries and revision in 1995 for fixed gear fisheries. Recent declines in halibut biomass, particularly in the GOA, have exacerbated concerns about levels of PSC in groundfish fisheries because of the potential effect of halibut PSC on other user groups.

In April 2011, the Council adopted a range of proposed reductions for analysis that would be implemented through the GOA groundfish harvest specifications process for 2012/2013 after scoping the issue through a number of discussion papers in 2011 and 2012. In addition to the No Action Alternative, the proposed alternative (Alternative 2) included options for reductions of a) 5 percent, b) 10 percent, and c) 15 percent of the 2,000 mt halibut PSC limit on trawlers and 300 mt halibut PSC limit on fixed gear groundfish operations. Two suboptions addressed effects on trawl PSC limit apportionments. In June 2011, the Council reviewed the suite of alternatives for analysis and reorganized the suboptions.

In October 2011, the Council initiated a new action to remove GOA halibut PSC limits from the annual harvest specifications process through an amendment to the GOA Groundfish FMP and set halibut PSC limits in federal regulation. Such an action would mirror the process for setting halibut PSC limits in BSAI groundfish fisheries. The Council also modified the options under the proposed alternative for revising GOA halibut PSC limits and scheduled initial review of the analysis for the revised management approach and alternatives for February 2012. At this meeting the Council will review the draft analysis and determine the schedule for final action (e.g., either April 2012 or June 2012).

Jane DiCosimo introduced the staff report on this agenda item. Darrell Brannan and Mike Downs gave the update on the RIR and SIA, respectfully. The AP gave its report, and the SSC gave its report, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Campbell moved, which was seconded by Mr. Hull, to approve the release of the EA/RIR/IRFA for public review, incorporating recommendations from the SSC that pertain to the analysis as possible, with the following additions:

- 1. New IPHC bluebook information and CEY from the 2012 annual IPHC meeting, including expanded discussion on a) the methods and assumptions used in the lost yield and migration models that are briefly described within the analysis; and b) the methods used by IPHC staff to apportion bycatch among the U26, O26-U32, and O32” size categories.**
- 2. Add a new suboption under Option 2, Suboption 3 that would allow the Am. 80 sector to roll unused halibut from one season to the subsequent season, similar to the non-Am. 80 sectors.**
- 3. Remove Suboption 3.1, which would apply the full trawl PSC limit reduction to the 5th season only.**

Add a new suboption under Option 2, Suboption 3 to allow available trawl halibut PSC in the 2nd season deep and shallow water complexes to be aggregated and made available for use in either complex from May 15 through June 30. Halibut PSC sideboards for the Am. 80 and AFA sectors would continue to be defined as deep and shallow water complexes in the second season.

Ms. Campbell spoke to her motion. She noted she incorporated ideas heard in public comment and has the intention of moving forward with this action. Ms. Campbell also noted it would be beneficial to have results of the scheduled halibut workshop before final action in June, but the Council can address the timing issue during Staff Tasking. Ms. Campbell reviewed the additions, noting that she added a new suboption for the AM80 fleet to roll unused halibut PSC to the non-AM80 sectors. Additionally, she removed the suboption that would put the PSC in the 5th season only, which is not practical. She reiterated that in response to public comment, she had staff present the concept as a table of halibut PSC management in the second season. There were questions of clarification from the Council members, and regulatory and management clarifications from staff. Discussion continued generally regarding the timing of the halibut workshop, and it was agreed that information resulting from the workshop could be incorporated into the final version of the analysis that would be submitted to the Secretary.

Mr. Fields noted his support of the motion and his sensitivity to widespread concern of the halibut resource and this is an appropriate motion for the Council to pass.

Mr. Oliver noted that the Council will eventually look at a comprehensive bycatch package for the GOA and a baseline discussion paper will be available for June. Mr. Tweit requested a brief update as part of staff tasking at the April meeting.

Mr. Henderschedt voiced his support of the motion, and reminded the Council to be aware of the next steps. He recalled testimony from industry; specifically a cross-section of Central GOA representatives spoke to their desire for moving forward and working together to address bycatch, and reminded them they can do so without waiting for Council action.

The motion passed without objection.

C-3 (a) Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab Rebuilding Plan

BACKGROUND

On September 24, 2009, NMFS notified the Council that the Pribilof Islands blue king crab (PIBKC) rebuilding plan has not achieved adequate progress to rebuild the stock by 2014 and that this stock remains overfished. To comply with section 304(e)(7) of the MSA, the Council has two years from this notification to prepare and implement an amended PIBKC rebuilding plan.

The Council has reviewed iterations of this rebuilding plan analysis at multiple meetings, most recently at final action in October 2011, when the Council changed the range of rebuilding plan alternatives to include an option to Alternative 2, and a new Preliminary Preferred Alternative that involves a year-round closure to the Pacific cod pot fishing in the Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone and a prohibited species catch (PSC) limit that triggers a larger area closure to additional fisheries. At the December 2011 meeting, the Council was informed of some analytical changes to the qualified fisheries for the analysis as well as received in public comments some requests to consider additional elements in the analysis and suite of alternatives.

As a result, the Council rescheduled final action on this document and requested that staff provide an update at this meeting on many of the elements discussed for inclusion in the analysis. The Council requested additional information on the following: the survey distribution of PIBKC in conjunction with observed bycatch; the boundaries of the State PIBKC registration district including rationale for the boundaries as well as the process by which registration areas can be modified, information on how a cap in numbers of crab vs. weight of crab is calculated; draft results of seasonal apportionment strategy; rollover mechanics of unused PIBKC PSC, increased observer coverage, whole haul sampling, seasonal apportionment of PIBKC PSC, and incorporation of discard mortality rates in inseason management; and any additional issues regarding qualified fisheries. Several discussion papers have been prepared by staff to address these issues.

Based on the information presented, the Council may decide to modify alternatives at this meeting or notify the public that alternatives will be modified further in April which may delay the timing of final action, currently scheduled for April 2012.

Diana Stram gave the staff report on this agenda item. Jennifer Mondragon reported on catch accounting issues and Martin Loefflad gave a report on the methodology to calculate the numbers of crab from observer data on weight and other observer issues. Pat Livingston gave the SSC report and Lori Swanson gave the AP report. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Glenn Merrill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Henderschedt:

- 1. Select Alternative 2b as the PPA to apply the existing Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone trawl closure to vessels fishing Pacific cod with pots.**
- 2. Alternative 6 should be further analyzed based on the following modifications, which are based on the AP motion, with clarifications:**
 - Add an option to component 2:**
 - Option 2. The trigger cap is seasonally allocated to all fisheries in aggregate. Any unused PSC will roll to the following season.**
 - 25 % to first quarter, 25% to second quarter, 50% to last half of year**

- 50% to first half of year, 50% to last half of year
 - 75% to first half of year, 25% to second half of year
- **Add an option that bycatch caps are in numbers of crab, where the annual cap is based on the average weight of PIBKC over the previous five years.**

Mr. Merrill spoke to his motion, noting that this action signals to the public the Council's desire to move forward on measures to reduce bycatch while continuing to work on other tools. He emphasized that the Council does not need to resolve all issues (observer coverage, census sampling, etc.) in order to take action to reduce the risk of overfishing.

Mr. Benson moved to amend the motion by striking point 1, which was seconded. Mr. Benson spoke to his motion, emphasizing that it is not fair to single out one group type based on criteria that may or may not be accurate. He stated that if the Council is going to have a set of criteria, it should apply to all gear groups.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke in opposition to amendment, and noted while the motion does have the appearance of putting one gear group out of favor, the Council is managing uncertainty, and the largest source of uncertainty of calculating bycatch of PIBKC is from that fleet.

Mr. Fields noted he would not support the amendment if he thought it would impact PIBKC, but does not want to penalize one gear group. Mr. Benson emphasized the effect of his motion is that Alternative 2 remains, and what is stricken drops the PPA designation. There was brief discussion regarding the effects of the amendment on the motion and the analysis. It was agreed that the PPA must clearly be stated so stakeholders can adequately respond in April. **The amendment failed 2/9, with Benson and Fields voting in favor. The main motion passed without objection.**

C-3 (c) Update on Tanner Crab Rebuilding Plan

BACKGROUND

*On October 1, 2010, NMFS notified the Council that the eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab (*Chionoecetes bairdi*) stock is overfished. To comply with section 304(e)(7) of the MSA, the Council has two years from this notification to prepare and implement a Tanner crab rebuilding plan. The eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab stock was declared overfished because the survey estimate of total mature male biomass was below the minimum stock size threshold.*

Overfishing is not occurring. The State of Alaska did not open the directed Tanner crab fishery for the 2010/2011 season, and the fishery will remain closed until abundance increases. While retained catch was 0 mt, total catch from all sources was estimated to be 870 mt. The overfishing level for the 2010/2011 season was 1,610 mt. Tanner crabs are incidentally taken in the groundfish, snow crab, red king crab, and scallop fisheries.

The Tanner crab rebuilding plan is a challenge because, at the time the stock was declared overfished, the stock assessment model was in the very early stages of development. Without a stock assessment model, it is not possible to estimate the required pieces of a rebuilding plan: the minimum time to rebuild, the target time to rebuild, and an estimate of the harvest rate to achieve rebuilding in the target time period. This is complicated by the need to estimate incidental harvests in the snow crab fishery in conjunction with directed and incidental catch of Tanner crab in the directed Tanner crab fishery as alternative time frames will likely be tied to these estimated harvest rates. Thus a stock assessment model

is critical to development of an appropriate rebuilding plan which accurately estimates the necessary harvest rates to estimate rebuilding time frames.

Staff will provide the Council with an update on the model development, issues related to identifying biological reference points, and draft rebuilding projections at this meeting. The preliminary alternatives represent different rebuilding periods and ways to rebuild the stock in as short a time period as possible, taking into account the status and biology of the stock, the needs of fishing communities, and the interaction of Tanner crab within the marine ecosystem. If the model is approved in June, the Council could conduct initial review in October and final action in December, 2012. Note that, in the absence of a rebuilding plan, the fishery will remain closed unless abundance increases sufficiently to meet the established threshold for opening the fishery.

Diana Stram gave the staff report on this agenda item. Pat Livingston gave the SSC report, Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and there was no public comment.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Glenn Merrill noted the Council's continued support for continued research and development on the model development based on the scheduled timeline.

C-3 (e) Crab Economic Data Collection

BACKGROUND

Over the course of several meetings, the Council has considered the revision of the crab Economic Data Reports (EDR) to improve the accuracy and reduce the cost of that program and eliminate redundancy with other data collection. Based on discussion papers, reports, public testimony, and its experience with the data collection initiatives, the Council made an initial review of an analysis of alternatives to revise the crab EDR at its October 2011 meeting. At that time, the Council made revisions to the alternatives, as well as requested additional analysis concerning certain aspects of the amendment, and requested that the document be released for public review and action at this meeting.

Mark Fina gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from Council members. The SSC had given its report earlier, and Lori Swanson gave the AP report. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, that the Council adopts as its preferred alternative for this action a modified Alternative 3 (ATTACHMENT 6) In addition, the Council recommends that general regulations be developed to implement this collection, with all forms (and any form revisions) subject to revision in the Council process. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the motion, and outlined his changes in the alternatives as shown in the attachment. He noted developing the options has been a lengthy work in progress in working through improvements of EDR. With the adoption of the modified Alternative 3 for the processing sectors, Mr. Henderschedt noted that it addresses problems that have been brought up with EDR. Additionally, he noted that although many components are dropped, it does not represent a step back, but an attempt to collect relevant data of high quality which is useful and easily obtained. Mr. Henderschedt urged the Council to continue to develop and improve the EDR program. There were brief questions of clarification on the motion.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the motion, which was seconded, to include bait and food purchases as part of the catcher processor sector matrix. It had been noted by staff that these had been included in the catcher vessel sector, and it was agreed it should be included in the catcher processor sector also. **The amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Fields moved to amend, which was seconded, to include under crew, “all unique captain crew and settlement sheets” in EDR. Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, noting it represents balancing equity and costs, and including crew contracts would provide an expansive resource in understanding crew employment. He reminded the Council that one of their concerns in the crab program is changes in crew compensation. Mr. Cotten noted that while he is sensitive to the interests of the crew and social contracts, he also has concerns on what information should be private, and he hasn't been convinced this is the best method of acquiring data and will not be supporting the motion. Mr. Henderschedt was in agreement with many of Mr. Cotten's remarks, and noted that crew wage data currently included in the EDR is the best yet. He noted his concerns with the impact of the crab rationalization program on crew, but does not need to see contracts to understand the impacts. Mr. Hull thanked Mr. Fields for making the motion which leads to discussion and is also in agreement that the Council needs this kind of information to assess impacts on crew, but cannot support the motion for many of the same reasons already discussed. Mr. Fields thanked the Council members for their comments. **The amendment failed 10/1, with Mr. Fields voting in favor.**

Mr. Fields spoke to the main motion, and noted that it is incumbent on the Council to consider the future, and noted his desire to re-evaluate the decisions made today.

Mr. Tweit moved to amend, which was seconded, that the Council deems proposed regulations that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of this motion to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303(c), and therefore the Council authorizes the Executive Director and the Chairman to review the draft proposed regulations when provided by NMFS to ensure that the proposed regulations to be submitted to the Secretary under section 303(c) are consistent with these instructions. Mr. Tweit noted that the motion applies to the regulations, and the maker of motion indicated that forms will come back to Council for review, as well as changes to the forms, should there be any. Regulations will have the benefit of significant staff analysis and the Council has good understanding of that along with the additional precaution of timing for forms. **Amendment passes without objection.**

Mr. Tweit wanted to emphasize that the Council is not finished with this issue, and that there will be further challenges and he looks forward to additional work on both the science and industry end to fix portions of this so that is all workable.

Mr. Merrill noted that the motion is responsive to National Standard 2; using the best available scientific information. He noted the Council can revisit the issue in future and that none of the modifications are expected to compromise ability to manage the fisheries.

The amended main motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

C-4 (a) GOA Trawl Sweep Modifications

BACKGROUND

In October 2010, the Council initiated a trailing amendment to require trawl sweep modifications on trawl vessels using nonpelagic gear in the Central GOA to reduce unobserved crab mortality. The action was initiated in conjunction with final action on the GOA Tanner crab area closures. The Council

considered the scope of the proposed amendment following a brief discussion paper presented at the February 2011 meeting. The paper focused on the practicality of trawl sweep modification for different GOA nonpelagic trawl fisheries, the effectiveness of the modification at reducing prohibited species catch of crab in the GOA nonpelagic trawl fisheries, and a tentative plan for verifying sweep elevation on GOA vessels during the 2011 GOA flatfish fishery. After reviewing the discussion paper and taking public comment on the issue, the Council narrowed the proposed sweep modification action to flatfish fisheries in the Central GOA.

Jon McCracken and Dr. Craig Rose gave the staff report on this agenda item. Roy Hyder gave the Enforcement Committee report relating to this issue. The SSC had given its report on this agenda item earlier, and the AP had a very brief report which was referenced.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved to forward the document for public comment and schedule for final action. The motion was seconded. Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, indicating that the action was initiated as a trailing amendment during final action on the GOA Tanner crab area closures because modified sweeps needed further research. Now that the research portion is completed, the findings show a positive correlation between the sweep modification and bycatch savings, as well as benefits seen by industry. There was a brief discussion indicating the motion is supportive of staff using the draft analysis to sync the GOA and BSAI regulations with respect to the extending slightly the exempted area on the net bridles and door bridles from 180' to 185'.

Mr. Benson noted his support of the motion, and is pleased the trawl fleet and scientists have come together with reasonable application of gear. Mr. Benson noted the fleet is supportive of this motion, even at a cost to industry, because it is the right thing to do from a biological stance as well as conservation of habitat.

Motion passes without objection.

C-4 (b) HAPC Areas of Skate Egg Concentration

BACKGROUND

Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) are geographic sites of special importance within the distribution of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for the Council's managed species that may require additional protection from fishing activity and adverse fishing effects. HAPCs must be rare and may be ecologically important, sensitive to human disturbance, or stressed by development activities. The Council has a formalized process within its Fishery Management Plans for selecting HAPCs, and periodically selects habitat priority types and issues a request for proposals.

In 2010, the Council set a habitat priority type—"skate nurseries"—and issued a call for proposals in conjunction with completion of the EFH five-year review. Council staff initially screened the HAPC proposals which the joint groundfish Plan Teams reviewed for rarity and ecological merit. The Council selected a HAPC proposal from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center for further analysis. In February 2011, the Council reviewed a discussion paper on identifying and conserving six skate egg concentration HAPC sites in the eastern Bering Sea and adopted a suite of alternatives and options for full analysis.

Sarah Melton, Matt Eagleton, and John Olson gave the staff report on this issue. Roy Hyder gave the Enforcement Committee report on this item; the SSC had given its report earlier, and Lori Swanson gave

the AP report on this agenda item. Stephanie Madsen gave the Ecosystem Committee report on this agenda item, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION /ACTION

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, to not send out the document for public review but provide direction for staff to improve the draft for review at later date.

- 1. Reformulate Alternative 3 with revised area boundaries consistent with the Enforcement Committee recommendations;**
- 2. Reword current Option e to “suggest” adding further research and monitoring of areas of skate egg concentration to the Council’s annual research priority list;**
- 3. Add to Alternative 2 a statement of Council intent to “discourage fishing in these areas” of skate egg concentration with any fishing gear that makes contact with the sea floor;**
- 4. Incorporate the following bullets from the AP’s motion into the analysis. Expand the analysis to include:**
 - Longer history of fishing in proposed HAPC sites;**
 - Further discussion with NMFS’ Office of Law Enforcement on the ability to minimize the closure sizes;**
 - Economic analysis of impacts on the actual proposed closure sites, including buffer(s);**
- 5. Incorporate the SSC’s recommendations, including consistency of terms, but not the comments on enforcement;**
- 6. Provide for Alternative 2 a discussion of potential industry and agency monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms;**
- 7. Incorporate the comments from the Ecosystem and Enforcement Committees.**

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that this is a precautionary approach and skate eggs are not common to all areas managed so identified areas are important and vulnerable fishing gear that makes contact with the seafloor. He noted his motion is an enforceable option, and recognizes the importance and interest in these the areas.

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend, which was seconded, in Alternative 2: voluntary no bottom contact gear, move to Alternative 3 as option (e). Mr. Henderschedt noted that alternative 3 deals with conservation and deals with actions beyond identification of HAPC sites. Additionally, the motion will establish reasonable expectations and objectives to give notice and guidelines to industry. Alternative 3 uses these tools for avoidance. There was discussion and questions regarding the best way to apply comments and suggestions.

After a brief stand down, **Mr. Henderschedt, with the concurrence of his second, withdrew his amendment to the motion.**

Mr. Tweit spoke to the main motion. He noted that if the Council is to adopt HAPCs without an enforcement option, the expectation is that the Council will be encouraging industry to avoid fishing in any of the areas with gear that makes contact with the seafloor.

Mr. Benson moved, which was seconded by Mr. Hull, to include in the bulleted list of items, actual bycatch of egg casings by gear type in each HAPC site. Mr. Benson noted that the information would be helpful to discern the impact and effort that is occurring in these areas. There was brief discussion

regarding the bycatch information available, and it was generally agreed that whatever information is available would be included. **Amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Tweit noted that the intent to “discourage fishing” is to note a change in activity over time, or a reduction in observed egg casings.

Amended main motion passed without objection.

C-4 (c) Bristol Bay Red King Crab Spawning Area/Fishing Effects

BACKGROUND:

In April 2010, the Council reviewed the summary report of the 5-year review of essential fish habitat (EFH) provisions. The report addressed new habitat information available since the last comprehensive review of EFH, documented in the 2005 EFH EIS, and how it pertains to the EFH provisions of the Council’s fishery management plans (FMPs) for BSAI and GOA groundfish, BSAI crab, Scallop, and Salmon. During the Crab Plan Team’s review of EFH information pertaining to crab species, the Plan Team recommended that further analysis should be undertaken to evaluate fishing effects on crab stocks, and the Council tasked staff with preparing a discussion paper to address these issues.

The discussion paper describes the methodology that was used in the 2005 evaluation of fishing effects, and considers how other parameters appropriate for crab stocks (such as the importance of spawning and larval distribution relative to oceanographic currents for crab settlement) might be addressed with further. The paper focuses specifically on red king crab, as a case study, although a similar methodology is used for all crab species.

The Plan Team also identified that recent shifts in the red king crab population distribution may mean that the spawning population is now present in an area in southwestern Bristol Bay that is also a location of intensive trawl fishing. The discussion paper provides specific information about the area in southwestern Bristol Bay, southwest of Amak Island; the oceanographic currents that may mean that eggs released in this area have greater chance of survival through larval and juvenile life history stages; and the influence of the Bering Sea cold pool which affects when ovigerous females are more likely to be extruding eggs in this area. The red king crab bycatch interactions of groundfish fisheries in this area are also included. In April 2011, the Council also asked for a comprehensive analysis of the efficacy of existing red king crab protection areas, such as the Red King Crab Savings Area and the Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure, which has not yet been undertaken, as staff with the necessary crab stock assessment experience have not yet been available for such an evaluation.

Finally, the discussion paper describes some options for Council action on this issue. This discussion is a response to concerns raised by the Crab Plan Team during the EFH 5-year review in 2010. There are two issues that were raised: the general conclusions about the effects of fishing on crab EFH that were reached during the 2005 EFH EIS, and specific concerns about a habitat area important for red king crab. Regarding the first issue, the Crab Plan Team’s initial concern was that the analysis concluded that some fishing effects on crab stocks were known, with which they disagreed. It is for the Council to decide whether it is appropriate to initiate a re-evaluation of the effects of fishing on crab EFH as an outcome of the 2010 EFH 5-year review, or whether further research is needed to investigate these issues, which might be developed in preparation for the 2015 EFH 5-year review.

With regard to the second issue, habitat protection for red king crab, the discussion paper investigates the importance of the ovigerous red king crab population in southwestern Bristol Bay for boosting larval and juvenile survival. A habitat-based hypothesis is presented, but has yet to be empirically verified. The Crab Plan Team has expressed concern about groundfish fishery interactions with crab in this area both

from habitat and bycatch considerations. Given this, the paper suggests several avenues that are available to the Council for possible action.

Diana Stram and John Olson gave the staff report on this agenda item. The SSC and the AP both gave reports, and Stephanie Madsen and Steve MacLean gave the Ecosystem Committee report. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION /ACTION

Mr. Tweit moved the Ecosystem Committee recommendations relative to the structure of a revised discussion paper, which should come back to the Council after the 2012 nearshore survey is completed and the research is summarized and analyzed. The Council also directs staff to expand the discussion paper to consider the efficacy of closure areas, as well as include management closures that the Council may want to consider to address potential risks to crab recruitment in cold vs. warm years. The discussion paper should also examine options for dynamic management in response to environmental triggers, or differential bycatch controls to protect female crab. It was also noted that the discussion paper will consider ways in which the industry might be able to be responsive to Council performance standards without a regulatory framework, as well as SSC comments. The motion passed without objection.

D-1 (a) GOA Chinook Salmon Bycatch

BACKGROUND

In December 2010, the Council initiated two amendments to address GOA Chinook salmon bycatch. The first amendment package was expedited, and established PSC limits for the Western and Central GOA pollock fisheries. Additional provisions ensured some form of observer coverage on all vessels fishing for pollock no later than January 1, 2013, and required full retention of all salmon taken in the pollock trawl fishery, in order to allow NMFS to implement a robust sampling protocol for Chinook salmon, and allow for genetic stock identification of Chinook salmon taken as bycatch. The Council took final action in June 2011, and a notice of availability and proposed rule for Amendment 93 were recently published.

The Council also initiated a second amendment package that was intended to be more comprehensive, and on a longer-term track. With respect to this second amendment package, the Council has expressed several intentions. The analysis was initiated with a specific suite of alternatives, addressing the implementation of PSC limits for the GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries, the establishment of a bycatch cooperative for these fisheries, and full retention of salmon in all the GOA trawl fisheries. Additionally, the Council identified several other items for which they requested further information, presumably with a view to determining whether those items should be included in the suite of alternatives. Finally, during the development of Amendment 93, the Council discovered that an element of the original amendment analysis for pollock PSC limits, namely a requirement for membership in a mandatory bycatch cooperative by pollock fishery participants, could not be implemented in the straightforward manner conceived of in the alternative. Therefore, the Council deferred discussion of this proposal, along with any other comprehensive tools that could improve the ability of pollock fishery participants to avoid Chinook salmon, to the current amendment package.

Given these diverse intentions, staff deemed it advisable to present the Council with a discussion paper addressing these various issues, and to ask for clarification with respect to the alternatives for moving ahead with this second Chinook salmon bycatch amendment package for the Central and Western GOA trawl fisheries.

Mark Fina presented the report on this agenda item. The AP did not address this agenda item, but Chairman Olson referenced the AP's December minutes. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Commissioner Campbell moved the following, which was seconded:

Problem statement:

Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards require balancing achieving optimum yield with minimizing bycatch, while minimizing adverse impacts on fishing dependent communities. Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) taken incidentally in GOA trawl fisheries is a concern, and incidental take is limited in the Biological Opinion for ESA-listed Chinook salmon stocks. The Council recently adopted a PSC limit of 25,000 Chinook salmon for the Western and Central GOA pollock trawl fisheries, while also indicating an intent to evaluate Chinook salmon bycatch in the non-pollock GOA trawl fisheries, which currently do not have a Chinook salmon bycatch control measure.

The following alternatives apply to non-pollock trawl fisheries in the Central and Western GOA.

Alternative 1: Status quo.

Alternative 2: 5,000, 7,500, or 10,000 Chinook salmon PSC limit (hard cap).

Option 1: Apportion limit between Central and Western GOA.

Option 2: Apportion limit by operational type (CV vs. CP).

Applies to both options: Apportion proportional to historic average bycatch of Chinook salmon (5- or 10-year average).

Alternative 3: Full retention of salmon.

Vessels will retain all salmon bycatch until the number of salmon has been determined by the vessel or plant observer and the observer's collection of any scientific data or biological samples from the salmon has been completed.

Ms. Campbell answered questions of clarification from the Council members. She noted that in the next version of the analysis the Council would continue to have information on the PSC limits that result from the combination of options and what the distributional impacts of those caps have on participants in particular fisheries. Ms. Campbell commented on the origin of the Chinook salmon PSC limits, and stated that the range is consistent with the range of options the Council took when dealing with the Pollock fishery.

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded by Mr. Benson, to amend under Alternative 2, add 12,500 Chinook salmon PSC limit. He spoke to his motion noting that while he appreciates the consistency with origin of the numbers for analysis, he is concerned that the Council needs to maintain flexibility when moving forward in responding to the analysis of potential impacts on the fisheries. Given the potential for splits between Central and WGOA and CP/CVs, the Council may need a broader range to meet its ultimate objectives which include both reducing bycatch and meeting historical performance of the fisheries. Mr. Fields noted that a greater range may show more information, but will oppose the motion because it may set an expectation of what the Council may choose.

Mr. Merrill noted that the motion eliminates problematic provisions for a census data collection instrument for non-pollock bycatch, which means that NMFS' ability to measure bycatch will be less precise. Therefore a larger range may be necessary to accommodate that inaccuracy. Mr. Merrill also noted that even with the larger number included in the range, the total GOA Chinook salmon trawl bycatch would be capped within the 40,000 salmon analyzed in the northwest regions' Incidental Take Statement for ESA-listed Chinook salmon.

Mr. Hull noted that he was willing to increase the range, but that the Council does remain committed to finding ways to reduce bycatch in the GOA for halibut and Chinook salmon, and the intersection of those efforts with this action may be important in the future.

Mr. Henderschedt remarked that the motion is trying to achieve a range of objectives all focused on reducing bycatch, while treating sectors fairly and managing fisheries at an appropriate level.

Amendment passes 7/4 with Fields, Hull, Cotten and Olson in opposition.

Mr. Tweit supported the amended main motion, and thanked Commissioner Campbell for clear direction in the motion. However, he noted he remains frustrated that in the Council's attempts to address bycatch, the Council has not given this fleet tools to manage their fishery and control bycatch. He also noted the Council adds regulatory expectations of this fleet faster than observations of the effects of those regulations can be made, in contrast to how other the Council manages other fleets elsewhere. Mr. Hyder noted he will not support the motion because he is in favor of a catch share plan as opposed to a bycatch cap.

The amended main motion passes 9/2, with Hyder and Benson in opposition.

D-1 (b) GOA Pollock D Season TAC Reapportionment

BACKGROUND

In June 2011, the Council took final action to establish a 25,000 Chinook salmon PSC limit in the Western and Central GOA pollock fisheries. The Central GOA will be capped at 18,316 Chinook salmon and the Western GOA at 6,684 Chinook salmon. At that meeting the Council also requested a discussion paper on the potential to reapportion GOA D-season pollock TAC to the A-, B-, and C-seasons to reduce fleet exposure to Chinook PSC closures. In October 2011, the Council requested that staff expand the paper to incorporate the latest data from Steller sea lions tagged with satellite linked transmitters and to investigate alternative apportionment schemes for pollock TAC in the GOA.

It is likely that any change to the GOA pollock regulations would require formal consultation under Section 7 of the U.S. Endangered Species Act (i.e., preparation of a new Biological Opinion). If the Council wishes to take further action to reapportion GOA D-season pollock TAC, additional guidance from the Council regarding objectives and alternatives for consideration and analysis is necessary. At this meeting the Council will review the revised discussion paper, and consider whether they wish to take further action to reapportion GOA D-season pollock TAC.

Steve MacLean gave the staff report on this agenda item, and answered brief questions from the Council. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Bedford moved, which was seconded, to take no action on this agenda item. He spoke to his motion noting that the Council, and public, have been dealing with bycatch for some time and actions are being taken to limit bycatch in the Pollock fishery and Chinook bycatch in the GOA. He also mentioned that the regulatory environment is in flux and along with a great deal of uncertainty and all other factors together, it is not the right timing for this action.

Mr. Fields noted he will support the motion, with concerns, and notes at some point the Council may need to re-initiate a Section 7 consultation.

Mr. Tweit noted his appreciation and support for the motion, and as a Council must compile a suite of tools fleets can use to control bycatch. While it may trigger consultation, the Council may be able to develop additional RPAs. He noted his support for a more comprehensive package for the GOA.

Mr. Cotten noted his opposition for the motion, stating he does not have the same fear of a section 7 consultation.

Motion passed with Mr. Cotton objecting.

D-1 (c) AFA Vessel Replacement

BACKGROUND

On October 12, 2010, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (Act) was signed into law. Section 602 of the Act addresses the replacement and removal of vessels eligible to participate in the Bering Sea pollock fishery under the American Fisheries Act (AFA). To assist in understanding the implications of the Act, the Council requested staff prepare a discussion paper on the Act and its potential impacts on the GOA groundfish sideboard fisheries.

As noted in the discussion paper, two ambiguities arise with the application of the GOA sideboards under the Act. The Act is silent on how to apply the GOA sideboard provisions to replacement vessels with multiple LLP licenses; and the Act is silent on the transfer of the sideboard privileges of removed AFA catcher vessels to assigned vessel or vessels in its cooperative. This absence of direction for both replacement vessels and removed vessels create ambiguities concerning the application of GOA sideboard restrictions. To address these ambiguities, two different approaches for each ambiguity were included in the discussion paper. Given that Act provides the Council with a relatively broad authority to address issues with respect vessel replacement including GOA sideboards, the Council can initiate a regulatory action utilizing the included approaches or other approaches that clarify the application of the GOA sideboards.³ The authority provided in the Act also allows the Council to include measures to limit and/or control fishing capacity in the GOA groundfish fisheries, so the Council could also broaden the regulatory action to include measures to limit the expansion of capacity expansion in the GOA.

Mark Fina gave the staff report on this agenda item. The AP report was given, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, the following:

Problem Statement:

Groundfish sideboard protections are included in the AFA to prevent participating AFA vessels from increasing fishing effort beyond historical catch in the GOA. Ambiguities exist pertaining to groundfish sideboards in the AFA vessel replacement provisions of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (Act). For vessels with multiple licenses, it is unclear whether the MLOA on the Bering Sea LLP or the GOA LLP applies to a replacement vessel when fishing in the GOA. Additionally, if an AFA vessel exempt from the GOA sideboards is removed from the fishery and assigns its pollock

³ It should be noted that in the absence of Council action directed to resolving these issues, NOAA Fisheries will likely develop regulations interpreting the Acts provisions to resolve these issues. Other ambiguities may also require resolution through rulemaking.

quota to another vessel, the Act is unclear whether the GOA exemption is transferable in addition to the pollock quota. Action is needed to clarify vessel replacement provisions of the Act and prevent increased capacity in the GOA groundfish fisheries by AFA vessels.

The Council requests staff to prepare an analysis for initial review including the following action alternatives and options:

Issue 1: Replacement/rebuilding provisions

For AFA non-exempt vessels to fish in the GOA, a replaced/rebuilt vessel:

- Alt 1. May not exceed the most restrictive MLOA specified on any GOA LLP assigned to the vessel at the time the vessel owner applies to NMFS for replacement or rebuilding. (The MLOA of any BSAI LLP assigned to the vessel to be replaced does not apply.)**
- Alt 2. May not exceed the most restrictive MLOA specified on any GOA LLP assigned to the vessel at the time the Act was approved (Oct 15, 2010). (The MLOA of any BSAI LLP assigned to the vessel to be replaced does not apply.)**
- Alt 3. Abide by current 10% limit on increasing the existing length (LOA), horsepower and tonnage, at the time the Act was approved (Oct 15, 2010).**

For AFA exempt vessels to fish in the GOA, a replaced/rebuilt vessel:

- Alt. 4. May not exceed the LOA specified on the FFP for the vessel to be replaced or rebuilt at the time the Act was approved (Oct 15, 2010).**

Issue 2: Vessel removal provisions

Upon removal of an exempted vessel, the sideboard exemption is extinguished and cannot be transferred to another vessel.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion, noting that this is a complicated issue, and the Council and Agency are trying to find best way to merge management of effort on a vessel basis and on a permit basis. The Council is trying to use permits as a way to re-assign vessel-based rights and restrictions in the case of AFA replacement and rebuilding. Mr. Henderschedt briefly reviewed each alternative and its application. There was brief discussion regarding the differences in the motion and the motion passed by the Advisory Panel.

Mr. Henderschedt talked briefly on why the proposed alternatives do not limit vessel replacement to the MLOA of BSAI LLPs. Given that the legislation allows for vessel replacement without limitations in the BSAI, it appears inconsistent to apply the BSAI LLP restrictions to vessels that are accessing the GOA sideboard fisheries. Rather, the proposed alternatives rely on the most restrictive MLOA specified on any GOA LLPs to control effort in the GOA sideboard fisheries.

Motion passed without objection

Mr. Cotten requested a report on exempt vessels and fishing at historic levels, and it was noted that at the next meeting the co-op reports will be included.

D-1 (d) BSAI Flatfish Specification Flexibility

BACKGROUND

In December 2010, the Council requested a review of using non-specified reserves or alternative measures to increase flexibility in the harvest of flatfish (yellowfin sole, rock sole, and flathead sole) in

the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) by the Amendment 80 sector (i.e., non-American Fisheries Act trawl catcher/processors). A discussion paper was presented in February 2011, which examined a possible method for providing Amendment 80 cooperatives with additional harvest opportunities for flathead sole, rock sole, and yellowfin sole without increasing the aggregate total allowable catch assigned to those species. After reviewing the report, the Council requested an expanded discussion paper to address legal, practical, and policy implications of the proposed action, and to examine the possibility of including the CDQ sector.

The revised discussion paper reflects further discussions with NMFS management staff about how such flexibility, for both Amendment 80 cooperatives and the CDQ groups, might be practicably achieved within the existing management structure. The paper discusses an approach that would create an aggregate flatfish TAC for yellowfin sole, rock sole, and flathead sole, and also create a new category of quotas to ensure that even with the aggregate TAC, the maximum permissible biological catch allowable for an individual species is not exceeded.

The approach that is discussed in this paper would require an FMP amendment and regulatory changes, which would need to be implemented independent of the annual harvest specification process, and at the beginning of a fishing year. The proposed change could not be implemented in time for the beginning of the 2013 fishing year.

Mark Fina gave the staff report on this issue and Lori Swanson gave the AP report. Public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, that Council postpone further action pending receipt and discussion of 2011 BSAI Amendment 80 annual reports. In the meantime, the Council ask staff to work with industry and NMFS Regional staff to refine a workable implementation model that would serve as an action alternative should the Council choose to initiate analysis at a later date.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion, noting that moving forward on an analysis at this time is premature. There may be a question about whether there is a need for this action, and the annual reports will allow the Council to examine how the Amendment 80 sector operated, both individually and cooperatively, to catch the 2011 quotas. Additionally, the implementation model proposed in the discussion paper is unworkable, but that there are other ways to achieve flexibility. He urged the Council to consider this issue again when the Amendment 80 report is available, because there may be a broader question of optimum yield in achieving economic yield of our fisheries while staying under the regulatory 2 million mt cap.

The motion passed without objection.

D-2 Staff Tasking

Mr. Oliver noted the items scheduled for staff tasking, and noted that after the scheduled presentations of the programmatic SEIS and the status of IFQ proposals, the Council can discuss other items.

Programmatic Groundfish Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Gretchen Harrington gave a background on the proposed schedule for the revised groundfish PSEIS and answered questions from the Council. There was discussion regarding the necessity for a new PSEIS. Mr. Tweit noted there is still a lot of work left to do and the old objectives are still relevant. Mr. Oliver

noted that during staff discussions, there were conversations about the form and scope of the revised PSEIS, and how it will evolve, and will the Council choose to look at small changes or something more comprehensive. Mr. Tweit noted that the public and stakeholders could provide valuable input as to the priorities. Mr. Fields stated that the Council should evaluate the necessity of this project and what items would be displaced when this project is begun.

Halibut/Sablefish IFQ proposal update

Jane DiCosimo presented a preliminary discussion paper on the status of current IFQ proposals and a brief background of Council final action on several IFQ proposals from the same Call for Proposals. She noted direction on whether to accept new IFQ proposals from the Council would be helpful.

Other items

Chris Oliver went through the status of items for future meetings, including items that have not been yet tasked, and discussed the three-meeting outlook. There were brief questions, and Mr. Oliver also reviewed items the Council had flagged for discussion throughout the meeting.

Steller Sea Lion Measures

Melanie Brown updated the Council on the development of the EIS for Steller sea lion measures based on a recent court order. Dr. Balsiger reminded the Council that the proposal and timeline for NMFS action may not be accepted by the judge. Ms. Brown noted that NMFS is looking forward to working with the public and anyone else who may have ideas, on how to protect sea lions while still allowing for fisheries. Mr. Tweit encouraged the Council, specifically the Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee to take an active role as the process unfolds.

Mr. Hull requested to have a charter halibut report under the B items as part of the enforcement report.

There were brief questions and clarifications on draft April agenda items.

Committee Appointments

Chairman Olson announced Joe Reh fuss has been appointed to the Observer Advisory Committee and Dr. Jason Gasper has been appointed to the Crab Plan Team.

Electronic Communication

Mr. Olson noted the Council will begin accepting email comments on a trial basis, and details will be in the newsletter.

Lori Swanson gave the AP report on this agenda item. Public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Observer Program Restructuring

Mr. Oliver clarified the issue of concern deals with the Council's action on GOA Tanner Crab closures and the link to a 100% observer coverage requirement in the closure areas which is inconsistent with the restructured observer program. Mr. Fields noted he is concerned about timing, and wanted to confirm that if the new observer program is not in place when the Amendment 89 package went into place, there would still be 100% coverage (noting that when the restructured program was put in place, it would supersede the 100% coverage requirement). Mr. Merrill confirmed that this is the case, but NMFS is moving forward under the assumption that the observer restructuring program will be in effect. He noted that at the next Council meeting he should have more clarity as to the progress of rulemaking. Mr. Fields noted he is very interested in the next steps, and specifically, how the Council will express priorities

under the new observer program for geographically designated areas, as well as specific gear types or seasons.

Steller sea lion mitigation process and role of Mitigation Committee

Mr. Tweit noted the Council should express strong interest in having the timeline and EIS process to incorporate enough time for the Council and the Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee to be meaningfully incorporated as an active and timely participant in the comment process. Mr. Tweit stated the timeline needs to balance two different objectives: sufficient time for full Council engagement, and be expedited to the extent practicable.

He went on to state that the Mitigation Committee should reconvene, with an examination of information that has become available since the biop and discuss the range of the information. Chairman Olson cautioned tasking the committee with work until the legal process unfolds and noted that the Council will be monitoring the process closely.

PSEIS

Mr. Tweit noted that a report in April would be helpful which outlines 1) concrete examples of how the revised programmatic would improve efficiencies, and 2) details on proposals for pre-scoping, including how to do outreach to stakeholders, and solicit comments from the AP and SSC on whether or not the science needs to be revisited. He noted that the Council may have a clearer set of expectations after a report as to whether or not the Council needs to revise the programmatic.

Mr. Fields affirmed he is interested in the Council and NMFS staff being involved and making recommendations. There was brief discussion on current objectives in the current programmatic, and Ms. Smoker (NOAA GC) noted that NEPA wants federal agencies to understand the environmental impacts of their actions, and the data included in the current programmatic is beginning to age, and at some point the Council will need to do another programmatic because the current one would be out of date.

Mr. Cotten advocated a public comment scoping session. Mr. Henderschedt noted it does not hurt to have a plan to move forward for when the Council feels it has reached a point where it's necessary to revise the PSEIS.

Mr. Balsiger stated that NMFS and Council staff can work together on a scoping meeting among the stakeholders, and have a report in April.

EFH Consultation process:

Mr. Tweit noted his interest in developing a set of criteria and asked for the Ecosystem Committee and the State of Alaska's comments and recommendations. Mr. Henderschedt recalled that NMFS categorized consultations on proposed permits, and noted that the Council's interest is more likely limited to consultations that may have major effects requiring mitigation. The Council agreed to ask the Ecosystem Committee to look at this issue and report back.

IFQ issues

Mr. Hull reminded the Council there have been four new IFQ/Sablefish proposals the Council has approved for discussion papers and many years since the Council has had a call for proposals. He suggested that since the IFQ Implementation Committee is planning to meet before the next Council meeting, that it review the proposed discussion papers with the specific purpose of prioritizing so the Council can move forward and take action.

Mr. Hull also noted that the IPHC received a report from Ron Antaya NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, describing enforcement issues with all directed halibut fisheries, and suggested it be presented to the

Council at the next meeting. Mr. Oliver noted that he can try and make sure the report and/or presentation is included in April.

Mr. Hull commented on the IFQ proposal for Area 4B that allows D shares to be fished on C vessels and recommended it be scheduled for the April meeting, or as soon as practicable. Mr. Olson noted that the Council could signal intent to agenda the item for final action, based on previous analysis. Ms. DiCosimo noted that she may be able to provide a separate supplement that would capture recent public testimony on the proposed action. Mr. Olson reminded the Council that although final action is scheduled, if the Council finds the document would benefit for further information and review, it can be rescheduled at a later date.

Council / IPHC future involvement

Mr. Tweit requested Mr. Gregg Williams outline how the peer review process works for the IPHC. Mr. Williams spoke about the IPHC's peer review process, and clarified that it is not anticipating another CIE review, but the Commissioners are considering a technical workgroup of the current halibut model. There was brief discussion regarding the models, and Dr. Balsiger directed the Council's attention to a press release regarding the upcoming halibut workshop, and noted that there will be a range of involvement and ideas of how the peer review process will take place. Mr. Tweit emphasized that the Council should remain involved, and help lead the process, as it may affect the Council's process for stock assessment and management. Mr. Fields suggested the relationship between the IPHC and the Council should be addressed by the IFQ committee, and after brief discussion, it was generally agreed that the Council maintain interactions at the Council level, not at the committee level.

Council Support for USCG

Mr. Tweit noted that he appreciates the Coast Guard reports on the effort and resources that go into monitoring and enforcing the North Pacific areas, and that at the next meeting he would like an overview of the broader mission. Mr. Olson would like information on how the Council can be helpful to the USCG in securing the resources they need for the area. Capt. Sanial noted that resources are available to maintain the level for FY12/13 for the Bering Sea. He noted that the Arctic will require more resources, and they are being made available, but not at the risk of other areas. Capt. Sanial noted that he can provide a report at the next meeting of the USCG's broad fisheries mission, and that the increased and new effort in the arctic will not detract from that. It was generally agreed the Council does not need to weigh in at this time.

Crab EDR and potential future direction

Mr. Henderschedt noted that although the Council's scientific advisors have a way to go to improve EDR, he suggested a "cooling off" of the process, and focus on the revisions the Council has adopted in final action, review current data collection, and have discussion with those involved as to the next steps, and develop common objectives and strategies. He suggested taking a less formal approach to those discussions.

Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab

Mr. Henderschedt offered clarity to the PIBKC motion, noting that the Council expects to see the analysis in June for final action with the selected PPA for closing the PIHCZ to the pot cod fishery. He went on, stating that if the Council chooses to adopt that PPA, it still is not the final word on PIBKC. The Crab Plan Team will be looking at questions of appropriate management area and correct calculation of OFL. He suggested the Council will be dealing with this issue, and addressing the question of preventing overfishing beyond any final action in Kodiak in June. Mr. Fields thanked Mr. Henderschedt for clarity, but remains frustrated at forced regulations that may or may not have an impact on PIBKC.

BSAI Right of First Refusal Crab Group

Mr. Fields remarked that during public testimony the Council heard a desire to hear a report from that group on the progress to date. He noted there may be an impasse, and the Council may have to revisit the amendment package. Mr. Cotten noted that the Council will have to address it during the next few months as everyone becomes aware of the potential effects of current regulations.

The Council thanked everyone for their work, and the meeting was adjourned, Tuesday, February 7 at 2:56 pm.

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET
February, 2012 **N.P.F.M.C. MEETING**

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NAME	AFFILIATION
Kathy Hansa	SEAFSA
Glenn Reed	PSPA
Paul Mac Gwynn	At-Sea Processors Assn.
LUOER Dochtermann	KODIAK LONGWELLS
BRENT PAINE	UCB
Kris Noosz	Teiele Seafoods
Lori Swanson	AKF
Tyson Kade	Van Ness Feldman
STEPHEN KEITH	IPHC
ERIE BERGGREN	DSFU
Shawn McManus	"
Harold Cox	"
David Owens	"
Koll Bruce	DSFU
Heather McLarty	McLarty & Assoc. Juneau
Howard Torsen	GOAACC
Robin Lane	FIN Predator Homer, AK
Don Lane	FIN Predator Homer AK

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET
February, 2012 **N.P.F.M.C. MEETING**

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NAME	AFFILIATION
Andrew Jensen	WK Journal of Commerce
Dee Smith	F/V Lisa Melinda
Luci Roberts	APICDA
Michael Lake	AOI
Simeon Swetzof Jr.	CITY OF ST. PAUL
Matt Upton	U.S. Seafoods
Todd Loomis	Ocean Peace
Arnie Thompson	A.C.C.
GLENN REED	PSPA
Vern Hall	F/V PROVIDER, RONDYS INC.
ERIZABETH WINEY	WESTWARD SEAFOODS
Jeff Stephan	UFMA
SHAWN DOCHTERMANN	CREWMAN'S ASSOCIATION
Siri Dammarell	F/V Silver Dolphin
Margaret Hall	Rondys Inc
Frank Petty	CITY OF WILKESBARE
Jan Warrantuk	OCEAN
HERMAN SQUARTSOFF	VILLAGE OUZENKRE

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

February, 2012 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

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NAME	AFFILIATION
Susan Robinson	Fishermen's Finest
[Signature]	FWU Seattle
Matt Upton	U.S. Seafood

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Time Log of meeting: February 1-6, 2012

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
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Wednesday, February 1, 2012

0:00:01	8:14:34	Call to order
0:00:47	8:15:21	Move to approve agenda
0:01:04	8:21:42	B-1 ED report - Chris Oliver
0:26:52	8:41:20	B-2 NMFS report - Glenn Merrill
0:59:06	9:13:15	Jon Kurland, EFH Consultation
1:08:19	9:22:54	C-4 (d) Coral research - Chris Rouper
1:13:36	9:27:45	Glenn Merrill 3-mile line
1:13:45	9:28:41	B-3 ADFG report - Karla Bush
1:24:02	9:38:13	B-5 USCG Report - Greg Sanial, Tony Keene
2:15:16	10:44:00	B-7 IPHC - Bruce Leman
2:27:34	10:55:36	Greg Williams
3:04:09	10:32:06	B-8 Protected Resources - Steve MacLean
3:28:40	13:08:56	B Items - Public Testimony
3:28:47	13:09:02	Bob Alverson
3:36:45	13:17:01	Larry Cotter, John Gauvin, Kenny Down
3:54:52	13:34:55	Jeff Osborn
4:05:49	13:45:54	Simeon Swetsoff
4:08:45	13:48:49	Julie Bonney, Bob Kruger, Glenn Reed
4:14:10	13:54:18	Paul Clampitt
4:17:16	13:57:10	George Hutchings
4:41:25	14:31:08	Diana Evans C-1 Halibut Management
5:21:16	15:10:15	Dave Fraser
5:29:29	15:18:35	Bob Snell, Everett Anderson APICDA
5:34:10	15:23:05	Clem Tillion
5:38:10	15:27:12	Chuck McCallum
6:05:54	15:57:00	C-2 Halibut PSC - Jane DiCosimo
6:29:12	16:25:15	Mike Downs, Darrell Brannan - RIR and IRFA
6:49:03	16:44:47	Recess

Thursday, February 2, 2012

0:00:09	8:00:40	Call to order
0:00:28	8:03:23	C-2 Staff report continued - Darrell Brannan, Mike Downs
1:06:17	9:06:28	SSC report, Pat Livingston
1:13:03	9:13:10	AP report, Lori Swanson
1:22:36	9:39:58	Public Testimony
1:26:51	9:44:11	Lou Dochterman
1:28:56	9:46:31	Brian Harber, Koll Bruce, Harold Cox, Havid Owens, Jeff Peterson
1:34:31	9:51:57	Jan Standaert, Shawn McManus
1:38:32	9:55:48	Joel Hanson
1:41:28	9:58:42	John Warrenchuck
1:54:48	10:12:08	Herman Squartsoff
2:02:01	10:19:08	James Skonberg
2:04:58	10:22:03	Bob Alverson
2:20:18	10:37:20	George Hutchings

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Time Log of meeting: February 1-6, 2012

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
2:34:11	10:51:10	Harold Torsen
2:37:08	10:54:01	Bob Krueger
2:51:21	11:08:06	Julianne Curry
2:53:21	11:10:06	Teresa Peterson
2:58:01	11:14:46	David Polushkin
3:00:11	11:17:03	Rob Sanderson
3:08:10	11:24:48	Don Lane
3:10:18	11:26:59	Linda Behnken, Jeff Farvour
3:29:25	11:46:07	Susan Robinson, Erin Moore
3:34:16	11:50:49	Julie Bonney
3:49:10	12:05:34	Shawn Dochterman
3:55:24	15:19:23	Kenny Downs
4:06:35	15:30:32	Lori Swanson
4:16:17	15:40:09	Garrett Elwood
4:22:29	15:46:21	Campbell Motion C-2
5:04:29	16:27:59	Recess

Friday, February 3, 2012

0:00:00	8:06:57	Call to order
0:01:01	8:08:14	C-3 (a) Prib Blue King Crab Rebuilding - Diana Stram
0:42:54	8:49:40	Jennifer Mondragon
1:22:38	9:29:05	Martin Loefflad
2:06:07	10:12:19	SSC report, Pat Livingston
2:08:49	10:15:10	AP report, Lori Swanson
2:19:39	10:25:42	Donna Parker
2:21:01	10:27:06	Stephanie Madsen
2:25:32	10:31:33	John Gauvin
2:28:56	10:35:02	Heather McCarty, Mateo Paz Soldon
2:34:55	10:40:53	Arni Thompson
2:39:29	10:45:24	Kenny Down
2:47:15	10:53:07	Council Motion, Glenn Merrill
3:02:56	11:08:48	C-3 (c) Tanner crab rebuilding - Diana Stram
3:19:01	11:24:44	SSC report, Pat Livingston
3:20:10	11:25:49	AP report, Lori Swanson
3:22:18	11:29:25	C-4 (c) BBRKC spawning areas/fishing effects
3:23:50	11:29:29	Diana Stram, Jon Olson
3:49:05	11:54:33	SSC report, Pat Livingston
3:50:05	11:55:32	AP report, Lori Swanson
3:52:21	11:57:54	Ecosystem Committee report, Stephanie Madsen/Steve MacLean
3:56:26	12:01:50	John Gauvin
4:04:29	12:09:48	Bill Tweit
4:07:39	13:33:11	remaining SSC report, Pat Livingston
4:45:08	14:09:48	C-3 (e) BSAI Crab EDR - Mark Fina
6:31:16	16:15:03	AP report, Lori Swanson
6:40:13	16:23:58	Public Testimony, Mark Gleason

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**Time Log of meeting: February 1-6, 2012**

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
6:44:49	16:28:30	Jim Stone
6:50:28	16:34:11	Dyann Provenzano
6:56:36	16:40:12	Nancy Harris
7:04:19	16:47:55	Siri Dammarell
7:05:14	16:48:49	Vern Hall
7:10:59	16:54:29	Arni Thompson
7:11:31	16:55:01	Steve Minor
7:16:46	17:00:18	Elizabeth Wiley
7:20:16	17:03:46	Nikolai Silverstol
7:28:02	17:11:26	Shawn Dochtermann
7:30:40	17:14:07	Ed Poulsen
7:33:42	17:17:06	Ludger Dochtermann
7:36:15	17:19:33	Recess

Saturday, February 4, 2012

0:00:00	8:04:17	Call to order
0:46:15	8:50:32	C-4 (a) Trawl sweeps - Dr. Rose, Jon McCracken
1:50:06	9:53:51	Enforcement Committee Report, Roy Hyder
1:53:19	9:56:55	AP report, Lori Swanson
1:55:35	10:20:00	Public Testimony
1:55:56	10:20:22	George Hutchings
1:59:37	10:24:34	Julie Bonney
2:04:40	10:29:01	John Gauvin
2:11:50	10:36:10	John Warrenchuck
2:23:50	10:48:07	C-4 (b) HAPC Skate Egg Concentrations
2:24:33	10:48:56	Sarah Melton, Matt Eagleton
3:32:04	11:55:54	Enforcement Committee report, Roy Hyder
3:32:11	11:56:01	Ecosystem Committee report, Stefanie Madsen
3:33:53	13:32:01	AP report, Lori Swanson
3:36:31	13:34:34	George Hutchings
3:39:56	13:38:09	John Gruver
4:00:39	13:58:33	John Warrenchuk
4:04:21	14:02:12	Stephaine Madsen
4:14:09	14:11:54	John Gauvin
4:58:22	15:13:44	D-1 (a) Chinook Salmon Bycatch - Mark Fina
5:23:37	15:38:52	Herman Squartsoff/Howard Toresen
5:26:57	15:42:05	George Hutchings
5:32:48	15:47:50	Joel Hansen
5:38:28	15:53:27	John Warrenchuk
5:41:39	15:56:38	Julie Bonnie
		Recess

Sunday, February 5, 2012

0:00:49	8:03:00	Call to order
0:01:09	8:04:03	D-1 (b) GOA B Season Pollock - Steve MacLean

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Time Log of meeting: February 1-6, 2012

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
0:28:52	8:30:54	AP report, Lori Swanson
0:30:23	8:34:29	Ernie Weiss
0:38:53	8:40:53	George Hutchings
0:39:00	8:40:56	Julie Bonney
0:49:29	9:06:04	D-1 (c) AFA Vessel Replacement - Mark Fina
1:24:53	9:41:06	AP report, Lori Swanson
1:28:35	10:00:43	Public Testimony
1:28:38	10:00:45	Brent Paine
1:41:06	10:13:09	George Hutchings
1:44:18	10:16:19	Julie Bonney
1:47:33	10:19:33	Henderschedt motion
2:04:08	10:51:47	D-1 (d) BSAI Flatfish Specs Flex - Mark Fina
2:43:04	11:30:24	AP report, Lori Swanson
2:45:03	11:32:25	Public Testimony, Lori Swanson
2:49:37	11:38:25	Jason Anderson
3:02:17	11:49:29	Susan Robinson
3:05:52	11:53:01	Bill Orr
3:14:55	12:02:02	John Warrenchuk
3:22:05	13:17:54	Henderschedt motion
3:28:58	13:24:41	<i>Recess until 9:00 am</i>

Monday, February 6, 2012

0:00:01	9:02:09	Call to order
0:02:44	9:04:52	Gretchen Harrington
1:22:53	10:24:27	AP report, Lori Swanson
1:22:56	10:24:33	D-2 Staff Tasking – Chris Oliver
1:46:07	10:47:37	Public Testimony
1:46:15	10:47:40	Bob Alverson
1:49:39	10:51:02	Arni Thompson
1:59:37	11:00:56	Kenny Down
2:08:30	11:09:45	Donna Parker
2:11:33	11:12:48	Edward Anderson
2:13:44	11:15:12	Bob Snell
2:19:36	11:20:51	Simeon Swetsoff
2:22:07	11:23:21	George Hutchings
2:34:45	11:35:50	Heather McCarty
2:43:28	11:44:30	John Gauvin
2:48:12	11:49:19	Julie Bonney
2:51:02	11:52:05	Linda Kozak
4:22:02	14:58:29	<i>Meeting Adjourned</i>

DRAFT REPORT
of the
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE
to the
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
January 30th – February 1st, 2012

The SSC met from January 30th through February 1st, 2012 at the Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA.

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	Farron Wallace, Vice Chair <i>Wash. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>	Robert Clark <i>Alaska Department of Fish and Game</i>
Alison Dauble <i>Oregon Dept. of Fish and Willife.</i>	Anne Hollowed <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	George Hunt <i>University of Washington</i>
Gordon Kruse <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Kathy Kuletz <i>US Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	Seth Macinko <i>University of Rhode Island</i>
Lew Queirolo <i>NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region</i>	Terry Quinn <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Kate Reedy-Maschner <i>Idaho State University Pocatello</i>
Ray Webster <i>International Pacific Halibut Commission</i>		

Members absent were:

Jennifer Burns <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Jim Murphy <i>University of Alaska Anchorage</i>	Franz Mueter <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>
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SSC Nominations

The SSC reappointed Pat Livingston as chair and Farron Wallace as vice chair. The SSC also wants to express how much it values the stock assessment expertise and institutional memory of Farron Wallace on the SSC. This type of expertise is important and needed and it is our hope that Farron can be retained on the SSC once he assumes his new position in the NMFS Observer Program.

B-1 Plan Team nominations

The SSC reviewed the nomination of Dr. Jason Gasper to the Crab Plan Team, replacing Gretchen Harrington who is moving on to another position. Jason's experience with stock assessment and management will provide a good contribution to the CPT. The SSC recommends that the Council approve his nomination.

C-2 Initial review Halibut PSC Limits

The SSC received a presentation of the initial review draft of an EA/RIR/IRFA to revise the Pacific halibut PSC from Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC), Darrell Brannan, and Mike Downs (consultants). Public testimony was provided by Julie Bonney (Alaska Groundfish Data Bank) and Jon Warrenchuk (Oceana).

The current revision of the draft analysis addresses the vast majority of the SSC concerns expressed after our previous initial review of this proposed action package. The analysts have confronted a complex body of information and statistical data pertaining to this action. The SSC appreciates the excellent progress demonstrated since our last review, especially the attention given to our earlier questions and

suggestions. The SSC also extends its appreciation for the concerted effort made by the analysts/authors to use accurate and consistent terminology throughout the narrative.

Although the draft is a substantial improvement over the earlier version, the SSC suggests additional attention to several elements of the descriptive narrative. The SSC previously commented on the confounding of “personal-use” and “subsistence-use” aspects of Pacific halibut removals. This distinction has important legal, management, social, and cultural implications. We acknowledge the authors’ efforts to improve the treatment, particularly in the Community Impact appendix. The SSC suggests comparable treatment in the RIR.

A related matter concerns whether the analysis tracks impacts of changes in halibut PSC mortality on all prospectively impacted users (see p. xxiii). There appears to be a too-narrow characterization of impact distribution. For example, changes in halibut biomass resulting from reductions in PSC removals may influence subsistence user costs and success, benefits accruing to personal use fishermen, etc.

Another consideration the authors of the analysis may wish to revisit is the occasional imprecise substitution of the terms “halibut mortality rate” and “halibut PSC rate”. The two can be quite different, owing to the estimation of <100% handling mortality assumption. It is not always clear from the context in the draft which measure is being referenced. In other passages, the wrong term appears to have been used (see p. xix).

The SSC suggests that it may be time to formally reassess exactly what constitutes “confidential” information under Council protocol. As both Federal and State of Alaska statutes contain mandatory criteria for judging whether information is or is not governed by “confidentiality” rules, there should not be substantial uncertainty. Yet there appears to be varied definitions employed in the document. This is endemic to many of the analyses coming before the SSC and Council. In most instances, Council and Agency staff go to extremes to err on the side of nondisclosure. But, unless these legal thresholds are at risk of being infringed, withholding relevant information or declining to use data (see p. xxi), by asserting confidentiality, does not serve science or the public interest. An effort to obtain definitive, unambiguous, and officially sanctioned direction on this topic, to inform Council, SSC, NOAA, and State of Alaska personnel subject to these data protection protocols seems prudent. The SSC recommends that the Council seek legal guidance from NOAA General Counsel and the State of Alaska as to the finer points of interpreting and applying the confidentiality protocols, as they apply to the Council’s management process. Possibly, the legal guidance is clear but there are inconsistencies in the application of the rules.

Regarding sections on protected species in the EA (i.e., Seabirds; 3.5), the SSC recommends background information be updated and more specific to this particular document. Likewise, broad generalizations about the lack of impact of fisheries on seabirds (3.5.2.4.2) are not substantiated with citations and are probably not supportable. The SSC will provide the analysts with specific editorial recommendations for their consideration and treatment, as time allows.

Appendix 7 includes new fieldwork in Kodiak, the results of which better describe the significance of this action for this community. The methodology describing the nature of this fieldwork is needed. The document could also benefit from a broader description of the potential impacts on the resident processing labor force, since public testimony indicated that the action could affect retention of labor and change the community structure. The document could also better reflect the potential consequences of switching to pelagic trawl gear, which would put vessels in a Chinook salmon PSC situation. Tables 3a and 4a on pages 10-11 may contain errors in the ex-vessel gross values and need to be reviewed. **The SSC recommends that the document be released for public review, incorporating the suggested edits to the extent practicable.**

C-3(a) Pribilof Island blue king crab rebuilding analyses

The SSC received a presentation from Diana Stram (NPFMC) that reviewed survey distribution of Pribilof Islands blue king crab (PIBKC) and fishery catch in relation to State and Federal regulatory areas and alternative closure configurations. Public testimony was given by John Gauvin (Alaska Seafood Cooperative), Donna Parker (Arctic Storm) and Arni Thomson (Alaska Crab Coalition).

During the October 2011 meeting the Council requested staff to provide additional information on a number of discussion items associated with the PIBKC rebuilding plan. The SSC was specifically asked to consider information in relation to area stock boundaries used to define the spatial area over which the PIBKC OFL is currently applied and the associated bycatch accrual over alternative areas. These issues have major implications in rebuilding analyses and the development of alternatives for the PIBKC rebuilding plan. Available information suggested that the current area may not adequately cover the spatial extent of the stock, as indicated by survey and PSC. Given the limited time for review, questions about the information presented, and the lack of review and input by the CPT, **the SSC is not able to recommend changes to the currently defined spatial extent over which the PIBKC OFL is currently applied. The SSC requests the CPT to conduct a detailed review of current spatial information, additional information requested by the SSC below, and comment on the most appropriate spatial extent to accumulate catch for computing OFL.**

The SSC request the analysts provide additional information on:

- Sex and season of PIBKC survey catch and PSC in groundfish fisheries
- Numbers of crab actually observed and extrapolated numbers to total estimates
- Size composition of survey catch and PSC in groundfish fisheries
- Potential influence of the cold pool on survey catch distribution

The SSC requests this information to help judge the veracity of purported BKC bycatch observations particularly in areas 509 and 516, the possibility of seasonal movements that may reconcile divergent BKC distribution from survey (summer) and groundfish fishery PSC (winter?) observations, and current understanding of BKC life history and distribution.

C-3(b) Crab model workshop report

Tanner Crab Model

A report on the Tanner crab portion of the NPFMC Crab Modeling Workshop, was presented by Diana Stram (NPFMC), Jim Ianelli (NMFS-AFSC), Lou Rugolo (NMFS-AFSC) and Jack Turnock (NMFS-AFSC). As with GKC, the crab modeling workshop provided an excellent opportunity for a detailed examination of the Tanner crab model. Workshop participants identified and recommended a number of issues for resolution before the model can be accepted for fishery management. A few of the major issues that were addressed during the workshop included:

1. Large variability in survey catchability among time periods. The analysts provided a list of factors that changed over time, but workshop participants felt that these factors were insufficient to explain such large changes. While participants encouraged further analysis of survey data in attempts to reconcile the differences, most discussion focused on modeling alternatives that might explain the data better. This led to two sets of model runs: (1) “Hide’em” scenarios in which the low survey estimates over 1982-87 were due to unavailability of crabs to the survey gear for some unknown reason, and (2) “Kill’em” scenarios in which these low estimates were due to heightened but unobserved crab mortality. Both scenarios mimic the data better than the previous base model that included seemingly unrealistic changes in survey catchability.

2. There appears to be a data conflict between the length frequency of the Tanner crab bycatch in the red king crab fishery and other data. The fit to survey data improved when the bycatch length-frequency data were downweighted.
3. Input sample size specifications appear to play a role in model results. Assumptions about sample size appear to be particularly consequential in fisheries with Tanner crab bycatch or PSC for which few animals were measured for size. Workshop participants recommended that sample sizes should be specified by year. An analysis of the spatial coverage of size frequency data may help.
4. A number of model coding issues were identified by the workshop chair after the conclusion of the workshop. These issues included non-differentiability of the double-logistic discard selectivity curve, need for greater clarity on the many components included in the objective function, and complexity of coding that require recompiling the model each time new model scenarios are run. Conversion to a more general model code using switches in input control files would be beneficial. A similar recommendation to use such a general model coding was made for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab assessment.
5. Other post-workshop advice from the workshop chair includes a general desire to simplify the estimation of parameters such as maturity, growth, and natural mortality, as well as the use of fishing effort, rather than limited catch data, to estimate crab fishery bycatch and groundfish fishery PSC discards by assuming a relationship between this fishing mortality and fishing effort from the various fisheries that take Tanner crab as bycatch.

The workshop report provides a more comprehensive description of these and other issues, along with a full list of recommendations for further model development. Since the conclusion of the workshop, the analysts developed a draft work plan and have begun to address a few of these workshop recommendations. Model 1 is now being used as the new base model. Changes made since the workshop include new sample size weights, a one-time increase in mortality in 1983 applied to mature crabs, and change in the fishing mortality penalty. Preliminary model results as a consequence of these changes are very encouraging.

The SSC greatly appreciates the intensive effort of the analysts and workshop reviewers. **The SSC supports all of the workshop recommendations for the Tanner crab model.** The SSC wonders whether any ancillary data may be useful to help evaluate the operative mechanism (i.e., hide-‘em or kill-‘em) that may have been operating in the early to mid-1980s. For example, an apparent increase in mortality of large male crab only may be indicative of a fishing effect, whereas an apparent increase in mortality in crabs of all sizes and both sexes may be indicative of a natural die-off. Potential synchrony with similar observations for Bristol Bay red king crab may help to uncover the cause. Depressed prices paid for Tanner crabs in primary foreign markets might imply unreported, illegal harvests.

Whereas preliminary new mortality runs included a one-time increase in mature crab in 1983 only, **the SSC requests that the assessment authors explore evidence for increased mortalities for all modeled sized classes for both sexes, as well as evidence that the mortality event may have occurred in one year versus several years.** When reporting new model results, **the SSC requests that the analysts include Model 1 without the “kill ‘em” option. Analysts should report model results separately for some of the more significant changes (e.g., mortality shift), so the reasons for improved future model fits can be judged.** Model diagnostics will also be helpful to evaluate alternative model configurations. **Finally, the SSC requests that the analysts explore model sensitivity to growth and mortality assumptions.** The SSC is very optimistic that a base model can be recommended for use in annual catch specifications by the Crab Plan Team in May and the SSC in June. Because of the pressing importance of this effort, the SSC requests a report on model progress at the SSC meeting in April 2012.

Tanner Crab Rebuilding

The SSC was provided a very brief summary of workshop discussions about models and scenarios for use in projections for Tanner crab rebuilding analyses. At the time, workshop participants had the understanding that rebuilding analyses could not await further model development and must proceed prior to adoption of a base Tanner crab model. However, it was explained to the SSC at this meeting that it would be acceptable to conduct rebuilding analyses using a base model, which might be accepted in May/June 2012. With this in mind, **the SSC anticipates receipt of an acceptable Tanner crab and refined, more comprehensive plans for rebuilding analyses in June 2012. Rebuilding scenarios outlined in the workshop report appear to be well advised, including the no-fishing scenario. One very important decision concerns the recruitment scenarios to use in the projection analysis.** The issue is that selection of the time period will have big effects on expectations of stock productivity and, therefore, rebuilding probabilities and time frames. Bookends proposed during the workshop included recruitment scenarios based on periods of high (1974 through 1980) and low (1982 through 2011) productivity. **Rebuilding scenarios including these optimistic and pessimistic recruitment projections would be useful, but the SSC also requests scenarios including recruitments drawn from the full set of recruitment observations.** There remains considerable uncertainty about the roles of fishing (e.g., catch, PSC and bycatch) versus climate (e.g., temperature) versus ecological (e.g., predation) factors on Tanner crab stock status and recruitment.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

Diana Stram (NPFMC) and Steve Martell (University of British Columbia, Crab Plan Team) provided an overview of the outcome of the crab modeling workshop for golden king crab (GKC). M.S.M. Siddeek (ADF&G) provided an overview of model developments for the Aleutian Islands GKC stock. David Fraser (Adak Community Development Corporation), Linda Kozak (Golden King Crab Harvesters) and Steve Hughes (Natural Resource Consultants) gave public testimony.

Dr. Martell reported that the participants in the workshop concluded that the GKC model was not ready for use as the basis of a Tier 4 status determination. **The SSC agrees that additional work is required on the model before it can be used for Tier 4 status determinations.** The SSC will review additional model developments in June 2012.

Dr. Martell explained that workshop participants reviewed the GKC model code and discussed modifications to test assumptions. Some of these modifications were tested during the meeting. He recommended that future crab reviews should consider this workshop format. The format allowed participants to more fully understand the model assumptions and their implementation. Dr. Martell developed new data input code that provided a more flexible platform for modeling. The SSC greatly appreciates Steve's time and his efforts to improve the GKC model. Dr. Ianelli (AFSC, Workshop Chair) reported that efforts are underway to create a generic crab modeling platform. **The SSC agrees that a more flexible modeling platform would be a useful new development and supports continued interim reviews of crab models if they are deemed necessary.**

The workshop report provides a list of activities that should be considered and progress can be discussed during the Crab Plan Team (CPT) meeting in May. In general, the SSC agrees with the work plan and supports the recommendations in the workshop report. In particular, the SSC agrees that the author should carefully examine the fishery CPUE data to look at effects of soak time, and other explanatory variables. The SSC suggests that, in addition to soak time, other explanatory variables might include time blocks, depth strata, pot design and size, and possibly tide. Fishery CPUE might decline over time due to local depletion. Therefore, breaking the data into temporal blocks may provide a more reliable index of abundance.

The workshop report recommends that the tagging data should be incorporated into the model and suggests that the analysts should attempt to estimate molting probabilities and growth in the model. The SSC supports this approach. The SSC also supports the collection of improved shell condition data on surveys and by onboard observers to allow better estimation of molting probability, as well as continued tagging studies to improve growth estimates.

The workshop report recommended that the author should compare the observer catch estimates with the dockside estimates as a method to estimate discard. The SSC approved this approach for Tanner crab and agrees that the author should consider this approach for GKC.

ADF&G plans to conduct a survey of the Eastern Aleutians in 2012. The SSC strongly supports this activity. The survey would provide the 5th fishery independent data point for this population. The SSC learned that ADF&G is considering minor modifications to the survey design. The SSC cautions against making changes that will alter the integrity of the time series unless they are critical. If changes must occur, the SSC recommends that experiments are conducted to assess how the new approach will compare with the old approach.

PDF of OFL

Diana Stram (NPFMC) and Jim Ianelli (NMFS-AFSC) presented a summary of a workshop on estimating the probability density function (pdf) of the overfishing limit (OFL) for crab stocks. Discussions focused on the need to clarify the definitions of various OFL terms, calculation of variance, and methods to deal with the types of uncertainty not included in assessments. A review of the approaches used for groundfish was helpful to these deliberations. For crab, discussions focused on the computation of pdfs for stocks in Tiers 3 and 4. Workshop participants provided a set of three short-term and seven long-term recommendations.

The SSC extends its appreciation to the workshop participants for making excellent progress on this difficult issue. **The SSC fully endorses the workshop recommendations.** The SSC understands that Jack Turnock and Andre Punt have developed some simulation software applications that may facilitate the estimation of the pdf of OFL. The SSC recommends that they combine their efforts to develop a standard software package with documentation that can be distributed and utilized by all crab stock assessment authors for calculating the pdf of OFL. **The SSC requests that all crab assessment authors implement recommendations 1 through 3 in the upcoming assessment and encourages other efforts to make progress on the remaining workshop recommendations in the not-too-distant future.**

C-3(e) Final Action Crab EDR and CIE review

The SSC received a presentation of the subject draft RIR-IRFA package from Mark Fina (NPFMC). Public comment was offered by Steve Minor (PNCIAC).

The SSC appreciates the effort that has been made to bring a very complex and multifaceted issue into a relatively manageable framework. The analyst suggested that, within the constraints provided by Council action *as per* our comments at the October 2011 meeting, changes had been made to address SSC issues. Because the Council has determined that final action on this amendment will occur at this meeting, the SSC is limited in its ability to offer meaningful comment. Nonetheless, the SSC wishes to make several observations. First, the CIE Review made a series of useful and insightful observations concerning the need for and benefit of an EDR. Based upon these, the CIE reviewers made several specific recommendations, each of which should be considered by the Council. The summary remarks, provided by the CIE panel chairman, are particularly informative. Among the most compelling of these is the recommendation that scientific data collection and interpretation in the subject areas of economics,

anthropology, and sociology would benefit from a dedicated Economic and Social Science Plan Team, equivalent to the biological Plan Teams that serve the Council so effectively.

The SSC endorses the proposal to remove blind formatting, currently mandated under status quo. It appears to the SSC that any potential benefit in additional confidentiality protection that might be attributed to blind formatting is substantially exceeded by the cost, complexity, and risk of introduction of data error.

The critical importance, yet continued absence, of basic economic (and other social science) data have been the focus of SSC comment and concern for many years. The SSC has repeatedly gone on record challenging the adequacy of economic and socioeconomic impact assessments provided in support of Council actions. With the advent of fishery rationalization programs, expectations for meaningful improvement in economic analyses seemed attainable. The BSAI crab rationalization program, initiated by Congressional action and elaborated by the Council, was expressly framed as a social contract between the public and those private individuals and entities that were recipients of substantial economic value, embodied in tradable IFQ and IPQ access guarantees. That social contract was founded partly on exchanging privately held access privileges for detailed proprietary economic data with which to understand the changes caused by rationalization (e.g., quasi-rents, shares markets, crew compensation, community stability and welfare effects, wealth consolidation, behavioral changes in fishing and processing practices and behaviors, net welfare changes to the Nation). The alternatives under consideration by the Council seem to represent a retreat from the balance struck in this contract.

As we noted in our October, 2011 minutes, the status quo EDR has been judged to be excessively burdensome, given the benefit it yields. Yet, the alternatives to the status quo appear in many ways to be a substantial retreat from meaningful collection of economic performance data. Neither extreme appears to be a rational or desirable course. The SSC believes that the loss of this opportunity will critically impair the Council's ability to meet future management objectives and it will be hard to recover the collective will and momentum to collect such data in the foreseeable future.

The SSC urges the Council to seek opportunities to meaningfully enhance the scope and detail of the revised EDR program they adopt. We believe that there must be some acceptable middle-ground between the status quo EDR program and the incomplete and inadequate data acquisition programs reflected in the two action alternatives.

C-4(a) Initial review GOA trawl sweep modification

An initial review draft EA/RIR/IRFA for GOA trawl sweep modifications was presented by Diana Evans (NPFMC) and Craig Rose (NMFS-AFSC). Public testimony was given by Julie Bonney (AK Groundfish Databank) and John Gauvin (AK Seafood Cooperative). This action is a trailing amendment to Amendment 89 to require trawl sweep modifications on non-pelagic trawl vessels fishing for flatfish in the Central GOA to reduce unobserved Tanner crab mortality. Two alternatives were presented in the draft analysis: 1) status quo with no trawl sweep modifications or 2) require trawl vessels targeting flatfish in the Central GOA with non-pelagic trawl gear to use elevating devices on trawl sweeps to raise them off the seafloor.

The analysis borrows and benefits from information gained from the analysis and implementation issues of trawl sweep modifications for trawl vessels fishing for flatfish in the Bering Sea (cf. Amendment 94). Field experiments conducted with various configurations of trawl sweeps in the GOA showed results similar to those found in the Bering Sea that were found effective in raising the sweeps above the seafloor and limiting the reduction in groundfish catches in modified trawls. The SSC also appreciates the authors' use of surveys of vessel operators for describing current trawl sweep configurations in the Central GOA and the potential impediments to implementation of trawl sweep modifications if this action is taken. One

important aspect of the analysis is the flexibility provided in implementation of the performance standard via a combination of disk size and disk spacing gear standards that achieve the performance standard.

The SSC recommends that the draft document be released for public review with minor modifications as follows:

- Tables 1-2 and 2-4 need to be corrected so that the percentage of PSC is accurately displayed.
- If available, a map of bottom sediments in the Central GOA along with a map of catches of flatfish should be included in the EA.
- Include a discussion that compares the size composition of groundfish catches made with modified and unmodified sweeps.
- Black-footed Albatross need to be removed from the list of ESA candidate species in Table 1-10. Was the bycatch of BFA actual reports of bycatch or extrapolated numbers of birds taken?
- The document would benefit greatly from a careful and thorough proof-read.

C-4 (c) 2012 01 30 Skate Nursery HAPC

The SSC received a presentation by Sarah Melton (NPFMC), with the assistance of Gerald Hoff (NMFS-AFSC) and John Olson (NMFS-AKR). Public comment was provided Merrick Burden (Marine Conservation Alliance), John Gruver (United Catcher Boats), Donna Parker (Arctic Storm) and John Gauvin (Alaska Seafood Cooperative). The SSC commends the analytical team on their presentation.

The SSC reviewed a discussion paper in February 2011 on this topic and offered several suggestions for the full analysis. The SSC recognizes the considerable work and resulting improvement in the document since we last reviewed it. In response to these SSC comments, the authors adequately explained the practical rationale for choice of areas and the size of the areas to be acted on. They also initiated the quantification of the significance of these sites to the overall recruitment of skates and the potential for additional sites in the Bering Sea. However, there are some areas that still require more analysis and clarification.

We need to know more about the population-level importance of these areas and their potential protection. Is there a higher than average incidental catch of skates in the proposed HAPC areas, and if so, would closing them to fishing improve stock status? Is there evidence that the areas of high egg concentration that have been subject to a high level of bottom-contact fishing have lower densities of egg cases or a higher proportion of non-viable eggs? Of the viable eggs located in the surveys for areas of high concentration of skate eggs, what proportion of viable eggs are in the areas of high concentration and what proportion are in areas of lower density or spread out across the shelf? If the presumed fishing-related mortality of skate eggs were to cease, what effect might this have on skate populations and the ecosystem components with which skates interact? There is a need for a clearer justification for the use of a density of 10,000 egg cases km² as the threshold for deciding that a location is an area of high egg concentration. Finally, since the goal of this action is to protect spawning and breeding habitat necessary to support a sustainable skate fishery and the managed species contribution to a healthy ecosystem, there should be a discussion of the status of the Alaska skate population relative to B_{msy} .

A number of questions were raised, especially in public testimony, concerning the estimation of the economic impacts of the proposed HAPCs, should they be closed to fishing. In addition to the overall mean impact, it would be helpful to know the extreme values when these areas may have been particularly important fishing grounds. Thus, it would be useful to examine how often these areas have been of importance in the past. At present, the VMS data from 2003 through 2011 serve as the analytical frame over which impacts are evaluated. The SSC suggests that earlier data on fishing activity in the regions of the designated HAPC sites be investigated. Fisheries data from the early 2000s and mid- to

late-1990s, while not equivalent to electronic monitoring, may provide useful insights into historical fishing patterns that pre-date VMS. It would also be useful to determine which of the proposed areas would create difficulties for avoidance given their proximity to closed areas or known obstacles.

The SSC recommends that the analysts add a more elaborated discussion of the “catch-at-risk” methodology employed to characterize potential changes in fishing in response to HAPC designation. We also recommend adding the modifier “gross” to estimated measures of economic values.

The SSC suggests that the treatment of enforcement issues associated with the proposed HAPC action be reconsidered. Reliance on the enforcement committee report and crab fishing enforcement example is inappropriate to the HAPC program. There also appears to be an opportunity to address proposed skate egg HAPC restriction impacts by gear-type category. That is, fixed gear implications are very different from mobile gear impacts. Likewise, it is not clear that the buffers around the proposed HAPC areas need to be as large as suggested because all tows will be observed, and the observer would be able to determine whether tows with bottom-trawls were in the proposed HAPC areas. Regardless of the size of the buffers, it would help greatly if the authors would clearly define the HAPC area, the buffer area around it, if any, and the area used to determine the economic impact of the proposed closure.

There are also some terminology issues. Although the Council has stated that it wishes to call the proposed HAPC areas “areas of skate egg concentration”, frequently in the document they are referred to as nursery areas. This is confusing, even though the term commonly used in the literature is “nursery area.” Additionally, the authors propose a unique definition of “bycatch”. The SSC sees benefit in keeping the definitions of commonly used terms as precise and consistent as possible.

Finally, the SSC notes that the inclusion of “Research Priorities” as an option in the action alternatives short-circuits the evaluation and ranking of priorities usually provided by the Plan Teams, which are then revised and recommended by the SSC to the Council. The SSC recommends that the Council postpone decisions on research priorities for this action until the Plan Teams have the opportunity to evaluate all suggested research needs. The list of potential research needs should be forwarded to the Groundfish Plan Team. An additional research issue for them to evaluate is the level of suspended sediment in the vicinity of the areas with high concentrations of skate eggs, with and without trawling, and the effects of the suspended sediment on the ability of developing skates to circulate water through their egg cases.

Given the number of confusing issues in the current version of the document, **the SSC recommends that the document be returned to staff for additional work and that the SSC have an opportunity to review the next version prior to public release.**

C-4(c) Updated discussion paper BBRKC spawning area

Diana Evans (NPFMC) presented a revised and expanded discussion paper on the evaluation of adverse impacts from fishing on crab EFH, previously presented in April 2011. The revisions were largely to incorporate survey and PSC information from the area southwest of Amak Island in Bristol Bay, including exploration of the relationships between the trawl survey data, temperature, and PSC amounts. Options for Council action with respect to protection of this area were also presented in the report. John Gauvin (Alaska Seafood Cooperative) provided public testimony.

The information presented in the revised report is suggestive of the importance of the area southwest of Amak Island, but it is not conclusive. The SSC considers that at present there is insufficient evidence to support any management action but does support further research (see page 35 of the discussion paper). Regarding the relationship between survey CPUE and temperature in that area, the SSC recommends

considering the mean temperature across the range of BBRKC habitat and the extent of the cold pool, rather than simply local temperature.

C-4(d) 2012-2015 Deep Sea coral research

The SSC received a presentation from Chris Rooper (NMFS-AFSC) on the fieldwork planned for the Alaska Coral and Sponge Initiative (AKCSI; 2012-2014), sponsored by the NOAA Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program (DSCRTP). Public testimony was received from Jackie Dragon (Greenpeace).

A number of ongoing research priorities and objectives in the Alaska region were identified by the DSCRTP, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and Essential Fish Habitat-Environmental Impact Statement (EFH-EIS) process and is the focus of this initiative. The SSC believes this research will provide extremely valuable information to inform the Council process to better understand the location, distribution, ecosystem role, and status of deep-sea coral and sponge habitats. The objectives are consistent with the Council's Five-Year Research Priorities (Council Priorities) identified in June 2011, specifically an immediate concern, "Evaluating habitats of particular concern" (III.A) and an ongoing need, "Habitat mapping" (III.A and III.B). One exception was noted, pertaining to assessments of the distribution and prevalence of coral and sponge habitat specifically in Bering Sea canyons (III.A.1). The SSC noted that at the time the Council Priorities were identified, this particular concern was thought to be partially underway. At present, the AKSCI does not include any Bering Sea research projects. It is unclear if the Bering Sea coral research that is currently underway is sufficient to meet Council needs. This could be evaluated by the AKSI program in out-years.

The SSC encourages the ACSI to continue or pursue cooperative efforts with the National Park Service, the Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program, and the Aleutian Bering Sea Islands Landscape Conservation Cooperative. SSC members suggested an Automated Underwater Vehicle may be more appropriate than Remote Operated Vehicles for assessments in the deeper habitats. Overall, the SSC considers the AKCSI research to be highly relevant to multiple Council Priorities identified in June 2011 and will provide timely information for upcoming Council activities related to EFH.

SSC Workshop on Use of Stock-Recruitment Relationships in Stock Assessments

At its December 2011 meeting, the SSC chose stock-recruitment issues as its topic for its workshop held February 1, in conjunction with the SSC meeting. The following key issues were identified:

- criteria for moving from Tier 3 to Tier 1 based on whether a spawner-recruit (SR) relationship was credible (and had a corresponding pdf for F_{msy}),
- detecting regimes for when an SR relationship changed,
- estimation of an SR relationship within the assessment or outside,
- how much weight to give the SR relationship if inside the assessment.

In addition, there are several related issues that pertain specifically to the effort to examine the implications of incorporating uncertainty buffers into the groundfish management system. Key questions include:

1. Should form and steepness be constrained? If so, on what basis (e.g., meta-analysis to determine similar stock groupings)?
2. Should the initial SR model be estimated by assuming B35% is BMSY and F35% is FMSY?
3. What are the best methods for estimating uncertainty when estimating the SR model?

The following presentations were given at the workshop to help discussion of these issues and questions:

- Tom Wilderbuer (AFSC) – Tier 1 management overview and experience with advancing stocks to Tier 1
- Megan Stachura (UW) - Multivariate analysis of groundfish recruitment to understand environmental forcing.
- Cody Szuwalski (UW) - Identifying recruitment regimes and specifying BMSY proxies, a case study for snow crab.
- Teresa A'mar (AFSC) - Identifying recruitment regimes and specifying BMSY proxies, a case study for walleye pollock.
- Martin Dorn (AFSC) – Use of stock-recruit steepness priors based on meta-analysis in West Coast rockfish assessments.
- Grant Thompson (AFSC) - Some problems associated with estimating relative recruitment without first integrating out random effects.
- Jim Ianelli (AFSC) - Issues and concerns in modeling stock recruitment for EBS walleye pollock.

The SSC thanks the presenters for their useful presentations. Three presentations considered analytical approaches to address regime shifts in stock production (Stachura, Szuwalski, A'mar). These presentations applied statistical methods to identify shifts in recruitment and evaluated the implications of shifting time frames on harvest control strategies. The SSC recommended that analysts should consider estimating the power to detect environmental change and the vulnerability and susceptibility of different species to these changes. This could be used to evaluate the risk of calling a regime if one had not occurred. The presentation by Dr. A'mar revealed that if a real regime shift is not identified in the assessment, then the biological reference points slowly moved in the correct direction of change anyway. This property could be used if the detection power was low and the risk of mis-specifying the regime shift was high. Some authors utilized management strategy evaluations to analyze the implications of shifting biological reference points when detection skill was low. The SSC agrees that this is a promising analytical approach.

Dr. Ianelli and Mr. Wilderbuer provided approaches in which variables representing environmental forcing are incorporated into the SR relationship. This type of approach requires collection of additional data, which can be expensive or time-consuming to collect, but has the desirable quality of accounting for environmental variability in the assessment. With this type of approach, it is then necessary to select biological reference points that are intended to reflect the long-term average productivity of the stock. One approach is to make forecasts of future values of the environmental variables. Another approach that is similar to current BRP's is to use an average of the historical time series of environmental conditions over a selected time period thought to be an accurate representation of the average condition.

Drs. Dorn, Thompson, and Ianelli provided three different approaches to incorporate spawner recruitment relationships into stock assessment. Dr. Dorn noted that west coast assessment scientists inform steepness in the stock recruitment relationship by either estimating steepness with a prior based on a meta-analysis, or by fixing steepness at the mean of the meta-analysis. The SSC noted that, if this approach was used, the analysts might consider using the cluster analysis techniques shown in the presentation by Ms. Stachura as a basis for grouping stocks for the meta-analysis. If this approach was used it appears that cod, pollock and sablefish stocks would be grouped together. Dr. Thompson introduced a statistical method to estimate mean recruitment and σ_R . Dr. Ianelli provided an example where he conditioned the spawner-recruit parameters on the basis of the assumption that $F_{35\%}$ was equal to F_{msy} . The SSC encourages stock assessment analysts and the Plan teams to evaluate all three of these approaches.

Workshop participants discussed the criteria needed to transition a stock to Tier 1 and commented that the pdf of Fmsy should incorporate several sources of error in growth, natural mortality, selectivity, and the SR relationship.

The SSC and PT members discussed timelines to continue research on this topic. The SSC supports the previous recommendation of the Groundfish PT that the next step would be to hold a workshop to develop guidelines on how to address environmental changes in the SR relationship into biological reference points and how to model environmental forcing in stock projection models. The discussions from the SSC workshop should be helpful in identifying terms of reference for the next workshop. The SSC believes it would be useful to have members from both the Groundfish and Crab Plan Teams present, because the issues are common to both groups. Also, it would be useful to have some Groundfish Plan Team members attend the May Crab Plan Team meeting to provide input into these issues as they relate to the Tanner crab rebuilding analysis and some Crab Plan Team members attend the September Groundfish Plan Team meeting for the same reason.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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FINAL ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES North Pacific Fishery Management Council January 30 - February 2, 2012 Seattle, Washington

The following (19) members were present for all or part of the meetings:

Kurt Cochran
Craig Cross
Julianne Curry
Jerry Downing
Tom Enlow
Tim Evers
Jeff Farvour
Becca Robbins Gisclair

Jan Jacobs
Alexus Kwachka
Craig Lowenberg
Chuck McCallum
Matt Moir
Theresa Peterson
Ed Poulsen
Neil Rodriguez

Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

*Absent: Andy Mezirow,
John Crowley*

Minutes of the December 2011 meeting were approved.

Election of Officers

The Advisory Panel approved Tom Enlow as Chair and Lori Swanson and Becca Robbins Gisclair as co-vice Chairs for 2012.

C-2 Halibut PSC in GOA – Initial Review Analysis

The current analysis package only considers reductions to PSC limits and does not include tools for industry to accomplish PSC reductions while maintaining harvest levels. For this reason, the AP recommends that the analysis be revised to include options to:

- Tie PSC reductions to halibut stock status (floating cap)
- Allow some portion of unused PSC (50-100%) to roll from one year to the next
- Develop individual bycatch quotas for groundfish participants based on catch history.
- Allow Amendment 80 sideboards to roll from season to season, and manage Am 80 5th season sideboards as aggregate (not separated into deep- and shallow-water complexes).
- Include an option for a sector split of the trawl halibut PSC cap between CVs and CPs.

The AP recommends that the document not be released for public review.

Motion passed 11-8.

The following substitute motion failed 8-11:

The AP recommends the Council move this analysis forward with the following additions:

Alternative 2, Option 2:

Suboption 1:

Add (d) 20 percent

Suboption 2:

Add (d) 20 percent

Suboption 3:

Add (d) 20 percent

Add Suboption (applied to suboptions 1-3): 10% reduction in year 1, an additional 5% in year 2 and another 5% in year 3 (total reduction = 20%).

Incorporate the following in the analysis:

- Incorporate new IPHC data and other bluebook information.
- Look at individual vessel bycatch rates in specific fisheries to assist in determining whether bycatch is a random event or whether fishing behavior is a factor (i.e. are there boats with consistently high bycatch rates).
- Include history of halibut bycatch reductions in the H&L CP sector.

Minority Report on C-2: The undersigned minority supported the substitute motion. The minority felt that action must be taken to reduce halibut PSC limits in the Gulf of Alaska. Review of the IPHCs current and retrospective status of the halibut stocks indicates a clear need to protect the halibut resource. Uncertainty surrounding overall stock health, low exploitable biomass, and slow growth rates warrants a precautionary approach to halibut removals. Inadequate reductions in total removals of halibut may threaten the rebuilding potential of halibut stocks.

The directed commercial and charter halibut fisheries have taken significant reductions in allowable harvest over the past decade. Gulf regulatory areas (2C, 3A, 3B) experienced a 50% total reduction in allowable harvest by the directed commercial fishery from 2002 to 2011 while the 2C charter halibut fleet was reduced to the bottom GHL staircase in 2011. The dynamics of the directed and non-directed halibut fisheries have changed significantly, while the PSC limits for Gulf of Alaska trawl and fixed gear fleets have remained at the levels set in 1986 and 1995 respectively.

Signed by: Ernie Weiss, Becca Robbins Gisclair, Chuck McCallum, Theresa Peterson, Tim Evers, Jeff Favour, Alexis Kwachka, Julianne Curry

C-3(a) Pribilof Island blue king crab rebuilding

The AP recommends that the Council delay final action on Pribilof Island blue king crab bycatch management to allow input from the SSC and the Crab Plan Team.

The AP recommends modifying Alternative 6 as shown in **bold**.

Component 2. Triggered closure of the area representing the distribution of the PIBKC stock between 1984-2009 (See Figure 10-3). The PSC associated with this closure is established as a fishery-wide level at 75% of the ABC (currently this equates to a cap of 1,726 lbs or 646 crab). This PSC cap is then further allocated as follows:

Option 1. To sectors by gear type as follows:

Trawl Gear – 45% of trigger cap
Pot Gear – 45% of trigger cap
H&L Gear – 30% of trigger cap

Under the current 2011/12 ABC this would equate to cap levels by sectors as indicated in the table below (in lb and numbers of crab):

Gear type	% allocation	Cap (lb)	Cap (numbers of crab)
Trawl	45%	777	291
Pot	45%	777	291
Hook and Line	30%	518	194

Option 2. Seasonally to all fisheries in aggregate. Any unused PSC will roll to the following season.

- a) 25 % to first quarter, 25% to second quarter, 50% to last half of year
- b) 50% to first half of year, 50% to last half of year
- c) 75% to first half of year, 25% to second half of year

Further, the AP recommends that bycatch caps be managed as a number of crab, based on the average weight of PIBKC over the last five years.

The AP emphasizes the importance of precision in bycatch estimates, and requests continued development of census reporting of PIBKC bycatch.

The AP recommends that the Council request staff include a discussion of the following documents in the EA:

- Declaration of Commercial Fishery Failure, 2000
- SSC Minutes of April 10-12, 2000
- Declaration of Overfishing Status for PIBKC, September 5, 2002

The AP requests that the stock boundary for PIBKC be refined to reflect the true distribution of the Pribilof Island blue king crab resource with input from the Crab Plan Team and the SSC.

Motion passed 18-0.

C-3(c) Tanner Crab Rebuilding

The AP comments that we are encouraged by the progress made regarding the *bairdi* model which will help as we move forward with a rebuilding plan. The AP credits much of this progress to the recent Crab Modeling Workshop and encourages this forum to occur in the future as necessary to address crab modeling issues.

Motion passed 18-0.

C-3(e) Crab Economic Data Reporting

The AP recommends that a modified Alternative 3 (attached) be moved forward for final action to revise catcher vessel and catcher processor EDR forms. The AP further recommends that alternative 3, also attached, be moved forward for final action to revise the shore based processor and floating processor EDR forms. Finally, the AP recommends that general regulations be developed to implement this collection, with all forms (and any form revisions) subject to revision in the Council process.

Motion passed 14-4.

Note: The only changes made under the AP's modified Alternative 3 motion to catcher vessel and catcher processor EDR forms from Alternative 3 were to exclude "All unique captain and crew contracts and settlement sheets" and to include "crew license number/CFEC permit number".

Minority Report: A minority of the AP did not support this motion because they felt that the alternative selected would not provide the data necessary to reach the original goals of the crab EDR program of assessing the effects and impacts of crab rationalization. While the minority agrees with the premise of eliminating redundant or unusable data elements, the minority was not comfortable with removing a significant number of data elements at this time. The minority supported an approach of developing better ways to collect necessary data elements which are not accurately collected rather than simply eliminating key data collection elements.

Signed by: Becca Robbins Gisclair, Chuck McCallum, Theresa Peterson, Alexis Kwachka

C-4(a) Trawl Sweep Modifications

The AP recommends that the Council move the analysis forward on a normal timeline and send it out for public review.

Motion passed 19-0.

C-4(b) HAPC – Skate Egg Concentration Sites

The AP recommends that the analysis not be sent out at this time. The analysis should be expanded to include:

- Longer history of fishing in proposed sites
- Further discussion with NMFS enforcement on ability to minimize closure size
- Economic analysis of impacts of actual proposed closure site, including buffer(s)
- Options for circular closures centered on highest density
- Discussion of sites in other areas (BS, AI, GOA)
- Further explanation of the calculation used to estimate total number of sites
- Further explanation of how density of eggs is determined
- A table including sites, species, casing density, population trend, fisheries in the site and amount of fish caught in site.
- Actual bycatch of egg casings by gear type in each site
- Actual impact of fishing gear on the habitat
- Clarification of process for modifying fishing restrictions in HAPC sites

The AP also encourages the analysts to work with fishing industry members to better identify and explain the importance of the sites to fisheries, and issues related to the effects of potential closures.

Motion passed 19-0.

C-4(c) BBRKC Spawning Area/Fishery Effects

The AP recommends that the Council request that the discussion paper be brought back after the nearshore survey work in 2012 can be incorporated, and after the Crab Plan Team can address this issue.

Motion passed 19-0.

D-1(b) GOA Pollock D-season

The AP recommends that the Council take no further action on this issue.

Motion passed 17-1.

D-1(c) AFA Vessel Replacement on GOA Sideboards

The AP recognizes the need to clarify ambiguities in the effect of the AFA vessel replacement language highlighted by staff in the discussion paper.

The AP recommends that the Council develop a purpose and need statement and request staff initiate analysis of the following alternatives:

1. To fish in the GOA, a replaced/rebuilt vessel must:
 - Option 1. Be within the MLOA specified on their GOA LLP at the time the legislation was approved
 - Option 2. Be within the MLOA specified on both their GOA and BSAI LLPs at the time the legislation was approved
 - Option 3. Abide by current 10% limit on increase in existing length, horsepower and tonnage as of the time of the legislation and may not exceed 125 feet.
2. If the replaced vessel did not have a GOA LLP at the time of the legislation, the replacement vessel is not eligible to fish in GOA.
3. Upon removal of an exempted vessel, the sideboard exemption is extinguished and cannot be transferred to another vessel.

The analysis should address the possibility that a replacement vessel could exceed the 125-foot limit on exempt vessels contained in the current AFA regulation.

Motion passed 19-0.

D-1(d) BSAI Flatfish Specification Flexibility

The AP recommends that the Council move this issue forward for analysis, and ask staff to further develop options to maximize flatfish harvesting flexibility, with input from participants in the affected fisheries. The options should insure harvest by species is below ABC limits, and should not pre-empt flatfish harvests in other sectors.

Motion passed 17-1.

D-2 Staff Tasking

The AP recommends that the Council initiate the process of updating the Programmatic SEIS by scheduling a scoping meeting and requesting staff to prepare a discussion paper.

Motion passed 19-0.

The AP recommends that the Council encourage NOAA to facilitate the development of integratable software to use with navigational systems onboard vessels.

Motion passed 17-0.

The AP recommends that the Council develop EDR programs for all federal fisheries to facilitate the development of baseline data.

Motion passed 12-5.

The AP supports continued efforts by the Council to improve electronic communication.

Motion passed 18-0.

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Fishing data	Fish ticket number	all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Days fishing	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Days traveling (from port to grounds) and offloading	by crab fishery			
Deliveries and revenues	Landings by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Deadloss by share type - pounds	by crab fishery		-	-
	Landings by share type - revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on the vessel by share type	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on other vessels by share type				
	Leased quota by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only
	Leased quota by share type - cost				
Leased quota by share type - crew contributing shares	by crab fishery	aggregated all crab fisheries- count of crew leasing			
Crew	Number of crew by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Payments to crew	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Payments to captain	by crab fishery	by crab fishery, check box for skipper/owners	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Labor payment details - charges and deductions	in all crab fisheries			
	All unique captain and crew contracts and settlement sheets		by crab fisheries	by crab fisheries	-
	Revenue shares - owner/crew/captain	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Crew license number/CFEC permit number	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	aggregated across all crab fisheries
	Insurance premium - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries and aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Paid deductibles - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Pot purchases - number	aggregated for all crab fisheries	aggregated all fisheries new pots only		
	Pot purchases - cost				
	Pot purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - costs	aggregated for all crab fisheries			
	Line and other gear purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/pounds by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/cost by fishery				

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crab costs	Bait used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Fuel used - gallons by fishery	by crab fishery		by crab fishery (gallons only)	by crab fishery (gallons only)
	Fuel used - cost by fishery			-	-
	Fuel used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Food and provisions - costs	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-		
	Other crew expenses	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Freight costs for landed crab	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Storage, wharfage, delivery costs for gear	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Observer costs - by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Landing taxes and fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Cooperative fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Other expenses	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
Vessel costs	Vessel and equipment investment - cost	aggregated across all fisheries (excluding exclusively non-crab costs)	aggregated all fisheries, including R&M		
	Vessel and equipment investment - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Insurance premium	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel - gallons and cost			aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - cost	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
All activities	Days at sea - all activities	aggregated across all activities	-	-	-
	Gross revenues - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	-	-
	Pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Tendering			checkbox	checkbox
	Labor cost - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Fishing Data	Dates covered (days in the fishery)	by crab fishery			
	Days fishing	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Days traveling (from port to grounds) and offloading	by crab fishery			
	Days processing	by crab fishery			
Deliveries and revenues - for operations as a catcher vessel	Landings by share type - pounds	-	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Landings by share type - revenues	-	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Production	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Production - box size	by crab fishery			
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery			
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery			
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery		
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
IFQ	Vessel owner's IFQ used on the vessel by share type	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on other vessels by share type				
	Leased quota by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only
	Leased quota by share type - cost				
	Leased quota by share type - crew contributing shares	by crab fishery	aggregated all crab fisheries- count of crew leasing	-	-

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crew	Number of harvest crew by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Payments to captain	by crab fishery	by crab fishery -check box for skipper/owners	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Payments to harvest crew	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Harvest labor payment details - charges and deductions	in all crab fisheries			
	Number of crew paid based on processing work	by crab fishery			
	Average processing positions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	All unique captain and crew contracts and settlement sheets		by crab fisheries	by crab fisheries	-
	Crew license number/CFEC permit number	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	aggregated across all crab fisheries
	Crab processing employees by residence	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-
Custom processing services purchased	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crab costs	Insurance premium - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Paid deductibles - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Pot purchases - number	aggregated for all crab fisheries	aggregated all fisheries new pots only	-	-
	Pot purchases - cost				
	Pot purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - costs	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/pounds by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/cost by fishery				
	Bait used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Fuel used - gallons by fishery	by crab fishery	-	by crab fishery (gallons only)	by crab fishery (gallons only)
	Fuel used - cost by fishery			-	-
	Fuel used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Food and provisions - costs	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Other crew expenses	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab	aggregated across crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Lease (IPQ) costs		by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Landing and sales taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries			
	Storage, wharfage, delivery costs for gear	aggregated for all crab fisheries			
	Observer costs - by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries			
Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries				
Cooperative fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-	
Other expenses	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-	

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Vessel costs	Vessel and equipment investment - cost	aggregated across all fisheries (excluding exclusively non-crab costs)	aggregated all fisheries, including R&M	-	-
	Vessel and equipment investment - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Insurance premium	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel - gallons and cost			aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - cost	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
All activities	Processing days - all activities	aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Days at sea - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		
	FOB revenues - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		
	Finished pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Round/raw pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Labor cost - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3
Production	Production - dates covered by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Production - processing days by fishery	by crab fishery	Providing first and last day and number of active days	
	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery		
	Production - box size	by crab fishery		
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery		
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery		
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska only
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Labor	Average processing positions	by crab fishery		
	Man-hours	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
	Crab processing employees by residence	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
Custom processing services purchased	Reporting requirement			All companies contracting custom processing must report
	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery		
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery		
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery		
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab processing costs	Fisheries taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries		
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Food and provisions - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Other direct crab labor costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Insurance deductibles - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Lease (IPQ) costs	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Observer costs	by crab fishery		
	Freight cost for plant supplies	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Water, sewer, and waste disposal	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Other crab-specific costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
General plant costs	Annual fuel, electricity, lubrication, hydraulic fluids	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Plant and equipment investments	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Repair and maintenance	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Other plant specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries		
General processing information	Processing days - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Gross FOB revenues - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Finished processed pounds - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Processing labor costs - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3
Production	Production - dates covered by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Production - processing days by fishery	by crab fishery	Providing first and last day and number of active days	
	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery		
	Production - box size	by crab fishery		
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery		
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery		
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery FOB Alaska only
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include raw pounds and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Labor	Average processing positions	by crab fishery		
	Man-hours	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
	Crab processing employees by residence	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries
Custom processing services purchased	Reporting requirement			All companies contracting custom processing must report
	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery		
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery		
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery		

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab processing costs	Fisheries taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries		
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Food and provisions - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Other direct crab labor costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Insurance deductibles - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery		
	Lease (IPQ) costs	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Observer costs	by crab fishery		
	Freight cost for plant supplies	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Water, sewer, and waste disposal	aggregated across crab fisheries		
	Other crab-specific costs	aggregated across crab fisheries		
General plant costs	Annual fuel, electricity, lubrication, hydraulic fluids	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Vessel and equipment investments	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Repair and maintenance	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries		
General processing information	Processing days - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Gross FOB revenues - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Finished processed pounds - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	
	Processing labor costs - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	

Council motion
February 1, 2012

C-1 Final action to allow formation of a CQE in Area 4B (BSAI FMP Amd 102)

The Council adopts the following preferred alternative:

Alternative 2. Establish a CQE Program in Area 4B. Allow a non-profit entity representing an eligible community in Area 4B to purchase and hold Area 4B halibut quota share and Aleutian Islands sablefish quota share, with similar qualifying criteria and operational limits as the existing GOA CQE communities (see specific provisions below).

1. Eligible communities

Non-CDQ communities located in Area 4B with less than 1,500 people, no road access to larger communities, direct access to saltwater, and a documented historic participation in the halibut or sablefish fisheries are eligible to own and use commercial catcher vessel halibut and sablefish quota share. In addition to meeting these criteria at final action, eligible communities must be listed as a defined set of eligible communities in Federal regulation. Communities not meeting the qualifying criteria and not on the list adopted by the Council are not eligible to participate. Other Area 4B communities could petition the Council for inclusion after the implementation of this program.

Qualifying Area 4B communities would be restricted to purchasing Area 4B halibut and Aleutian Islands sablefish quota share.

2. Ownership Entity

A non-profit entity, approved by NMFS as the holder of the Adak Community Allocation of Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab will be recognized as the CQE entity for the community of Adak. The governing body in Adak (currently City of Adak) must approve the CQE to operate on behalf of the community.

3. Use Caps for Individual Communities

Each eligible community in Area 4B is limited to purchasing and using 15% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool and 15% of the Aleutian Islands sablefish QS pool.

4. Cumulative Community Use Caps

All eligible communities combined are limiting to purchasing and using 15% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool and 15% of the Aleutian Islands sablefish QS pool.

5. Purchase, Use and Sale Provisions

Original block and vessel size designations apply if the community transfers the QS to any person other than another eligible community.

Block Restrictions

- *Communities may buy blocked and unblocked quota share.*
- *Individual eligible communities are limited to holding 10 blocks of Area 4B halibut QS and 5 blocks of AI sablefish QS. Individuals receiving IFQ leased from an eligible community entity would be subject to the existing individual use caps in regulation.*

Vessel Size Restrictions

- *Quota share held by communities under this program would be exempt from vessel size (share class) restrictions, while the QS is owned and leased by the community.*
- *Transferability of halibut catcher vessel QS in Area 4B from commercial to qualified community entities is allowed for B, C, and D category quota share. The following rules apply to purchases of Area 4B 'D' category quota share purchased by the CQE:*
 - *Area 4B 'D' category quota share purchased by an Area 4B CQE must have the annual IFQ fished on 'D' category vessels ($\leq 35'$ LOA).*
 - *an Area 4B CQE may purchase any size block of 'D' category QS.*

Sale Restrictions

- *Eligible communities owning catcher vessel quota shares may sell those quota shares to any other eligible community or any person meeting the provisions outlined in the existing IFQ Program.*
- *Eligible communities may only sell their quota share for one of the following purposes:*
 - (a) *generating revenues to sustain, improve, or expand the program*
 - (b) *liquidating the entity's quota share assets for reasons outside the program*

Should an eligible community sell their quota share for purposes consistent with (b) above, an administrative entity would not be qualified to purchase and own quota share on behalf of that community for a period of three years.

Use Restrictions

The CQE may lease to non-residents for a limited period of five years after the effective date of implementation of the program. After that time, the CQE must lease QS to residents of the community it represents. The individual leasing IFQ from the CQE is not subject to the 150 sea days requirement, when leasing to Adak residents.

Additional provisions include:

- *No vessel may be used, during any fishing year, to harvest more than 50,000 pounds of IFQ halibut and 50,000 pounds of IFQ sablefish derived from QS held by a CQE in Area 4. The vessel would also be subject to the same vessel use caps applicable in the overall IFQ Program.¹*
- *A CQE may lease up to 50,000 pounds of halibut IFQs and 50,000 pounds of sablefish IFQs per lessee annually. The 50,000 pound limit is inclusive of any quota owned by the individual (lessee).*

6. Performance Standards

The following are goals of the program with voluntary compliance monitored through the annual reporting mechanism and evaluated upon review of the program. Community entities applying for qualification in the program must describe how their use of QS will comply with the following program guidelines:

¹The vessel use caps applicable in the IFQ Program are 0.5% of all halibut IFQ TAC and 1% of all sablefish IFQ TAC.

- (a) Maximize benefit from use of community IFQ for crew members that are community residents.*
- (b) Insure that benefits are equitably distributed throughout the community.*
- (c) Insure that QS/IFQ allocated to an eligible community entity would not be held and unfished.*

7. Administrative Oversight

The Council recommends a provision to require submission of a detailed statement of eligibility to NMFS prior to being considered for eligibility as a community QS recipient. The statement would be similar to what is required under the GOA CQE Program. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Certificate of incorporation*
- (b) Verification of qualified entity as approved under "Ownership Entity"*
- (c) Documentation demonstrating accountability to the community*
- (d) Explanation of how the community entity intends to implement the performance standards*

The Council also recommends a provision to require submission of an annual report detailing accomplishments. The annual report would be similar to what is required under the GOA CQE Program. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) A summary of business, employment, and fishing activities under the program*
- (b) A discussion of any corporate changes that alter the representational structure of the entity*
- (c) Specific steps taken to meet the performance standards*

C-3(e) - Crab Economic Data Reporting
February 4, 2012
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

The Council adopts as its preferred alternative for this action a modified Alternative 3 (attached). In addition, the Council recommends that general regulations be developed to implement this collection, with all forms (and any form revisions) subject to revision in the Council process.

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Fishing data	Fish ticket number	all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Days fishing	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Days traveling (from port to grounds) and offloading	by crab fishery			
Deliveries and revenues	Landings by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Deadloss by share type - pounds	by crab fishery		-	-
	Landings by share type - revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on the vessel by share type	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on other vessels by share type				
	Leased quota by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only
	Leased quota by share type - cost				
Leased quota by share type - crew contributing shares	by crab fishery	aggregated all crab fisheries- count of crew leasing			
Crew	Number of crew by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Payments to crew	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Payments to captain	by crab fishery	by crab fishery, check box for skipper/owners	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Labor payment details - charges and deductions	in all crab fisheries			
	All unique captain and crew contracts and settlement sheets		by crab fisheries	by crab fisheries	-
	Revenue shares - owner/crew/captain	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Crew license number/CFEC permit number	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	aggregated across all crab fisheries
	Insurance premium - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries and aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Paid deductibles - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Pot purchases - number	aggregated for all crab fisheries	aggregated all fisheries new pots only		
	Pot purchases - cost				
	Pot purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - costs	aggregated for all crab fisheries			
	Line and other gear purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/pounds by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	purchases by crab fishery
	Bait used - species/cost by fishery				

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crab costs	Bait used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Fuel used - gallons by fishery	by crab fishery		by crab fishery (gallons only)	by crab fishery (gallons only)
	Fuel used - cost by fishery			-	-
	Fuel used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Food and provisions - costs	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-		purchases by crab fishery
	Other crew expenses	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Freight costs for landed crab	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Storage, wharfage, delivery costs for gear	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-		
	Observer costs - by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Landing taxes and fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Cooperative fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Other expenses	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
Vessel costs	Vessel and equipment investment - cost	aggregated across all fisheries (excluding exclusively non-crab costs)	aggregated all fisheries, including R&M		
	Vessel and equipment investment - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Insurance premium	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel - gallons and cost			aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - cost	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
All activities	Days at sea - all activities	aggregated across all activities	-	-	-
	Gross revenues - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	-	-
	Pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Tendering			checkbox	checkbox
	Labor cost - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated across all activities

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Fishing Data	Dates covered (days in the fishery)	by crab fishery			
	Days fishing	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Days traveling (from port to grounds) and offloading	by crab fishery			
	Days processing	by crab fishery			
Deliveries and revenues - for operations as a catcher vessel	Landings by share type - pounds	-	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Landings by share type - revenues	-	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Production	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Production - box size	by crab fishery			
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery			
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery			
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery		
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
IFQ	Vessel owner's IFQ used on the vessel by share type	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Vessel owner's IFQ used on other vessels by share type				
	Leased quota by share type - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only	by crab fishery- arms length monetary payments only
	Leased quota by share type - cost				
	Leased quota by share type - crew contributing shares	by crab fishery	aggregated all crab fisheries- count of crew leasing	-	-

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crew	Number of harvest crew by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Payments to captain	by crab fishery	by crab fishery -check box for skipper/owners	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Payments to harvest crew	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (aggregated across harvesting and processing crew)
	Harvest labor payment details - charges and deductions	in all crab fisheries			
	Number of crew paid based on processing work	by crab fishery			
	Average processing positions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	All unique captain and crew contracts and settlement sheets		by crab fisheries	by crab fisheries	-
	Crew license number/CFEC permit number	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	aggregated across all crab fisheries
	Crab processing employees by residence	aggregated across all crab fisheries	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-
Custom processing services purchased	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Crab costs	Insurance premium - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Paid deductibles - crab only	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Pot purchases - number	aggregated for all crab fisheries	aggregated all fisheries new pots only	-	-
	Pot purchases - cost				
	Pot purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - costs	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Line and other gear purchases - location	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Bait used - species/pounds by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	purchases by crab fishery
	Bait used - species/cost by fishery				
	Bait used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Fuel used - gallons by fishery	by crab fishery	-	by crab fishery (gallons only)	by crab fishery (gallons only)
	Fuel used - cost by fishery			-	-
	Fuel used - purchase location by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Food and provisions - costs	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	purchases by crab fishery
	Other crew expenses	aggregated for all crab fisheries	-	-	
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab	aggregated across crab fisheries	-	-	-
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Lease (IPQ) costs		by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Landing and sales taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries			
	Storage, wharfage, delivery costs for gear	aggregated for all crab fisheries			
	Observer costs - by fishery	by crab fishery	-	-	-
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries			
Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries				
Cooperative fees	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-	
Other expenses	aggregated across all crab fisheries	-	-	-	

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt 2.	Alt 3.	Modified Alt 3.
Vessel costs	Vessel and equipment investment - cost	aggregated across all fisheries (excluding exclusively non-crab costs)	aggregated all fisheries, including R&M	-	-
	Vessel and equipment investment - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Repair and maintenance - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Insurance premium	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel - gallons and cost			aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - cost	aggregated across all fisheries	Aggregated All Fisheries	-	-
	Fuel, lubrication, fluids - annual - location	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries	-	-	-
All activities	Processing days - all activities	aggregated all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Days at sea - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		
	FOB revenues - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		
	Finished pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Round/raw pounds - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated all fisheries		
	Labor cost - all activities	aggregated across all activities	aggregated all fisheries		

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Modified Alt. 3
Production	Production - dates covered by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - processing days by fishery	by crab fishery	Providing first and last day and number of active days		
	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Production - box size	by crab fishery			
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery			
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery			
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery		
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska only	by crab fishery - FOB Alaska only
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)	by crab fishery (include pounds raw and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Labor	Average processing positions	by crab fishery			
	Man-hours	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
	Crab processing employees by residence	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
Custom processing services purchased	Reporting requirement			All companies contracting custom processing must report	All companies contracting custom processing must report
	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Modified Alt. 3
Crab processing costs	Fisheries taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries			
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Food and provisions - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Other direct crab labor costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Insurance deductibles - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Lease (IPQ) costs	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Observer costs	by crab fishery			
	Freight cost for plant supplies	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Water, sewer, and waste disposal	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Other crab-specific costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
General plant costs	Annual fuel, electricity, lubrication, hydraulic fluids	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Plant and equipment investments	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Repair and maintenance	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Other plant specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries			
General processing information	Processing days - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Gross FOB revenues - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Finished processed pounds - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Processing labor costs - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Modified Alt. 3
Production	Production - dates covered by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - processing days by fishery	by crab fishery	Providing first and last day and number of active days		
	Raw crab processed by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Product and processed pounds by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Production - crab size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Production - box size	by crab fishery			
	Production - finished pounds	by crab fishery			
	Production - custom processing identifier	by crab fishery			
Revenues	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - crab size and grade	by crab fishery	by crab fishery		
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - box size and finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (use box size categories)	by crab fishery (use box size categories)
	Sales to affiliates/non-affiliates by species - revenues (fob)	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery FOB Alaska only	by crab fishery FOB Alaska only
	Custom processing by species/product/process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery (include raw pounds and pounds of product)	by crab fishery (include raw pounds and pounds of product)
	Custom processing revenues	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Labor	Average processing positions	by crab fishery			
	Man-hours	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
	Total processing labor payments	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
	Crab processing employees by residence	by crab fishery	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	by crab fishery
Custom processing services purchased	Reporting requirement			All companies contracting custom processing must report	All companies contracting custom processing must report
	Custom processing services purchased - raw pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - product and process	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - box size	by crab fishery			
	Custom processing services purchased - finished pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Custom processing services purchased - processing fee	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
Crab purchases	Raw crab purchases by fishery - ifq type	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - size and grade	by crab fishery			
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - pounds	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery
	Raw crab purchases by fishery - gross payments	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery

Data type	Data element	Alt 1. (status quo)	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Modified Alt. 3
Crab processing costs	Fisheries taxes and fees - crab only	by crab fisheries			
	Processing and packing materials, equipment, and supplies - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Food and provisions - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Other direct crab labor costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Insurance deductibles - crab only	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Repackaging costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Broker fees and promotions by fishery	by crab fishery			
	Lease (IPQ) costs	by crab fishery	by crab fishery	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)	by crab fishery - arm's length (monetary payments)
	Observer costs	by crab fishery			
	Freight cost for plant supplies	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Freight costs for products	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Product storage	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Water, sewer, and waste disposal	aggregated across crab fisheries			
	Other crab-specific costs	aggregated across crab fisheries			
General plant costs	Annual fuel, electricity, lubrication, hydraulic fluids	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Vessel and equipment investments	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Repair and maintenance	aggregated across all fisheries			
	Foremen, managers, other employees and salaries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries
	Other vessel specific costs	aggregated across all fisheries			
General processing information	Processing days - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Gross FOB revenues - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Finished processed pounds - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		
	Processing labor costs - annual total - all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries	aggregated across all fisheries		

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News & Notes

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

February 2012

Election of Officers and new appointments

The Council's Advisory Panel unanimously re-elected Tom Enlow from Unisea as Chair and elected Lori Swanson and Becca Robbins-Gisclair co-Vice Chairs. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee re-elected Pat Livingston for chair and Farron Wallace as vice chair. Chairman Olson announced that Joe Rehfluss has been appointed to the Observer Advisory Committee as a representative of active observers, and Dr. Jason Gasper of NMFS has been appointed to the Crab Plan team. Dave Little was appointed to the IFQ Implementation Committee. Welcome aboard!

Industry Thank You

The Council would like to thank all members of industry and the many sponsors who contributed to the reception given during the Council meeting. Delicious seafood and music were enjoyed by all.



Photo Credit: UCB

GOA Chinook Bycatch

In December 2010, the Council initiated two sequential amendments to consider bycatch measures for Chinook salmon in the GOA, first for the pollock fisheries, and then for the non-pollock trawl fisheries. These measures included establishing Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) limits. The Council approved PSC limits for the pollock fishery in June 2011. At this meeting, the Council revised the problem statement and alternatives for moving forward with measures for the GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries. The alternatives propose PSC limits of 5,000, 7,500, 10,000, or 12,500 Chinook salmon for non-pollock groundfish trawl fisheries in the Central GOA and Western GOA management areas. The limits would operate as a "hard cap," whereby NOAA Fisheries would close fisheries if attained. Under options, the overall limit could be apportioned between the two management areas or between operation types (CV/CP), based on historic average Chinook catch rates in the respective areas and operation types. The Council also advanced an alternative for analysis that would mandate full retention of Chinook salmon in these fisheries, to advance biological sampling and genetic identification of Chinook salmon intercepted as bycatch in the groundfish fisheries. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

Email Comments Now Accepted

On a trial basis, and in time for the March/April meeting, and in response to many requests from the public, the Council will begin accepting email comments at one email address: npfmc.comments@noaa.gov. The comments must identify the submitter by legal name, affiliation, and date, and must also identify the specific agenda item by number (C-1(a) for example), and must be submitted by the comment deadline. Comments received under these conditions will be sorted, copied, and included in the Council notebooks. PDF attachments will be accepted, as long as the above criteria are met. Comments received after the deadline will not be copied and distributed, but will be treated the same as written late comments.

Emails submitted for the comments must be to the above address, and not to specific Council staff or Council members.

Additionally, email comments will only be accepted on items that are on the scheduled agenda. While a return receipt will be issued automatically upon receipt of the electronic comment, as always, submitters may always call the office to confirm.

Details will be noted in the agenda, and on our website.

EFH Consultation

The Council received further information on the NMFS Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation process, following up on a comprehensive report to the Council in December. Under current practice, NMFS notifies the Council, or Council staff, of a pending action that may affect habitats of direct concern to the Council. Nationally, no Councils have developed explicit criteria for when NMFS should inform a Council about EFH consultation issues and seek Council involvement, however, the agency recommended that any criteria that be developed be flexible and fairly broad. The Council asked both the Ecosystem Committee and the State of Alaska to provide input and recommendations on suggested criteria that might apply to consultations resulting in recommendations for mitigation. The original report and the follow-up letter are available at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/habitat/>. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

GOA Pollock reapportionment

The Council heard a report from staff about the possible benefits to Chinook salmon bycatch and potential challenges with Steller sea lion protection measures with reapportioning Western GOA pollock D-season TAC to the A-, B-, or C-seasons. Due to uncertainty in Chinook bycatch reduction, the potential for competition among CGOA and WGOA fisheries, and the likelihood that a formal consultation under Section 7 of the U.S. Endangered Species Act would be required, the Council elected to take no further action. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

Halibut Bycatch

The Council reviewed an initial draft analysis that examined proposed changes to the management of commercial groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). The proposed action would occur through an amendment to the GOA Groundfish Fishery Management Plan to set Prohibited species catch (PSC) limits on removals of Pacific halibut in federal regulations instead of the annual harvest specifications process. In addition to the No Action Alternative, the proposed alternative (Alternative 2) includes options for reductions of a) 5 percent, b) 10 percent, and c) 15 percent of the 2,000 mt halibut PSC limit on trawlers and 300 mt halibut PSC limit on fixed gear groundfish operations.

The Council approved the release of the analysis for public review, with some revisions. The Council requested that the analysts incorporate 1) updated information on Pacific halibut from staff documents from the January 2012 International Pacific Halibut Commission meeting, 2) expanded descriptions of IPHC methods on lost yield, migration, and apportionment of bycatch of halibut among those under 26 inches, between 26 inches and 32 inches, and over 32 inches, and 3) responses to SSC recommendations, as possible.

The Council also made several changes to the range of alternatives, as described below.

1. Add a new suboption under Option 2, Suboption 3 that would allow the Am. 80 sector to roll unused halibut from one season to the subsequent season, similar to the non-Am. 80 sectors.
2. Remove Suboption 3.1, which would apply the full trawl PSC limit reduction to the 5th season only.
3. Add a new suboption under Option 2, Suboption 3 to allow available trawl halibut PSC in the 2nd season deep and shallow water complexes to be aggregated and made available for use in either complex from May 15 through June 30. Halibut PSC sideboards for the Am. 80 and AFA sectors would continue to be defined as deep and shallow water complexes in the second season.

To accommodate the April 2012 schedule for a halibut "bycatch" work shop to be conducted by the Council and International Pacific Halibut Commission and inform the Council on this action, the Council set the date for final action for June 2012. NMFS advised that the likely timeline for implementation is 2014. Jane DiCosimo is the Council contact for this action.

Halibut / Sablefish IFQ Program

Under its staff tasking agenda, the Council reviewed a paper on the status of four discussion papers for IFQ proposals submitted under the 2009 call for Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) proposals. These include:

- allowing the retention of 4A halibut incidentally caught while targeting sablefish with pots in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island regulatory areas;
- allowing the use of pots in the Gulf of Alaska sablefish fishery;
- exploring problem of unharvested halibut IFQ in Area 4; and
- for sablefish, removing the block program A shares and increase the A share only cap

The Council referred discussion of whether to proceed with these discussion papers to the IFQ Implementation Committee, which will convene prior to the next Council meeting. Note that the IFQ committee will also review a discussion paper on vessel monitoring systems that previously had been requested by the Council. The Council will consider the committee recommendations on IFQ discussion papers at its next meeting. But neither the committee nor the Council is considering new IFQ proposals at this time.

The Council also scheduled final action on a previously prepared IFQ amendment to allow halibut IFQ derived from Category D QS to be fished on Category C vessels in Area 4B.

The Council discussed its continued interest in the IPHC halibut stock assessment and expressed its interest in contributing to peer review of the model. The Council acknowledged the strong relationship between the two agencies, as evidenced by the jointly sponsored halibut workshop scheduled for April 24-25, 2012 in Seattle. Information on the workshop is posted on the Council website. Jane DiCosimo is the Council contact for halibut management.



CQE Program in Area 4B

The Council approved an amendment to establish a Community Quota Entity (CQE) Program in Area 4B of the Aleutian Islands. Adak is the only community in Area 4B which meets the proposed eligibility criteria, which targets small, rural, non-CDQ communities in Area 4B with commercial halibut and sablefish participation. The overall intent of the program is to allow a community non-profit organization to represent Adak for the purpose of purchasing Area 4B halibut catcher vessel quota share (QS), and Aleutian Islands sablefish catcher vessel QS, to promote long-term community access to the commercial halibut and sablefish fisheries.

The Council adopted the preliminary preferred alternative, identified at initial review in October 2011, with two minor changes (the final motion is posted on the Council website). The Council acknowledged that some of the provisions of the Area 4B CQE program are slightly different than those that apply to the program in the GOA, however it was noted that the remoteness of Adak and its unique circumstances warranted minor adjustments to the way the program is applied. Under the Council's preferred alternative, Adak would be allowed to purchase up to 15% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool, and up to 15% of the AI sablefish QS pool. IFQ resulting from the community QS may be leased to individuals that are not residents of Adak for a period of up to five year after the effective date of implementation of the program. After that time, the CQE may only lease IFQ to residents of Adak. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

AFA Vessel Replacement

At the February 2012 meeting, the Council reviewed a discussion paper on AFA vessel replacement and its potential impacts on the GOA groundfish sideboard fisheries. The Council requested the discussion paper because of AFA vessel replacement language included in the U.S. Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (Act), which was signed into law on October 15, 2010. Specifically, Section 602 of the Act addresses the replacement of vessels eligible to participate in the Bering Sea pollock fishery under the American Fisheries Act.

After reviewing the discussion paper, the Council developed a purpose and need statement and alternatives intended to prevent increased participation in Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries by vessels replaced under the Act. The Council's purpose and need statement specifies that the action would be intended to "prevent increased capacity in the Gulf of Alaska fisheries by AFA vessels." To address this intent, the Council developed alternatives to address ambiguities in the Act that might allow for capacity increases of AFA vessels while also increase capacity of those vessels in Gulf of Alaska fisheries. Alternatives under consideration would require replacement or rebuilt sideboarded vessels (which are subject to catch limits in the Gulf fisheries) to comply with either: 1) the most restrictive maximum length overall (MLOA) limit on the vessel's Gulf endorsed licenses at the time of vessel replacement or removal, or 2) the most restrictive maximum length overall (MLOA) limit on the vessel's Gulf endorsed licenses at the time of approval of the Coast Guard Act (October 15, 2010). In addition, the Council requested staff to analyze a rule that would not allow a sideboarded vessel to fish in the Gulf if

its replacement vessel was 10 percent greater in length, horsepower, or tonnage. The Council also adopted an alternative for analysis that would remove any Gulf sideboard exemption from any replacement vessel of length greater than the exempt vessel it replaces. An additional alternative would clarify that any Gulf sideboard exempt AFA vessel that is removed from the AFA fishery without replacement would not be permitted to transfer its exemption (but that the exemption would expire). Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

Deep Sea Coral Research Plan

The Council received a report from Dr Chris Rooper, of the NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center, on the Alaska Coral and Sponge Initiative that began this year. NOAA is sponsoring a three-year field research program in the Alaska region for deep sea coral and sponges, in order to better understand the location, distribution, ecosystem role, and status of deep sea coral and sponge habitats. Dr Rooper provided information on the eleven projects that are planned for the initiative, which include: developing a coral habitat map for the GOA and AI, and a geologically interpreted substrate map for Alaska; investigations of *Primnoa* corals in the Gulf of Alaska; estimation of the effects of commercial fixed gear fishing on coral and sponge using underwater cameras; and measurements of oxygen and pH and increased collections of coral and sponge specimens from the summer bottom trawl surveys. The Initiative is intended to result in management products that can be of utility to the Council, for example in the annual Ecosystem Assessment, the AI Fishery Ecosystem Plan, or the 2015 5-year EFH review. Further reports will be provided to the Council as fieldwork proceeds. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

HAPC Skate Areas

The Council made an initial review of designating areas of skate egg concentration as Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC). The Council voted to expand the analysis and current suite of alternatives and options for initial review at a future meeting.

The analysis examines three action alternatives and five options for conservation and management: Alternative 1, status quo; Alternative 2, identify areas as HAPCs; and Alternative 3, identify and conserve areas of skate egg concentration as HAPCs. Under Alternative 3, the Council may choose to adopt any combination of gear use restrictions to prevent fishing activity that makes contact with the sea floor.

Under the Council's motion, Alternative 2 will include a discussion on potential industry and agency monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms, and a statement of intent to discourage adverse fishing activities within the HAPC sites. Alternative 3 will be revised to include HAPC area boundaries consistent with the Enforcement Committee's recommendations. Option e will be reworded to suggest adding research and monitoring of areas of skate egg concentration to the annual research priority list.

The expanded analysis will also include a lengthier history of fishing activities in the proposed sites, discussion on the ability to minimize the areas closed to fishing while complying with enforcement requirements, an economic analysis of impacts on the proposed closure sites, including buffers, and the amount of actual bycatch of egg casings by gear type in each HAPC site, where known. The analysis will also incorporate recommendations and comments to the extent practicable from the SSC and Ecosystem and Enforcement Committees. Council staff is Sarah Melton.

SSC

Workshop

The SSC held a workshop on stock recruitment issues during this meeting. The key issues identified for discussion included: criteria for moving from Tier 3 to Tier 1 based on whether a spawner-recruit (SR) relationship was credible (and had a corresponding pdf for Fmsy), detecting regimes for when an SR relationship changed, estimation of an SR relationship within the assessment or outside, and how much weight to give the SR relationship if inside the assessment.

A series of presentations were given by stock assessment authors and other scientists. The SSC minutes contain a detailed summary of the various presentations as well as the discussion forum held afterwards. The SSC recommended a follow up workshop by members of the crab and groundfish plan teams as well as outside expertise to develop guidelines on how to address environmental changes in the SR relationship into biological reference points and how to model environmental forcing in stock projection models. The SSC also suggested that some Groundfish Plan Team members attend the May Crab Plan Team meeting to provide input into these recruitment issues as they relate to the Tanner crab rebuilding analysis. This workshop will ideally be held prior to the May CPT meeting. Further details on the workshop to be posted on the Council's website as available. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Pribilof Island Blue King Crab Rebuilding Plan

The Council reviewed several discussion papers regarding issues relative to the forthcoming Pribilof Island blue king crab (PIBKC) rebuilding plan analysis. The Council has reviewed iterations of this rebuilding plan analysis at multiple meetings, most recently at final action in October 2011, when the Council changed the range of rebuilding plan alternatives to include an option to Alternative 2, and a new Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) that involves a year-round closure to the Pacific cod pot fishing in the Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone and a prohibited species catch (PSC) limit that triggers a larger area closure to additional fisheries. At the December 2011 meeting, the Council was informed of some analytical changes to the qualified fisheries for the analysis as well as received in public comments some requests to consider additional elements in the analysis and suite of alternatives. As a result, the Council rescheduled final action on this document and requested that staff provide an update at this meeting on many of the elements discussed for inclusion in the analysis. The Council requested additional information on the following: the survey distribution of PIBKC in conjunction with observed bycatch; the boundaries of the State PIBKC registration district including rationale for the boundaries as well as the process by which registration areas can be modified, information on how a cap in numbers of crab vs. weight of crab is calculated; draft results of seasonal apportionment strategy; rollover mechanics of unused PIBKC PSC, increased observer coverage, whole haul sampling, seasonal apportionment of PIBKC PSC, and incorporation of discard mortality rates in in-season management; and any additional issues regarding qualified fisheries.

The Council revised their PPA at this meeting to include only the year-round closure of the PIHCZ to Pacific cod pot fishing (Alternative 2d) due to concerns about the appropriate PIBKC stock boundary and made some modifications to Alternative 6. The Council specifically added an option to Alternative 6 for seasonal allocations of the PSC cap. The Council clarified that final action for this analysis will now be scheduled for June 2012 in order to allow for further discussion by the Crab Plan Team and SSC on the appropriate stock boundary for PIBKC for the OFL prior to Council action. A discussion of the stock boundary and alternative methods to establish an OFL

(rather than based on average catch) will be provided at the May CPT meeting in Anchorage to be held the week of May 9th. Recommendations by the CPT will be forwarded to the SSC for their review in June and final recommendations provided to the Council in conjunction with the final action on this analysis. The Council motion and current suite of alternatives are posted on the Council's website. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Tanner Crab Rebuilding Plan and workshop

The Council was informed of progress on the development of an Aleutian Islands golden king crab model and a Tanner crab stock assessment model following a NPFMC sponsored crab modeling workshop held in Seattle January 9-13th, 2012. Reports from the model workshop were reviewed by the SSC and are posted on the Council's website. The CPT will review the Tanner crab model at the May CPT meeting in Anchorage. Discussions of the use of the model for assessment purposes in the 2012/13 cycle will be held as well as the intent to use the model for projections of rebuilding for the forthcoming Tanner crab rebuilding plan. The Council will review alternatives for the Tanner crab rebuilding plan in June with initial review scheduled for October 2012. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Observer restructuring

Under several agenda items, the Council discussed the interrelationship of approved and proposed Council management measures (for example, GOA tanner crab area closures and Pribilof Islands blue king crab area closures) with the restructured observer program that is in the process of being implemented. The Council noted that NMFS will be providing a report at the April Council meeting on the process that will be undertaken, annually, to develop a deployment plan for observer coverage for fisheries that fall into the less than 100% coverage category. The Council requested that the report include a discussion of how the Council might express priorities for observer coverage in geographically designated areas, as well as for specific gear types or seasons.

GOA Trawl Sweeps

At the February 2012 meeting, the Council released for public review an analysis evaluating the requirement for elevating devices on nonpelagic trawl sweeps for vessels targeting flatfish in the Central Gulf of Alaska. The purpose of the action is to reduce unobserved crab mortality in the Central Gulf of Alaska from the potential adverse effects of nonpelagic trawl gear used for flatfish fishing. The Council initiated this action in conjunction with final action on the GOA Tanner crab PSC measures, which created area closures around Kodiak to protect Tanner crab.

The proposed action would be to combine a gear and performance standard to raise the elevated section of the sweep at least 2.5 inches, measured next to the elevating device. To achieve this performance standard, elevating devices would be required along the entire length of the elevated section of the sweep. To allow for some flexibility around the requirement, there would be two possible sweep configurations that meet the performance standard. In the first configuration, elevating devices that are spaced up to 65 feet apart must have a minimum clearance height of 2.5 inches when measured next to the elevating device. In the second configuration, the elevating devices may be spaced up to 95 feet apart, but they must have a minimum clearance height of 3.5 inches when measured next to the elevating device. In either case, the minimum spacing of the elevated devices is no less than 30 feet.

The Council also added a new element to the analysis, based on the experience in the BS flatfish fisheries using modified trawl sweeps. The proposed action would extend slightly the exempted area on the net bridles and door bridles from 180' to 185' to accommodate hammerlocks attached to net and door bridles. This change would apply to both the BS and the Central GOA.

Final action is currently scheduled for April Council meeting. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

Bristol Bay Red King Crab EFH

The Council reviewed an expanded discussion paper on issues that were raised by the Crab Plan Team during the 2010 EFH 5-year review, about the effects of fishing on crab habitat. The discussion paper addressed both general issues about the methodology used to determine the effects of fishing, as well as specific concerns about red king crab and the need to protect mature females in southwestern Bristol Bay. The Council directed staff to expand the discussion paper to consider the broad context of recruitment and protection of red king crab throughout its distribution, including the efficacy of existing closures for minimizing bycatch, especially in cold versus warm years. The Committee recommends that the discussion paper include conceptual management approaches the Council might want to consider to address potential risks to crab recruitment in cold versus warm years. The paper should include options for dynamic management in response to projections of whether the coming year will be cold or warm, or other measures, such as differential bycatch controls to protect female crab, or seasonal closures. The discussion paper should also address the ability of industry to respond to adaptive management measures outside of a strictly regulatory environment. The paper will also incorporate the results of a planned 2012 nearshore survey for red king crab, to occur this summer. Staff contact is Diana Evans.



Testifiers during the Council meeting on Halibut PSC.

Bering Sea Flatfish Specifications Flexibility

The Council reviewed a staff discussion paper concerning the development of a flexibility mechanism that would allow Amendment 80 cooperatives and CDQ groups to harvest individually allocated flatfish (rock sole, flathead sole, and yellowfin sole) in excess of their species-specific allocations, provided those harvests can be maintained below the species-specific acceptable biological catch (ABC), and within an aggregate total catch assigned to those species. The Council postponed consideration of whether to develop an analysis of such a flexibility mechanism until after it receives the reports of the Amendment 80 cooperatives (which will be presented to the Council at the April meeting). The Council also directed staff to continue to work with agency staff and industry to develop a workable mechanism that achieves the desired flexibility while meeting management goals. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

Upcoming Meetings

Charter Management

Implementation Committee:

February 22, 10 am Anchorage
Old Federal Building (605 West
4th) and March 27 4-7 pm,
Anchorage Hilton.

Statewide teleconference on

Chum salmon bycatch analysis:
February 24th, 9-11 AM. 877-214-
2906 Participant Pin: 1214

Scallop Plan Team meeting:

February 27th, 2012 9am-5pm.
Old Federal Building, Anchorage.

Joint Protocol Committee March

19 - Hilton, Aleutian Room, 9-4.

IFQ Implementation Committee

March 25 or 26 (T), Anchorage
Hilton

Halibut Workshop: April 24-25,

2012 at Crowne Plaza Hotel,
downtown Seattle

Joint Groundfish Plan Team

Meeting to recommend Pacific
cod models: May 1, 2012 AFSC
and teleconference

Crab Plan Team meeting: May

7-10, 2012 Anchorage, AK
(location TBD)

Protected Species Report

The Council received a report regarding a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and NMFS to conserve migratory birds. The MOU contains several provisions that are designed to reduce bycatch-related injury to migratory birds, and emphasizes the need for NMFS and FWS to work with the Councils to incorporate seabird bycatch reduction measures in FMPs. Comments on the draft MOU are due on April 13, 2012.

The Council also received a brief report on a draft Environmental Assessment from the FWS Pacific Region evaluating an application from NMFS Pacific Islands Region for a Migratory Bird Treaty Act permit to authorize takes of Laysan Albatross, Black-footed Albatross, Sooty Shearwater, Northern Fulmar, and Short-tailed Albatross in the shallow-set longline fishery. If authorized, this permit would be the first issued under Special Purpose permitting regulations. Neither the FWS or NMFS anticipates that these sorts of permits will be required in federally managed fisheries in the GOA, BSAI, or Arctic in the near future. Council staff continues to monitor this process and will inform the Council of any new developments.

On January 9, 2012, the Alaska Region of NMFS received a Supplemental Biological Opinion from NMFS Northwest Region regarding authorization of the GOA groundfish fisheries and their potential impacts on ESA-listed Chinook salmon. The Northwest Region concluded that GOA groundfish fisheries are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of either the Upper Willamette River or Lower Columbia River Chinook salmon Evolutionary Significant Units (ESUs), nor are they likely to affect designated critical habitat for either ESU. Therefore, NMFS reaffirmed the provisions of the Incidental Take Statement in the 2007 Supplementary BiOp, including a bycatch limit of 40,000 Chinook salmon in the GOA groundfish fisheries.

NMFS has extended the deadline for the final decision regarding ESA listing of four subspecies of ringed seal and two Distinct Population Segments (DPSs) of bearded seals. The new deadline is June 10, 2012.

NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center announced the 2011 abundance estimates for the endangered

Cook Inlet beluga whale population is 284 animals, almost 20% lower than the 2010 estimate of 340. However, the 2011 estimate stays within the range of the ten-year population trend for Cook Inlet belugas, which shows an annual decline of 1.1 percent.

The 12-month finding on the petition to delist the Eastern DPS of Steller sea lions, originally due on 8/31/2011, is not yet complete. NMFS reports that they are continuing to work toward completion of the draft Status Review, with an anticipated publication date of sometime in March.

The Council also received a report about the State of Alaska et al. lawsuit against NMFS et al. regarding the BSAI groundfish FMP Biological Opinion. Judge Burgess found that NMFS did not comply with NEPA standards in developing an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact rather than an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluating the impacts of their Reasonable and Prudent Alternative. Judge Burgess, however, allowed the Biological Opinion and Interim Final Rule to stand. Parties in the lawsuit have until February 8 to provide additional briefs to the Court before Judge Burgess decides on a remedy. The Council also received a draft timeline for development of an EIS from NMFS staff. The Council expressed to NMFS their desire to remain "meaningfully" involved in the process to develop an EIS and encouraged NMFS to work with the Council and the Mitigation Committee as the process unfolds.

The Council approved the Statement of Work (SoW) Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Center for Independent Experts (CIE) review of the 2010 Final Biological Opinion of the BSAI groundfish FMP. The ToR were drafted cooperatively at a meeting on November 8, 2011 by representatives of NMFS, the Council, and the states of AK and WA. The SoW and ToR result in production of a report with two chapters: (1) a CIE desk review of the Final BiOp using data and materials available to NMFS as of the close of public comment (9/3/2010), and (2) a review of the BiOp following a one-day public panel, including public testimony and information available to NMFS after publication of the Final BiOp. NMFS reported that any CIE SoW and ToR would need to be reviewed by their office of Science and Technology, and that the Council would be informed of any suggested changes to the SoW and ToR before the CIE contract was finalized. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

Crab EDR

The Council selected a preferred alternative to modify the crab fishery economic data reports (crab EDR). The Council's purpose and need statement – adopted at its April 2011 meeting – states that the action is intended to address data inaccuracies, redundancy of the crab EDR with other data collections, and the cost and burden of the program. The Council's action made several modifications to the program, eliminating data elements that could be estimated with data from existing sources (such as fishing time, which can be estimated from fish tickets and landing reports). The Council elected to continue the collection of captain and crew compensation data, but elected not to expand the collection by requiring the submission of crew contracts and settlement sheets, as that

requirement could be very costly and could pose certain confidentiality risks. Although the Council eliminated the collection of several cost items due to challenges associated with submitting accurate data, the Council elected to require the submission of fuel use and bait and food and provision costs by vessels and processing labor costs. In addition, the Council elected to maintain collection of landings revenues by IFQ share type and product revenue data to provide information concerning markets that are unavailable from other sources. The Council also focused the collection of leasing data on arm's length monetary transactions and expanded the collection of custom processing data to improve the information collected on lease values and expanded the collection of. The Council

also elected to maintain blind formatting of the EDR data, which is intended to protect confidentiality of submitters. Under the program, a third party manages EDR data, providing it to analysts in a format that does not reveal the submitters' identities. The Council specifically requested that the analysis of the removal of blind formatting examine the potential for inadvertent releases of data that could arise as a result of the distribution to analysts of data identifying the submitter. The Council also requested the opportunity to review forms developed to implement the data collection (and any future revisions to those forms) to ensure that the forms collect data consistent with the Council's intent. Staff contact is Mark Fina.

Groundfish PSEIS

At the February meeting, the Council considered a discussion paper providing an annual review of its groundfish management policy, and the status of implementation of that policy. The groundfish management policy was adopted by the Council in 2004, following the comprehensive review of the fisheries in the Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic SEIS (PSEIS). The paper also discussed the factors that may influence the timing of and process for when the Council may wish to supplement or revise the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS. The Council asked NMFS to provide some examples of how an updated PSEIS could address efficiencies in our analytical or regulatory process, and requested that the SSC provide scientific guidance on the continued relevance of the analysis in the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS. **The Council also requests stakeholder input on whether the existing groundfish management objectives continue to be relevant, or are in need of revision.** To that end, the Council endorsed holding a stakeholder listening session during an evening of the April Council meeting, and accepting written comments from those that cannot attend that meeting. The stakeholder input will be compiled in a report to the Council, who will review stakeholder and SSC input at their June meeting. A flyer announcing the listening session is attached to this newsletter. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 2/13/12

March 26 - April 3, 2012 Anchorage, AK	June 4 - 12, 2012 Kodiak, AK	October 1-9, 2012 Anchorage, AK
AFA Pollock Cooperative and IPA Reports Amendment 80 Cooperative Reports CGOA Rockfish Cooperative Reports SSL: Review Notice of Intent EFH Consultation Process: Update SOPP: Review and Approve Observer Program: Update Halibut CSP: Review and action as necessary Halibut Area 4B Fish-up: Final Action Joint Protocol Committee: Report GOA Pacific cod A-season opening dates: Discussion paper P.Cod Jig Management: Revised Discussion Paper Limit Other Gear on Jig Vessels: Discussion Paper Northern Bering Sea Research: Discussion paper BS Habitat Conservation Area Boundary: Review BSAI Chum Salmon Bycatch: Initial Review GOA Flatfish Trawl Sweep Modifications: Final Action BSAI Crab ROFR Workgroup: Report; action as necessary (T) Scallop SAFE: Approve harvest specifications BS Tanner crab model: SSC review BSIERP Management Strategy Evaluation: Report Groundfish PSEIS: Discuss schedule HAPC - Skate sites: Initial Review VMS Use and Requirements: Discussion paper PSEIS status review: SSC only Grenadiers: Discussion paper (T) GOA pollock EFP: Review (T)	Halibut workshop report: Review GOA Halibut PSC: Final Action GOA comprehensive halibut bycatch amendments: Disc paper BSAI halibut PSC limit: Discussion paper (T) Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Leasing prohibition: Discussion paper Halibut/sablefish IFQ changes: Discussion paper (T) BSAI Greenland turbot allocation: Discussion paper BSAI Crab Binding Arbitration - GKC: Workgroup report Binding Arbitration Issues (lengthy season, publishing decisions, IPQ Initiation): Discussion Paper Revise BS FLL GOA cod sideboards: Discussion paper (T) FLL Vessel Replacement: Initial Review/ Final Action BSAI Flatfish specification flexibility: Discussion Paper Crab Plan Team Report: Set Catch Specifications for 4 stocks Pribilof BKC Rebuilding Plan: Final Action HAPC - Skate sites: Final Action PSEIS: Review comments & reports; action as necessary Total catch and ACLs: Discussion paper - SSC only (T)	SSL EIS scoping (T) BSAI Chum Salmon Bycatch: Final Action GOA Chinook Bycatch All Trawl Fisheries: Initial Review (T) BSAI Crab active participation requirements: Initial Review BSAI Crab Cooperative Provisions for Crew : Discussion paper AFA Vessel Replacement GOA Sideboards: Initial Review (T) Groundfish Catch Specifications: Adopt proposed specifications BSAI Tanner Crab rebuilding plan: Initial Review <div style="background-color: yellow; text-align: center;">ITEMS BELOW FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</div> Crab PSC numbers to weight: Discussion paper Crab bycatch limits in BSAI groundfish fisheries: Disc paper AI P.cod Processing Sideboards: Initial Review BBRKC spawning area/fishery effects: Updated Disc paper (Dec) MPA Nominations: Discuss and consider nominations

AI - Aleutian Islands
 AFA - American Fisheries Act
 BiOp - Biological Opinion
 BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
 BKC - Blue King Crab
 BOF - Board of Fisheries
 CQE - Community Quota Entity
 CDQ - Community Development Quota
 EDR - Economic Data Reporting
 EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit
 EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
 EFH - Essential Fish Habitat
 FLL - Freezer longliners
 GOA - Gulf of Alaska

GKC - Golden King Crab
 GHl - Guideline Harvest Level
 HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
 IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
 IBQ - Individual Bycatch Quota
 MPA - Marine Protected Area
 PSEIS - Programmatic Supplemental Impact Statement
 PSC - Prohibited Species Catch
 RKC - Red King Crab
 ROFR - Right of First Refusal
 SSC - Scientific and Statistical Committee
 SAFE - Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation
 SSL - Steller Sea Lion
 TAC - Total Allowable Catch

Future Meeting Dates and Locations
 March 26-April 3, 2012 - Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 June 4-12, 2012 - Best Western, Kodiak
 October 1-9, 2012 - Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 December 3-11, 2012 - Anchorage
 February 4-12, 2013, Portland
 April 1-9, 2013, Anchorage
 June 3-11, 2013, Juneau
 September 30-Oct 8, 2013 Anchorage
 December 9-17, 2013, Anchorage

(T) Tentatively scheduled

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is evaluating its Groundfish Programmatic SEIS



The Council developed its current groundfish management policy in 2004, following a comprehensive review of the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries. The Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS) evaluated the cumulative changes in the management of the groundfish fisheries since the implementation of the Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) around 1980, and considered a broad array of policy-level, programmatic alternatives. On the basis of the analysis, the Council adopted a management approach statement, and 9 policy goal statements, with 45 accompanying objectives.

The Council is considering whether the time is right to revise the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS. The decision will take into account many different factors, but one important element is whether the Council wants to change the objectives, policy statements, or overall management approach for the groundfish fisheries. Consequently, **the Council is asking for stakeholder input on the following questions:**

- Are the Council's current groundfish management approach, policy goal statements, and objectives still relevant?
- How is the Council doing relative to achieving its groundfish management objectives?
- Are there new objectives that ought to become part of the groundfish management policy?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INPUT

A stakeholder listening session will be held Thursday evening during the April Council meeting. Members of the public will have an opportunity to provide any comments, which will be compiled by staff and presented to the Council in a report at the June Council meeting. The session will be:

5:30-8pm, Thursday, March 29, 2012, in the AP room at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

You may also submit written comments to the Council, which will be included in the report. Written comments must be received at the Council office before 5pm on May 1st. Send letters by mail or fax (see below), or email to npfmc.comment@noaa.gov. If submitting comment by email, please include PSEIS in the subject line.

The Council's groundfish management approach, policy goal statements, and specific objectives are posted on the Council website, along with the discussion paper on this issue that was presented to the Council in February 2012. More information will be posted on the Council website a week before the listening session.

www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/public-meetings/committees-related-meetings.html