

DRAFT Minutes
April 2014
216 Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Anchorage Hilton, Anchorage Alaska

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Attachments

- Sign in sheet
- Time Log
- AP and SSC Minutes
- Newsletter

The following Council, SSC, AP, and NPFMC staff attended the meetings.

Council Members

Eric Olson, Chair	Craig Cross	David Long
John Henderschedt, Vice Chair	Ed Dersham	Bill Tweit
Jim Balsiger	Duncan Fields	RADM Tom Ostebo/LT Tony Kenne
Cora Campbell/Nicole Kimball	Dave Hanson	
	Roy Hyder	
	Dan Hull	

NPFMC Staff

Gail Bendixen	Steve MacLean	Maria Shawback
Sam Cunningham	Sarah Marrinan	Diana Stram
Jane DiCosimo	Jon McCracken	David Witherell
Diana Evans	Sarah Marrinan	
Peggy Kircher	Chris Oliver	

Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC met from April 7th through 9th at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	Robert Clark, Vice Chair <i>Alaska Department of Fish and Game</i>	Chris Anderson <i>University of Washington</i>
Jennifer Burns <i>University of Alaska Anchorage</i>	Alison Dauble <i>Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>	Anne Hollowed <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>
Gordon Kruse <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Steve Martell <i>Int'l. Pacific Halibut Commission</i>	Lew Queirolo <i>NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region</i>
Terry Quinn <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Kate Reedy <i>Idaho State University Pocatello</i>	Matt Reimer <i>University of Alaska Anchorage</i>

Members absent were:

Sherri Dressel <i>Alaska Department of Fish and Game</i>	George Hunt <i>University of Washington</i>	Seth Macinko <i>University of Rhode Island</i>
Franz Mueter <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Farron Wallace <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	

Advisory Panel

The following members were present for all or part of the meetings, from April 8-11.

Ruth Christiansen	Jerry Downing	John Gruver
Kurt Cochran	Jeff Favour	Heath Hilyard
John Crowley	Becca Robbins Gisclair	Jeff Kauffman

Mitch Kilborn
Alexus Kwachka
Craig Lowenberg
Brian Lynch

Chuck McCallum
Paddy O'Donnell
Joel Peterson
Theresa Peterson

Sinclair Wilt
Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

The attachments contain the public sign-in register and a time log of Council proceedings, including those providing reports and public comment during the meeting.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eric Olson called the meeting to order at approximately 8:03 am on Wednesday, April 9, 2014.

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

The agenda was approved as written.

The approval of the February 2014 minutes was postponed until the June 2014 meeting.

B. Reports

The following reports were given:

- B-1 Executive Director's Report: Chris Oliver
- B-2 NMFS Management Report: Glenn Merrill, Mary Furuness, Steve Davis, Jeanne Hansen
Electronic Monitoring - Martin Loefflad
- B-3 ADF&G Report: Karla Bush
- B-4 USCG Report: Capt. Phil Thorne, Lt. Tony Kenne
- B-5 USFW Report: Doug McBride
- B-6 Protected Species Report: Steve MacLean
- B-7 NIOSH Report: Jennifer Lincoln

Public comment was taken on all B items.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Hull moved the following in regard to an EM Workgroup:

Purpose

The Fixed Gear EM Workgroup is a Council committee established so that industry, agency and EM service providers have a forum to cooperatively and collaboratively design, test and develop electronic monitoring systems that are consistent with Council goals and objectives to integrate electronic monitoring into the observer program.

The EM work group will review the current suite of EM tracks going forward in 2014 and 2015 to inform development of an analysis of alternative approaches to EM to meet Council objectives for estimating catch and discards. The EM workgroup will 1) identify a specific list of research objectives to be addressed by the CRP, what data elements are being collected to inform the objectives and whether sampling levels are appropriate; 2) review data protocols to ensure that each track will

provide information to ensure comparison and synthesis of data sources; and 3) identify a timeline, milestones, and decision points for the Council in order to integrate EM into the Observer Program for the fixed gear fisheries.

The EM workgroup will be guided by and, if necessary recommend revisions to, the EM Strategic Plan that was approved by the Council in June 2013.

Composition

The Council will appoint representatives from the fixed gear fleet and EM service provider companies, who submitted letters of interest to the Council by the deadline of March 15, 2014. Representatives from the fixed gear fleet include longline and pot gear, from all vessel sizes. *Council appointees may name an alternate to serve in their place.*

Agency representation is anticipated from the list below, but each agency will determine on its own who will participate, depending on the workgroup agenda and needs.

Agency staff: NMFS staff from SF, Regional office, AFSC, OLE, GC, etc.
ADF&G, PSMFC, IPHC, Council staff

Operating rules and reporting

The workgroup is a Council committee and support will be provided by Council staff.
The workgroup may recommend and the Council will set meeting times and agendas.
The workgroup chairman or facilitator will be appointed by the Council chairman.
The workgroup will operate on a consensus basis and report directly to the Council.

Mr. Hull spoke to his motion thanking everyone for efforts to get to this point. He noted he was being specific in tasking the workgroup, and that the task of the workgroup is guided by the EM strategic plan. Mr. Hull noted that tasks replace those that were initially outlined in June 2013, and answered questions of clarification from the Council members. Dr. Balsiger noted that developing a timeline can be a suggestion, but results from research relative to implementing EM may change the timeline, although he remains optimistic the research will be completed on time. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Hull moved the following draft EM workgroup agenda for the May meeting, which was seconded:

- 1. Review a draft planning document with timelines, milestones and decision points (NMFS to present draft).**
- 2. Refine the data review protocols for 2014 EM cooperative research.**
- 3. Review study designs for all 4 Tracks in the EM cooperative research.**
- 4. Review draft RFP for Tracks 2 & 3.**
- 5. Discuss process for incorporating independently funded fixed gear EM pilot projects into the cooperative research, including pot gear.**
- 6. Discuss process for incorporating independently funded trawl gear EM pilot projects into the Council's EM initiatives.**

He spoke to his motion noting that it is a "to do" list focusing on the 2014 fieldwork. **The motion passed without objection.** Mr. Hull went on to discuss a release for vessels who want to participate in EM, and

that NMFS is working on expediting the process for participation. He noted the selection process for vessels later in the year should be a topic for discussion in staff tasking.

NIOSH

Chairman Olson stated the Council should schedule regular updates with the Council. **Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, that the Council draft a letter of support to the respective Congressional delegation of the states of Alaska, Washington, and Oregon, noting that its work, education and outreach, in terms of behavioral changes in the fleet, is important to the industry. The Council requests continued funding in the upcoming years.**

Chairman Olson noted that this topic can be agended at the CCC meeting to raise importance of the issue. **The motion passed with Dr. Balsiger abstaining.**

C-1 Steller Sea Lions

BACKGROUND

On April 2, 2014 NMFS released the Final Biological Opinion (BiOp) for authorization of the Alaska groundfish fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands under the proposed revised Steller sea lion protection measures. NMFS concluded that the proposed action was not likely to cause jeopardy to the Western DPS of Steller sea lions or cause adverse modification to its critical habitat.

At this meeting staff from NMFS Protected Resources Division will present the findings of the BiOp.

Steve MacLean gave a brief introduction on this agenda item. Brandee Gerke and John Kurland gave an update on the Final Biological Opinion and answered questions from the Council. Public Comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Olson noted that no action was required and thanked NMFS for the work on the package so the rules and regulations could be in place by the end of the year.

C-2 GOA Trawl Bycatch

BACKGROUND

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Discussion Paper

In October 2013, the Council directed staff to prepare a discussion paper reviewing a partial framework for a program to manage the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish trawl fisheries. Prior to that, the Council had reviewed discussion papers on trawl bycatch management and quota-based fisheries in February and June of 2013. In June 2013, the Council received eight written proposals on aspects that stakeholders would like to see in a new program.

The framework outlined in the Council's October motion focuses on the catcher vessel (CV) and shorebased processing components of the fishery. Industry input from at-sea stakeholders is expected at this meeting. The proposed program would regulate the trawl fisheries in the Western GOA, the Central GOA, and the West Yakutat district. The reviewed framework addresses the following potential program elements: program eligibility, formation of CV cooperatives, existing harvest sector species allocations to be maintained, harvest sector allocations of Chinook salmon and Pacific halibut PSC, allocation of pollock and Pacific cod quota to CV cooperatives, pro rata allocation of PSC to CV cooperatives, a limited access

opt-out fishery, observer coverage, quota transferability and consolidation limits, and regionalization of shoreside landings.

The paper provides a list particular issues that may require further Council input before proposed elements of the program framework can be fully analyzed (Section 1.3 of the paper).

Baseline data is provided on: PSC usage/rates and retained groundfish catch for the various GOA harvest sectors, areas, and target fisheries; the number of vessels and LLP licenses that are active in the fishery; and the proportion of retained groundfish harvest taken by the top three CV LLPs in each target fishery (by area).

The discussion paper covers several proposed elements that are intended to provide stability to fishery dependent communities under the program, but does not specifically address community fishing associations (CFA), or the like. CFAs were addressed to the extent possible in the October 2013 discussion paper, and the Council held a workshop on the subject at its February 2014 meeting. A summary of the proceedings from the February workshop is included here as an attachment.

Issues pertaining to management of groundfish in State of Alaska waters were also addressed in the October 2013 discussion paper, and are not further discussed here.

Council action at this meeting may be to refine the program framework into elements and options for initial analysis, or to highlight areas of the framework that need to be further developed in a discussion paper.

GOA Trawl EDR Forms

NMFS is providing three proposed EDR forms to give the Council an opportunity to review and comment on their structure and content before they are finalized (forms attached). These forms were developed based on Council direction provided in October 2013.

NMFS is proposing to apply the same approach for streamlining GOA Trawl EDR regulations that was applied to the recent amendments to the Crab EDR and Chinook salmon bycatch EDR. A large portion of the regulatory amendment text for Amendment 80 at § 679.94 repeats the data field descriptions that are provided and more fully explained in the AM 80 EDR. If the detail in regulation is retained for this action, any future updates that the Council would like to make for the revised Amendment 80 EDR would require proposed and final rulemaking.

The draft regulations proposed for revising the Amendment 80 EDR focus on the requirements for who must submit data for a given trawl EDR by a specified date, to whom the EDR must be provided, and how it would be certified and verified. To simplify the current Amendment 80 regulatory detail, NMFS would apply the same procedure that has been used in the last two EDR amendments. Any revisions to GOA Trawl EDR forms prepared for review by OMB would be provided to the Council for review before submission to OMB.

NMFS requests that the Council indicate if this approach contained in the draft regulations is acceptable. Note that the proposed rule supporting these draft regulations will also be available for public comment after the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register.

Sam Cunningham and Darrell Brannon introduced the agenda item. Darrell Brannon reviewed the GOA Trawl Bycatch discussion paper. Brian Garber Yonts gave the staff report on EDR. The AP and the SSC gave the reports on the EDR portion of the agenda item first and public comment was heard. Following action on EDR, the GOA Trawl Bycatch Management discussion paper was given reports by the SSC and AP, and public comment was heard on that issue separately.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

EDR

Mr. Merrill moved, which was seconded, that the Council recommends NMFS proceed with rulemaking. If Gulf of Alaska EDR forms are modified, provide forms to the Council for review prior to the Alaska Region completing PRA approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tweit. Mr. Merrill spoke to the motion, noting that it is responding to a request from staff for clarification, and that should the EDR forms be modified, the Executive Director and Chairman can notify the Council should it need to be reviewed further. **The motion passed without objection.**

Trawl Bycatch Management

Ms. Campbell made the following motion:

The Council requests that staff provide a paper reviewing the expanded program structure described below and a preliminary evaluation of the combined effects of several primary elements. The paper should continue to evaluate whether and how the elements of this design address the objectives in the Council's purpose and need statement. The intent is to receive feedback characterizing: 1) how the fishery would operate under the new design; 2) how well it may meet the Council's stated objectives; and 3) which decision points are necessary to transform the program structure into alternatives for analysis.

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Program

1. Bycatch management

The primary objective of this action is to improve incentives for PSC reduction and PSC management, achieved in several ways through this program design.

- a. **Reduced PSC:** The Council intends to adopt a program to: (1) minimize Chinook salmon bycatch, and (2) achieve more efficient use of halibut PSC, allowing some efficiency gains to provide additional target fishery opportunity while leaving some halibut PSC savings in the water for conservation and contribution to exploitable biomass.
- b. **Cooperative management:** A system of cooperative management is best suited to managing and reducing bycatch (such as, hotspot program, gear modifications, excluder use, incentive plan agreements) while maximizing the value of available target species. Cooperatives are intended to facilitate a flexible, responsive, and coordinated effort among vessels and processors to avoid bycatch through information sharing and formal participation in a bycatch avoidance program.
- c. **Gear modification. Option:** gear modifications for crab protection.

2. Observer Coverage

All trawl catcher vessels in the GOA will be in the 100% observer coverage category, whether they participate in the voluntary cooperative structure or the limited access fishery with trawl gear. NMFS will develop monitoring and enforcement provisions necessary to track quota, harvests, and use caps for catcher vessels and catcher processors.

3. Areas

Western Gulf, Central Gulf, West Yakutat

4. Sector eligibility

Inshore sector: Shoreside processors and harvesters that meet the qualifications under the cooperative program. Allocations are based on trawl landings during the qualifying years with a CV trawl LLP or a CP

trawl LLP that did not process catch onboard. Any CP LLP not used to process catch offshore during the qualifying years will be converted to a CV LLP at the time of implementation.

Offshore sector: Am 80 vessels, and their replacement vessels, defined in Table 31 CFR Part 679, and their current LLP. Allocations are based on trawl landings during the qualifying years with a CP trawl LLP that processed catch onboard.

5. Allocated species

Target species:

Pollock (610/620/630/640)

Pacific cod (WG/CG)

Additional target species for consideration include:

CGOA flatfish: Rex sole, arrowtooth flounder, and/or deep water flatfish

WGOA rockfish and WY Pacific ocean perch

Secondary species:

Sablefish (that not allocated under the CG Rockfish Program)

CG Skates (big and longnose)

Thornyhead rockfish

Shortraker rockfish

Rougheye/blackspotted rockfish

Other rockfish

Consider whether cooperative measures would be an effective approach to managing secondary species, as opposed to cooperative allocations.

PSC species: Halibut and Chinook salmon

6. Sector allocations of target species, secondary species, and PSC

Allocations to the trawl CV sector for WG and CG Pacific cod (Am 83), CGOA rockfish program (Am 88), and GOA pollock (Am 23) are maintained. Allocations to the trawl CP sector for the CGOA rockfish program are maintained. GOA flatfish eligibility for the trawl CP sector under Am 80 is maintained.

Pollock and Pacific cod:

Pollock and Pacific cod TACs would be allocated to the inshore sector; the offshore sector would receive an incidental catch allowance (ICA) for Pacific cod and pollock and be managed under maximum retainable amounts (MRAs).

Other target species and secondary species: If other target and/or secondary species are allocated under the program, sector allocations would be based on each sector's harvest share from:

Option 1. 2008 – 2012

Option 2. 2007 – 2012

Option 3. 2003 - 2012

In addition to the options based on catch history above, options for establishing WG and WY rockfish sector allocations include:

Option 1. Allocate based on Am 80 sideboards (dusky rockfish would be recalculated based on dusky rockfish harvest only)

Option 2. Allocate to the CP sector only. The CV sector is prohibited from directed fishing and managed under MRAs.

PSC sector allocations:

Chinook salmon PSC apportionments to support the non-pollock trawl CV and CP sectors (excluding CG rockfish program for the CV sector) are based on GOA Amendment 97. The Chinook salmon PSC limit to support the pollock trawl fisheries is a CV allocation only. Any Chinook salmon PSC caught in WY comes off the cooperative's Chinook salmon PSC limit.

Halibut PSC apportionment between the CP and CV sectors will be based on halibut PSC use during:

- Option 1. 2008 - 2012
- Option 2. 2007 - 2012
- Option 3. 2003 - 2012

7. Voluntary inshore cooperative structure

- a. Annually allocate target species at the cooperative level, based on aggregate retained catch histories associated with member vessels' LLPs:

- Option 1. 2008 - 2012
- Option 2. 2007 - 2012
- Option 3. 2003 - 2012

- b. Apportion halibut PSC and Chinook salmon PSC limits to each cooperative on a pro rata basis relative to target fisheries of GOA trawl vessels in the cooperative [such as, pollock Chinook salmon PSC cap divided based on pollock landings; non-pollock Chinook salmon cap divided based on non-pollock landings (excluding rockfish); halibut PSC apportioned in proportion to target groundfish landings associated with cooperative members' LLPs.] PSC could be further divided based on use in target fisheries or fisheries groupings, prior to being allocated to each cooperative on a pro rata basis. Once in the cooperative, PSC can be used to support any target fisheries within the cooperative.

Option: Each processor controls a portion of PSC within a cooperative and negotiates terms of access through private agreement. The processor would activate the incremental PSC through NMFS, making it accessible to the cooperative. PSC made available by these agreements cannot be used by processor-owned vessels.

- c. Participants can choose to either join a cooperative or operate in a limited access fishery [sector-level, non-transferable target allocations and PSC]. Harvesters would need to be in a cooperative with a processor by November 1 of the previous season to access a transferable allocation.
- d. Initial (2 years) cooperative formation would be based on the majority of each license's historical landings (aggregate trawl groundfish deliveries, excluding Central GOA rockfish harvested under a rockfish cooperative quota allocation) to a processor during:
 - Option 1. The qualifying years for determining target species allocations
 - Option 2. 2011 - 2012, or the two most recent qualifying years they fished
- e. Each cooperative would be required to have an annual cooperative contract filed with NMFS. Initial formation of the cooperative would require a cooperative contract signed by (options: 51% - 80%) of the license holders eligible for the cooperative and the processor (option: and community in which the processor is located). Cooperative members shall internally allocate and manage the cooperative's allocation per the cooperative contract.
- f. The annual cooperative contract must include:
 - Bylaws and rules for the operation of the cooperative
 - Annual fishing plan
 - Operational plan for monitoring and minimizing PSC, with vessel-level accountability, as part of the annual fishing plan

- Clear provisions for how a harvester and processor may dissolve their contract after the cooling off period of two years. If a harvester wants to leave that cooperative and join another cooperative or the limited access sector, they could do so if they meet the requirements of the contract.
 - Specification that processor affiliated harvesters cannot participate in price-setting negotiations except as permitted by general anti-trust law.
- g. Additional contract elements (such as, bycatch management, active participation, mechanism to facilitate entry, community provisions) may be required to ensure the program is consistent with Council objectives.
 - h. Full transferability for annual use by other harvesters within the cooperative. Cooperatives can engage in inter-cooperative transfers of annual allocations to other cooperatives on an annual basis. Inter-cooperative transfers must be processed and approved by NMFS. Inshore allocations can only be transferred to and used by inshore cooperatives.
 - i. Cooperative members are jointly and severally responsible for cooperative vessels harvesting in the aggregate no more than their cooperative's allocation of target species and PSC allowances, as may be adjusted by annual inter-cooperative transfers.
 - j. Cooperatives will submit a written report annually to the Council and NMFS. Specific criteria for reporting shall be developed by the Council and specified by NMFS as part of the program implementing regulations.
 - k. Permit post-delivery transfers of annual allocations among cooperatives. All post-delivery transfers must be completed by December 31.
- 8. Voluntary catcher processor cooperative structure**
- a. Annually allocate target species at the cooperative level, based on aggregate total catch histories associated with member vessels' LLPs:
 - Option 1. 2008 – 2012
 - Option 2. 2007 – 2012
 - Option 3. 2003 – 2012
 - b. Apportion halibut PSC and Chinook salmon PSC limits to each cooperative on a pro rata basis relative to target fisheries of vessels in the cooperative [such as, non-pollock Chinook salmon cap divided based on non-pollock landings; halibut PSC apportioned in proportion to target groundfish landings associated with cooperative members' LLPs.] PSC could be further divided based on use in target fisheries or fisheries groupings, prior to being allocated to each cooperative on a pro rata basis. Once in the cooperative, PSC can be used to support any target fisheries within the cooperative.
 - c. Participants can choose to either join a cooperative or operate in a limited access fishery [sector-level, non-transferable target allocations and PSC]. No later than November 1 of each year, an application must be filed with NMFS by the cooperative with a membership list for the year. In order to operate as a cooperative, membership must be comprised of:
 - Option: at least 2 separate entities (using the 10% individual and collective rule) and/or
 - Option: at least [2 – 4] eligible LLP licenses
 - d. Cooperative members shall internally allocate and manage the cooperative's allocation per the cooperative contract. Cooperatives are intended only to conduct and coordinate harvest activities of the members and are not FCMA cooperatives.

- e. The contract would require signatures of all LLP holders in the cooperative. The annual cooperative contract must include:
 - Bylaws and rules for the operation of the cooperative
 - Annual fishing plan
 - An operational plan for monitoring and minimizing PSC, with vessel level accountability, as part of the annual fishing plan
 - Specification that processor affiliated harvesters cannot participate in price setting negotiations except as permitted by general anti-trust law.
 - A cooperative may adopt and enforce fishing practice codes of conduct as part of their membership agreement.
 - f. Full transferability for annual use by other harvesters within the cooperative. Cooperatives can engage in inter-cooperative transfers of annual allocations to other cooperatives on an annual basis. CP annual cooperative allocations may be transferred to inshore cooperatives; inshore annual cooperative allocations cannot be transferred to CP cooperatives. Inter-cooperative transfers must be processed and approved by NMFS.
 - g. Cooperative members are jointly and severally responsible for cooperative vessels harvesting in the aggregate no more than their cooperative's allocation of target species, secondary species, and PSC, as may be adjusted by annual inter-cooperative transfers.
 - h. Cooperatives will submit a written report annually to the Council and NMFS. Specific criteria for reporting shall be developed by the Council and specified by NMFS as part of the program implementing regulations.
 - i. Permit post-delivery transfers of annual allocations among cooperatives. All post-delivery transfers must be completed by December 31.
9. Fishery dependent community stability (applies to inshore cooperatives)
- a. Consolidation limits
 - Vessel caps and limits on the percentage of the total allocation that a person can hold (accessible only through a cooperative).

Harvester use caps in each region (WG and CG/WY). Harvesters that exceed these percentages are grandfathered into the program. No person may hold or use more than the following percentage of target species CV shares, using the individual and collective rule:

- Option 1. 3%
- Option 2. 5%
- Option 3. 7%

Vessel use caps are applicable within the cooperative. A vessel may not be used to harvest more than the following percentages of target species cooperative quota issued to the CV sector:

- Option 1. 5%
- Option 2. 10%
- Option 3. 15%

- Processor use caps

Processor use caps (facility-based) in each region (WG and CG/WY). Processors that exceed these percentages are grandfathered into the program. No processor shall receive or process more than the following percentage of aggregate target species cooperative quota issued to the CV sector:

- Option 1. 10%
- Option 2. 20%
- Option 3. 30%

- b. **Target species quota would be required to be landed in the region in which it is designated (WG or CG/WY designation) based on historical delivery patterns during the following years:**
 - Option 1.** The qualifying years for determining target species allocations
 - Option 2.** 2011 - 2012
 - Option 3.** Target species CG quota that has historically been landed in Kodiak would have a port of landing requirement to be delivered to Kodiak; CG quota not historically landed in Kodiak would be regionalized (WG or WY/CG).
- c. **Require individuals or entities to meet fishery participation criteria in order to be eligible to purchase an eligible trawl license with associated history.**

10. Transferability

- a. **(Annually) Full transferability for annual use within the cooperative. Cooperatives can engage in inter-cooperative agreements on an annual basis.**
- b. **(Long-term) The LLP is transferable, with the associated history of the target species (which, when entered into a cooperative, brings with it a pro rata share of PSC.)**

Target species history is severable from a CV trawl license and transferable to another eligible CV trawl license (which, when entered into a cooperative, brings with it a pro rata share of PSC). Transferred history retains the regional delivery designation.

11. Gear conversion

Upon further development, the Council could include gear conversion provisions that allow Pacific cod trawl CV allocations to be fished with pot gear, although any harvest would continue to be deducted from the vessel's annual trawl quota account and would not affect the pot gear Pacific cod sector allocations.

12. Limited access trawl fisheries (CV and CP)

If a license holder chooses not to join a cooperative, it may fish in the limited access fishery. Under the limited access fishery, the LLP's historic share of (non-transferable) target species will be fished in a competitive fishery open to all trawl vessels in the sector who are not members of a cooperative. The catcher vessel limited access fishery will be subject to all current regulations and restrictions of the LLP and MRAs.

PSC limits in the limited access fishery will retain status quo apportionments by area, season, and/or fishery. Halibut and Chinook salmon PSC limits are annually apportioned to the limited access fishery on a pro rata basis relative to groundfish catch histories associated with LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative, as reduced by [options: 20% - 30%]

13. Sideboards

Consider whether sideboards that apply under the Rockfish Program for the CV and CP sectors, non-exempt AFA CV sideboard limits, non-AFA crab vessel groundfish sideboards, and Amendment 80 groundfish and halibut PSC sideboard limits in the GOA should be removed.

Consider sideboards for or prohibition of directed fishing for Pacific cod in the West Yakutat area with trawl gear. Consider sideboards on directed fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear in the WG and CG (harvest that accrues to the Pacific cod pot sector allocations).

14. Program review

Per the Magnuson Stevens Act, a program review would be conducted five years after implementation and every seven years thereafter.

15. Cost recovery and loan program

Per the Magnuson Stevens Act, a cost recovery program would be implemented to recover the incremental agency costs of the program related to data collection, analysis, and enforcement, up to a maximum of 3% of the ex-vessel value from landings of species allocated under the program. Up to 25% of cost recovery fees may be set aside to support a loan program for purchase of shares by fishermen who fish from small vessels and first-time purchases of shares under the program. Loan qualification criteria would need to be defined.

The Council also requests further information on latent trawl licenses and their effect on the proposed cooperative program, to evaluate the need for further recency criteria in the WG and CG trawl CV sectors.

Ms. Campbell spoke to the motion. She noted that this motion expands the Council's October 2013 motion and highlighted where the expansions and changes were in order to move forward with analysis and alternatives and options. Continuing, she noted this motion took out the possibility of limiting quota share duration and the consideration of making quota reallocation dependent upon PSC bycatch performance, which could have reduced cooperation within the fleet.

She continued, noting there is a substantial expansion of species to consider for allocation as emphasized in public comment, and that the CP sector is included in this program framework. The next analysis should identify other species to allocate besides pollock and cod, and whether doing so would generate additional PSC benefits. She wanted to be clear that the CP sector's pollock allocation would be managed through an ICA and that a range of potential qualifying years to make allocations are provided in the motion. She spoke about qualifying years for cooperatives, consolidation limits, regional delivery requirements, and sideboards.

The motion noted that allowing conversion to pot gear for Pacific cod could enhance PSC performance. The motion gives clarity to the limited access fishery, and PSC limit reductions that could be placed on participants in that fishery. More information on latent licenses needs to be included in the next version, and outreach to all the GOA communities, along with input from stakeholders need to be gathered as the Councils continues with this complex issue. Ms. Campbell answered questions of clarification from Council members. It was generally agreed that the Council would have continued discussions with the State of Alaska Board of Fisheries as the Council moves forward with this action.

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend by adding the following text under section 7, part D: following the word "Formation" insert (suboption: in the first two years of each harvester's participation in a cooperative). The motion was seconded by Mr. Cross.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion noting that it provides a broader scope by which to look at the process of joining and exiting voluntary cooperatives. Limited access would not be a way to get around two year participation in a cooperative with the LLP-holder's historically associated processor. After brief discussion, **the amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Fields moved to amend to change option 1 under section 9, Vessel use caps, from 5% to 3%. The motion was seconded. Mr. Fields noted there should be a broader range so the Council can make an informed decision, and that more information is needed on fleet profiles. There was discussion regarding setting vessel use caps and individual owner use caps at the same number. The motion passed without objection.

Mr. Fields moved to amend in section 12, under PSC reductions in vessels that opt out, to have a range from 10% to 30%. **The amendment was seconded by Mr. Hull.** Mr. Fields noted that the Council is in the early stages of understanding how the program will fit together, but options should be realistic.

Initial stage should include a broad range for discussion. Mr. Tweit noted he will be opposing the motion, and noted that the difference between 0-10% is not significant enough for analysis. **The motion passed with Tweit objecting.**

Mr. Hull noted that there is an intersection between goals of minimizing PSC halibut use, and IPHC's processes. By taking action on halibut PSC, Council is valuing halibut PSC and notes it affects exploitable biomass and spawning biomass, etc. He noted that the Council should be working on the relationships as the program develops.

Mr. Henderschedt noted that there is a balance between NS 1 and NS9, reducing bycatch and increasing yield of fishery. Discussion has to continue regarding how to monitor and respond to bycatch in terms of management and accountability.

Mr. Hyder thanked the Commissioner for the motion and the roadmap it outlines to reduce bycatch in the GOA. He noted the industry will feel the impacts of the actions, and the Council will give them the tools to reduce bycatch. The motion reflects stakeholder interest.

Mr. Fields noted the motion removes the discussion related to duration of shares, and is bothered by the fact the Council cannot find a way to incentivize bycatch reduction other than cooperative fishing practices, and will be looking for this component in the future.

A vote on the amended main motion passed without objection.

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, the following motion regarding Community Fishing Associations:

The council requests an assessment of how a CFA construct could be used to address the Council's problem statement and the goals and objectives for GOA Trawl Bycatch Management. The discussion should compare and contrast the CFA tool with provisions in the Council's April 2014 motion that may provide specific community protections. Additional questions about the CFA construct and how it may interface with the overall GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Program should be identified, as well as an identification of gaps in the proposal, and/or legal and implementation issues.

Proposal for a Community Fishing Association

I. Structure

The Community Fishing Association (CFA) entity must be a non-profit entity qualified by NMFS, with a community sustainability plan approved by the Secretary as specified in the MSA.¹ The Council can establish set requirements for the Community Fishing Association entity to be approved, possibly mirroring many of the CQE requirements. The Community Fishing Association could be a single Gulf-wide administrative entity, or a single entity with two divisions, one for the Central Gulf and one for the Western Gulf.

The entity will be governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will include balanced representation from fishing and community interests, including the cities and boroughs, trawl co-op representatives (note that co-op representatives would not need to be community residents), non-trawl fishermen and conservation interests. Municipalities (city/borough) could appoint their own designees, as well as the non-trawl seats. Co-ops could appoint their own representatives, and the board itself could appoint a conservation seat. The goal for the Board of Directors is to ensure that

¹ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(IV).

board composition is broad enough to ensure both fishery and community interests are represented, but small enough to function efficiently.

The specific composition of the Board of Directors will be set in regulation to ensure that all interest groups are represented.

II. Community Eligibility

The MSA defines a fishing community generally as “a community which is substantially dependent on or substantially engaged in the harvest or processing of fishery resources to meet social and economic needs, and includes fishing vessel owners, operators, and crew and United States fish processors that are based in such community.”² Specifically in regards to allocations to fishing communities in the context of Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs), a community must be “located within the management area of the relevant Council,” meet criteria developed by the Council and established by the Secretary and “consist of residents who conduct commercial or recreational fishing, processing, or fishery-dependent support businesses within the Council’s management area.”³ Under both of these definitions, a community need only be engaged in fishing or processing within the management area. There is no requirement that they specifically engage in the target species fishery, or in a particular fishery. In fact, in developing participation for a fishing community under the LAPP provisions, Councils are required to consider “economic barriers to access to the fishery,” and “the potential for improving economic conditions in remote coastal communities lacking resources to participate in harvesting or processing activities in the fishery.”⁴ These considerations, particularly the latter, specifically support the inclusion of communities in the management area which do not currently participate in the trawl fishery in particular. Under the LAPP definition, a fishing community may even consist of residents who conduct fishery-dependent support businesses, harvesting and processing activity is not required.

Under this program we propose fishing community criteria⁵ to include communities within the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska management areas which have:

1. Traditional fishing or processing practices in, and dependence on, fisheries in the management area;
2. Cultural and social ties to fisheries in the management area;
3. Economic barriers to access to the fishery;
4. A high potential for economic and social impacts associated with a LAPP program on harvesters, captains, crew, processors, and other businesses substantially dependent upon the fishery;
5. There will be no more than two Community Fishing Associations, one for the Western and one for the Central Gulf of Alaska.

III. Allocation

The Community Fishing Association would be allocated fishing quota for all CV target and PSC species allocated under the program. For analysis, the Council should consider an allocation range of 10-20%.

² 16 USC § 1802(17).

³ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(I-III).

⁴ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(B)(iii,vi).

⁵ Note that under the MSA provisions, eligibility criteria must be developed by the Council, approved by the Secretary, and published in the Federal Register. These eligibility criteria are therefore submitted as recommendations, but further refinement should be developed by the Council.

Quota allocated to the Community Fishing Association may not be sold.

IV. Quota Distribution

- Quota will be leased on an annual (option: every 3 years) basis according to allocation criteria established by the Board which meet the goals and objectives for the Community Fishing Association established by the Council in regulation.
- To ensure that quota leased from the Community Fishing Association achieves the goals and objectives established by the Council, quota will be leased subject to specific contract terms which meet the goals and objectives adopted by the Council, and referenced below in Section VII.

V. Lease Fees

- Lease fees will be used only to directly support the Community Fishing Association's operational and administrative costs and will not exceed reasonable costs as audited by NMFS. And will be publically disclosed in the CFA annual report.

VI. How the CFA Intersects with the Overall Program

- The Community Fishing Association will operate within the co-op structure. Quota leased from the Community Fishing Association must be utilized through a cooperative.
- Community Fishing Association quota will be subject to the same set of rules as other quota in the program in terms of bycatch management, observer coverage, sector allocations, cooperative structure, regionalization, and gear conversion.
- Any vessel and owner consolidation limits established under the overall program will also apply to quota leased by the Community Fishing Association, e.g. the consolidation limit will apply to quota directly owned or fished by a vessel and any quota leased from the Community Fishing Association.
- A participant who leases quota from the Community Fishing Association will be required to fish at least that amount of fish within their co-op (e.g. a vessel may not lease quota from the CFA, then have that quota fished by another vessel in the co-op since the contract terms would not apply to a vessel which had not leased quota from the CFA).

VII. Reporting, Accountability and Transparency

- The Council would set goals and objectives for the CFA (as per Amendment 91 requirements for the Incentive Plan Agreements) and allow the CFA board to adopt CFA policies and operational guidelines to meet those goals and objectives.
- To be eligible to participate in the program, the CFA must "develop and submit a community sustainability plan to the Council and the Secretary that demonstrates how the plan will address the social and economic development needs of coastal communities, including those that have not historically had the resources to participate in the fishery, for approval based on criteria developed by the Council that have been approved by the Secretary and published in the Federal Register."⁶
- The Council would receive an annual report from the CFA and evaluate its progress toward meeting the Council's policy goals.
- The annual report must also be distributed to all communities in the relevant management area.

⁶ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(IV).

- The Council would also review the CFA as part of the review process of the catch share program overall.
- The Council could initiate action at any time to modify the catch share program, including modifying or eliminating the CFA if it is not meeting the Council's goals and objectives.

VIII. Goals and Objectives of the Community Fishing Association

A. Council-established Goals and Objectives for the CFA (in regulation and/or the FMP):

1. Provide for the sustained (current and historical) participation of fishing communities (MSA National Standard 8).
2. Minimize adverse economic impacts on fishing communities (MSA National Standard 8).
3. Assist entry-level and small vessel owner-operators, captains and crew and fishing communities (MSA §303A(c) (5) (C)).
4. Incentivize additional bycatch savings beyond standard requirements by rewarding those willing to adopt additional measures to reduce bycatch with access to additional CFA quota.

B. The CFA may respond to several of the Council's established Goals and Objectives for the program (numbers refer to Council Goals and Objectives):

4. Authorize fair and equitable access privileges that take into consideration the value of assets and investments in the fishery and dependency on the fishery for harvesters, processors, and communities.
6. Promote community stability and minimize adverse economic impacts by limiting consolidation, providing employment and entry opportunities, and increasing the economic viability of the groundfish harvesters, processors, and support industries.
13. Minimize adverse impacts on sectors and areas not included in the program.
14. Promote active participation by owners of harvest vessels and fishing privileges.

C. "Possible" CFA goals and objectives adopted by the CFA within Council objectives:

1. Maintain the historical number of active trawl vessels home-ported in CFA communities.
2. Maintain the historical number of active trawl skippers that are resident in CFA communities.
3. Maintain the historical number of GOA trawl vessel crewpersons that are resident in CFA communities.
4. Maintain the amount of quota owned and/or operated by CFA community residents.
5. Maintain crew compensation at levels established prior to the rationalization program.
6. Enable fishermen to transition into the GOA trawl fishery under the new management program.
7. Facilitate gear conversion within provisions of main program.

Mr. Fields spoke to the motion, noting that this is an effort to provide detail for analysis, not necessarily a template, but a start for discussion. It offers a structure to provide set-aside quota to provide for Council goals and objectives. Mr. Fields stated the CFA is a two-part structure: Part 1; the Council developing clear, broad, goals and objectives for CFA, based on the Magnuson Stevens Act, and Part 2: whether or not NMFS should have an auditing function relative to CFA lease rates. Mr. Fields noted the motion makes clear CFA lease rates would be disclosed in an annual report. He answered questions of clarification on the motion.

It was further clarified that staff will primarily look at the first paragraph of the CFA motion in providing a discussion paper for the next meeting on this agenda item. The remainder of the language in the motion is to be regarded as a possible example of a CFA structure, but not a clear set of provisions to be analyzed as a proposed package.

There was discussion regarding the purpose of CFAs, how change is affected, and the organizational structure. **Mr. Dersham moved to amend in VIII, change the sentence to “MAY respond” instead of “responds.”** He noted the language better reflects the intent of the analysts to bring back information. **The amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Hyder spoke to CFAs, and noted that although he supports community protections, he cannot support this proposal, as he is not prepared and informed enough to vote on this development of structure. He noted there may be better ways to protect communities, and stated the importance of protecting communities. Ms. Campbell noted that she will be looking for input and feedback from the public regarding CFAs, and a number of coastal communities have requested CFAs be considered. Mr. Cross noted that he does not support CFAs, but does support adaptive management, and that industry and community input is important as the Council proceeds. Mr. Merrill noted he will be focusing on CFAs as a tool.

Mr. Dersham noted that he has serious reservations about CFAs, but will support the motion as a broad look at the idea. Chairman Olson stated that losing community protection at this point is not acceptable, and recognizes both the support and opposition. **The vote on the amended main motion passed 10-1, with Hyder in opposition.**

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, to request a discussion paper that more fully examines the design of the adaptive management quota that is part of the West Coast Trawl groundfish ITQ program, the rationale for its inclusion in the program, and the Pacific Council’s ongoing consideration of the costs, benefits, opportunities, and challenges associated with its potential application.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the motion, noting that his intention is for the action to be treated as separate motion, as the scope extends beyond the motion that the Council has just adopted. Valuable information could be identified and would provide the Council the ability to adapt to unanticipated outcomes or to changes that emerge after adoption of this program. The potential benefits of adaptive management quota include community protection, but other possible uses should also be discussed. There was brief discussion, and the **motion passed without objection.**

C-3 Cooperative Reports

BACKGROUND:

In the last decade or more, the Council has developed several cooperative programs as options in larger catch share programs. As part of those cooperative programs, cooperatives have provided annual written reports detailing the use of cooperative quota. These reports are intended to be a resource for the Council to track the effectiveness of the cooperative and their ability to meet the Council’s goal for the programs. Additionally, they are a tool for the cooperatives to provide feedback on the programs to the Council. In general, cooperative reports are often presented by cooperative managers during the April meeting.

(a) Amendment 80 Co-op reports

Implemented in 2008, the Amendment 80 Program is a limited access privilege program (LAPP) that allocates a portion of total allowable catch (TAC) for Atka mackerel, Pacific ocean perch, and 3 flatfish species (yellowfin sole, rock sole, and flathead sole), along with an allocation of prohibited species catch (PSC) quota for halibut and crab, in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI), to the Amendment 80 sector.

Cooperative Name	Submitted Annual Report	Council Presentation
<i>Alaska Seafood Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Jason Anderson)
<i>Alaska Groundfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	No

(b) CGOA Rockfish Co-op reports

In 2007, the Central GOA Pilot Rockfish Program was implemented. The program was intended to enhance resource conservation and improve economic efficiency for harvesters and processors who participated in the program. Allocations of the primary rockfish species (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and pelagic rockfish) and important incidental catch species (i.e., sablefish, Pacific cod, shortraker and rougheye rockfish, and thornyhead rockfish) are divided between the catcher vessel sector and the catcher processor sector. In addition, each sector is allocated halibut PSC limits based on historic catch of halibut in the target rockfish fisheries. As part of reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in 2007, the Pilot Program was extended until December 31, 2011. During that time, the Council completed action on Amendment 88 to the GOA Fishery Management Plan that revised the Rockfish Program and the amendment was implemented in 2012.

Cooperative Name	Submitted Annual Report	Council Presentation
<i>ISA Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>North Pacific Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>OBSI Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>Star of Kodiak Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>Western Alaska Fisheries Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>Global Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>Pacific Rockfish Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Julie Bonney)
<i>FCA Cooperative</i>	Yes	No
<i>Best Use Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Susan Robinson)

(c) AFA Co-op reports

In 1998, Congress established the American Fisheries Act specifically for the pollock fishery in the BSAI management area. Among other things, the AFA encouraged domestic enterprise in Alaskan fisheries and established provisions for the creation of fishery cooperatives in three sectors: at sea catcher processors, mothership, and inshore vessels. Cooperatives are given exclusive allocation of pollock based on their members' historical catch.

Cooperative Name	Submitted Annual Report	Council Presentation
<i>Catcher Vessel Intercooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)

<i>Peter Pan Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Unisea Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Westward Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Unalaska Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Akutan Catcher Vessel Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Northern Victor Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (John Gruver)
<i>Mothership Fleet Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (James Mize)
<i>Pollock Conservation Cooperative & High Seas Catchers' Cooperative</i>	Yes	Yes (Stephanie Madsen)

Jon McCracken gave the staff report on this agenda item. Representatives from each of the cooperatives gave the reports for that cooperative.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Olson noted there is no AP or SSC report, and no action required on this agenda item. There was discussion stating the importance of the reports, and thanking the industry for their response.

C4 BSAI Crab Cooperative Reports

BACKGROUND

At the December 2013 meeting, the Council received the first submission of voluntary BSAI crab cooperative reports. Seven of the ten cooperatives submitted a written report to the Council before this meeting and representative from three of the cooperative provided oral testimony to support their submission. Reports were intended to address concern raised in the 5-year review of the crab rationalization program; specifically the transfer of quota shares to active participants in the fishery, high lease rates for quota share, and equitable crew compensation.

In December, the Council additionally received a staff presentation with updated 2012 crab Economic Data Report (EDR) information, which highlighted data availability and timing of the crab EDR for review. With input from stakeholders and understanding the utility of fully audited crab EDR for reference, the Council moved to change the timing of the reports. Beginning 2015, the reports will be requested March 1 of each year with an opportunity for representatives to present at the April Council meeting.

The seven submitted reports were formatted using one of two styles. The majority of the reports used a seven question-and-answer format directly adapted from the Council's letter that was originally sent to the cooperatives. One cooperative, representing a diverse group of perspectives allowed their members to individually submit letters addressing how the Council's concerns manifested in their business practices. The Council requested that staff follow up with the non-responding cooperatives.

Contact was made with the three cooperatives that had not submitted a report by the December Council meeting, in order to notify them of the continued interest in their perspective on the Council's issues of concern. Since that point, two additional cooperatives have reported for the 2015 cycle: Trident Affiliated Harvesting Corporation, and Coastal Villages Crab Cooperative.

In December, Council members began a discussion on their satisfaction with the content provided in the first round of crab cooperative reports. For instance, some members said they would have liked to see more information on the effectiveness of the measures taken within the cooperatives to address concerns with active participation, lease rates and crew compensation. This discussion was scheduled to continue at this, April 2014 meeting, in order to allow the Council an opportunity to provide further specificity regarding their expectations for these annual reports. This will aid cooperative representatives in their ability to successfully provide input on the Council's concerns, as well as allowing agency staff the opportunity to make the necessary information collection request based on Council action at this meeting.

Sarah Marrinan gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. There was no AP or SSC report, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Cross stated the 7 questions the cooperatives voluntarily answer provide as much information as the Council needs. He noted that it is imperative to continue the report process, and combined with EDRs, audit features, and the QS website, there is adequate information. Mr. Fields commented that the non-responsive cooperatives should be required to report, as the cooperatives are using a public resource. Ms. Campbell noted that there is a variety of information reported even using the 7-question format. NOAA General Counsel reminded the Council that the cooperative reports are voluntary. Mr. Henderschedt stated that the Council should focus on building relationships rather than resorting to regulatory reporting.

Mr. Cross moved that the Council's preferred reporting format for crab cooperatives answer the seven questions asked by the Council, as exemplified by the ICE report of 2013. The motion was seconded. Mr. Tweit moved to amend, by adding: Additionally, the Council encourages all coops' answers to be as quantitative as possible, as well as encourage 100% compliance with filing the reports by March 1 of each year. The amendment was seconded. Mr. Henderschedt noted he cannot support the motion, and encouraging compliance cannot be applied to a voluntary action. There was discussion regarding what the Council would like to see regarding what is voluntary vs. required. Mr. Cross noted that overall, the Council's intent is to work with industry in a voluntary, cooperative way relative to this motion. **The amendment passed with Hyder and Henderschedt objecting. The main motion passed without objection.**

C-5 Amendment 80 review

BACKGROUND

Amendment 80, implemented in 2008, enabled the formation of fishery cooperatives for non-AFA trawl catcher processors. As part of the Amendment 80 program developed by the Council and as required by section 303(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), a 5-year review of the program is required to determine progress in meeting the goals of the Amendment 80 program and the MSA.

For the December 2013 meeting, a draft work-plan of the 5-year review was prepared. The work-plan summarized the specific requirements that a 5-year review be developed, possible issues to examine, and annotated table of contents of the review. At the December 2013 meeting, the Council examined and provided direction concerning the draft work plan. Since December, Northern Economics, a contractor hired to complete the 5-year review, has been preparing the report, which was completed on April 1, 2014. The report reviews 1) the use and collection of scientific data in the Amendment 80 fisheries, 2) rationalization and elimination of the race for fish, 3) safety in the Amendment 80 fisheries, 4) a

discussion of the modified trawl sweeps in the Amendment 80 fisheries in maintaining a healthy marine ecosystem, 4) attainment of optimum yield and ability to account for variations and contingencies, 5) retention and utilization of harvested resources, 6) prohibited species catch in the Amendment 80 and BSAI trawl limited assess sectors, 7) benefits generated by the Amendment 80 fishery, 8) assessment of CDQ Program allocations in Amendment 80 fisheries, and 9) community impacts of Amendment 80.

Jon McCracken gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. Marcus Hartley from Northern Economics gave a report on the document, and Jennifer Lincoln gave a staff report from NIOSH analyzing the effect of Amendment 80 on the safety issues in the fleet. Lori Swanson gave the AP report on this agenda item, the SSC had given its report earlier, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt noted that a motion is not required, and that changes to this rough draft have already been covered by the SSC and AP, and outcomes should be focused on the results of the program relative to the National Standards and Magnuson Act. He noted the next draft should incorporate the additions and in October or December the Council can review the final report.

Mr. Fields wanted to include information on confidentiality, and the ability to waive confidentiality for information, so the Council can have clarity on how the sector has avoided PSC.

Mr. Hull reminded the Council that there was a public comment request on Amendment 80 participation in the rockfish sector. There was brief discussion on the scope of the linkages and Mr. Hartley pointed to a few places in the document where impacts can be noted. Mr. Tweit requested more discussion on cooperative formation requirements.

C-6 Round Island Transit

BACKGROUND

Vessels with Federal Fisheries Permits (FFP) are prohibited from transiting through Council-implemented walrus protection areas around Round Island and Cape Pierce in northern Bristol Bay. Until implementation of GOA FMP Amendment 83, vessels with FFPs tendering herring or salmon in the Togiak Bay fishery were able to surrender their FFP during the tendering season and transit the protection areas, with the expectation that they could reactivate their FFP after the tendering season. GOA Amendment 83, unrelated to any action in northern Bristol Bay, prevents vessels from surrendering their FFP and reactivating it within a three year period. As a result, vessels with FFPs face risk of fine if they pass through walrus protection areas, or must surrender their FFPs for three years in order to tender herring or salmon for the northern Bristol Bay fisheries.

The purpose of this action is to maintain suitable protection for walrus on Round Island, to restore access to vessels with FFPs serving as tenders for the northern Bristol Bay herring and salmon fisheries to the routes used by tenders before implementation of GOA FMP Amendment 83, and to allow vessels delivering groundfish access to the route north of Round Island to reduce the likelihood of disturbance to walrus on Hagemeister Island.

Steve Maclean gave the staff report on this agenda item. Lori Swanson gave the AP report and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, to select the following as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative:

- **Alternative 2 Option 1, and Alternative 3**
Alternative 2, Option 1: Establish a transit area, open from April 1 through August 15, annually, north of a line from 58° 47.90' N, 160° 21.91' W to 58° 32.94' N, 159° 35.45' W, maintaining a minimum of 3 nm from Round Island.
- *Alternative 3: establish a transit area in the EEZ near Cape Peirce, open from April 1 through August 15, annually, east of a line from 58° 30.00'N, 161° 46.20'W to 58° 21.00'N, 161° 46.20'W*

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the motion stating this is a well analyzed and vetted issue, and expressed appreciation to staff and stakeholders. He noted that the selected PPA addresses three different considerations; avoiding impacts to walrus, safety at sea, and efficiency in the fishery.

He went on to state that minimizing impacts to walrus is the crux of the PPA, and through this motion the Council can provide an opportunity to route, or encourage, vessel traffic where there is a high certainty of minimizing impacts to walrus. Traffic can be routed at a distance away from Round Island, while minimizing need for transit past an area on Hagemeister island. He stated there are currently no measures in place and this alternative is a step forward with a result of safe navigation and efficiency to fleet, along with walrus protection.

The Chairman noted that the analysis is clear that this motion would provide sufficient protection for walrus, although he acknowledged the disagreements from public comment. He also stated that any action that Council takes can be changed if intended results are not met.

Mr. McBride stated that more protections are always better, but the analysis shows intended result, and that Hagemeister Island will benefit. Mr. Fields supports the motion and noted that it supports many of the conservation National Standards.

Dr. Balsiger supports the motion and will continue to track the issue and its effects, and noted USFW will take more action dealing with Critical Habitat in 2015, and NMFS will have more information at that time.

Mr. Tweit made the following amendment, which was seconded:

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).

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 the Executive Director and the Chairman would retain their ability to withhold submission of the FMP amendment and/or proposed regulations and take action back to the Council if the E.D. and Chairman determine that the section 305(d) draft proposed regulations are not in keeping with Council intent for the action. **The amendment passed with no objection.**

The amended main motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

C-7 Bering Sea and GOA Salmon PSC genetics update

BACKGROUND

In conjunction with action by the Council under Amendment 91 to the BSAI groundfish FMP, the Council requested annual reports on the genetic stock composition of the salmon bycatch by species in the BSAI (and GOA once available). Two reports are available for the 2012 fisheries:

- 1) Genetic Stock Composition Analysis of Chinook Salmon Bycatch Samples from the 2012 Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska Trawl Fisheries*
- 2). Genetic Stock Composition Analysis of Chum Salmon Bycatch and Excluder Device Samples from the 2012 Bering Sea Walleye Pollock Trawl Fishery*

Dr. Jeff Guyon of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center Auke Bay Laboratory will be available to provide a report on the 2012 genetic results at this meeting.

Bering Sea Pollock fishery Chinook IPA and Chum ICA reports;

Under Amendment 91 to the BSAI Groundfish FMP, AFA sector representatives are required to provide an overview of their Chinook salmon bycatch reduction efforts under individual incentive program agreements (IPAs). Representatives from the Inter-cooperative Agreement (ICA) for chum bycatch avoidance will also provide a report on bycatch avoidance measures under the rolling hot spot (RHS) program in 2013. This report is a requirement of the status quo chum bycatch avoidance program implemented under Amendment 84 which conveys an exemption to the current Chum salmon savings area (CSSA) closure in the Bering Sea.

The following reports are available and presentations will be made at the meeting by the sector representative noted:

Agreement	AFA sector/group	Council Presentation
<i>Bering Sea Pollock Intercooperative Salmon Avoidance Agreement (Chum ICA)</i>	<i>all</i>	<i>John Gruver and Karl Haflinger</i>
<i>Inshore Salmon Savings Incentive Plan (SSIP)</i>	<i>Inshore CVs</i>	<i>John Gruver</i>
<i>Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan (MSSIP)</i>	<i>Mothership</i>	<i>James Mize</i>
<i>Chinook Salmon Bycatch Reduction Incentive Plan (CP IPA)</i>	<i>Catcher Processor sector and CDQ</i>	<i>Stephanie Madsen and Amanda Stern-Pilot</i>

Diana Stram gave the staff presentation on this agenda item, along with Dr. Jeff Guyon from AFSC, who gave a presentation on the genetic analysis of chum salmon. Members from the cooperatives gave the ICA reports. The SSC gave its report, and Becca Robbins Gisclair gave the AP report. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Chairman Olson noted no action was required. Dr. Stram outlined the direction for the discussion paper in June, which will address a number of analyses of potential changes to the current Chinook bycatch management including shortening the pollock season, requiring salmon excluders and additional constraints on the fleet when bycatch rates are high. The paper will also provide an overview of the modifications to goals and objectives of the program necessary to incorporate chum salmon bycatch

into the existing IPAs. There was brief discussion, and the Council endorsed the SSC's comments on this issue.

C-8 Review Scallop SAFE report and approve catch specifications

BACKGROUND:

The Scallop Plan Team met in Homer on February 25-26, 2014 to review the status of the weathervane scallop stocks in Alaska, to prepare the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report and to recommend an acceptable biological catch (ABC) level to meet Annual Catch Limit (ACL) requirements. The SAFE report was mailed to you on March 31st. The report from the Scallop Plan Team meeting is attached and includes discussions of a number of topics from the meeting that are not included in the SAFE report itself. The SAFE report provides an overview of scallop management, scallop harvests and the status of the regional weathervane scallop stocks. Scallop stocks are neither overfished nor approaching an overfished condition.

Please note the letter from Representative Paul Seaton attached to the Scallop Plan Team report requesting review of permit consolidation. The Scallop Plan Team did not address it as it is more appropriate for Council consideration.

Diana Stram gave the staff report on this agenda item, and the AP gave its report. Public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Campbell moved, which was seconded, to approve the SAFE report, and set the 2014/2015 ABC ACL at 1.161 million lbs. of shucked meats, and the OFL = 1.29 million lbs.

Ms. Campbell spoke to the motion noting the OFL and ABC numbers are consistent with SSC and PT's recommendations and applies the ABC control rule. Scallops are not overfished, and managed conservatively by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game which will manage GH's by area. **The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

C-9 Bering Sea Canyons

BACKGROUND

In June 2013, the Council passed a motion to identify and validate areas of coral concentrations for possible management measures for the conservation and management of deep sea corals in Pribilof and Zhemchug canyons. The motion requested that AFSC expand upon their initial analysis of coral concentration to include an overlay of model results with existing data, and a biodiversity index and rare species analysis. The Council also tasked staff to initiate a discussion paper that addresses management measures to be considered for conserving areas of coral concentration and associated fish productivity. Staff was instructed to meet with the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) and stakeholders to discuss possibilities for collaboration in order to survey areas of coral abundance and to identify and develop tools for coral impact reduction.

In February 2014, staff hosted a workshop on the Bering Sea canyons in Seattle. At the workshop scientists from the AFSC and presented their expanded analysis (see attached). The workshop also focused on planned and potential collaborative research to understand the distribution and abundance of corals in the canyons, and to develop tools to mitigate potential impacts of fishing gear on those corals.

At this meeting, the Council will review a discussion paper that provides an overview of the workshop, as well as information on management measures that could be implemented to reduce potential impacts on corals in the Bering Sea canyon areas. Should the Council choose to move forward to further evaluate potential coral conservation measures, the Council may want to discuss a process to identify specific options for analysis.

Steve MacLean gave the staff report on this agenda item. Diana Evans gave the Ecosystem Committee Report, the SSC gave its report, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschect moved, which was seconded, to adopt the following statement of purpose and need:

The purpose of this action is to determine whether and how the Council should recommend amendment of the BSAI Groundfish and Crab FMPs to protect known, significant concentrations of coral in the Pribilof Canyon and the adjacent slope from fishing impacts under the appropriate authorities of the MSA.

This action should identify a discrete area or areas of significant abundance of deep sea corals in, and directly adjacent to, the Pribilof canyon, assess the potential for fishing impacts on the identified area or areas of significant coral abundance, evaluate the historical and current patterns of fishing effort and fish removals in and adjacent to the Pribilof Canyon, consider the types of management measures that would be appropriate to conserve discrete areas of significant coral abundance while minimizing impacts on established fishing activity, and identify the appropriate authority under which the Council may take action.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has taken significant steps to protect coral and coral habitats in the Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska. Recent models and data have shown that Pribilof Canyon and some areas along the Bering Sea slope may also contain deep sea coral. Observational and survey data have detected a relatively high abundance of corals within the Pribilof Canyon and the adjacent slope, and results of a predictive model from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center show that up to 33% of the deep sea coral habitat along the Bering Sea slope may lie within, and adjacent to, Pribilof Canyon. Results of surveys planned for summer 2014 will provide additional data to further refine our understanding of coral occurrence within the canyons and slope habitats, and this information will be useful in refining alternatives developed in response to this purpose and need. There is historical fishing activity that occurs within and around the Pribilof Canyon.

Deep sea corals may be important habitat for several commercially important fish species managed by the Council, and may provide important ecosystem services for the maintenance of healthy Bering Sea ecosystems. Consistent with the Council's adopted policy for incorporating the Ecosystem Approach to fisheries management and the authorities of the MSA, the Council intends to initiate action to investigate where and how to protect coral in the Pribilof Canyon and directly adjacent slope.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the motion, stating that this Council has a history of protecting the canyons and habitat protection. Workshops have been scheduled to evaluate management actions, review habitat and fish information in the canyons, as well as fishing activity in that area, as well as a process for those actions. This action continues a process to re-examine the potential value and need for management measures to protect habitat in Bering Sea canyons. This motion focuses action on the coral habitat of Pribilof Canyon and the directly adjacent slope. The objective of the action is to protect significant concentrations of coral in this area from fishing impacts. He noted that this motion is not

intended to replace current research or projects, but to use and be responsive to, information gathered from the projects in the discussion paper.

Timing and substance of the motion is considered to be economical of time and resources to ensure the best available science, and resulting in a science based solution to protecting valuable habitat while maintaining healthy fisheries. Mr. Henderschedt answered questions of clarification from the Council members. Discussion ensued regarding timing and the scoping process.

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, a substitute motion, (using the AP motion): The Council recommends taking no further action on this agenda item until the AFSC visual camera surveys are completed and a report of the findings is presented to the Council.

He spoke to the motion stating the original motion is premature, especially relative to identification of area, and is not persuaded that there is immediate harm that will put coral under threat. There is no reason to move ahead in advance of other information.

Mr. Tweit noted that the Council needs to act to be precautionary, and stated the two motions are different in respect to timing and next steps. Discussion continued regarding SSC comments.

Mr. Hyder stated the Council has started this process a long time ago, and the substitute motion does not stop the process, and the Council will still review information. It is not a choice between doing something and nothing, but rather looking at everything before making a decision.

The substitute motion failed 4/7, with Hyder, Fields, Dersham, and Long voting in favor.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the main motion by adding “deep sea coral” after the word concentration in the second paragraph. The motion passed without objection.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the main motion by adding “if we have made a determination, this action could identify ...” changing “should” to “could.” The amendment was seconded.

Mr. Henderschedt noted there is no intent in this action to foreshadow and the Council cannot make a determination if there are no alternatives. There was brief discussion and **Mr. Fields withdraws the motion with the concurrence of the second.**

Mr. Fields moved to amend by striking the following sentence in the purpose and needs statement: **Observational and survey data have detected a relatively high abundance of corals within the Pribilof Canyon and the adjacent slope, and results of a predictive model from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center show that up to 33% of the deep sea coral habitat along the Bering Sea slope may lie within, and adjacent to, Pribilof Canyon. The motion was seconded.**

Mr. Fields spoke to the motion, noting that it is premature in a purpose and needs statement to site a predictive model that SSC has indicated may not be accurate. It could be prejudicial given the tentativeness of the model. Dr. Balsiger stated his agreement and noting the motion is clearer and more succinct. There was brief discussion, and the motion to strike the sentence passed 8/3, with

Motion to strike passes 8/3 with Henderschedt, Cross, and Hull in opposition.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the amended main motion and thanked the staff of the various agencies that will be working on projects over the summer.

Mr. Hyder moved to delete the word “should” and insert the word “may.” The motion was seconded. Mr. Hyder spoke to the motion and noted it is more consistent with the rest of the motion. **The motion passed with two objections: Tweit and Henderschedt.**

Mr. Tweit spoke to the amended main motion, and noted the Council is taking action beyond the motion from July of 2013. He noted it will have a single species approach, but will have ecosystem benefits. Moving forward, he stated, the Council will have to consider the effects of displaced effort. Mr. Fields noted that although the motion is slightly different from what he had intended, he is supportive of the motion and wants to have an discussion as to what an EFH may include, and wants to highlight the limited scope. He encourages more information as the Council proceeds with this process. Ms. Kimball noted her agreement and the Council needs to have clear, established objectives as to how to move forward.

The amended main motion passed without objection.

D-1 Ecosystem Vision Statement Action Plan

BACKGROUND:

In February 2013, the Council adopted an Ecosystem Vision Statement intended to synthesize the Council's policy on ecosystem-based management, and to work in concert with existing comprehensive management objectives. The approach includes three parts: a value statement, the vision statement, and an implementation strategy. The Council's Ecosystem Committee continues to work on the Council's remaining task: to evaluate the implications of the ecosystem policy on Council near- and long-term actions, in the form of an action plan.

Diana Evans gave the staff report on this agenda item, and no action was taken. She also updated the Council on the Ecosystem Committee's comments on this agenda item.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Tweit noted that the Council's Ecosystem Committee will refine an action plan on the Ecosystem Vision Statement and report back to the Council at the October meeting. Additionally, the Council agreed with the Committee's recommended plans for soliciting public comment on the development of a Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP).

D2 EFH 5 Year Review

BACKGROUND:

The Council and NMFS are required to review the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) components within the Council's fishery management plans (FMPs) every five years. At this meeting, staff will provide an overview of the planned approach for the 2015 EFH 5-year review. The objective of the review is to evaluate and synthesize new information on habitat, determine whether changes to the FMPs are warranted, and present this evaluation in a summary report to the Council. If the Council chooses to update its FMPs based on the report, for example to revise EFH descriptions or management measures, FMP amendments will subsequently be prepared, along with the appropriate analytical documents.

Diana Evans and Jon Olson gave the staff report on this agenda item, and Diana Evans also gave the Ecosystem Committee report on this agenda item. The AP gave its report, the SSC had given its report, and there was no public comment.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

The Chairman noted that no Council action was required, and Mr. Tweit recommended the Council support the 5 year review, and requests the SSC and Ecosystem Committee comments be taken into

account, as well as any new information that might be gained relative to the habitat of the Bering Sea shelf break, slope, and canyon areas.

D-3 PSEIS

BACKGROUND

The Council is scheduled to review a draft Supplemental Information Report (SIR) that synthesizes relevant information in order to allow the Council and NMFS to determine whether there is a need to supplement the 2004 Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (2004 PSEIS).

The 2004 PSEIS is a comprehensive review of the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries, which evaluated cumulative changes in the management of the groundfish fisheries, and a broad array of policy-level programmatic alternatives. On the basis of the PSEIS, the Council adopted its current groundfish management policy. In June 2012, the Council reviewed a discussion paper identifying factors that may influence the timing for supplementing or updating the 2004 PSEIS. To determine if a revision or supplement to the PSEIS is necessary at this time, the Council and NMFS decided to prepare a supplemental information report, a tool to evaluate the need to prepare a new environmental impact statement to supplement a previous EIS. NEPA requires agencies to prepare a supplemental EIS to either draft or final EISs if the agency (1) makes substantial changes in the proposed action that are relevant to environmental concerns; or (2) there are significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts.

Diana Evans gave the staff report on this agenda item and gave the Ecosystem Committee report. The AP and SSC gave the reports on this agenda item, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Kimball moved, which was seconded, the following: After review of the draft Supplemental Information Report, the Council finds that there have not been sufficient changes in groundfish fisheries management or significantly new information to trigger the need for supplementing the PSEIS at this time. The Council recommends that a final SIR be prepared after consideration of SSC comments.

Ms. Kimball spoke to the motion. She appreciates the tool and the ability to use a SIR process, a non-NEPA document, to evaluate programs. She noted the SIR draft is a comprehensive review of each of the resource components evaluated in the 2004 PSEIS, and that the SIR is clear that the Council must evaluate 2 criteria to determine if a supplement is necessary, and these criteria must be considered with respect to the program as a whole, rather than for individual components.

Ms Kimball noted that for almost all resource components the new information in the draft SIR does not suggest a new analysis would result in significantly different conclusions for impacted resource components. For a few components, we may have information that results in a new conclusion, but the experts noted that that is not a conclusion that we are having a negative impact on the environment. And then there are 2 or 3 components that may have new information brought to bear, but it certainly does not appear that the new information identified in the draft SIR would result in a significantly different conclusion regarding the environmental impact of the groundfish fisheries overall. She noted that this is also supported by our Ecosystem committee and SSC minutes. She expects that the agency can take this feedback from the council and fold it into the final SIR.

Mr. Tweit compared the SIR process with an audit, and noted it is a good diagnostic tool, and an effort to be more transparent. He spoke about the history of the Programmatic SEIS, and noted that the SIR process is a good tool to measure and attribute value to, the Programmatic.

The motion passes without objection.

Dr. Balsiger noted that NMFS is prepared to receive comments on the document within the next month.

D4 Research Priorities

BACKGROUND:

Council and AKFIN staff have been working on developing a web-based database portal for the Council's research priorities. Our intention with the project is the following:

- 1. have a system that tracks research priorities, and their identified attributes, over time*
- 2. design a process that allows the Plan Teams, the SSC assigned reviewer, and then the full SSC to propose and approve/disapprove changes to the research priorities directly in the program*
- 3. be able to output research priority data in multiple formats for different users (e.g., SSC, Council, research agencies, or stakeholders interested in a particular topic)*

In April and June 2013, the SSC refined the list of fields to track in the database, and since then, staff have been working with AKFIN to develop the database and web portal. At the April meeting, we hope to demonstrate the web system to the SSC, and solicit any feedback. The intention is to have the system up and running prior to the June meeting, for the SSC to use for its final research priority recommendations in June. We will demonstrate the system using the proposed research priority changes offered by the Scallop Plan Team at their recent meeting.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

This agenda item was an SSC only review and those comments are available in the SSC minutes.

E – Staff Tasking

Mr. Oliver reviewed the staff tasking information and reviewed logistics and details of the next Council meeting in Nome. Jane DiCosimo gave an update on halibut/sablefish actions and interactions with the Halibut Commission. Lori Swanson gave the AP report on this agenda item.

Joint Protocol Meeting

There was brief discussion regarding the Council/BOF joint protocol meeting, and it was requested to have the materials distributed ahead of time where possible.

Sea Lion EIS

It was requested to have an update from NMFS on the EIS for the October 2014 meeting.

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Action

Ms. Campbell noted that lead time for the analysis should be more, rather than less, in order to give the public and interested stakeholders to review and comment. She stated it is important to the success of the program. Chairman Olson noted October is the best time to schedule this action. Outreach to the

Western GOA would be preferable in May, and Mr. Oliver noted that there is a meeting tentatively scheduled to Sand Point.

Ecosystem Committee

Mr. Tweit noted he will try to attend all 3 scoping meetings for the BS FEP, and encouraged Council members to attend if possible. The fishing impact model analysis for the 5 year EFH may not be completed before the September Ecosystem Committee meeting, in which case a separate Ecosystem Committee may need to be re-scheduled.

CDQ Halibut Mortality Rates

The Chairman noted the staff will work with appropriate agencies to understand why differences exist in the discard mortality rates. Mr. Henderschedt noted the issue will be addressed first by the groundfish plan team, and requested to expand discussion to explore the reason behind the two separate calculations and management approaches.

EM Workgroup

Mr. Hull noted that the Observer Advisory Committee will schedule a meeting which will depend on when NMFS completes the annual report, tentatively May 28-29 in Anchorage. He specified the two primary agenda items as reviewing the observer annual report, and initial review documents for observer tendering and CDQ Pacific cod.

He also stated the EM workgroup will schedule a meeting during the Lowell-Wakefield PSC symposium, and will schedule it as appropriate.

Chairman Olson read the appointees to the EM workgroup: Dan Falvey, David Polushkin, Brian Lynch, Malcolm Milne, Jeff Stephan, Bernie Berkholder, Morgan Dyas, Howard McElderry. Each appointee can have one appointee, and Dan Hull will serve as Chair of the committee.

Insurance Coverage of Observers

Mr. Cross noted that the issue was brought up in public testimony, and **made a motion, which was seconded, that the Council draft a letter to the NMFS administration asking that the issue of observer insurance costs in the North Pacific be examined, in regards that there appear to be inconsistencies around the nation that require different insurance coverages for Federal observers which concerns the North Pacific Council as it seeks to maximize efficiency in its observer program, and 2; that the method necessary to reduce observer costs by eliminating unneeded insurance for observers in the North Pacific that are in the regulations 50CFR which include obligation to provide insurance to observers under claims in the Jones Act, while some current law state that Observers are not seamen, and the Jones Act does not apply.**

Mr. Cross spoke to the motion, stating that industry came forward in February and did more research, which they presented at this meeting. However, it is not within Council determination or regulation to address this, and that directing this issue to NMFS is the best step forward. **The motion passed without objection.**

IFQ Committee

Mr. Hull noted the Council received a proposal from Mr. McManus which he will forward to the IFQ Committee to review at a later time.

Mr. Olson thanked all those in attendance, and adjourned the meeting at 11:48 on April 14, 2014.

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

April 2014, 20___ N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
Chris Thomson	Alaska Salmon Alliance
BRENT PAINE	UCB
Todd Loomis	Ocean Peace, Inc.
Frank Kelly	UNA Alaska
Simeon Swetzof Jr	CITY OF ST. PAUL
KRIS NOROSZ	Teide Seafoods
Jeff Stephan	United Fishermen's Marketing Assoc.
Paul MacGregor	At-Sea Processors
VINCE O'Shea	PSPA
Heather McLarty	McLarty and Assoc., Juneau
Dwan Robinson	Fishermen's Finest
Mike Szymanski	" "
Michael Lake	AOI
Green REED	PSPA
Stoian Iankov	GOA fisherman
Molly Dychne	AOI
MARK GIBSON	ABSC
VERONICA SWAJEN	NORTH STAR Group

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

April 2014, 20 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
Karl Ohls	North Star Group
Sinclair Wirt	WESTWARD SEAFOODS
Elizabeth Wmeyer	WESTWARD FISHING CO

Time Log
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Meetings held in Anchorage, Alaska at Hilton Hotel
April 9-14, 2014

April 9, 2014

Time of Day Subject

08:01	Call to Order
08:02	Approval of Agenda
08:03	B1 ED Report - Chris Oliver
08:33	B2 NMFS Mgt - Steve Davis, Jeanne Hansen
09:13	Electronic Monitoring - Martin Loefflad
10:20	B3 ADF&G - Karla Bush
10:31	B4 USCG - Tony Keene
10:47	B5 USFWS - Doug McBride
10:54	B6 Protected Species - Steve MacLean
10:54	B7 NIOSH Report - Jennifer Lincoln
11:34	Public comment B reports
11:35	Linda Behnken, Dan Falvey
11:55	David Poluskhin
12:04	George Hutchings
01:45	EM motion Dan Hull
02:06	C1 Stellar Sea Lion
02:06	Brandee Gerke, Jon Kurland
03:54	Public comment C1
03:54	Dave Fraser, Todd Loomis
03:59	Chad See
04:06	Recess

April 10, 2014

Time of Day Subject

08:10	Call to Order
08:12	C2 GOA Trawl Bycatch – EDR
08:12	Darrell Brannan, Brian Garber Yontz
08:30	AP report, Lori Swanson
08:32	SSC Report, Bob Clark
08:40	Public comment C2
08:40	George Hutchings
08:41	Julie Bonney
09:12	C2 Brannan Cunningham
02:10	SSC report, Pat Livingston
02:43	AP report, Lori Swanson
03:01	Public comment C2
03:03	Pat Branson, Wooden, Heather McCarty/City & Borough of Kodiak
03:24	Darren Platt
03:28	Don Ashley
03:39	George Hutchings
03:47	Ernie Weiss, EAB
03:51	Paul Grundholdt
03:57	Paul Olson
04:04	Alexus Kwachka
04:16	Stoian Iankov
04:23	Susan Robinson
04:29	Paddy O'Donnell
04:32	Glenn Reed
04:43	Theresa Peterson
04:58	Chuck McCallum
05:03	Bob Krueger
05:13	Matt Hegge
05:21	Jody Cook
05:26	Beth Stewart
05:36	Recess

April 11, 2014

Time of Day Subject

08:01	Call to Order
08:01	Public Comment C2 continued
08:01	Kiley Thompson
08:03	Tom and Andrew Manos
08:08	Pete Schoenberg
08:12	John Warrenchuck
08:15	Henry Mitchell
08:18	Julie Bonney
08:58	C2 Council action - Motion
11:01	SSC report, Pat Livingston
11:11	C3 Coop Reports
11:12	Jason Anderson
11:30	Bill McGill
11:38	Julie Bonney
01:02	Bill McGill
01:06	Susan Robinson
01:18	John Gruver, Jim Mize
01:38	Stephanie Madsen
01:51	C4 BSAI Crab Coop Rpts - Sarah Marrinan
01:59	Public comment C4
01:59	Jake Jacobson
01:59	Joe Sullivan
02:07	Mark Gleason
02:45	C5 Am80 5 year Review
04:24	AP report, Lori Swanson
04:25	Public Comment - Bill Orr
04:33	Recess

April 12, 2014

Time of Day Subject

08:29	Call to Order
08:29	Jennifer Lincoln NIOSH AM08
08:46	Public comment C5
08:46	Stephanie Madsen
08:50	Matt Upton
08:55	George Hutchings
09:00	Lori Swanson
09:30	C6 Round Island Transit
09:30	Steve MacLean
10:13	AP report, Lori Swanson
10:18	Public Comment
10:18	Frank Logusak
10:26	Jason Anderson
10:42	Helen Aderman
10:42	Vince O'Shea
11:16	C7 Salmon Genetics Update
11:16	Diana Stram, Jeff Guyon
01:01	Karl Haflinger, John Gruver
01:49	James Mize
02:03	Stephanie Madsen
02:45	SSC Report on C7
02:53	Becca Robbins Gisclair
03:20	C8 Scallop SAFE - Diana Stram
03:28	AP Report
03:33	George Hutchings
04:42	Recess

April 13, 2014

Time of Day Subject

09:01	Call to Order
09:02	C9 Bering Sea Canyons - Steve MacLean
09:54	Ecosystem Report, Diana Evans
10:08	AP Report, Lori Swanson
10:10	SSC Report
10:34	Public comment C9
10:34	Carl Wassilie
10:38	George Pletnikoff
10:49	Jon Warrenchuk
10:58	Merrick Burden
11:09	Chad See
11:13	Jackie Dragon
11:21	John Gauvin
11:35	Stephanie Madsen
11:43	D3 Programmatic SIR
11:44	Diana Evans
12:02	Ecosystem Committee report on D3
02:52	Public comment D3
02:52	John Warrenchuk
02:59	George Hutchings
03:03	Paul Olsen
03:16	D1 Ecosystem Committee Report
03:16	Diana Evans
03:26	D2 EFH 5 year Review – Diana Evans, Jon Olson
03:57	D2 Council Action
04:22	Recess

April 14, 2014

Time of Day Subject

09:03	Call to Order
09:03	Sen. Mark Begich
09:37	E1 Staff Tasking - Chris Oliver
09:57	AP Report
09:59	Public Comment E1
09:59	Michael Lake
10:08	Chad See
10:16	Aggie Fautz and Anne Vanderhoeven
10:22	George Hutchings
10:30	Henry Mitchell
10:33	Julie Bonney
11:12	Meeting Adjourned

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Eric A. Olson, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director



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ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES

April 8-11, 2014
Anchorage, Alaska

The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent ~~stricken~~):

Ruth Christiansen
Kurt Cochran
John Crowley
Jerry Downing
Jeff Farvour
Becca Robbins Gisclair
John Gruver

Heath Hilyard
Jeff Kauffman
Mitch Kilborn
Alexus Kwachka
Craig Lowenberg
Brian Lynch
Chuck McCallum

Paddy O'Donnell
Joel Peterson
Theresa Peterson
Sinclair Wilt
Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

Minutes from the February 2014 meeting were approved

C2 GOA Trawl Bycatch – EDR Report

The AP recommends the EDR report come back to Council and AP one more time with revisions, with the intent to start collecting data in 2015. *Motion passed 21/0.*

C2 GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

Industry Proposal:

The AP recommends that the Council move the industry workgroup proposal ([Attachment 1](#)) forward for analysis with the following changes and section-by-section comments below. *Motion passed 13/8.*

Add an alternative to reduce halibut PSC by 5, 15, or 30% and include consideration of king and tanner crab bycatch. *Motion carried 11/10*

Comments:

Introduction

- Concern: The introduction does not clearly outline PSC reductions
- PSC reductions are part of coop responsibilities. Regulation should not specify how reductions will be achieved.
- Concern: Language implies that purpose is to structure around existing PSC numbers rather than future reductions.

1. Sector definitions

- Clarification: LLPs that do not meet qualification criteria can still be used in the program (e.g., can lease quota, fish on unallocated species, etc)
- Addition: Section 1.3 (Eligibility to fish), insert 'all trawl vessels in the GOA will have 100% observer coverage.'

2. Sector allocations

2.2 Primary and secondary species

- Need to address which species could become a race for fish under the new program.
- Concern: allocating species which are not fully harvested (e.g., arrowtooth) could prevent future participation in those fisheries
- Concern: allocating species which are shared between sectors (e.g., skates) could restrict access by other sectors
- Concern: do not allocate anything in the WGOA except cod and pollock
- Concern: WGOA rockfish fishery is currently a race-for-fish that has precluded even opening the fishery in some years. It needs to be included in the program.

2.3 PSC allocations

- Concern: allocating Chinook PSC up to the cap is not responsive to bycatch reduction
- Comment: Hard caps on PSC at coop level will not be reached, resulting in savings

3. Inshore Catch Share Program Elements

3.3 Program structure: cooperative style program

- Comment: Current practice includes single processor receiving deliveries from single vessel

3.4 Harvester-Processor Community-Based Association Provisions

- Concern: Using older history may force harvesters into a cooperative with a processor they are no longer delivering to.
- Comment: Coop formation percentage requirement assures coop can't be halted by one or few members
- Concern: the coop agreement should include community as a signator
- Concern: communities should not be able to veto coop agreement. Local politics are a concern.
- Concern: community access to coop agreement may result in release of confidential business data and anti-trust concern.
- Concern: requiring community signature on coop agreement may inhibit coop formation.

3.6 Options for Harvester movement from Tier 1 co-op to another co-op

- Concern: Coop contract could include any type of provision regarding ability to leave coop
- Question: Council can't mandate provisions that it can't enforce, but can it prohibit provisions that it can't enforce (e.g., harvesters leaving quota behind if departing coop)?
- Clarification: Analyze specific range of amounts for processor-controlled PSC (0 to 5%, 5 to 25% options)

3.7 Cooling-off period

- Concern: harvesters could be forced to stay in a cooperative with a processor they have not been delivering to recently

3.9 Community Landing requirements/Processor Participation requirements

- Concern: Some vessels historically deliver to Petersburg on the last trip of the season. Landing requirements could preclude this.
- Concern: Some communities had processing capability in the past that is no longer there. Landing requirements could preclude replacing that processor.
- Concern: Landing requirements could preclude opportunities for additional GOA communities to process underutilized species.
- Concern: Fish that has recently been processed outside the region cannot come back under these delivery requirements.

4. Inshore use caps

4.1 Processor caps

- Concern: Caps set too low could prohibit new vessels joining a processor coop
- Concern: what about areas that have only one or two processors?

4.2 Control, individual ownership and use caps for harvesters

- Concern: Caps set too low may make it difficult for processors to attract harvesters with processor controlled PSC
- Comment: Vessels that are more efficient should be able to focus on particular species
- Concern: Caps should be set lower to provide consolidation controls to mitigate negative impacts to communities.

5. Inshore Limited Access Fishery

- Clarification: Regional landing requirement does not apply to limited access fishery

7. General Cooperative Provisions

7.5 LLP transfers

- Clarification: Allocation can be severed from LLP
- Concern: severed allocations can become commodities
- Concern: If allocations are tied to the LLP, purchaser has to buy everything associated with that LLP (e.g., other area and gear endorsements)
- Concern: Severed quota should be linked to size of original vessels

Minority Report: A minority of the AP did not support the motion to move the industry proposal forward for analysis. The minority felt this complex proposal would set a specific program outline in place for the Gulf program. The proposal was just provided during public comment and there was not sufficient time to review and adopt as the path forward at this time. Substantively, this is a by catch management program and the proposal does not contain specific measures and metrics for reducing bycatch. The industry proposal guts the community protection measures contained in the Council's October motion (community sign-on on co-op agreements, limited duration quota issuance) and it is not acceptable to

advance a catch share program without adequate protections for fishing communities and providing for entry into the fishery.

Signed by: Becca Robbins Gisclair, Ernie Weiss, Joel Peterson, Theresa Peterson, Alexis Kwachka, Chuck McCallum, Jeff Kauffman

CFA Proposal:

The AP recommends that the Council move the CFA workgroup proposal (Attachment 2) forward for analysis with the following changes and section-by-section comments. *Motion passed 13/8.*

I. Structure

- Concern: Program puts authority in a board that may or may not understand the fishery
- Concern: Local politics may influence CFA board decisions
- Comment: Board would be broadly representative with transparent process
- Comment: Board will include a processor representative

II. Community eligibility

- Concern: Allocations for fully subscribed species may be re-directed by CFA (e.g., to non-participants in fishery).
- Comment: Quota for underharvested species could provide new opportunities for communities
- Concern: Interpretation of 'community' goes beyond MSA definition. Including communities without historic participation is a take-away from other communities.
- Comment: CFA allocation will be used to leverage community issues (lease rates, etc)
- Comment: CFA allocation provides flexibility to address unintended consequences without the need to revisit the Council action.

III. Allocation

- Concern: This takes away quota from participants that have invested in the fishery.
- Concern: analysis should include an option for no initial allocation to CFA (allocation will be purchased)
- Concern: If CFA purchases fish it will result in a lease fee to pay back purchase price, which is part of the initial concern.
- Comment: The point of a CFA is to implement best practices in reducing bycatch.
- Concern: Even if lease fee only covers administrative costs it will be significant.
- Comment: Adjust range of allocation to 0 to 25%

IV. Quota Distribution

- Concern: vessel use caps could preclude returning quota to vessels that contributed, resulting in a reallocation.
- Question: are lease fees paid up front or as the fish are harvested?
- Comment: Include analysis of lease fees of 1, 2, and 3%.
- Comment: lease fees should be considered as high as 10%

VI. How CFA intersects with the overall program.

- Question: Can a coop lease from the CFA, or is it on an individual vessel basis?
- Comment: PSC associated with leased target would be a part of the lease. Non-severable.

VIII. Goals and Objectives

- Comment: goals don't address bycatch reduction except in C8.
- Comment: Intent is to address impact of coop program which facilitates bycatch reduction
- Comment: Home ports (C1) are not necessarily associated with vessel activities
- Concern: Local employment mandates (C2 and C3) constrain vessel operations and selection of best crew
- Concern: Maintaining crew compensation levels (C5) will be difficult with added lease fee for CFA set-aside.
- Comment: CFA will have control on lease fees whereas lease fees from individuals are not controlled.
- Concern: Mandates for local hiring contradict National Standard 4 (no discrimination between residents of different states).
- Comment: CFA is about community protections and community input that is flexible and responsive to unforeseen consequences is important.

General comments:

- Industry workgroup proposal contains community protection measures (use caps, regionalization, etc).
- Allocations become commodities with no protection for the community.

Industry Discussion Paper Q&A (Attachment 3):

The AP recommends that the Council accept the responses below to questions from pages 4 and 5 of the staff discussion paper. *Motion passed 15/6.*

- 1) If a person or an entity holds multiple LLPs, each of which having a majority of qualifying landings history to different shorebased processors in different areas, does the Council intend for that person to have the option to join multiple cooperatives?

Response: For a person holding more than one LLP, it is assumed that the motion intends for initial cooperative membership to be calculated on an LLP-by-LLP basis, and not aggregated for all LLPs held by that person or on a single vessel. Staff treatment is correct.

- 2) What are the alternatives for criteria used to establish the initial two-year linkage between catcher vessels and processors in a cooperative? How can these criteria be explicit, but flexible enough to account for cases where delivery patterns have shifted during the most recent analyzed years?

Response: the Industry proposal for associations is as follows:

Basis for establishing initial association is the majority aggregate trawl groundfish deliveries, excluding rockfish, for all species combined:

Option 1: During the QS/history qualifying period.

Option 2: During the 2011-2012 period.

This provides a needed contrast between recent history vs the qualifying history. Until the analysis is brought back it is difficult to determine whether additional flexibility is needed to account for cases where delivery patterns have shifted.

- 3) If target species quota is regionalized, is the Council concerned about a conflict with any delivery requirements that might be a part of the privately negotiated contract between the harvesters and processor members of a CV cooperative?

Response: regionalization of landings allows for vessels to be members of multiple processor centric cooperatives – i.e. WYAK, CGOA and WG so that there is not a conflict with regionalization. Private contracts between processor and harvests cannot conflict with other regulations within the program.

- 4) Is there a minimum number of vessels that are required to form a cooperative? If not, is the Council concerned about the activity of a cooperative being treated as confidential information?

Response: Since the inshore cooperatives are processor affiliated cooperatives and only one processor is a member of the cooperative, single vessel cooperatives are necessary. It is unclear whether the activity of cooperatives with < 3 members can be provided versus deemed confidential. Cooperative agreements could include provisions for release of this data if necessary. Or could cooperatives with small numbers of vessels aggregate their data? Does staff have a solution for this?

- 5) If PSC is allocated, should prohibited species quota (PSQ) use be limited by season and by fishery? If PSQ is allocated by season, are rollover allowed?

Response: PSC should be allocated to the cooperatives, and be allowed to be used in any fishery during the year. Maximum flexibility will allow each cooperative to manage and reduce bycatch and use PSC wisely. As the discussion document states, “The allocation of PSC based on historical target fisheries landings, but not linking PSC to those fisheries for use, will likely allow each participant to achieve the greatest value in the fishery, given a limited quantity of permitted PSC. Each vessel would need to balance the value of using their PSC for the target fisheries that are allocated versus saving quota to participate in lower margin fisheries for flatfish (page 5).” Allocations of PSC to the cooperatives, and providing opportunities through inter-cooperatives to utilize creative and cooperative bycatch management is the most likely path to successful PSC management while achieving OY.

- a) Rockfish halibut rollover

Option 1: Roll over the unused halibut PSC by sector proportionally to the rockfish LLP holdings within each sector that are also allocated halibut PSC in the comprehensive GOA program.

Option 2: Roll over the unused halibut PSC to the co-op in the Rockfish Program that realized the savings.

- b) Chinook salmon rockfish rollover (inshore)

Option 1: Redistributed to LLPs that are allocated non-pollock quota and that participated in the Rockfish Program.

Option 2: Roll over the available amount to the processor affiliated co-op in the Rockfish Program that realized the savings.

- c) West Yakutat district Pollock fishery

Option 1: Exempt this regulatory area from Chinook salmon limits

Option 2: Impose Chinook salmon limits in the WYAK district pollock fishery and allocate an additional 200 to 500 Chinook salmon to historical WYAK pollock participants.

Suboption: Eliminate the 360 fish buffer construct and instead allocate the 360 fish buffer to support the WYAK pollock fishery.

- 6) Should AFA vessels that are exempt and non-exempt from limitations in the GOA be treated differently for PSQ allocations? The Council will need to determine what its policy will be for AFA sideboards.

Response: AFA exempt and non-exempt will not be treated differently for PSQ allocations and AFA sideboards will not be a consideration in policy decisions.

- 7) If target fisheries other than Pacific cod and pollock are allocated as part of program, should the Council only consider species that have a TAC for the West Yakutat district, as opposed to a species with a TAC set for the entire Eastern GOA?

Response: Only species that have a TAC for WYAK (pollock/rockfish) should be considered for allocation as part of this program.

- 8) Should the Council set sideboard limits for Eastern GOA Pacific cod, or any other fishery?

Response: No – catch amounts are so low for WYAK which is open to trawling why dampen down the ability to meet OY in this region. The Council always has the ability to develop restrictions in the future if need be.

- 9) Are persons required to hold PSQ for Chinook and halibut if they fish in the West Yakutat district with trawl gear?

Response: Yes – however an additional allocation for the WYAK allocated target fisheries may be in order (see above).

- 10) Is target species catch history severable from the LLP on which it was earned? If so, and if the history is transferred to another eligible license, does the pro rata share of PSQ transfer with the target catch history? The Council may wish to consider the case where pollock and Pacific cod are the only allocated target species. If a license holder transfers all of his or her target quota, the license might not have any PSQ remaining to cover activity in rockfish or flatfish fisheries.

Response: Because allocations of PSC to cooperatives are determined based on target catch, PSC will be distributed to the initial cooperatives on a pro-rata basis. After initial allocation, and subject to the cooperative agreement, target and PSC should be divisible, and severable.

- 11) For the purpose of measures meant to promote fishery dependent communities, how are communities defined? How might a license or an individual seeking to buy or sell quota be deemed to have an association with a community?

Response: See industry letter. The term “fishing communities” is defined under the MSA. Residency cannot be a required condition for eligibility to purchase or own an LLP under the MSA (National Standard 4). Any provisions to protect GOA communities must take into account the degree to which a community is dependent on GOA trawl fisheries and the economic and social impacts potential community measures might have on communities that are traditionally involved in GOA trawl fisheries.

12) If gear conversion is allowed, should the 100% observer coverage requirement also apply to vessels using longline gear? What type of license or endorsement (s) does a fixed gear vessel need to hold in order to fish trawl quota?

Response: Gear conversion should be a trailing amendment. See industry letter response.

13) If the Council includes the measure to make the retention of a portion of target species allocation subject to a periodic bycatch performance review, how will the portion of quota that is not retained be managed? Who might have access to this quota, and for how long? Will issues of due process and appeals be more tractable if the incentive program is framed as a reward, as opposed to a penalty?

Response: See industry letter. PSC management programs are best conducted at the cooperative level. The Council is required to conduct a 5 year review of the program under the MSA. The Council review should include evaluation of performance for cooperative PSC control programs, community protections, and the achievement of OY. The program should specifically be evaluated against the National Standards and program objectives.

Motion passed 15/6.

Minority Report: A minority of the AP opposed the final motion, having voted in favor of amendments to remove the responses to questions 11 and 12; both of those amendments failed 10-11. The minority believes the industry response to question 11 does not adequately describe the definition of a community for the purposes of the program, nor provide for sufficient community protections. The minority feels in regards to question 12 that gear conversion should be included as an option in the program, not as a 'trailing amendment'.

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

C5 Am 80 5-year Review

The AP recommends the Council request staff to expand the discussion on decreased CDQ harvests and its effects on CDQ communities, and cooperative structure and stranded fish.

Motion passed 19/0.

C6 Round Island Transit

The AP recommends the Council adopt the preliminary preferred Alternative 2, option 1 and Alternative 3 for final action.

Motion passed 19/1.

Rationale:

- Maintains protections for walrus
- No visible disturbance to walrus from vessels passing outside 3nm from Round Island (p.53)
- Alternative 3 relaxing closure increases protection.
- Voluntary fleet efforts to not transit the small areas near Crooked Island (FW best practices).

- Restores access for tenders.
- Action is responsive to hypothetical question related to unintended consequences of Council action; therefore, there is no operational need to change VMS requirements.
- Hunting season opens September 10. AP discussed a later date in response to tenders delivering late season (August 30).

C8 Scallop SAFE

The AP recommends the Council accept the annual SAFE report. *Motion passed 18/0.*

C9 Bering Sea Canyons

The AP recommends the Council take no further action on this agenda item until the AFSC visual camera surveys are completed and a report of the findings is presented to the Council.

Motion passed 15/5.

Rationale:

- To date the Council has been extremely responsive to public comment and concern that initially focused on coral habitat areas in the Bering Sea canyons.
- Research has been prioritized and is underway by the AFSC in response to previous Council direction.
- Scientific control areas are a different "ask" from initial public comment focused on coral habitat areas. It was noted by Council staff that scientists at the AFSC are beginning discussions on what these control areas would look like.
- Completion of the summer camera survey work will provide substantially more information for the consideration of any potential conservation policies.
- Development of a Purpose and Need statement (with associated goals and objectives) will be better informed and crafted with more data, which is why additional scientific information was requested initially.

Minority Report: A minority of the AP supported an amended substitute motion as follows 'The AP recommends the Council adopt the Ecosystem Committee recommendations for Bering Sea canyons as found on page 1 of the Committee April 9, 2014 meeting minutes, as amended to include the following under item 2:

Analysis should include

- *How to monitor compliance with area closures (geo-fencing, VMS, etc.).*
- *The effect of displaced effort from closed areas, especially in terms of PSC bycatch*
- *The status of gear modification research.*
- *Protocols established by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations for encounters with coral.*
- *Criteria for determining any management actions.*

The minority felt the Ecosystem Committee recommendations represented a reasonable approach and was supported by all public testimony heard by the AP, and the amended language specified valuable analyses.

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

D2 EFH 5-year Review

The AP echoes the Ecosystem Committee report and comments and supports the 5-year approach as it has been laid out. The AP hopes that the review will specifically highlight any new information relevant to the habitat of the Bering Sea shelf break, slope and canyon areas. *Motion passed 20/0.*

E1 Staff Tasking

The AP recommends the Council initiate a discussion paper to consider the current insurance coverage required by observer providers and potential modifications. *Motion passed 20/0.*

The AP recommends the Council schedule any action on PSEIS no sooner than October 2014.

Motion passed 20/0.

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Gray shade: reference to Council motion

Italics: Instruction for analyst

GULF OF ALASKA SECTOR ALLOCATION AND CATCH SHARE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years the Council has adopted a number of actions to reduce prohibited species bycatch in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) fisheries. The Council recently introduced Chinook salmon PSC limits in the GOA pollock and non-pollock fisheries, and adopted measures for reducing halibut PSC caps in the trawl and catcher-vessel fixed gear fisheries in the GOA by 15%. The groundfish trawl fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska do not have the management structure or the tools to fully adapt to these new PSC reductions.

The Council has recognized that there is a need to develop a new management structure whereby fishery participants are able to work cooperatively to adapt fishing practices to accommodate reduced PSC allocations. Such a structure needs to balance the interests of the catcher processors, harvesters and inshore processors in these fisheries while meeting conservation objectives and community goals.

At its June 2013 meeting the Council received proposals from several different interest groups for developing a GOA trawl bycatch management program. At its October 2013 meeting the Council developed a proposed program structure and requested staff to further develop a discussion paper identifying key issues.

This paper lays out elements and options for further analysis and consideration by the Council. It builds off a proposal provided to the Council in June of 2013 as well as the program structure described in the Council's October motion on agenda item C-5(a).

The program is designed to minimize allocation disputes between the trawl catcher-processor and inshore trawl sectors, and to build cooperative arrangements in both the inshore and catcher-processor sectors. Allocations between the inshore and catcher-processor sectors would be based on historical participation by each sector. For underutilized species, the intent is to develop measures to fairly allocate future opportunities between the sectors.

The proposal expands on the Council framework for a voluntary cooperative program for the inshore sector. Inshore participants believe the program should recognize and be founded on historical participation and investments by both harvesters and processors in these fisheries. The analysis of these elements and options should address the principle that the new management structure should not result in devaluation of one sector's investments or capital assets to benefit a different sector. The overall objective is to develop a program that balances the interests of both sectors, does not erode the assets of either sector, and provides similar opportunities for increased benefits to all participants in these fisheries while meeting conservation goals and community needs.

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This document also builds off proposals from the catcher-processor sector for a cooperative program for their fisheries, including additional elements and options to more fully develop such a program.

Industry also believes that any new GOA management program needs to consider and address historical community involvement in these fisheries, including employment in the harvesting and processing sectors as well as the effects of management measures on community infrastructure, services, and support businesses.

1. SECTOR DEFINITIONS

1.1. Inshore sector harvester participants

LLP holder qualification.

A CV LLP, or

A CP LLP license that did not process catch on board,

a) Would qualify for the program in the CG and WY

If the LLP was used for:

Option 1: at least ten trawl groundfish deliveries in the CG or WY the qualifying years.

Option 2: at least one trawl groundfish delivery in the CG or WY in the last ____ years before December 31, 2012 (range of analysis 2-3 years).

b) Would qualify for the program in the WG

If the LLP was used for:

Option 1: at least ten trawl groundfish deliveries in the WG the qualifying years.

Option 2: at least one trawl groundfish delivery in the WG in the last ____ years before December 31, 2012 (range of analysis 2-3 years).

Any CP LLP license not used to process catch offshore during the qualifying years will, at time of implementation of the program, convert to CV.

Note: no CP license holders are believed to have both delivered to shore and processed onboard during the qualifying years.

1.2. Offshore sector participants

Catcher processor sector: Those A80 vessels, and their replacement vessels, defined by Column A of Table 31 CFR part 679, and the LLPs currently issued to them.

Option: Amendment 80 definition of eligibility to fish in the Gulf of Alaska flatfish fisheries is maintained.

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1.3. Eligibility to fish

All vessels participating in the fisheries governed by this program will need to have an eligible LLP with the appropriate gear, operation type, and area endorsement assigned to the vessel at the time of fishing.

2. SECTOR ALLOCATIONS

Three alternatives sector allocations are considered for each sector. In all cases, halibut and Chinook salmon PSC are allocated to both sectors.

2.1. ICA Set Aside

Prior to calculating annual cooperative allocations, NMFS shall set aside an Incidental Catch Allocation (ICA) to meet the incidental catch needs of fisheries not included in the cooperative program.

2.2. Primary and secondary species allocations

Note: the proposed options suggest species allocations by sector. In some cases MRA management, co-op management for catch avoidance or sector allocations for directed harvest caps may be appropriate to build the needed flexibility to meet OY and bycatch management objectives. If a historical allocation for a sector is too low for operational flexibility under a hard cap, other management tools such as MRAs should be considered.

The preliminary analysis should examine, by management area, the potential for future TACs of the species listed below to constrain harvests under the program. The analysis should consider whether allocations or other management measures (including MRAs) are appropriate for overcoming that potential. The effects and possible management measures will be examined separately for the inshore and offshore sectors.

Arrowtooth flounder, Deep-water flatfish, Flathead sole, Shallow water flatfish, Atka mackerel, Shortraker rockfish, Rougheye and blackspotted rockfish, Thornyhead rockfish, Other rockfish CG, WG and WY sablefish, Big skate and long-nose skate

Unless otherwise specified all allocations will be made using the sector allocation qualifying years (Section 2.2.3).

Sector allocations of target species and PSC: Allocations for the trawl CP and CV sectors for WG and CG Pacific cod (Am 83), CGOA rockfish program (Am 88), and GOA pollock (Am 23) are maintained. Council motion 4.

Allocated Species: target species are pollock and Pacific cod. Council motion 5.

2.2.1. Option 1: Minimal allocations

For both sectors

CG rockfish – Primary and secondary species allocations as currently defined by Amendment 88 (the rockfish program)

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Inshore sector

Pollock (610/620/630/640) – as currently defined by Amendment 23.

Pacific cod (CG/WG) as currently defined by Amendment 83

Offshore sector

Pollock (610/620/630/640) – catch by the offshore sector is regulated through MRAs.

Pacific cod in the CG and WG – catch by the offshore sector is regulated through MRAs.

2.2.2. Option 2: Medium allocations

For both sectors

All option 1 allocations will be made. Pollock, Pacific cod, and CG rockfish as defined by option 1.

Inshore sector

WG rockfish

Option A: Allocate WG Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish and dusky rockfish.

Option B: Catch by the inshore sector is regulated through MRAs.

WY rockfish

Option A: Allocate WY Pacific ocean perch and dusky rockfish using the selected qualifying years.

Option B: Catch by the inshore sector is regulated through MRAs.

CG flatfish – Allocate rex sole and deep-water flatfish.

CG sablefish – Continue allocation of sablefish under the CG rockfish program. Allocated the remaining CG sablefish.

CG skates – Allocate CG big skate and long-nose skate.

Offshore sector

WG rockfish –

Option A: Allocate WG Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish and dusky rockfish.

Option B: WG Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish will be allocated to the offshore sector in an amount equal to the Amendment 80 sideboards. For dusky rockfish, recalculate A80 sideboard based on catches of dusky only, since black rockfish, blue rockfish, and dark dusky rockfish were removed from pelagic shelf rockfish complex and are now managed by the State of Alaska.

WY rockfish –

Option A: Allocate WY Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish and dusky rockfish.

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Option B: WY Pacific ocean perch and dusky rockfish will be allocated to the offshore sector in an amount equal to the Amendment 80 sideboards. For dusky rockfish, recalculate A80 sideboard based on catches of dusky only, since black rockfish, blue rockfish, and dark dusky rockfish were removed from pelagic shelf rockfish complex and are now managed by the State of Alaska.

CG flatfish – Allocate CG Rex sole and deep-water flatfish.

CG sablefish – Continue allocation of sablefish under the CG rockfish program. Allocate the remaining CG sablefish.

CG skates – Allocate CG big skate and long-nose skate.

Option 3: Full allocations

For both sectors

All option 1 and 2 allocations and management will be included.

Inshore sector

Additional CG flatfish – Allocate CG shallow-water flatfish, arrowtooth flounder, and flathead sole.

WG/WY Sablefish – Allocate WG and WY sablefish.

GOA Atka mackerel – Allocate GOA Atka Mackerel.

Offshore sector

Additional CG flatfish – Allocate CG shallow-water flatfish, arrowtooth flounder, and flathead sole.

WG/WY Sablefish – Allocate WG and WY sablefish.

WG other rockfish, thornyhead rockfish, shortraker rockfish, rougheye and blackspotted rockfish

Option A: Consider allocation of other rockfish, thornyhead rockfish, shortraker rockfish, rougheye and blackspotted rockfish.

Option B: Consider other management (such as required cooperative measures) of other rockfish, thornyhead rockfish, shortraker rockfish, rougheye and blackspotted rockfish to prevent closure of WG rockfish fisheries to avoid overharvest.

GOA Atka mackerel – Allocate GOA Atka mackerel.

2.2.3. Qualifying years

Except where allocations are otherwise specifically defined, the allocations to a sector will be based on total catches by the sector catches during:

Option 1: 2010-2012

Option 2: 2008-2012 (since A80)

Option 3: 2007-2012 (since CGOA rockfish)

Suboption: Apply only to WYAK and WGOA directed rockfish

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Option 4: 2003-2012

Option 5: 1998-2004 (A80 qualifying years)

2.2.4. MRA management

For the CP sector, all species under MRA management will be subject to offload to offload MRA accounting;

For the CV sector, all species under MRA management will be subject to trip to trip MRA accounting.

2.3. PSC Allocations

Sector allocations of target species and PSC: Allocate halibut and Chinook salmon PSC caps between the CP and CV sectors. Council motion 4.

2.3.1. Halibut

The annual PSC limit will be apportioned between the following sectors and areas:

Offshore sector (Gulfwide)

Inshore sector (subdivided between the WGOA and CGOA/WYAK)

Allocations to each sector/area will be based on relative historical PSC usage from:

Option 1: 2010-2012

Option 2: 2008-2012 (since A80)

Option 3: 2007-2012 (since CGOA rockfish)

Option 4: 2003-2012

Option 5: 1998-2004 (A80 qualifying years)

2.3.2. Chinook

Apportionment to the inshore and offshore sectors will be based on the current apportionment to the pollock fishery and non-pollock fisheries Council's June 2013 motion.

The offshore sector allocation will be based on the apportionment to non-pollock fisheries under the Council's June 2013 motion. The allocation to the CP sector will apply to the CGOA and WGOA.

3. INSHORE CATCH SHARE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Cooperative management: A system of cooperative management is best suited to managing and reducing bycatch (such as, hotspot program, gear modifications, excluder use, incentive plan agreements) while maximizing the value of available target species. Cooperatives are intended to facilitate a flexible, responsive, and coordinated effort among vessels and processors to avoid bycatch through information sharing and formal participation in a bycatch avoidance program. Council motion 1 c.

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Allocate target species (pollock, Pacific cod) at the cooperative level (to each coop), based on aggregate catch histories associated with each coop member vessels' LLPs. Council motion 6 a.

Apportion halibut PSC and Chinook salmon PSC limits to each cooperative on a pro rata basis relative to target fisheries of GOA trawl vessels in the cooperative [such as, pollock Chinook salmon PSC cap divided based on pollock landings; non-pollock Chinook salmon cap divided based on non-pollock landings (excluding rockfish); halibut PSC apportioned in proportion to the cooperative's allocation of target species.] Council motion 6 b.

3.1. Target and secondary species allocations

Species allocated between sectors (Section 2.2 options 1, 2 or 3 above) will be allocated to the inshore cooperatives. Species regulated through MRA management will not be allocated to inshore cooperatives. *Note: The analysis needs to consider and evaluate the possibility that some species or species groupings that are part of the sector splits, are not allocated as part of the inshore cooperative program.*

3.2. Allocation basis

Target species and secondary species allocated to the sector will be apportioned to the inshore cooperatives based on QS/history derived from landings made on LLP qualifying vessel during qualifying period.

Option 1: retained catch

Option 2: retained catch without meal

3.2.1. Qualifying years for target and secondary species QS/history

Option 1: 2010-2012

Option 2: 2003-2008

Option 3: 2008-2012

Option 4: 2003-2012 Drop 0, 1, 2 years

3.2.2. Apportionment of PSC to Cooperatives

Chinook (excludes CGOA rockfish non-pollock Chinook allocation)

Pollock Chinook cap (CGOA and WG) will be apportioned to the cooperatives based on inshore qualifying year pollock landings of cooperative members.

Non-pollock trawl Chinook cap will be apportioned to cooperatives based on inshore qualifying year historical usage within target fisheries or target fishery groupings of cooperative members based on:

Option 1: total non-pollock landings (excluding CGOA rockfish landings).

Option 2: total qualified target species catches and average Chinook use in the Pacific cod target fishery and aggregated flatfish target fisheries. The Pacific cod

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target fishery and the aggregated flatfish target fisheries will be assigned a percentage of the sector's total non-pollock Chinook PSC based on the sector's Chinook usage in those targets. Each cooperative will then be assigned a share of the sector's available Chinook PSC assigned to the Pacific cod target (and aggregated flatfish) equal to its portion of the catch of Pacific cod (and aggregated flatfish)

Option 3: total qualified target species catches and average Chinook use in the following target species fisheries: 1) Pacific cod, 2) shallow-water flatfish and flathead sole (combined), and 3) deep-water flatfish, arrowtooth flounder, and rex sole (combined). Each target fishery will be assigned a percentage of the sector's total non-pollock Chinook PSC apportioned to the sector based on usage in the target fishery. Each cooperative will then be assigned a share of the sector's available Chinook PSC assigned to the target fishery equal to its portion of that target species.

Note – Chinook PSC apportionments may be made for target species that are not allocated.

Halibut (excludes CGOA rockfish halibut PSC allocation)

Halibut PSC will be apportioned to cooperatives based on the inshore qualifying year historical usage within target fisheries or fishery groupings of cooperative members based on;

Option 1: total groundfish landings (excluding CGOA rockfish landings) .

Option 2: total non-pelagic trawl groundfish landings (excluding CGOA rockfish landings).

Option 3: total qualified target species catches and average halibut use in the Pacific cod target fishery and aggregated flatfish target fisheries. The Pacific cod target fishery and the aggregated flatfish target fisheries will be assigned a percentage of the sector's total halibut PSC based on the sector's halibut usage in those targets. Each cooperative will then be assigned a share of the sector's available halibut PSC assigned to the Pacific cod target (and aggregated flatfish) equal to its portion of the catch of Pacific cod (and aggregated flatfish)

Option 4: total qualified target species catches and average halibut use in the following target species fisheries: 1) Pacific cod, 2) shallow-water flatfish and flathead sole (combined), and 3) deep-water flatfish, arrowtooth flounder, and rex sole (combined). Each target fishery will be assigned a percentage of the sector's total halibut PSC apportioned to the sector based on usage in the target fishery. Each cooperative will then be assigned a share of the sector's available halibut PSC assigned to the target fishery (or aggregate target fisheries) equal to its portion of that target fishery catches.

Note – Halibut PSC apportionments may be made for target species that are not allocated.

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Note: the analysis should provide information on the effects of the above allocations on harvesters, and potential co-ops, taking into account confidentiality issues.

3.3. Program structure: Cooperative style program

3.3.1. Criteria for Voluntary Cooperative Program

Participants can choose to either join a cooperative or operate in a limited access pool [sector-level, non-transferable target allocations and PSC]. Harvesters would need to be in a cooperative with a processor by a specified date prior to the season to access a transferable allocation of target species and PSC. Council motion 6 c.

Note that the analysis should address the following relating to the inshore cooperative fishery. Harvesters must form a cooperative and associate with a processor subject to the criteria specified in the program, including the requirement for an agreement signed by both the harvesters and processor. Cooperatives formed upon implementation of the program will be based on historical participation of harvesters and processors during a qualifying period. These initial cooperatives are termed Tier 1 Co-ops. There is not a closed class of processors, and after a cooling off period harvesters may associate with any processor. They may move from one Tier 1 Co-op to another Tier 1 Co-op, or join a Tier 2 Co-op with a new entrant processor that wishes to enter the fishery after program implementation. This is a voluntary program, and a harvester may choose not to join a Co-op, and remain in the LLP limited access (non-cooperative) fishery. If a harvester that initially elects to fish in the LLP limited access fishery decides at a later date to participate in the cooperative fishery, it must be pursuant to the rules for Tier 1 Co-op formation.

3.3.2. Program Participants

Harvester participants.

Eligible LLP holders as defined above

Processor participants.

Any inshore processor that processes groundfish harvested in the Central/WYAK or Western GOA management areas.

3.4. Harvester-Processor Community-Based Association Provisions

Initial (2 years) cooperative formation would be based on the majority of a license holder's historical landings (aggregate trawl groundfish deliveries, excluding Central GOA rockfish harvested under a rockfish cooperative quota allocation) to a processor. Council motion 6 d.

Each cooperative would be required to have a private cooperative contract. The contract would require signatures of all harvesters in the cooperative and the processor (option: and community in which the processor is located). The contract would include clear provisions for how the parties may dissolve their contract after the first two years. If a harvester wants to leave that cooperative and join another cooperative, they could do so if they meet the requirements of the contract. Council motion 6 e.

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3.4.1 Basis for establishing the Tier 1 initial association is the majority aggregate trawl groundfish deliveries, excluding rockfish, for all species combined (see also community landings/processor participants section 2.9):

Option 1: During the QS/history qualifying period.

Option 2: During the 2011-2012 period.

3.4.2 Formation of a Tier 1 Co-op requires a Co-op agreement that meets criteria specified in this program, signed by no less than ____ (range for analysis 51% - 80%) of the ____ (analyze both number of LLPs, or amount of QS) qualified for the Co-op, and the processor.

3.4.3 Any harvester that wishes to participate in the program must initially join the Tier 1 Co-op associated with the processor where the majority of its QS/historical landings were made during the period specified above.

3.5. Inshore Co-op allocations

Allocations of target species and PSC to Co-op based on aggregate QS/history of LLPs in Co-op.

A Co-op must form and associate with a processor subject to the criteria specified in the program (including the requirement for an agreement signed by both the harvesters and processor) in order to receive an allocation of target and PSC species.

Target QS/history and PSC may be transferred within a Co-op or through inter-cooperative agreements with other inshore cooperatives on an annual basis subject to Co-op rules/contract.

3.6. Options for Harvester movement from Tier 1 Co-op to another Co-op.

Option 1: Limited Movement Model

Require a Co-op agreement that meets criteria specified in this program, signed by the qualified processor and the harvesters qualified for the Tier 1 Co-op associated with that processor. Agreement must specify the terms and conditions whereby a harvester can exit the co-op after the cooling off period and join another co-op. The agreement defining the terms and conditions for exiting a Tier 1 co-op shall be agreed to by both the Co-op harvester members and the processor before QS/history or PSC will be awarded to the Co-op.

Option 2: PSC Sharing Model

Each processor controls a portion of halibut and Chinook salmon PSC within a cooperative and negotiates terms of access through the Co-op agreement. The processor would activate access to the PSC through NMFS, making it accessible to the cooperative. PSC made available by these agreements cannot be used by processor-owned vessels. Council motion 6 option.

The PSC apportionment allotted to this option would originate as:

Suboption 1: a percent of the inshore sector PSC allocation for halibut and Chinook salmon taken off the top of the total inshore allocation, then apportioned to each processor on a pro rata basis based on the target species apportionments to the associated Co-op.

Suboption 2: the processor would control a percent of the PSC allocated to the associated Co-op.

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For each option above, the analysis should investigate the potential for creating a stable business environment for both harvesters and processors. The analysis should address the effects on all affected parties (harvesters in the original Co-op and the associated processor, the harvester leaving the Co-op, and coastal communities with historic participation in GOA trawl fisheries, etc.) and their investments in the fishery. For each model the analysis should investigate the potential effect on employment (harvesting and processing), and the goal of increasing value in the fishery without creating windfalls. The analysis should explicitly evaluate each model as they relate to balancing the desire for flexibility on the part of harvesters while protecting processor investments in the fishery, with the objective of developing measures that do not result in one sector's investments in the fishery being devalued to benefit a different sector. The analysis should also evaluate how different levels of PSC controlled by either sector could impact the working relationships and price negotiations between harvesters and their associated processors.

3.7. Cooling off period

There shall be a ____ (range for analysis 2 to 5 year) cooling off period applied to the program. The cooling off period applies to harvester movement between processors, communities and long-term transfer of associated target / PSC LLP histories.

3.8. Tier 2 Co-ops

After the cooling off period Tier 2 Co-ops may form with new processors entering the fishery after program implementation. Harvesters may join Tier 2 Co-ops provided that they have met requirements for program participation and movement from one Co-op to another.

Tier 2 Co-ops shall:

- be consistent with community protections and landing requirements.
- have a cooperative agreement that meets criteria specified in this program.
- meet all other requirements of the program.

No closed class of processors

No closed class of processors. At program implementation, processor participation is determined by qualifying criteria for Tier 1 Co-op formation. After the cooling off period, and subject to movement rules and regional delivery requirements, any qualifying harvester may go to any other Co-op, including Tier 2 Co-ops established in conjunction with a new entrant processor, subject to the rules of the new Co-op.

3.9. Community Landing Requirements/Processor Participants.

Target species quota would be regionalized (WG or WY/CG designation) based on historical delivery patterns. Option. Target species CG quota that has historically been landed in Kodiak would have a port of landing requirement to be delivered to Kodiak; CG quota not historically landed in Kodiak would be regionalized (WG or WY/CG). Council motion 7b.

CGOA/WYAK Landing Requirements:

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CGOA/WYAK LLP history shall have a community or regional landing designation. CGOA/WYAK LLP history landed in the City of Kodiak will have a port landing requirement for the City of Kodiak. LLP history landed in WYAK communities will have a port landing requirement for either Seward or Cordova

Processors qualified to participate in the CGOA cooperative program at time of implementation and associate with a Co-op to receive landings of CGOA groundfish from history landed in Kodiak must be located in the City of Kodiak and have processed trawl groundfish, excluding CGOA rockfish.

Processors qualified to participate in the cooperative program at time of implementation, and associate with a Co-op to receive landings from WYAK groundfish include CGOA qualified processors above, and any additional processors that processed trawl groundfish, excluding CGOA rockfish, that was harvested in WYAK and delivered into Seward or Cordova.

Option: If no processor is available or willing to associate with a Tier 1 Co-op in either Seward or Cordova, a harvester may join a Tier 1 Co-op for the CGOA and associate their WYAK harvest with the processor they have the majority of their CGOA/WYAK history with (Tier 1 rules).

All other LLP history derived from CGOA/WYAK harvest shall have a regional designation. CGOA/WYAK history landed in the CGOA but not landed in the City of Kodiak shall be required to be landed in the CGOA. Any CGOA LLP history landed in the WGOA region shall have a WGOA landing requirement.

Note: For port landing requirements, the analysis should investigate the pros and cons of requirements for processing in the port community, versus landing requirements for the port community.

WGOA Landing Requirements:

LLP history derived from WGOA harvest shall have a community or regional designation. LLP harvest landed in a WGOA community shall have a port landing requirement for that community. WGOA harvest not landed in a WGOA community but landed in the WGOA shall have a regional designation requiring landing in the WGOA. WGOA harvest history landed in the CGOA shall have a regional designation requiring landing in the CGOA.

Option: WGOA history landed in Akutan shall have a port landing requirement to be landed in either the WGOA or Akutan. WGOA history that was landed in Dutch Harbor/Unalaska shall have a port landing designation for either the WGOA or Dutch Harbor/Unalaska.

4. INSHORE USE CAPS

Consolidation limits. Vessel caps and limits on the percentage of the total allocation that a person can hold (accessible only through a cooperative). Processor caps in each area (WG and CG). Council motion 7a.

4.1. Processor caps

Include processor caps for individual processors in each area (WGOA, CGOA/WYAK).

Range for analysis 20% to 30% for the CGOA/WYAK.

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Range for analysis 20% to 30 % for the WGOA.

Processors that exceed this amount are grandfathered into program.

4.2. Control, individual ownership and use caps for harvesters

Cap the amount of QS/history that an individual may own or control by species by area. Range for analysis 5% to 7%. Individuals that exceed the cap at time of program implementation are grandfathered in.

Note: Using the ranges above for the harvester sector, the analysis should investigate the differences between the halibut program model and the AFA program model.

Vessel use caps

Cap the amount of target species (or subset of target species) that may be used on any one vessel within a Co-op.

Option 1: Range for analysis 7% to 15%.

Option 2: Range for analysis 1.5 to 2 times the ownership cap.

Note: the analysis needs to consider the effects of consolidation in the harvesting sector and should explore various mechanisms to address ownership and use. Trade-offs for harvesting limits should consider the effects of meeting OY for underutilized species.

4.3. Inshore Cooperative Caps

Include limits on the percentage of the total allocation of:

Option 1) Target species that a Co-op can hold.

Option 2) Target species and PSC species that a Co-op can hold.

Range for analysis 20% to 30% (same as processor caps above by regulatory area). Tier 1 Co-ops that exceed that amount are grandfathered into the program.

4.4. Co-op Qualification and Agreement Criteria

The program is based on a voluntary co-op formed by qualified harvesters that associates with a processor. The association is specified by a Co-op agreement signed by the requisite harvester representation and the processor. Allocations are to the co-op based on the aggregate history/QS of member LLPs, and may only be accessed through the harvester-processor associated co-op.

A Co-op, in association with a processor, is eligible to participate in the program upon certification by NMFS that it meets the following criteria:

- The harvesters and processor are qualified to participate in the program and Co-op formation criteria for harvester/processor association have been met
- A Co-op agreement, signed by the requisite harvesters and the processor, has been submitted that includes the by-laws and rules for operation of the Co-op.

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- Co-op membership agreements shall allow for the entry of other eligible harvesters into the co-op under the same terms and conditions as applicable to other qualified catcher vessel members.
- Co-op membership agreements will specify that processor affiliated harvesters cannot participate in price setting negotiations except as permitted by general antitrust law
- Terms and conditions are clearly spelled out and agreed to by the harvesters and the processor in the Co-op agreement whereby the harvester/processor association may be dissolved and a harvester may move to a different Co-op in association with a different processor. Processor affiliated vessels may participate in discussions regarding these terms and conditions, but not vote for their adoption.

The inshore sector may form inter-coop agreements for the CGOA/WYAK and WGOA regions respectively to address PSC bycatch management, post-delivery transfers, community considerations, and other operational factors to improve cooperation within the sector and further the goals of the program.

5. INSHORE LIMITED ACCESS FISHERY

The inshore limited access fishery is prosecuted by eligible LLP participants who elect not to be in a cooperative.

In all cases the LLP requirement would stay in place, thus vessels must have the appropriate LLP and endorsements to participate in a GOA trawl fishery. References to “limited access” are within this context

Annually, the inshore limited access fishery will be allocated a share of the sector’s allocation of each allocated target species equal to the aggregate share of all LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative. This is a pool available to any LLP participant not part of the cooperative fishery but otherwise qualified to fish in this fishery.

Annually, the inshore limited access fishery will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to the aggregate share of the halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively, of LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative.

The inshore limited access fishery will be subject to all current regulations including all seasonal and area restrictions

Option: Annually, the inshore limited access fishery will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to __ percent of the aggregate share of the halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively, of LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative. This provision could be used to create an incentive for cooperative membership and participating in the PSC reduction measures required of cooperatives.

6. CATCHER PROCESSOR COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Cooperative management: A system of cooperative management is best suited to managing and reducing bycatch (such as, hotspot program, gear modifications, excluder use, incentive plan agreements) while maximizing the value of available target species. Cooperatives are intended to facilitate a flexible, responsive, and coordinated effort among vessels and processors to avoid bycatch

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through information sharing and formal participation in a bycatch avoidance program. Council motion 1 c.

6.1. Allocation of groundfish history and apportionment of PSC limits within the catcher processor sector

6.1.1. Allocated target and secondary species:

All allocations from the Central Gulf rockfish program will be maintained (including primary, secondary and PSC).

For distribution of allocations within the catcher processor sector of other allocated target and secondary species, catch history is based on total catch during the qualifying period, with each eligible license receiving history based on catch of the vessel it is assigned to relative to the total catch of all eligible vessels in the sector. All history will be attributed to the LLP license identified by the vessel owner and assigned to the vessel at the time of implementation. To assign history to a license, that license must have gear, operation type, and area endorsements permitting that history.

Note: need to cover any secondary species included under the program.

6.1.2. Halibut PSC:

Apportionment of halibut to LLP licenses under the Central Gulf rockfish program will continue as prescribed by that program.

The remainder of the sector's PSC will be apportioned within the sector to the following target species:

Pacific cod

Rex sole

Arrowtooth flounder

WGOA and WYAK rockfish

(A complete list of species should be developed after examining PSC usage and rates)

based on the average use of halibut PSC in each target species within the CP sector during the CP sector's qualifying years, expressed as a percent of the total halibut PSC allocation to the sector (i.e., same general allocation system used for A80).

Each eligible license will then be assigned a share of the sector's available halibut PSC assigned to each target species based on its catch of those target species in an amount equal to its proportion of the sector's qualified catch history of the target species. (Note – Halibut PSC apportionments may be made for targets that are not allocated under this formula.)

6.1.3. Chinook PSC:

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The sector's Chinook PSC will be apportioned within the sector to the following target species:

Central Gulf Rockfish (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish) in the aggregate

Western Gulf rockfish (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish) in the aggregate

Pacific cod

Rex sole

Arrowtooth flounder

(A complete list of species should be developed after examining PSC usage and rates)

based on the average use of Chinook PSC in each target species within the CP sector during the CP sector qualifying years, expressed as a percent of the total Chinook PSC allocation to the sector.

Each eligible license will then be assigned a share of the sector's available Chinook PSC assigned to each target species based on its catch of those target species in an amount equal to its proportion of the sector's qualified catch history of the target species. (Note – Chinook PSC apportionments may be made for targets that are not allocated under this formula.)

The PSC apportionments will not change from year to year (i.e., will not fluctuate annually with target TACs).

Catch history used for allocation and eligibility purposes will be legal and documented catch. For the catcher processor sector Production Report data shall be used to determine catch.

6.2. Cooperative provisions for the catcher processor sector

No later than November 1 of each year, an application must be filed with NOAA fisheries by the cooperative with a membership list for the year.

In order to operate as a cooperative, membership must be comprised of:

At least ____ separate entities (using the 10% AFA rule) and

At least ____% of the eligible LLP licenses.

Annually, each cooperative will receive allocations of each allocated target species equal to its members' LLPs aggregate share of the sector's target species allocation.

Annually, each cooperative will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to its members' LLPs aggregate share of the sector's halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively.

6.3. Offshore caps

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6.3.1. Catcher processor vessel caps

No CP may catch more than 60% of aggregate annual target cooperative allocations for the CP sector. Grandfather provision.

6.3.2. Catcher processor individual caps

Since CP participation is governed by Amendment 80 eligibility, the Amendment 80 individual caps are adequate to prevent excessive consolidation in the CP sector under this program.

6.4. Catcher processor limited access fishery

The catcher processor limited access fishery is prosecuted by eligible catcher processor LLP participants who elect not to be in a cooperative.

Annually, the catcher processor limited access fishery will be allocated a share of the sector's allocation of each allocated target species equal the aggregate share of all LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative.

Annually, the catcher processor limited access fishery will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to __ percent of the aggregate share of the sector's halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively, of LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative. Note: this provision is used to create an incentive for cooperative membership and participating in the PSC reduction measures required of cooperatives.

The catcher processor limited access fishery will be subject to all current regulations including all seasonal and deepwater/shallow water complex fishery regulations and restrictions of the LLP and MRA limitations.

7. GENERAL COOPERATIVE PROVISIONS – applicable to both sectors

7.1. Duration of agreements

The duration of cooperative agreements will be specified in the Co-op agreement.

7.2. Filing Membership agreements.

The cooperative membership agreements will be filed with the RAM Division. Applications to NMFS for QS will be annual. The application shall specify the vessels and LLPs in the Co-op, and include a fishing and bycatch management plan for that fishing year.

Cooperatives will be required to notify RAM division which LLP holders are in a cooperative by _____.

7.3. Cooperative agreement terms

Co-op members shall internally allocate and manage the cooperative's allocation per the cooperative agreement. The cooperative(s) would need to show evidence of binding private contracts and remedies for violations of contractual agreements.

The cooperative agreement must have an explicit monitoring and fishery control program. The cooperative would need to demonstrate adequate mechanism for monitoring and reporting prohibited species and groundfish catch. Participants in the cooperative shall agree by contract to abide by all cooperative rules and requirements.

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Co-op members are jointly and severally responsible for cooperative vessels harvesting in the aggregate no more than their cooperative's allocation of target species, secondary species and PSC mortality allowance, as may be adjusted by inter-cooperative transfers.

A cooperative shall adopt and enforce fishing practice codes of conduct as part of their membership agreement.

The Co-op agreement includes provisions for an annual fishing plan (which in the case of inshore cooperatives will include agreements regarding deliveries, rotations, offload, and other operational matters).

A clear and specific plan for monitoring, controlling, and reducing PSC bycatch is included in the Co-op agreement and annual fishing plan. The plan shall include specific measures for monitoring target and PSC catch, minimizing Chinook bycatch, and more efficiently using halibut PSC in order to provide additional target fishery opportunity.

No Co-op member vessel shall be permitted to begin a fishing trip, unless the cooperative holds unused cooperative quota.

7.4. Cooperative reports

Co-ops shall prepare and submit an annual performance report for review by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS. NMFS and the Council shall develop a check list of information to be included in these reports.

Inshore Co-ops shall make these annual reports available to the community where the associated processor is located. In the case of areas within a Borough, the reports shall be provided at the Borough level.

Specific criteria for reporting shall be developed by the Council and specified by NMFS as part of the program implementing regulations.

Transfers

7.5. LLP transfers

Permanent transfers of an eligible license and its associated catch history would be allowed. Eligible LLP licenses and eligibility endorsements would not be separable or divisible.

Transfer of annual cooperative quota/history within a cooperative shall be subject to the applicable cooperative agreement without NOAA Fisheries approval. All transfers of annual cooperative quota/history would be temporary, and QS/history would remain with the original LLP.

7.6. Annual cooperative quota/history of a CP cooperative will be transferable to other CP cooperatives.

7.7. CP annual cooperative allocations may be transferred to inshore cooperatives. Inshore annual cooperative allocations cannot be transferred to CP cooperatives.

7.8. Post-delivery transfers of cooperative quota/history among cooperatives within a sector are permitted. There would be no limits on the number or magnitude of post-delivery transfers. All post-delivery transfers must be completed by December 31st. Post delivery transfers between the inshore and offshore sectors are also permitted subject to 7.7 above, with the distribution and management subject to the inter-coop agreement under 4.4 above.

7.9. All inter-cooperative transfers must be processed and approved by NOAA Fisheries.

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8. COST RECOVERY

A fee, not to exceed 3 percent of ex vessel value, will be charged on all program landings to cover the costs of administration of the program.

Community Protection in the Gulf of Alaska Trawl Bycatch Management Program

Submitted by: Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition,
Ernie Weiss, Terry Haines, Theresa Peterson, Alexis Kwachka, Dave Kubiak,
Alaska Marine Conservation Council

Introduction

We submit this proposal to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for inclusion in their Gulf of Alaska bycatch management motion. The current Council motion offers many programmatic benefits including 100% observer coverage and bycatch reduction goals. Nevertheless, the motion's structure allocating transferable quota shares and using co-operatives to manage the GOA trawl pollock and cod fisheries is likely to rearrange the fisheries' relationship to Alaska's coastal communities.

We commend the Council for including several components in the motion specifically addressing possible community impacts. However, these provisions, at best, only address a subset of expected impacts. We believe that an allocation of quota to fishing communities via a Community Fishing Association (CFA) provides additional community protections that are unique and broader than those currently in the motion. Specifically, a Community Fishing Association offers an opportunity to strengthen the relationship of captain, vessel, vessel owner and crew to the community, to address transitional entrance into the trawl fisheries and provide opportunity for future generations, and to encourage equitable crew compensation. In addition, a community that owns quota is likely to remain an active stakeholder in the management and prosecution of the fishery itself. None of these critical community impacts are sufficiently addressed by current components of the motion, and a Community Fishing Association can provide an accessible and flexible way to address these community concerns.

Recent NOAA guidance as well as independent legal analysis confirm that the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (MSA) authorizes allocations to fishing communities.¹ In addition, National Standard 8 of the MSA specifically requires that management measures provide for the sustained participation of communities and that adverse impacts on communities are minimized.² The Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch management program provides an opportunity for this Council to lead the nation in developing a new method for providing for a full suite of protections for fishing communities. **We urge you to take up this challenge and include the following proposal for a Community Fishing Association in the Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch reduction package.**

¹ See Josh S. Stoll & Mark C. Holliday, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA, *The Design and Use of Fishing Community and Regional Fishery Association Entities in Limited Access Privilege Programs*, NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/SPO-138 (2014); 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3). See also George J. Mannina, Jr., *Allocation of Harvest Rights*, Memorandum to the Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition and Alaska Marine Conservation Council (Sept. 24, 2013)(submitted to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for the Oct. 2013 meeting).

² 16 USC § 1851(a)(8).

Proposal for a Community Fishing Association

I. Structure

The Community Fishing Association (CFA) entity must be a non-profit entity qualified by NMFS, with a community sustainability plan approved by the Secretary as specified in the MSA.³ The Council can establish set requirements for the Community Fishing Association entity to be approved, possibly mirroring many of the CQE requirements. The Community Fishing Association could be a single Gulf-wide administrative entity, or a single entity with two divisions, one for the Central Gulf and one for the Western Gulf.

The entity will be governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will include balanced representation from fishing and community interests, including the cities and boroughs, trawl co-op representatives (note that co-op representatives would not need to be community residents), non-trawl fishermen and conservation interests. Municipalities (city/borough) could appoint their own designees, as well as the non-trawl seats. Co-ops could appoint their own representatives, and the board itself could appoint a conservation seat. The goal for the Board of Directors is to ensure that board composition is broad enough to ensure both fishery and community interests are represented, but small enough to function efficiently.

The specific composition of the Board of Directors will be set in regulation to ensure that all interest groups are represented.

II. Community Eligibility

The MSA defines a fishing community generally as “a community which is substantially dependent on or substantially engaged in the harvest or processing of fishery resources to meet social and economic needs, and includes fishing vessel owners, operators, and crew and United States fish processors that are based in such community.”⁴ Specifically in regards to allocations to fishing communities in the context of Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs), a community must be “located within the management area of the relevant Council,” meet criteria developed by the Council and established by the Secretary and “consist of residents who conduct commercial or recreational fishing, processing, or fishery-dependent support businesses within the Council’s management area.”⁵ Under both of these definitions, a community need only be engaged in fishing or processing within the management area. There is no requirement that they specifically engage in the target species fishery, or in a particular fishery. In fact, in developing participation for a fishing community under the LAPP provisions, Councils are required to consider “economic barriers to access to the fishery,” and “the potential for improving economic conditions in

³ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(IV).

⁴ 16 USC § 1802(17).

⁵ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(I-III).

remote coastal communities lacking resources to participate in harvesting or processing activities in the fishery.”⁶ These considerations, particularly the latter, specifically support the inclusion of communities in the management area which do not currently participate in the trawl fishery in particular. Under the LAPP definition, a fishing community may even consist of residents who conduct fishery-dependent support businesses, harvesting and processing activity is not required.

Under this program we propose fishing community criteria⁷ to include communities within the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska management areas which have:

1. Traditional fishing or processing practices in, and dependence on, fisheries in the management area;
2. Cultural and social ties to fisheries in the management area;
3. Economic barriers to access to the fishery;
4. A high potential for economic and social impacts associated with a LAPP program on harvesters, captains, crew, processors, and other businesses substantially dependent upon the fishery;
5. There will be no more than two Community Fishing Associations, one for the Western and one for the Central Gulf of Alaska.

III. Allocation

The Community Fishing Association would be allocated fishing quota for all CV target and PSC species allocated under the program. For analysis, the Council should consider an allocation range of 10-20%.

Quota allocated to the Community Fishing Association may not be sold.

IV. Quota Distribution

- Quota will be leased on an annual (option: every 3 years) basis according to allocation criteria established by the Board which meet the goals and objectives for the Community Fishing Association established by the Council in regulation.
- To ensure that quota leased from the Community Fishing Association achieves the goals and objectives established by the Council, quota will be leased subject to specific contract terms which meet the goals and objectives adopted by the Council, and referenced below in Section VII.

⁶ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(B)(iii,vi).

⁷ Note that under the MSA provisions, eligibility criteria must be developed by the Council, approved by the Secretary, and published in the Federal Register. These eligibility criteria are therefore submitted as recommendations, but further refinement should be developed by the Council.

V. Lease Fees

- Lease fees will be used only to directly support the Community Fishing Association's operational and administrative costs and will not exceed reasonable costs as audited by NMFS.

VI. How the CFA Intersects with the Overall Program

- The Community Fishing Association will operate within the co-op structure. Quota leased from the Community Fishing Association must be utilized through a cooperative.
- Community Fishing Association quota will be subject to the same set of rules as other quota in the program in terms of bycatch management, observer coverage, sector allocations, cooperative structure, regionalization, and gear conversion.
- Any vessel and owner consolidation limits established under the overall program will also apply to quota leased by the Community Fishing Association, e.g. the consolidation limit will apply to quota directly owned or fished by a vessel and any quota leased from the Community Fishing Association.
- A participant who leases quota from the Community Fishing Association will be required to fish at least that amount of fish within their co-op (e.g. a vessel may not lease quota from the CFA, then have that quota fished by another vessel in the co-op since the contract terms would not apply to a vessel which had not leased quota from the CFA).

VII. Reporting, Accountability and Transparency

- The Council would set goals and objectives for the CFA (as per Amendment 91 requirements for the Incentive Plan Agreements) and allow the CFA board to adopt CFA policies and operational guidelines to meet those goals and objectives.
- To be eligible to participate in the program, the CFA must "develop and submit a community sustainability plan to the Council and the Secretary that demonstrates how the plan will address the social and economic development needs of coastal communities, including those that have not historically had the resources to participate in the fishery, for approval based on criteria developed by the Council that have been approved by the Secretary and published in the Federal Register."⁸
- The Council would receive an annual report from the CFA and evaluate its progress toward meeting the Council's policy goals.
- The annual report must also be distributed to all communities in the relevant management area.
- The Council would also review the CFA as part of the review process of the catch share program overall.

⁸ 16 USC § 1853a(c)(3)(A)(i)(IV).

- The Council could initiate action at any time to modify the catch share program, including modifying or eliminating the CFA if it is not meeting the Council's goals and objectives.

VIII. Goals and Objectives of the Community Fishing Association

- A. Council-established Goals and Objectives for the CFA (in regulation and/or the FMP):
1. Provide for the sustained (current and historical) participation of fishing communities (MSA National Standard 8).
 2. Minimize adverse economic impacts on fishing communities (MSA National Standard 8).
 3. Assist entry-level and small vessel owner-operators, captains and crew and fishing communities (MSA §303A(c)(5)(C)).
- B. The CFA responds to several of the Council's established Goals and Objectives for the program (numbers refer to Council Goals and Objectives):
4. Authorize fair and equitable access privileges that take into consideration the value of assets and investments in the fishery and dependency on the fishery for harvesters, processors, and communities.
 6. Promote community stability and minimize adverse economic impacts by limiting consolidation, providing employment and entry opportunities, and increasing the economic viability of the groundfish harvesters, processors, and support industries.
 13. Minimize adverse impacts on sectors and areas not included in the program.
 14. Promote active participation by owners of harvest vessels and fishing privileges.
- C. Possible CFA goals and objectives adopted by the CFA within Council objectives:
1. Maintain the historical number of active trawl vessels home-ported in CFA communities.
 2. Maintain the historical number of active trawl skippers that are resident in CFA communities.
 3. Maintain the historical number of GOA trawl vessel crewpersons that are resident in CFA communities.
 4. Maintain the amount of quota owned and/or operated by CFA community residents.
 5. Maintain crew compensation at levels established prior to the rationalization program.
 6. Enable fishermen to transition into the GOA trawl fishery under the new management program.
 7. Facilitate gear conversion within provisions of main program.
 8. Incentivize additional bycatch savings beyond standard requirements by rewarding those willing to adopt additional measures to reduce bycatch with access to additional CFA quota.

Rationale for a Community Fishing Association

I. Why a Community Fishing Association?

A catch share program in the Gulf of Alaska trawl fishery has the ability to provide management benefits by ending the “race for fish” and providing the trawl fleet with a tool to reduce bycatch. In addition, this program will provide the added benefit of 100% observer coverage. However, nearly twenty years of direct experience with catch share programs in Alaska, as well as experience around the world, demonstrates clearly how catch share programs can adversely impact fishing dependent coastal communities. Coastal communities suffer when catch share programs result in absentee ownership of quota, fewer locally based vessels, high leasing fees, short term and long term vessel consolidation and consolidation of quota ownership, lower crew pay and job loss. The lessening of the relationships between fishing communities and those owning and fishing the resource as well as the out-migration of fisheries-based wealth and fishery access opportunities from the communities in proximity to the fishery resources is the most enduring impact on communities.

A Community Fishing Association provides an opportunity to expand coastal community protections by allocating a portion of the quota directly to a community entity. According to a recently published NOAA Guidance, “These entities [Fishing Communities and RFAs] represent one way to anchor limited access privileges in place-based and interest-based communities to help maintain their long-term access to federal fisheries.”⁹ Anchoring a portion of quota in the community ensures that the community—and community residents—retain access to some portion of the fishery over the long-term. The community can use this quota to maintain a local fleet, provide opportunities for transition and entry into the fishery (for example, by serving as a stepping stone for residents to transition into quota ownership), and ensure access to the resource for future generations. A Community Fishing Association also provides a mechanism for maintaining equitable crew compensation and maintaining local crew hire. Because the community owns the quota in a Community Fishing Association, they have the ability to set rules on how that quota is used, much as an individual quota owner does.

Impacts from catch share programs are difficult to predict. A Community Fishing Association, managing quota, will have the ability to adaptively respond to unexpected programmatic community impacts. Nothing in the current motion provides this flexibility to address unexpected or unanticipated community impacts. This ability to adapt and address impacts as they arise is critical - experience in the North Pacific shows that once quota is allocated it is very difficult if not impossible for the Council to address these impacts (see, for example, ROFRs in the crab program).

⁹ Stoll & Holliday, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA, *supra* note 1, at iv.

II. What added benefits does a Community Fishing Association provide beyond the current program options?

The Council's October 2013 motion includes several community protection provisions, such as limited duration of quota shares, community sign-ons on co-op contracts and regionalization. These provisions are significant and potentially address a number of community concerns. A Community Fishing Association, however, addresses issues and community impacts beyond those provided by the current community protection provisions. Specifically, none of the community protections contained in the current motion provide a mechanism for ensuring that some portion of quota remains anchored in the community, and that the economic wealth of quota ownership (not just the landings) does not all migrate away from local fishing communities. The provisions in the motion do not maintain or strengthen ties of skippers, crew, vessel owners or vessels to the fishery dependent community. In addition, the motion does not contain a mechanism for entry/transition into the fishery. A Community Fishing Association provides a mechanism for entry into the fishery addressing the substantial barriers to entry posed by the added cost of acquiring quota. By providing quota to new quota owners, a Community Fishing Association can facilitate transition into the fishery in a manner which allows for access to the fishery and ensures that a path is available for new participants who do not have the capital to purchase quota. Finally, a Community Fishing Association is the only construct that may help to mitigate crew compensation changes. Crew face impacts as a catch share program shifts ownership, increases leasing and changes fishing practices. The Council has struggled with how to maintain equitable crew compensation within a catch share program. A Community Fishing Association may provide unique crew equity constructs within a flexible co-op framework.

In summary, the Community Fishing Association is another "tool in the toolbox" as the Council develops a new management program. At this stage, it is important to have a full range of alternatives and options analyzed. A complete set of community protections is critical to the success of a new management program. A Community Fishing Association, as described in this document, provides unique and additional benefits beyond those contained in the current program framework and should be included as an option within the program design.

III. Why is an initial allocation required?

Our experience in Alaska provides ample examples of why an initial allocation of quota is needed to create a successful community protection entity. The Community Quota Entity (CQE) program in the Halibut and Sablefish IFQ fishery was created to provide community access to the resource and to reverse the impacts of quota and access migrating away from rural fishing communities. However, the CQE program was not provided with an allocation of quota, rather, communities are required to buy quota. As a result, while many communities have formed CQEs, only two have actually acquired quota and the amount purchased is de minimus. While the structure of the trawl bycatch management program is significantly different from the Halibut/Sablefish IFQ program, the dynamics of leasing, consolidation, and inactive participation and how these impact a

community are the same. In contrast to the CQE program, a Community Fishing Association which is allocated quota at the outset can immediately, in the first year of the program, plan mitigation strategies as well as plan for more long term protections for crew and for transitional fishing opportunities.

Providing an initial allocation to a Community Fishing Association is critical to the success of the Association, and to ensuring that community protection goals are met. Direct allocations to fishing communities are well established as a matter of law and policy. The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that “in developing a limited access privilege program to harvest fish a Council or the Secretary shall...include measures to assist, when necessary and appropriate, entry-level and small vessel owner-operators, captains, crew and fishing communities *through set-asides of harvesting allocations, including providing privileges, which may include set-asides of allocations of harvesting privileges or economic assistance in the purchase of limited access privileges (emphasis added).*”¹⁰ In addition, a recent NOAA Guidance clearly indicates that an allocation to a fishing community is an option for Councils to use to address the types of concerns raised in this situation: “Fishing community allocations (e.g., FC, RFA, Community Fishing Association, etc.) represent an alternative to individual allocations...in instances where small-scale and rural fishing communities exist and/or quota consolidation is a real or perceived concern, they represent a reasonable option for Councils to analyze.”¹¹

Providing an allocation of harvesting allocations to a fishing community to meet the needs of the community, including maintaining community ties with skippers, crew, owners and vessels has been anticipated by those crafting the governance documents for our federal fisheries and is well within the Council’s authority. The ability to allocate directly to fishing communities was provided as a matter of public policy specifically to address these types of challenges, and we urge the Council to take full advantage of the tools provided within the MSA in this regard.

Recommendations for Community Protections in the Current Motion

I. Duration of shares (Element (1)(b))

Limiting the duration of quota shares, or some portion of quota shares, is an important program element. The provision’s impact is primarily on the economic value of the quota which an individual holds/takes to the co-op. This provision could reduce quota value but the cost of entry is likely to remain high. Consequently, limited duration of shares alone is unlikely to provide opportunity for entry into the fishery. More importantly, limited duration of shares will not impact migration of quota and/or skippers, crew and owners away from the community. In addition, the April 2013 discussion paper highlights some significant administrative barriers to implementing a limited duration construct. A Community Fishing Association may be able to achieve the benefits of

¹⁰ 16 USC §1853a(c)(5)(C).

¹¹ Stoll & Holliday, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA, *supra* note 1, at 29.

a limited duration quota with less administrative burden. Therefore, we support continued development of a limited duration concept, and careful examination of how this concept and a CFA may work in tandem or separately.

II. Community sign-off on co-op agreements

One of the most significant community protection measures included in the current program design framework is the option for requiring community sign-off on contracts. This could also be a powerful mechanism for a community to weigh in on issues of community concern but it is unlikely to address the broader community concerns outlined herein. For this provision to be effective, the community would have to have full signatory (veto) power over the contract. In addition, a community structure would need to be developed to ensure that the “community’s” opinion is not simply the opinion of one single designated community representative. For this to work, co-ops would have to agree to waive confidentiality rights and essentially open up their contracts for public review. It would not be sufficient for the co-ops to waive confidentiality rights only for a single designated community representative. A broader community group would have to be provided with access to co-op contracts to ensure adequate community participation. We support continued development and refinement of this option, with particular attention to the issues raised above.

III. Consolidation limits

Consolidation limits are critical and should be included in the program design. Limits must be placed on both individual quota ownership and vessel quota use. Vessel use limits should not be erased when vessels join co-ops (unlike crab rationalization). Further, the extent of vertical integration of the fishery should be analyzed and better understood.

IV. Regionalized delivery requirements

Regionalization is another consideration in the current program framework. However, regionalization only addresses landings. Landings are important to community sustainability, but there is much more to a healthy fishing community. In addition, regionalization applied too strictly necessarily limits other fishery dependent communities from participation and may inhibit innovation, new product forms, changes in transportation and increase inefficiencies. Also, regionalization does not address maintaining or strengthening ties between community and skippers, crew, owners and vessels, transitional fishing opportunities and equitable crew compensation—all of which can be addressed through the CFA. Nonetheless, landings clearly represent a critical source of community stability, and the Council should continue to consider regionalized delivery requirements.

strategically, and cooperatively, both amongst the vessels themselves and with shore-based processors

3. *Reduce bycatch and regulatory discards by groundfish trawl vessels*
4. *Authorize fair and equitable access privileges that take into consideration the value of assets and investments in the fishery and dependency on the fishery for harvesters, processors, and communities*
5. *Balance interests of all sectors and provide equitable distribution of benefits and similar opportunities for increased value*
6. *Promote community stability and minimize adverse economic impacts by limiting consolidation, providing employment and entry opportunities, and increasing the economic viability of the groundfish harvesters, processors, and support industries*
7. *Improve the ability of the groundfish trawl sector to achieve Optimum Yield, including increased product retention, utilization, landings, and value by allowing vessels to choose the time and location of fishing to optimize returns and generate higher yields*
8. *Increase stability relative to the volume and timing of groundfish trawl landings, allowing processors to better plan operational needs as well as identify and exploit new products and markets*
9. *Increase safety by allowing trawl vessels to prosecute groundfish fisheries at slower speeds and in better conditions*
10. *Include measures for improved monitoring and reporting*
11. *Increase the trawl sector's ability to adapt to applicable Federal law (i.e., Endangered Species Act)*
12. *Include methods to measure the success and impacts of all program elements*
13. *Minimize adverse impacts on sectors and areas not included in the program*
14. *Promote active participation by owners of harvest vessels and fishing privileges*

1.3 Summary of key issues for Council consideration

The following is a non-comprehensive list of points on which Council consideration or clarification might be needed to further advance the development of the program outlined in the October 2013 motion:

1. If a person or an entity holds multiple LLPs, each of which having a majority of qualifying landing history to different shorebased processors in different areas, does the Council intend for that person to have the option to join multiple cooperatives?
2. What are the alternatives for criteria used to establish the initial two-year linkage between catcher vessels and processors in a cooperative? How can these criteria be explicit, but flexible enough to account for cases where delivery patterns have shifted during the most recent analyzed years?
3. If target species quota is regionalized, is the Council concerned about a conflict with any delivery requirements that might be a part of the privately negotiated contract between the harvester and processor members of a CV cooperative?
4. Is there a minimum number of vessels that are required to form a cooperative? If not, is the Council concerned about the activity of a cooperative being treated as confidential information?
5. If PSC is allocated, should prohibited species quota (PSQ) use be limited by season and by fishery? If PSQ is allocated by season, are rollovers allowed?
6. Should AFA vessels that are exempt and non-exempt from limitations in the GOA be treated differently for PSQ allocations?
7. If target fisheries other than Pacific cod and pollock are allocated as part of the program, should the Council only consider species that have a TAC for the West Yakutat district, as opposed to a species with a TAC set for the entire Eastern GOA?
8. Should the Council set sideboard limits for Eastern GOA Pacific cod, or any other fishery?

9. Are persons required to hold PSQ for Chinook and halibut if they fish in the West Yakutat district with trawl gear?
10. Is target species catch history severable from the LLP on which it was earned? If so, and if the history is transferred to another eligible license, does the pro rata share of PSQ transfer with the target catch history? The Council may wish to consider the case where pollock and Pacific cod are the only allocated target species. If a license holder transfers all of his or her target quota, the license might not have any PSQ remaining to cover activity in rockfish or flatfish fisheries.
11. For the purpose of measures meant to promote fishery dependent communities, how are communities defined? How might a license or an individual seeking to buy or sell quota be deemed to have an association with a community?
12. If gear conversion is allowed, should the 100% observer coverage requirement also apply to vessels using longline gear? What type of license or endorsement(s) does a fixed gear vessel need to hold in order to fish trawl quota?
13. If the Council includes the measure to make the retention of a portion of target species allocation subject to a periodic bycatch performance review, how will the portion of quota that is not retained be managed? Who might have access to this quota, and for how long? Will issues of due process and appeals be more tractable if the incentive program is framed as a reward, as opposed to a penalty?

2 Review of Proposed Program Structure

2.1 Bycatch management relative to Council's purpose and need statement

Both the purpose and need statement and the goals and objectives for the action focus on the need to create a management environment in which harvesters are better able to avoid PSC and more efficiently use available PSC. This focus suggests that any catch share program that allocates PSC species would enable better management of those species by participating vessels. The Council intends PSC reductions and efficient utilization to arise from vessels fishing more slowly, strategically, and cooperatively. The elements and structure of the program will affect whether fishing is slowed, or whether fishing strategies are more cooperative among vessels. Slowing fishing to a more optimum level will contribute to the stability of volume and timing of landings to allow better planning by processors.

The allocation of PSC would create an individual incentive for each participant to obtain the greatest value from the PSC they use. Whether PSC allocations alone are sufficient to achieve the goals of the program will depend on whether other measures can be adopted that would allow these PSC allocations to be fished in a manner that provides for the slowing and coordination of fishing and stable timing and volume of landings as intended for the action.⁵

PSC allocations are intended to provide each holder with an exclusive and limiting share of the available PSC. The participant could then choose what species to target, when, where, and how, to attain the greatest value of catch subject to the constraint of the PSC allocation. The allocation of PSC based on historical target fisheries landings, but not linking PSC to those fisheries for use, will likely allow each participant to achieve the greatest value in the fishery, given a limited quantity of permitted PSC. Each vessel would need to balance the value of using their PSC for the target fisheries that are allocated versus saving quota to participate in lower profit margin fisheries for flatfish. Basically participants choose a PSC rate that sacrifices PSC quota at a rate that equalizes the difference between profit attained from the additional share of their target allocations and the profit derived from the use of PSC for harvest of less valuable species later. This incentive structure could affect the ability (or tendency) of the fleet to achieve

⁵ Target species allocations have not been defined for the C/P sector at this time.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Certified: Jan Bender
Date: 5/15/14

**REPORT
of the
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE
to the
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
April 7th – 9th, 2014**

The SSC met from April 7th through 9th at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

Robert Clark, Vice Chair
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Chris Anderson
University of Washington

Jennifer Burns
University of Alaska Anchorage

Alison Dauble
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Anne Hollowed
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

Gordon Kruse
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Steve Martell
Int'l. Pacific Halibut Commission

Lew Queirolo
NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region

Terry Quinn
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Kate Reedy
Idaho State University Pocatello

Matt Reimer
University of Alaska Anchorage

Members absent were:

Sherri Dressel
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

George Hunt
University of Washington

Seth Macinko
University of Rhode Island

Franz Mueter
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Farron Wallace
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

C-2 GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

The SSC received a briefing on a discussion paper, presented by Darrell Brannan (Council Consultant) and Sam Cunningham (NPFMC). Public testimony was offered by Rachel Donkersloot (AMCC) and Jon Warrenchuk (Oceana).

The discussion paper arose from a request by the Council to review a partial framework for a program to regulate Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) avoidance in the GOA groundfish trawl fisheries. The resulting discussion paper contains a preliminary analysis of program elements that the Council is considering including in a final measure. Although this is earlier in the review process than the SSC is used to seeing such analyses, the SSC welcomes the opportunity for earlier input. This will ensure that the subsequent documents address program elements that warrant analytical focus, and that the policy scenario evaluations put before the Council reflect the best available science. Early inclusion of the SSC may be particularly important for programs such as GOA trawl bycatch management, which alter the institutional rules for harvesting and pricing fish, and where appropriate methods may be highly tailored to the specific proposal.

Presentation Issues

The intent of the Council, and intended effects of the prospective programs, would be clearer with the appropriate application of the terms “bycatch” (i.e., discards of groundfish) and “prohibited species catch” (e.g., interception and catch mortality of Pacific halibut, Chinook salmon) attributable to groundfish fishing in the GOA. In the first several pages of the discussion paper, it is unclear whether the authors intend to identify “discarded groundfish” (i.e., bycatch) or “prohibited species catch” (e.g., Pacific halibut, Chinook salmon) mortality. The Council’s problem statement actually references both sources of removals, appropriately distinguishing between the two categories. The document would be improved by consistently framing the analytical presentation in terms of *PSC avoidance* management.

At times, the language used in the narrative seems to favor a particular point of view. For example, in the consideration of duration of shares, references are made to "sanctions," "forfeited quota", and "punitive action." This is in the context of a societal interest in creating a program that makes the award of fishing privileges conditional upon some desired avoidance performance standards. The language employed seems to reflect an implicit starting point that assumes something is being taken from quota owners in a program that has not yet been created. This impedes the objective consideration of policy options. Another example of possible imbalance appears in the statement, “The prospect of lost revenue, due to (PSC triggered) groundfish closures before the TAC is taken, is a concern to harvesters, processors, communities, and other stakeholders,” implicitly those vested in groundfish. The same concern can and should be acknowledged in connection with the Chinook PSC and halibut PSC losses, because each species represents a significant economic, social, and cultural asset associated with its own stakeholders and communities. It is important that some balance be maintained with respect to accrual of impacts and identification of those impacted.

Later in the paper, there are references to pollock and Pacific cod allocations affecting inshore and offshore sectors in the GOA groundfish fisheries. Several of these assertions appear to be in error. The authors should carefully consult the controlling terms of access as set forth by GOA Inshore/Offshore actions, as amended.

While the draft working paper covers an impressive array of issues pertaining to GOA trawl fishing behavior and practices, the trade-offs implicit within the list of Council objectives could be more effectively contrasted and weighed. This could be accomplished through a list containing each of the Council’s proposed management strategies, followed by a concise summary of how each objective contributes (positively or negatively) to the Council’s program goals and objectives.

In addition to our comments here, the SSC will provide a detailed list of technical edits to the authors for their consideration.

Program Design Features

The SSC identified several features or elements of the proposal that are somewhat beyond the common experience in the design of rationalization programs, and whose implications need further thought and analysis.

Constitution of Cooperatives

The fisheries economics literature has broadly demonstrated that successful rationalization programs rely on well-functioning markets, both for quota and for landed product. However, there are aspects of the proposed program that differ from most rationalization programs in a way that may significantly impede functioning of the ex-vessel market. It is proposed that quota and PSC allowance be allocated to groups consisting of multiple harvesters contracting with one processor to form a cooperative, with no option to change processors during a season, and without control over which processor they are linked to for the first two years. In the case where BSAI crab rationalization effectively binds harvesters to processors, the ex-vessel market is cleared with the help of a mandatory arbitration system. Other harvesting cooperative

programs centered around processors leave some (sometimes limited) option for harvesters to sell to other processors, but economic theory suggests this threat is important to giving harvesters bargaining power.

Even following the two year phase-in, the scenario evaluated in the discussion paper suggests restricted movement: “Though not explicitly part of the Council’s motion, the fact that a CV can exit from the processor-linked cooperative to which it was initially assigned (after two years) means that the involved parties will have to negotiate terms for leaving the cooperative (an ‘exit strategy,’ as discussed in Section 2.1.4.3.3). It could be the case that the terms require a harvester to leave behind some of their quota share upon exit.” The SSC notes that any additional penalty imposed upon a CV that chooses to change processors would further impede functioning of the ex-vessel market.

Comparing the effects on the ex-vessel price market from other programs that significantly or completely limit harvesters’ landings options, where harvesters are either independent or vertically integrated may be informative. It would be important to consider alternatives and options that ensure processors and their communities are not unfairly disadvantaged by a shift to rationalization, but also assure that the market for landed product remains competitive.

A secondary, practical issue is that including a single processor in each cooperative may make key data on the performance of the program confidential, under NOAA’s interpretation of current regulations. If operations of single cooperatives are confidential, it will not be possible to evaluate aspects of the Council’s actions, such as performance of the community protection goals of the rationalization program.

PSC Allowance Linked to Target Quotas

The discussion paper suggests initial allowances of PSC would be set in proportion to the allocated groundfish quota, rather than based on historical encounter rates. While this is intended to reward past clean fishing, it presumes opportunities for, and control over, PSC utilization are comparable across the regions in the fishery. If avoidance opportunities vary—spatially or temporally—PSC may bind harvesters in regions differently and differentially affect communities, conflicting with community stability goals. An evaluation of the possible extent of spatial or fleetwide ability to avoid PSC, and whether this would lead to regional variation in the costs associated with avoiding PSC would be useful. This could be compared to severing PSC allowance from the associated target quota, both in allocation and transfer, so that the Council may evaluate alternative ways to reward clean fishing.

Incentives to Avoid PSC

The program described in the discussion paper seeks to provide additional explicit incentives to avoid PSC, through several potential mechanisms. In designing such mechanisms, it is important to document the extent to which harvesters have the ability to avoid PSC, or whether variation in PSC encounters is essentially random among harvesters or between years. The program should not be predicated on rewarding ‘good luck’ or punishing ‘bad luck.’ It is also possible that the best program design differs for Chinook PSC avoidance and halibut PSC avoidance.

One proposed mechanism sets a finite life to the PSC distribution system and adjusting allocations toward “cleaner” vessels over time. The SSC is concerned this will introduce uncertainty that will inhibit investment in long-term beneficial PSC avoidance technologies in the fishery. Further, the proposed 10 years is practically equivalent to “indefinite”, in the return on investment that businesses use, and so would do little to reduce the price of access to the fishery. The investment and avoidance incentives induced by this program element should be more closely examined in future analyses.

On page 6, the narrative discusses the potential for gaming of PSC performance records in the context of ‘PSC avoidance rewards programs’. This is a legitimate concern, as we currently have experience with gaming of PSC performance, in the form of the so-called observer effect. We also know that catch-

history based allocations invite speculative "fishing for quota history." In general, the Council may wish to consider these implications before a formal proposal is put forward.

Without dictating redistribution based on successful PSC avoidance, rationalization programs can be structured to incentivize avoidance internally. It should be noted that if PSC is constraining, failing to avoid PSC carries a cost in foregone future groundfish harvest opportunities. If access to remaining PSC allowance is transferable within or between groundfish sectors, the market price should express the implicit value of access to these groundfish harvesting opportunities. If the limits are not constraining, PSC allowance can be given an option value. An example can be found in the PSC allowance banking or rollover mechanisms that incentivize Chinook avoidance for the AFA inshore pollock cooperatives, which are enabled by PSC caps set as multi-year moving averages. The SSC encourages evaluation of program mechanisms that provide incentives to avoid PSC, but also provide flexibility to harvesters to respond to predictable or random changes in natural or market conditions.

The implications of gear conversion opportunities or constraints deserve full consideration. Rationalization may render obsolete the division between sectors targeting the same stock with different gear-types. Thus, vessels accumulating history with trawl gear may determine that they can best utilize their quota and avoid PSC by changing to pot or longline gear. This has happened in the post-rationalization West Coast trawl program, where harvesters are utilizing pot gear for sablefish, and testing it for lingcod. There may be implications for effort redistribution, target species changes, total catch composition effects, habitat impacts, and rates of prosecution of fisheries, all of which may have stock impacts and management effects. Likewise, the Council may wish to contemplate how fishery expansion might accompany attainment of PSC avoidance goals. Discussion should include the relationship between initial allocation and how (and to whom) resulting benefits may accrue. This has implications for concepts such as fishery entry opportunities and the role of community fishing associations (CFAs) in fishery dependent community stability and welfare.

Direct and indirect coastal community participation measures are explicitly included in the Council's motion, but there is little specificity or guidance as to how they should be structured, thus far. Because the Council is early in the creation process of the program, this is a critical opportunity for building community participation directly into the program. These may include direct allocations, entry opportunities, and employment opportunities, for example. With the exception of the CDQ program, the history of catch share programs in Alaska and globally have a record of negatively affecting community participation and stability following the initial allocation, and there are numerous community impact studies available that should be examined to inform this analysis of the benefits and consequences of different options. Stakeholder proposals in which CFAs anchor quota in communities should be analyzed for their ability to meet the Council's goals and objectives, as the program elements are being selected.

Program Evaluation

The SSC also heard from Brian Garber-Yonts (NMFS-AFSC) on drafts of the CV, CP, and shoreside processor economic data reports (EDRs). Current drafts are focused on collecting baseline data prior to rationalization, against which the eventual rationalization program will be evaluated. The draft forms are largely based on revisions of the crab and Amendment 80 EDRs. As those programs are now coming up for review, the SSC encourages that the many strengths and few weaknesses of those programs be evaluated and used to inform the design of these EDRs.

The EDR design process would additionally benefit from going through the exercise of identifying likely industry responses to the rationalization. Then, gaps in the data needed to monitor the extent of each change can be identified. Based on effects of previous rationalization programs, the SSC identified at least the following as plausible effects of rationalization:

- Changes in product form, including packaging and value-added
- Lengthening of the season

- Changes in the number of individuals working as crew or processing workers
- Changes in days worked by individual captains, crew or processing workers
- Changes in gear used, including excluders or changes in types of gear
- Changes in other fisheries in which vessels participate have constituted half or more of the benefits of rationalization programs in other fisheries:
 - Changes in timing or extent of participation across other fisheries, including BSAI, GOA, West coast trawl, rockfish.
 - Specialization in fisheries (this fishery appears to lose vessels, but some vessels leave for other, separately managed fisheries).

The draft EDRs appear focused on spatial changes associated with finding grounds with low levels of PSC species. For example, the CV EDR focuses primarily on fuel use. Each of these changes will carry with it a separate data need, which may be met through existing non-EDR programs, but may not. Particular attention should be paid to ensure that analysts can track the distribution of rents between processors and harvesters, and can link income from fisheries to communities, including residency of crew and processing workers.

One metric identified in the report for program monitoring is identifying regulations and preventing accumulation of excessive shares. It is difficult to identify what this will mean in a context where harvesters receive collective allocations, and there is no mechanism for moving among processors.

C-5 Amendment 80 Program 5-year Review

The SSC received a rough draft report and a presentation reviewing the Amendment 80 (AM80) program from Marcus Hartley (Northern Economics) and Jon McCracken (NPFMC). There was no public testimony.

The analysts are conducting a thorough and comprehensive 5-year review of AM80 that satisfies the requirements of the MSA and Council motion. The review indicates that the program has met and even exceeded the improved retention and utilization of fishery resource goals set forth by the Council. The review has many parts, some of which are more complete than others, and all of which will need to be finalized before it is released to the public for review. The SSC offers the following suggested improvements.

The utility of the document could be significantly improved with an expanded Executive Summary that highlights the major findings for all the components of the review. Currently, the reader must search for conclusions. Thus, a ‘report card’ or bullet point list of major findings is needed. In addition, the document would be improved by including a list of the Council’s original objectives for the program with a concise summary of how these objectives are (or are not) being met.

The review evaluates the quality and the accessibility of the economic data report (EDR) data being collected in conjunction with AM80. It rightly points out places where the EDR duplicates data collection and the potential misinterpretations of the questions asked, and suggests rephrasing and improvements to data collection. It is clear that some revisions to the EDR are warranted and the SSC supports subsequent efforts to use this review when making adjustments to the AM80 and GOA Trawl EDR forms.

The report reviews information from the voluntarily supplied public versions of AM80 cooperative reports. **The SSC remains concerned about confidentiality and fishing cooperatives in which vessel-level data are effectively quarantined due the NOAA General Counsel’s prevailing interpretation of cooperatives as single entities.** This is troubling, given the planned formation of cooperatives in other fisheries.

The use of qualitative data, gathered from owners and operators to evaluate some of the effects of AM80, could be improved with an explication of the methodology for this qualitative data collection. There are conclusions made from these data, for example, that there are “plenty of opportunities” for fishing crew and skippers or that marginally performing vessels “left the fleet willingly,” that warrant further explanation.

The safety section of the report supplied by NIOSH provides a great deal of useful information about the risks and casualties of this fishery. The high injury and fatality rates before AM80’s implementation are essentially unchanged under this program. The SSC suggests that the Alternative Compliance and Safety Agreement (ACSA) for AM80 vessels, which is having a positive effect on vessel safety but currently appears to be voluntary, could be made mandatory given the inability of many vessels to meet current safety regulations of loadline and classification.

The Community Impacts section should be expanded beyond its current emphasis on port calls and Adak to include similar impacts to Unalaska/Dutch Harbor, as was specified in the work plan. The report should further explain the community baseline against which the program is being assessed. The SSC supports the authors’ expressed interest that the EDRs include reported payments to CDQ groups. These data could potentially aid in estimating community impacts. Also, it was shown that more than half of the impacts from the fleet on total economic output and about 80 percent of the impacts on household income accrue outside Alaska. The SSC is interested to see how this compares with other fisheries.

The 5-year review contains ample evidence that the AM80 sector has succeeded in avoiding PSC, perhaps beyond the program’s expectations. However, the document does not currently contain a description of how catcher processors (CPs) in the AM80 sector have been successful in their PSC avoidance. Understanding how CPs have avoided PSC under AM80 has important implications for design features of future PSC reduction programs, such as the proposed GOA trawl bycatch (and PSC) program. For instance, if PSC avoidance under AM80 is facilitated primarily by the flexibility of harvesters to adjust where and when they fish, then any elements of future programs that restrict the fishing flexibility of harvesters may limit the extent to which the program is successful in reducing PSC. **The SSC therefore recommends that the 5-year review include a description of how harvesters have avoided PSC under AM80.** The analysts should make use of a recent paper, which contains all the relevant information for such a description (Abbott, J.K., Haynie, A., Reimer, M.N. “Hidden Flexibilities: Institutions, Incentives, and the Margins of Selectivity in Fishing.” In Press. Land Economics).

C-7 BS and GOA Salmon PSC Genetics Update

Jeff Guyon (NMFS-AFSC) gave a presentation on two NOAA Technical Memoranda concerning Chinook and chum salmon PSC (referred to as bycatch in the documents) in trawl fisheries in the BSAI and GOA. These reports update a developing time series of estimates of stock contribution by adding data from 2012. Also the reports present both the stock contribution estimates from a census of PSC from some individual hauls made during salmon excluder studies and the area-wide estimates. Graphical, but limited statistical, comparisons were made. Public testimony was provided by John Gauvin (North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation).

The SSC commends the authors and analysts for their excellent work that yields major insights into spatial and temporal (seasonal and annual) stock compositions. In particular the data collections in the GOA are much improved by the use of proportional systematic sampling. Highlights of the results regarding stock composition estimates include: (1) inter-annual variability in estimates, suggesting that annual data collection is necessary for accuracy (lack of bias), (2) seasonal variability in estimates, suggesting that data collection is needed through the season, (3) spatial variability in estimates, showing that the proportional systematic design now in place is critical for accuracy, and (4) similar stock compositions for the small areas used in the salmon excluder studies compared to the BSAI or GOA as a whole.

The SSC has the following suggestions regarding the ongoing genetic studies:

- 1) Use the term PSC, rather than bycatch, to describe these catches of salmon. Because bycatch of Pacific salmon is designated as PSC in a NPFMC groundfish management context, the SSC uses PSC in its reports to differentiate it from incidental removals and discards of other fish species (i.e., bycatch).
- 2) Use “northwest Bering Sea” in place of “Central Bering Sea”, which usually denotes the Donut Hole.
- 3) Conduct statistical chi-square (or similar) analyses of the stock composition frequencies to test for differences compared to the total PSC.
- 4) Investigate weighting the samples by PSC for statistical areas or appropriate subareas to obtain estimates with less bias, particular in years (all but 2011 and 2012 in BSAI and 2012 in GOA) and areas in which the sampling was opportunistic.
- 5) Expand the statistical analyses to estimate the age composition of the PSC, either using existing age-length keys or ageing the scales collected from the genetic studies.
- 6) Include a discussion of how the stock composition results from salmon excluder studies should be interpreted in terms of stock and age structure and in terms of mixing of stocks.
- 7) Compare and discuss the BAYES and SPAM methods used in the analyses, both in terms of methodology and results. The standard errors of the SPAM estimates are generally lower than for the BAYES estimates; how should this result be interpreted?
- 8) Provide the results of work being done by the UAF graduate student that corrects for bias in Chinook salmon stock composition from the BSAI once those are available. The SSC supports this type of analysis for chum salmon PSC in the BSAI.
- 9) We are pleased that results from genetic sampling of PSC in the BSAI and GOA during 2012 are now available. However, for this kind of information to aid in the reduction of salmon PSC, it will have to be analyzed and reported much more rapidly than has been achieved to date. Efforts should be made to achieve a more efficient turnaround of collecting and processing samples and the access to the associated haul data for samples of Chinook salmon from the GOA where the Council is currently formulating potential actions to manage for caps in PSC.
- 10) There is the potential for specific stocks or groups of stocks of Chinook salmon (e.g., hatchery releases) to “drive” contributions to PSC within a reporting group, especially in the GOA. We request that dendograms of the Chinook and chum salmon baselines be included in the reports to aid the reader in determining if there are particular populations within a baseline that might be genetically distinct enough to permit an analysis of stock compositions as subsets of the current reporting groups.
- 11) In this same light, we view coded wire tag (CWT) recoveries as another source of data for determining stock composition of PSC, and ask that sampling designs for genetics be augmented with sampling to scan for CWT recoveries (i.e., complete counts of adipose-clipped fish and a minimum 20% sample of heads from these fish) so that contributions from tagged stocks can be estimated.

C-8 Scallop SAFE

A presentation of the Scallop SAFE and February 2013 Scallop Plan Team (SPT) Report was given by Gregg Rosenkranz (ADF&G). He was accompanied by Diana Stram (NPFMC), and Ken Goldman (ADF&G) of the SPT. George Hutchings (former scallop fisherman, President of Americans for Equal Access) provided public testimony.

The SSC appreciates the SPT’s continued application of the stock structure template to weathervane scallops. The template provides several lines evidence that suggests that the stock is composed of regional meta-populations including: (a) regional differences in growth rate, age composition (possibly an indicator of regional differences in recruitment), and morphology; and (b) weak evidence of genetic

partitioning between the Bering Sea and GOA populations. **This evidence suggests that although current harvest practices are consistent with local area management, further refinement of the stock delineations for the purposes of setting the OFL and ABC for this species should be considered during the proposed workshop in 2015.**

The SAFE document showed strong evidence that scallops are found outside of the local fishing areas throughout the GOA and Bering Sea shelf. In 2012/13 the total catch was well below the area-wide ABC and OFL. **The SPT recommended setting the 2014/15 scallop ACL equal to an ABC of 1.161 million pounds of shucked meats and OFL equal to 1.29 million pounds.** The ACL is estimated using the max_{ABC} control rule of 90% of the OFL, which includes discards. **The SSC supports the Plan Team's recommended OFL and ABC for 2014/2015.**

To the extent practicable, the ADF&G manages scallop based on time trends in fishery independent and/or fishery dependent abundance indices in local fishing areas. The ADF&G applies a variety of conservation measures. For example, the Central Region (Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet) applies a 0.05 harvest rate to the biomass estimate derived from the survey expanded by an efficiency correction, and used whole weight to meat weight conversions to assign the GHL for each area. The use of 0.05 is at the low end of estimates of natural mortality. Additionally, the GHL may be lowered or closed to encourage local population recovery. For example, results from the most recent dredge survey indicate that the biomass in the Kamishak bed declined to its lowest level in the history of the survey, and ADF&G closed both the Kayak and Kamishak regions to allow an increase in recruitment. Finally, in-season management is applied in several beds where minimum thresholds for fishery CPUE are used to evaluate whether continued fishing should be allowed.

Fishery independent surveys are conducted in only a few scallop beds in the Central Region. Therefore, confirmation of the validity of fishery-dependent CPUE as an index of local abundance is important. The SAFE document contains a comparison of trends in survey biomass estimates and fishery CPUE in Kamishak Bay. The analysis showed a positive correlation between dredge survey biomass and fishery CPUE in North Bed, a negative relationship in the South Bed, but a positive correlation overall. It was also noted that an observed decline in fishery CPUE in the Kodiak Shelikof area was potentially due to Tanner crab avoidance. These observations suggest that time trends in fishery CPUE are uncertain indicators of local abundance trends. **The SSC recommends that during the workshop proposed for 2015, analysts review the processes that may influence fishery CPUE.**

Initial runs of an age-structured model for Kamishak Bay were brought forward at the 2014 SPT meeting. **The SSC is very supportive of continued model development for Kamishak Bay, supports plans for the development of a model for the Kayak Island area and requests a full description of the model.** The SSC agrees with the SPT that the authors consider a range of fixed natural mortality estimates and, if possible, annually variable natural mortality. In addition, the SSC recommends that the authors investigate how gear efficiency and uncertainty in survey data impact model results.

It was confusing to read the document's descriptions that jump back and forth among multiple districts within the areas. For example in Section 3.2 on the Yakutat Registration Areas, the text jumps back and forth between District 16 and the rest of the Yakutat region (referred to as Area D). The SSC recommends that each of the beds or districts within a registration area be discussed completely before moving on to the next district.

The SSC wishes to clarify that last year, when the Depletion Corrected Average Catch (DCAC) model was mentioned, this modeling approach was advanced just as an example. It should be noted that the DCAC modeling approach was developed for west coast groundfish stocks, and caution should be taken when applying this modeling approach to species other than groundfish. **The SSC encourages authors to**

examine a variety of alternative data-poor management approaches during the workshop to determine which, if any, could be applied to scallop.

C-9 Bering Sea Canyons

The SSC received a presentation from Steve MacLean (NPFMC) regarding the most recent discussion paper on the Bering Sea canyons. Public testimony was provided by: John Gauvin (Alaska Seafood Co-op), Jon Warrenchuck (Oceana), Heather Brandon (World Wildlife Fund), and Jackie Dragon (Greenpeace).

At the June 2013 meeting, the Council requested additional information to: (1) identify and validate where necessary areas of coral concentrations for possible management measures for the conservation and management of deep sea corals in the Bering Sea slope, and specifically in the Pribilof and Zhemchug canyons, and (2) develop a discussion paper that addresses management measures to be considered for conserving and/or managing areas of coral concentration and associated fish productivity. A workshop was organized in Seattle in February 2014 to provide the public with information on the AFSC predictive coral concentration model and other relevant research, and to provide a forum for discussions regarding collaboration and tools to reduce fishing impacts on corals. The workshop and the discussions resulting from that forum were very informative.

The April 2014 discussion paper summarizes the February 2014 workshop, includes new information presented at the workshop, and characterizes attendee concerns and discussions. In addition, the discussion paper provides relevant background information and introduces a suite of tools and options for the Council to consider if and when they choose to move forward with potential measures to conserve and manage deep-sea corals. **Overall, the discussion paper, combined with the recent research efforts mentioned in the discussion paper, provide a good starting point for discussions to develop objectives to protect and manage deep-sea coral in the Bering Sea slope and the Pribilof and Zhemchug canyons.**

The SSC echoes a common theme in the discussion paper and **encourages the Council to be explicit in their choice of objectives for any protections or management measures to be put into place, as the specific objectives selected could alter the scope, spatial scale, and the toolkit appropriate for achieving those objectives.** As an example to illustrate how changes in objectives alter the data and process necessary to inform decision-making processes, we considered three possible objectives for the protection of Bering Sea slope habitat: (a) protection of coral habitats, (b) to preserve existing unfished or lightly fished areas in outer shelf and slope regions of the Bering Sea (e.g., freezing the fishing footprint), and (c) establishment of marine protected areas to serve as control habitats for the purposes of conducting before-after-control-impact type analyses. If the primary objective is limited to protecting coral habitat in the Bering Sea outer shelf and slope, then groundtruthing the coral concentration model is a high priority. Verification of the predictive accuracy of the coral concentration model via the recently funded stereo camera survey would be an excellent way to refine this model. If the primary objective is to protect Bering Sea slope ecosystems by freezing the trawl footprint, then the analysts would need to work closely with industry and NMFS to identify the spatial distribution of trawled areas, potentially in a manner similar to what was done in the Aleutian Islands, to define areas to focus specific management actions. If the primary objective is to establish closed areas that would serve as representative unfished control habitats to quantify ecosystem effects of fishing on coral habitats, then the analysts would need to consider the size, location, and attributes of any proposed areas in relation to the Bering Sea slope habitat overall. In addition, when designing closed areas to address one or more of the goals outlined above, the analysts should also consider the connectivity of habitats. These examples clearly demonstrate how explicitly defined objectives are necessary to develop alternatives and to identify the data needed to support management actions. Depending on the choice of objectives, the Council may want to consider aligning this process with the upcoming EFH 5-year review, as this could potentially yield additional

tools (e.g., fishing effects model) and information to the process to develop management actions for deep-sea corals in the Bering Sea slope.

Though extremely dependent on decisions regarding specific goals and objectives, a wide variety of approaches are available for the Council to put forward as potential measures for the conservation and management of deep-sea corals. Changes in fishing effort, modifying gear configurations and area closures are three common approaches to reducing impacts of bottom contact gear, as discussed by the National Academy of Sciences in their 2002 report. Once the specific measures have been identified, the SSC recommends that a monitoring plan be developed alongside any management changes to assess potential impacts, including ecological, economic, and social, as appropriate. This is also required by some management authorities.

In terms of addressing the Council motion from June 2013, both the discussion papers and the recent AFSC research do provide information on coral distribution and concentrations, both in the canyons themselves and in the surrounding slope areas. **However, the SSC reiterated that information on the dependence of managed species on these habitats is still lacking**, a point previously made in the June 2013 SSC report. While recognizing the difficulty of quantifying the importance of these habitats to fish and invertebrate populations, if this was the true intent of that Council motion, at this time, there are no data to inform that discussion.

One of the options the Council could consider would be to use the AFSC predictive coral concentration model to define areas of high coral concentrations in which to focus future efforts. This potential use of the AFSC predictive model underscores how critical it is to further validate the model with the planned stereo camera work in the summer of 2014. While overlaying the currently available data from other visual surveys did not strongly contradict model results, differences in the spatial scale and the identification of coral to species from these different sources of data reduced the usefulness of these data to truly validate the predictive model. While the predictive model itself was promising, **management alternatives and decisions based on the predicted coral concentrations from this model without verification of the predictive skill of the model would be premature.**

Because this is an area of ongoing research, if the process to develop management measures moves forward, it might benefit from some flexibility to incorporate new information as these become available. However, it is uncertain how this flexibility could be maintained. The SSC is supportive of the planned cooperative research to further validate the AFSC predictive coral model, and notes that this research will provide valuable information beyond verification of model results, such as information on fish-habitat associations and sponge distribution and abundance. In addition, the final field year of the Alaska Coral and Sponge Initiative (2012-2014) will also provide more information on distribution and growth of these species, and potentially begin to connect this information with fish and invertebrate productivity.

D-2 EFH 5-year Review

The SSC received a presentation on the 2015 Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) 5-year review approach by Matt Eagleton (NMFS-AKR) and Diana Evans (NPFMC). A plan to develop updated fishing effects models was presented by John Olson (NMFS-AKR) and Brad Harris (Alaska Pacific University).

The proposed three-pronged approach for the 2015 EFH 5-year review encompasses all six FMPs for the NPFMC region.

1. Update EFH with new information and develop new methods for EFH descriptions. These methods may facilitate replacement of Level 1 (distribution data only) descriptions currently in place for all FMP species with Level 2 (habitat-related densities) and/or Level 3 (growth, reproduction, or survival rates within habitats) designations, when possible. A technical subgroup will be responsible for development of new methodology. Each assessment author will update information on EFH for each stock and will work with the technical subgroup to apply new

methods to Level 2 and Level 3 information, as appropriate. These new methods may take advantage of newly available information on habitat, such as smooth sheets (archived bathymetry and bottom type data) for the BS/AI and GOA regions and distributions of BS/AI corals and sponges and other species (e.g., GOA spiny dogfish). In conducting these updates, stock assessment authors will also be asked to identify any potential new Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) priorities.

2. A second technical subgroup will re-examine the Fujioka-Rose Long-term Evaluation of Fishing Effects Index (LEI) model and will review potential utility of a Swept Area Seabed Impact (SASI) model. The SASI model was developed for application for implementation by the New England Fishery Management Council. Dr. Harris has experience in applying SASI in New England. The LEI model will be migrated from Matlab to R software, streamlined, and some new features may be added based on the SASI review. Habitat-specific applications of an improved fishing effects model will take advantage of finer-scale information on catches owing to VMS, the Catch-in-Areas database, and improved geospatial habitat data.
3. A third technical subgroup will reassess non-fishing effects by developing a tool for spatial analysis of information on activities unrelated to fishing, such as fiber optic cables on the seafloor and locations of mines.

The SSC appreciates the excellent efforts of staff on this issue and fully supports the proposed approach for the EFH 5-year review. It is well thought out and this advance planning will facilitate Council decision making on EFH issues in 2015. Internal NMFS funding has been secured for successful execution of planned activities. Updated information for each species, coupled to new description methodology, should greatly advance our understanding of EFH for many FMP-managed species. If successful, these improvements in EFH designations may warrant omnibus amendments to all six FMPs.

An improved fishing effects model should provide an excellent tool to the Council for future considerations of additional management measures (e.g., effort reduction, gear modifications, and area closures) to mitigate fishing effects on benthic habitats. The improved model might also be useful to re-evaluate the ability of existing marine protected areas (e.g., crab area closures) to achieve their originally stated goals.

The SSC would like to hear a presentation on the new EFH designation methodology in October 2014, and a presentation on the results of its implementation in April 2015. The SSC offers the following specific advice to staff:

1. Prepare a one-page “cheat sheet” that compares the advantages and disadvantages of the LEI and SASI models.
2. Compare outcomes from the “old” and “new” versions of the LEI model. For instance, when and where has scoring changed?
3. Seek feedback from stock assessment authors about linkages between stock assessments and EFH. For instance, do habitat-specific rates of growth, reproduction, or survival under Level 3 inform stratified field sampling plans, stock assessment model specifications, and/or harvest control rules?
4. Clarify the ability of the improved fishing effects model to facilitate evaluation of alternative management scenarios and how habitat has changed as a result of historical (e.g., demise of shrimp trawl fisheries) or potential future fishery changes.

D-3 PSEIS SIR Review

Diana Evans (NMPFC) provided an overview of the Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS) Supplemental Information Report (SIR) draft to the SSC. No public testimony was received.

In 2004, a PSEIS for the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries led to the development of a preferred alternative (PA) that informs the Council's current groundfish management. The PA was purposefully designed to be flexible, and to allow Council to phase in changes over a lengthy timeframe. In April 2012, the SSC reviewed a document, developed at the Council's request, discussing whether there was a need to update the 2004 PSEIS in light of changes in management strategies, FMP amendments, and changes in fisheries and environmental conditions. In June 2012, Council requested that a SIR be developed to consider the limited question of whether there had been sufficient changes to require supplementing the current PSEIS.

Council staff clarified that the requirements for a new PSEIS are focused around whether either of two triggers had been met. The triggering conditions for a new PSEIS are (1) changes to the overall program that fall outside the previously approved PA, or (2) new knowledge/circumstances that would alter conclusions about the impact of the program on the quality of the human environment in a significant manner. Provided that neither trigger has been met, when finalized, this SIR may provide sufficient justification to defer the need for a new PSEIS until a later date. However, even if it is determined that a PSEIS is not required, the Council may opt to initiate revisions anyway.

This is the first time that the SSC has reviewed any programmatic SIR, and we commend Council staff for developing a clear and detailed document that lays out the history and need for this review. It was noted that the SIR addresses the fairly narrow question of whether a PSEIS is required under NEPA policy, not whether it might be desirable from Council's perspective. In addressing this question, the document does a very thorough job, and the SSC did not note any missing considerations.

The draft document finds that there have not been sufficient changes in groundfish fisheries management to trigger a new PSEIS at this time. As a result, the SIR focuses on the second criterion concerning new knowledge or information that might alter previous conclusions of impact. In evaluating this question, staff solicited expert opinion on the status of individual target, non-target, prohibited species, marine mammals and seabirds, habitat, socioeconomic, and ecosystem concerns. Details of the expert opinion are provided in a comprehensive appendix and summarized in section 6 of the SIR. The document notes that in several cases where specific actions taken by Council were likely to have focused impacts on species of concern (e.g., Steller sea lions, Pacific salmon), those changes have undergone separate NEPA review, and emphasizes that the question being considered here is at the program, not species, level.

The SIR noted inconsistencies in how some experts responded to some questions on the SIR template. The SSC supports the stated intention that staff will revisit those conclusions to ensure consistency prior to release of a final SIR to the public. The SSC discussed whether expert opinion was consistent when applied to the question of whether new analyses using the latest methods and information would lead to significantly different conclusions. The SSC noted model 2 in the 2014 Greenland turbot assessment, which, if adopted, would have indicated overfished status, as well as declining trends in Bering Sea sleeper sharks, which could be interpreted with new/ongoing analyses to lead to different determination of the impact of the fishery on these stocks. These situations may warrant at least a comment, but the SSC defers to the experts whose opinions were solicited for these particular stocks. Even in these cases, staff pointed out that the current management system is set up to address changes in stock status determinations and that a "decision to supplement the PSEIS must be based on consideration of the proposed action as a whole."

The stated timeline for Council action (October 2014) should satisfy a written public comment request for a 60-day public review period. The document should be checked for grammatical errors prior to public release. Unless requested by the Council, the SSC does not see the need to review the final SIR prior to final action.

D-4 Research Priorities

Diana Evans (NPFMC) and Michael Fey (AKFIN) provided an update on efforts to develop a web-based online application and database for submitting, reviewing, and managing the prioritization of research needs identified by the scallop, crab, and groundfish Plan Teams (Figure 1). No public comments were received. The application under development will allow the Plan Teams to submit and edit research needs identified by each of their teams. It will also allow the SSC to review these submissions and approve of (or not) their inclusion in the list of research priorities presented to the Council at their June meeting. The public will also be able to access this database online and export the information to an Excel spreadsheet.

Diana Stram (NPFMC) also updated the SSC on tentative plans the Groundfish Plan Teams have for addressing the review and update of their research needs during upcoming cycle of Plan Team and Council meetings. Groundfish Plan Teams were unable to update their research priorities this past fall due to the government shutdown. Therefore, they will not have any new priorities to incorporate into the database in June 2014. Instead, they plan to form a subcommittee from members of the two groundfish Plan Teams that will use the new application to review research priorities that result from the June 2014 Council meeting. Updates to groundfish research priorities by the subcommittee would then be reviewed and further updated by the assessment authors and Plan Teams during their September and November meetings, respectively, and submitted to the SSC in October and December. The SSC could then review and accept, modify, or reject these at their October and December meetings or wait until the following February meeting to address them together when there is more time for review and discussion.

The SSC thanks Council and AKFIN staff for their efforts to develop the application and their goal to have the application available for use by the SSC during their June 2014 meeting. A schematic of the process envisioned for the database has been constructed (Figure 1). We look forward to using the application to review and prioritize an updated list of research needs identified by the Scallop and Crab Plan Teams, as well as the overall list of research priorities, at the June meeting. We also agree with the Groundfish Plan Teams' plan for addressing the review and updating of research priorities during the upcoming year. The SSC also has the following general comments and suggestions:

- We reiterate our desire for input from the Council in the form of an updated list of ongoing (long-term), current, and upcoming management actions, along with a prioritization of these management actions to help inform our ranking of research priorities.
- Once the online application and cycle for updating research priorities within the application are successfully implemented, we envision potential involvement of the Advisory Panel in reviewing the list of research priorities as part of the annual cycle of review.
- The database field named "SSC Priority" should be renamed "SSC/Council Priority."
- There should be some consideration of a process for discussing with the Plan Teams and SSC on when to remove a research item from the priority list.
- Develop a method for archiving the annual priority reports of the Plan Teams, the SSC, and the Council
- A notification system for when changes to priorities are made by the Council would be helpful.
- A way to screen priorities by year, and some way to track the history of changes by year might be helpful, if not too logistically difficult.

Navigation Overview

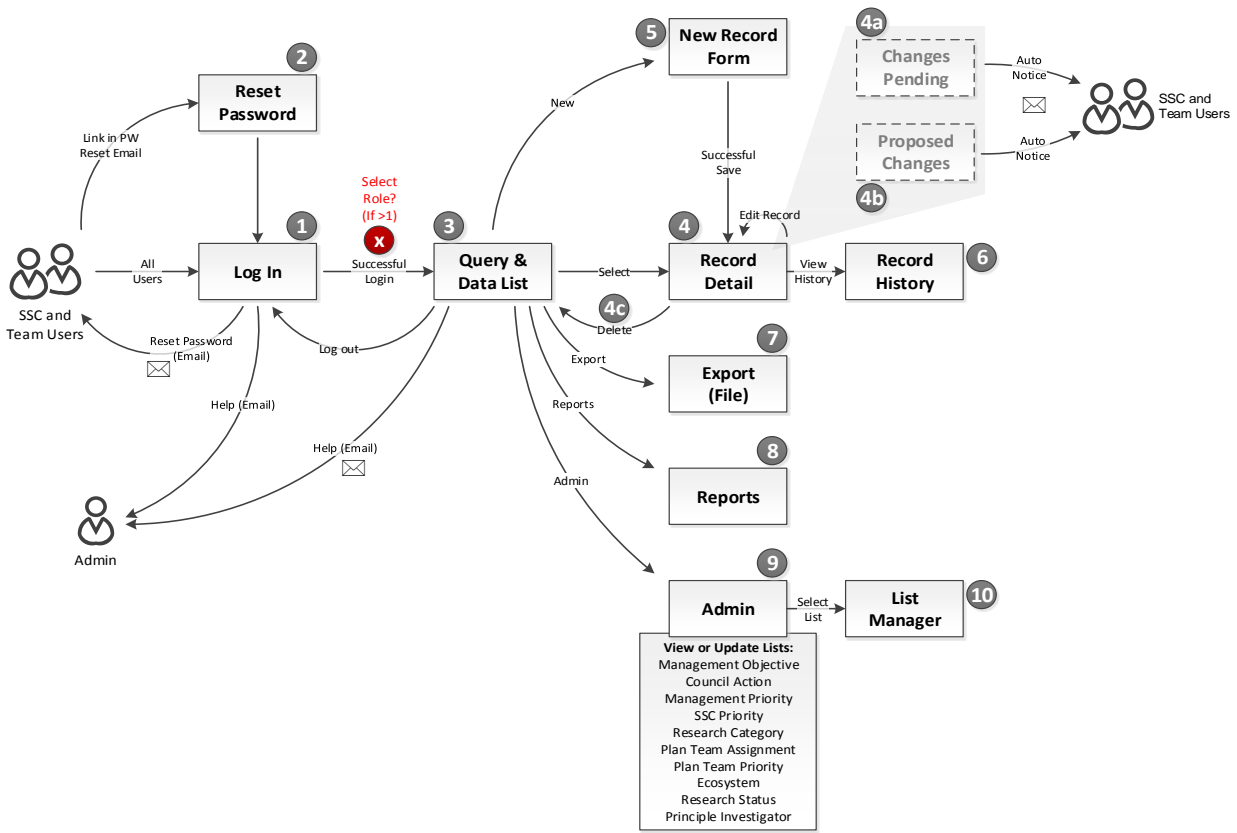


Figure 1. Schematic of the research priorities application database and its use.

D-5 Pacific Cod Assessment Models

Grant Thompson (NMFS-AFSC) provided two presentations to the SSC: (1) an overview on the data and base models from the 2013 Pacific cod stock assessment models, and (2) the March 2014 report of the Joint Team Subcommittee on Pacific Cod Models. There were five documents that gave the background for the historical development of Pacific cod models; these are available as appendices to the report. The presentations focused on the data available, model nomenclature, descriptions of the 2011 base model, and models that evolved from it. Public testimony was provided by George Hutchings (President of the Americans for Equal Access).

Unlike most groundfish assessment models, Pacific cod assessments are fitted to trends in survey numbers, not biomass. Composition information consists of length frequencies, and there is some aging information, but with only one year available for the AI stock. In general, the survey CPUE information for the BS, AI, and the GOA do not provide a lot of contrasting information that would resolve model confounding between global scaling and productivity. In other words, the data could equally come from a small productive stock, or a very large, less productive stock. Nearly all of the alternative model structures deal with this lack of information problem via informative priors for global scaling parameters such as catchability coefficients, or fixing Q and estimating time-varying parameters for selectivity. The analyst noted that, at least in the EBS case, it is very difficult to fit the survey CPUE data without allowing Q to vary over time.

The AI data present a very challenging problem, in which the annual survey CPUEs show a near monotonic decline, but the average size of fish caught in the fishery increases over the same time period. It has been difficult to reconcile this divergence using similar age-structured models that are used for EBS and the GOA stocks.

In the GOA, recent commercial catches have been much higher than in the 1980s, and the pot fishery is a much more dominant gear type in this region. Trends in survey CPUE are also relatively uninformative and in years where there are contrasting changes in abundance (e.g., 2010), estimates of uncertainty are extremely large. Another unique feature in the GOA survey data is that 2-year old cod appear to be less available to the survey gear than age-1 and age-3 cod. This poses potential problems when using parametric selectivity curves that have monotonic increasing functions. One solution has been to split the data set up into sub-27cm and over-27cm groups. **The SSC recommends exploring a time-varying, non-parametric function (i.e., a random walk) that directly estimates age-specific selectivity coefficients in lieu of splitting the data into two independent sources.**

A subcommittee consisting of members from the Groundfish Joint Plan Team last met on March 12, 2014 via phone conference to discuss Pacific cod models. The objective of this meeting was to reduce the number of possible model configurations to a maximum of six models for each area, while the authors are free to include additional discretionary models as they see fit. The process for developing and refining appropriate models for Pacific cod still needs to mature and **the SSC recommends that the assessment authors continue to work with the subcommittee to refine this process. For 2014, the SSC recommends as an alternative model the use of the time-varying, non-parametric selectivity function described above. Additionally, profiling over the natural mortality rate should be conducted to gain a better understanding of the relationship between global scaling (Q and its associated priors) and natural mortality rate.** The mode of the M-profile should not be used as a basis for setting the natural mortality rate in the model as it is conditional on other structural assumptions in the model. **Lastly, the SSC recommends that as an overarching goal for these three areas, a common model structure be explored and based on the biology of Pacific cod and not devolve over time to address area-specific outliers or retrospective biases.**

In light of the presentation, the SSC clarified its intent regarding the use of the base model (“base” being used here to identify the model accepted by the SSC in the previous year) for “several” years. While the SSC cannot be prescriptive about the exact length of time this would be, the idea is to continue the use of the model until there is general agreement by the stock assessment authors, the Plan Team, and the SSC on discontinuing its use.

The SSC discussed the use of model averaging to ameliorate some of the problems of choosing among competing models with substantially different estimates. Essentially, the SSC agrees with the analyst that this approach should not be used until progress is made regarding issues about the selection of the competing models and averaging over models with nonlinearities in population and fishery processes.

The SSC also discussed the nomenclature used to specify models in a historical context (when introduced and the model designator). While the SSC understands that this was useful for the historical presentation, it also notes that the nomenclature is confusing and probably not useful for the assessment in a given year. Furthermore, the use of “base model” to denote any model that is proposed seems overly inclusive and perhaps should be restricted to the chosen model in a previous assessment year.

Miscellaneous Items

Data Confidentiality Consideration

NPFMC Executive Director Chris Oliver met with the SSC to discuss the Data Access and Confidentiality section of the Council’s letter in response to U.S. Congressman Doc Hastings’ draft of the MSA revision. The letter concluded, “Overall, the NPFMC believes that the current data collection and confidentiality provisions in the MSA are working quite well.” Mr. Oliver conveyed that this was written in response to a proposed revision that would have increased restrictions; it was not intended to convey that specific improvements in data access were not needed.

The SSC identified two points where data access and confidentiality provisions are viewed as inadequate, especially by social scientists charged with assessing the benefits, costs, and distributional effects of Council initiatives. First, the SSC December 2013 meeting report reflected concerns (again raised in the GOA rationalization discussion paper in April 2014), about interpretations of entity confidentiality encompassing cooperatives as single entities. If this interpretation persists, reporting performance of entire fisheries under Council management would be impossible on the basis of confidentiality constraints. The MSA is ambiguous on this matter, but it appears that this ambiguity has been functionally interpreted by NOAA as restrictively as possible. The informational responsibilities and obligations incumbent upon those who profit from public trust resources could be addressed during a revision of MSA.

Second, the use of third-party contractors to collect, compile, manage, and disseminate statistical data to Council and Agency staff is a concern. The value of establishing barriers to access of data, collected under legal mandates, impose costs, both in terms of efficient use of staff and expenditures of limited financial resources. It is our understanding that there has been no instance of confidential data released by Council or agency analysts in NPFMC experience, calling into question whether these additional data costs and access complexities are justified. Ultimately, the Council must assess whether the benefits of contracting a third-party to provide blind-data management, justify the costs (e.g., staff time and associated resources, delays resulting from communication failures between analysts and third-party data managers, error detection and resolution, contracting expenditure and overhead).

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News & Notes

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

April 2014

Senator Begich Addresses Council

Alaska Senator Mark Begich thanked the Council for their work in Alaska fisheries, and briefly addressed a recent discussion draft of an MSA reauthorization bill. He outlined the major changes and encouraged comment on the draft.



Adios Gregg!

The Council would like to thank Gregg Williams, of the IPHC, for his dedicated service to the North Pacific fisheries. For over 36 years he has been a part of the fisheries management process, and we wish him luck in his future endeavors.



Photo: David Witherell

Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch Management

The Council received several reports related to Chinook and chum salmon bycatch management in the Bering Sea. Genetic stock composition analyses were presented for Chinook salmon samples in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries from 2012, and stock composition analyses of chum salmon in the Bering Sea in 2012. The majority (64%) of Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea is from the aggregate Coastal western Alaska stock grouping which includes rivers from Norton Sound to Bristol Bay (including the middle and lower Yukon and the Kuskokwim). Estimated annual stock composition from the Upper Yukon is approximately 2.4%. These results are similar to estimates from 2011 samples. Chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery remains dominated by stocks of Asian origin (~60%) with annual contribution from western Alaska chum stocks of roughly 14%. Sampling protocols in the GOA limit the ability to estimate Chinook stock composition thus results can only be used to determine presence or absence of individual stocks at this stage. The samples show an abundance

however of southern stock groups (British Columbia, West Coast of the United State and Coastal Southeast Alaska). All genetic analyses are available on line at NOAA Technical memorandums (see Council website).

The Bering Sea pollock industry provided their annual reports on their respective sector incentive program agreements (IPAs) for Chinook salmon bycatch management as well as the report on the current combined cooperative management of chum salmon bycatch. These reports are available on the Council website and provide an overview of each IPA's efforts to avoid Chinook salmon bycatch in 2013 as well as estimates of the number of salmon avoided. The Council was updated by staff on the upcoming discussion paper for the June Council meeting which will address a number of analyses of potential changes to the current Chinook bycatch management including shortening the pollock season, requiring salmon excluders and additional constraints on the fleet when bycatch rates are high. The paper will also provide an overview of the modifications to goals and objectives of the program necessary to incorporate chum salmon bycatch into the existing IPAs. The discussion paper will be available on the Council website in mid-May. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

No Place Like Nome

The Council will be meeting in Nome, Alaska June 2-10. For those who are interested in attending, who may be looking for lodging, please contact the Chamber of Commerce (907)443-6555, or www.visitnomealaska.com. They will be able to help you with arrangements.

Round Island Transit

The Council reviewed the final EA/RIR/IRFA for an action to allow seasonal transit opportunities for vessels with FFPs through walrus protection areas at Round Island and Cape Peirce in northern Bristol Bay, Alaska. The Council approved a motion to select the Preliminary Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2 Option 1, and Alternative 3, as its Preferred Alternative. The text of the Preferred Alternative reads:

- *Alternative 2, Option 1:*
Establish a transit area, open from April 1 through August 15, annually, north of a line from 58° 47.90' N, 160° 21.91' W to 58° 32.94' N, 159° 35.45' W, maintaining a minimum of 3 nm from Round Island.
- *Alternative 3: establish a transit area in the EEZ near Cape Peirce, open from April 1 through August 15, annually, east of a line from 58° 30.00' N, 161° 46.20' W to 58° 21.00' N, 161° 46.20' W*

Staff contact is Steve MacLean

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

The Council reviewed a discussion paper that responded to an October 2013 motion outlining a potential program framework to manage and reduce bycatch in the GOA trawl fisheries. The paper covered program elements that were outlined in the motion (allocation of target and bycatch species, cooperative management, observer coverage, gear conversion, existing sector allocations, and community stability measures), as well as some issues that were not addressed (sideboards, license and quota transferability, and quota share/use caps).

The Council passed three motions on this item. The first motion modifies and expands the previous program framework. Program eligibility is defined for both the inshore and offshore sectors. The list of species to be considered for allocation was expanded from pollock and Pacific cod to include some flatfish and rockfish target species, as well as some secondary species. The motion provides ranges of years to be considered for qualifying history. For each sector, the motion provides a potential list of required elements to be addressed through a cooperative contract. The motion maintains community stability measures that were part of the October 2013 motion, and adds a range of ownership, use, and processing caps for preliminary analysis; a placeholder for other eligibility criteria that would protect fishing communities is maintained from the previous motion. The motion narrows the focus of gear conversion measures to the harvesting of trawl quota with pot gear. Finally, the motion states that the Council will consider whether or not to maintain existing sideboards, and whether new sideboards are necessary to protect unallocated Pacific cod trawl fisheries (West Yakutat) and pot fisheries (Western and Central GOA).

The other two motions requested separate discussion papers on elements that could be incorporated into the program framework. One paper will examine how "Community Fisheries Association(s)" might address Council Objectives

relating to community stability, and how the CFA tool contrasts with stability measures that are already included in the Council's proposed framework. The paper will identify legal and implementation issues, as well as how inclusion of CFAs would affect other elements of the program. A proposed CFA structure is described in the CFA motion. The other paper would explore how an adaptive management quota set-aside was implemented in the West Coast groundfish trawl ITQ program, the expected opportunities and challenges that are associated with adaptive management quota, and the Pacific Council's rationale for its inclusion.

The Council also reviewed the forms that will be used for economic data collection (EDR) on the GOA trawl fisheries. Science Center staff indicated that some minor modifications might be made to the forms, based on the results of pre-testing. The Council requested that the Executive Director review any changes to determine if they warrant further consideration by the Council before the forms are finalized.

The Council also endorsed Council outreach meetings with Western GOA fishermen in May, in order to better inform them of potential program elements and prepare them to provide specific input on WGOA inclusion.

The motions can be found on the NPFMC website. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

Digital Council Meetings

The Council and the public have been using a new document management system which greatly reduces the amount of paper necessary pre, during, and post Council meetings. All of the items available during a meeting are accessible digitally by accessing the agenda, either from our website, or from npfmc.legistar.com. Additionally, agendas and attached items are also available through an app for the ipad called iLegislate. For more information, or to get set up using the app, contact Maria Shawback or Peggy Kircher at the office.

Bering Sea Canyons

The Council reviewed a discussion paper that summarized information presented at the Bering Sea Canyons Workshop held in Seattle, WA on February, 3, 2014, and presented information on the management measures that the Council has used to protect corals in the Gulf of Alaska and Aleutian Islands, and could use if they wished to protect corals in the eastern Bering Sea. After public comment and deliberation, the Council approved a motion to draft a Purpose and Need Statement, which is available on the Council website.

In passing this motion the Council noted that they have consistently acted to identify significant concentrations of deep sea corals and to protect those areas from fishery impacts. This action continues a process to re-examine the potential value and need for management measures to protect habitat in Bering Sea canyons. This motion focuses action on the coral habitat of Pribilof Canyon and the directly adjacent slope. The objective of the action is to protect significant concentrations of coral in this area from fishing impacts. The Council will schedule a time for scoping testimony during one of its upcoming meetings, but no sooner than October 2014, to focus on two topics: the general range of alternatives that should be considered under this action; and the best process by which to identify, develop, and refine alternatives. It was noted that alternatives would not be finalized until after adequate review of the data that will be provided by the Fisherman's Information and drop camera surveys to be completed in summer 2014. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

Scallop Management

The Council received the annual stock assessment and fishery evaluation (SAFE) report for the weathervane scallop stocks in Alaska. The SSC set the acceptable biological catch (ABC) limit at 1.161 million pounds of shucked scallop meats, a level equivalent to 90% of the overfishing limit (OFL) per the established ABC control rule. The ABC is specified statewide while actual guideline harvest levels (GHLs) are established by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game by registration area. The Council was informed of the new State waters fishery that may be prosecuted in several areas of the state following the sunset of the prior state vessel based moratorium. Actual management by ADF&G in each of the allowable areas for the State waters component of the bed will be determined based upon an assessment of effort by region prior to the opening of the fishery. The SSC was supportive of the Scallop Plan Team's intent to hold a data-poor assessment workshop for scallop stocks and provided some input on additional topics for consideration for that workshop. The Team intends to schedule that workshop in early 2015. The Council also reviewed a request from State of Alaska Representative Paul Seaton, asking for a

review of permit consolidation in the scallop fisheries, but took no action on the request. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

PSEIS SIR

The Council reviewed the draft Supplemental Information Report (SIR) on the 2004 Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic Supplemental Information Statement (PSEIS). The objective of the draft SIR is to synthesize relevant information about the nature of changes to the groundfish management program since the 2004 PSEIS, and new information about the impacts of the fisheries relevant to environmental concerns, in order to assess whether the NEPA conditions that require an EIS to be supplemented have been met. Following a review of the information contained in the draft SIR, the Council recommends that a supplement to the PSEIS is not necessary at this time. The SIR will be finalized to incorporate SSC comments, after which NMFS will make its determination on the SIR. In response to public testimony, the agency noted that they would consider any public comments on the SIR before making their final determination if received before the end of May. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

Bering Sea FEP

The Council discussed the next steps for the development of a Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), a project that was initiated in February 2014. The Council is soliciting public input on what the objectives of the FEP should be, and whether and how a Council FEP could provide added value to the Council. The Council will schedule an opportunity for stakeholder input on the FEP at the June Council meeting in Nome, and also intends to hold outreach hearings in Anchorage and Seattle later in the summer/fall. Based on public input, including recommendations from its Ecosystem Committee, the Council will then consider whether and how to proceed with the FEP, including questions of FEP design and content, and staff workload. Staff contact is Diana Evans

Staff Tasking

In addition to discussing the relative priority of previously tasked projects, the Council provided clarifications on several issues and discussed tasking for its various committees. Additionally, the Council tasked staff to do the following:

- Send a letter to the NMFS Assistant Administrator regarding inconsistencies with insurance requirements for federal observers.
- Meet with IPHC staff to re-examine the halibut discard mortality rates for CDQ fisheries and discuss why they would be different than the non-CDQ fisheries.

Upcoming Meetings

Crab Plan Team: May 5-8, 2014. Federal building Juneau, AK. Agenda Online.

Joint Protocol Alaska BOF and NPFMC: May 21, Anchorage

EM Workgroup: May 15-16, 1:00pm Clarion Suites, Anchorage

Observer Advisory Committee: May 28-29, 10am (TBD)

Council Meeting: June 2-10, Nome, AK

Groundfish PT: September 23-27, November 17-21, Seattle, AFSC

Ecosystem Committee: Seattle, September 2014 (TBD)

Amendment 80 5-Year Review

At this meeting, the Council reviewed a draft Amendment 80 Program 5-year review. As part of the Amendment 80 program developed by the Council and as required by section 303 (A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), a 5-year review of the program is required to determine progress in meeting the goals of the Amendment 80 Program and the MSA. After reviewing the draft report, the Council asked staff to include suggested changes and additions to the document and bring back for a final review at the October meeting. A copy of the Amendment 80 5-Year review is available on the Council website. Contact is Jon McCracken.

Fishing Cooperatives Report Review

At the April meeting, the Council reviewed cooperative reports for the Amendment 80 Program, Central Gulf Alaska Rockfish Program, and American Fisheries Act Program. As part of these programs, cooperatives have provided annual written reports detailing the use of the cooperative quota. These reports are intended to be a resource for the Council to track the effectiveness of the cooperative and its ability to meet the Council's goal for the programs. Additionally, the reports are a tool for the cooperatives to provide feedback on the programs to the Council. At this meeting, the Council did not take any action concerning the cooperative reports, but they did note their appreciation for the written reports and the oral presentations provided by the cooperative managers. Copies of the cooperative reports are available on the Council website. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

EFH 5-year review

The Council was briefed on the proposed approach for the 2015 EFH 5-year review. The 2015 review will focus on three key areas where revised workproducts are anticipated: refining EFH species descriptions with specific habitat data, streamlining and updating the fishing effects model, and developing a spatial dimension to the non-fishing effects descriptions. The review will also prioritize stocks for habitat assessment, in accordance with the Habitat Assessment Improvement Plan (HAIP), and will inform the Council's 5-year consideration of whether habitat priorities should be identified for a HAPC call for proposals. The Council supported the approach, and requested that SSC and Ecosystem Committee comments be taken into account. The Council also hopes the review will specifically highlight any new information relevant to the habitat of the Bering Sea shelf break, slope, and canyons areas. Staff contact is Diana Evans/Steve MacLean.

BSAI Crab Cooperative Reports

The Council discussed the content and format of the first round of BSAI crab cooperative reports. The majority of these reports were submitted in December 2013, with two additional reports submitted for this April meeting; representing a total of 9 of the 10 crab cooperatives. Council members deliberated on the appropriate expectations for a voluntary cooperative report. The Council passed a motion that encourages responses from all cooperatives in the future and recommends all cooperatives' answers to be as quantitative as possible. Additionally, the motion establishes the seven question format, as exemplified by the ICE report of 2013, as a preferred reporting format. Reports should be submitted by March 1 of each year. Staff contact is Sarah Marrinan.

EM Workgroup

The Council appointed a Council Fixed Gear Electronic Monitoring (EM) Workgroup at this meeting. The Workgroup is tasked with reviewing the different research tracks going forward as part of the 2014-2015 EM cooperative research program, and providing input on research objectives and data protocols. The Workgroup will also review how the research will inform the Council's objectives for estimating catch and discards, and will identify a timeline, milestones, and decision points for integrating EM into the Observer Program. The composition of the Workgroup includes appointed representatives of the fixed gear fleets and EM service provider companies, and agency representatives from NMFS, ADF&G, PSMFC, IPHC, and the Council. The Workgroup will hold its first meeting in May. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 4/18/14

June 2-10, 2014 Nome, AK	October 6-14, 2014 Anchorage, AK	December 8-16, 2014 Anchorage, AK
MSA Reauthorization: Update SSL EIS: Update		VMS Discussion paper: Review
BSAI Halibut PSC Stock Impacts: Discussion paper Sector reports on BSAI Halibut PSC measures	CDQ Halibut PSC discard mortality rates: Report BSAI Halibut PSC Deck Sorting: Discussion paper (T) GOA Trawl Bycatch Management: Discussion papers	GOA Trawl Bycatch Management: Action as necessary
Observer Advisory Committee report Observer Program Annual Report Observers for Tending: Initial Review Electronic Monitoring: Workgroup report	AI Pcod Allocation: Initial Review Draft Observer Annual Deployment Plan: Review Observers for Tending: Final Action (T)	AI Pcod Allocation: Final Action (T) Observer coverage on small CPs: Discussion paper Observer coverage on BSAI trawl CVs: Discussion paper
Crab ROFR contract terms: Initial Review	Charter Halibut Common Pool: CATCH report/Disc paper	Area 4A halibut retention in pots: Initial Review (T) IFQ Vessel Caps: Discussion paper (T)
CDQ P.cod fishery development: Initial Review	Crab ROFR contract terms: Final Action ROFR Aleutia PQS: Final Action CDQ P.cod fishery development: Final Action	Pribilof canyon corals: Receive comments re range of alternatives
BSAI crab ABC/OFLs for 3 stocks: Approve; PT report	BSAI Crab SAFE report: set ABC/OFL for 7 stocks: PT report	BSAI Crab bycatch: Discussion paper
Norton Sound RKC LLPs: Discussion paper	GOA sablefish longline pots: Initial Review	GOA sablefish longline pots: Final Action
Bering Sea Chinook/chum salmon bycatch: Disc. paper	Proposed groundfish harvest specs: Approve; PT report	Final groundfish harvest specs: Approve; PT report
Bering Sea FEP: Receive comments	GOA Skate MRA revisions: Initial Review MRA calculation all fisheries: Discussion Paper	GOA Skate MRA revisions: Final Action
Research Priorities	Bering Sea FEP: Update/review objectives	ITEMS BELOW NOT YET SCHEDULED
BS Trawl Salmon Excluder EFP: Review/consultation	EFH 5-year Review update: SSC only	Greenland Turbot allocation: Initial Review EFH 5-year Review (2015) GOA Tending (Feb 2015) Observer fee collection methods: Discussion paper Observer exemption for deminimus IFQ: Discussion paper Observer requirements for multiple area fishing: Discussion paper
	Am 80 5-year review: Final Report	

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
EFH - Essential Fish Habitat
EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
FEP - Fishery Ecosystem Plan
FLL - Freezer longliners

HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
ICA - Inter-cooperative Agreements
IPA - Incentive Program Agreements
LLP - Limited License Plan
MPA - Marine Protected Area
MRA - Maximum Retainable Allowance
PSEIS - Programmatic Supplemental Impact Statement
PSC - Prohibited Species Catch
RKC - Red King Crab
ROFR - Right of First Refusal
SIR - Supplemental Information Report
SSC - Scientific and Statistical Committee
SAFE - Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation

Future Meeting Dates and Locations

June 2-10, 2014, Nome
October 6-14, 2014 Anchorage
December 8-16, 2014, Anchorage
February 2-10, 2015, Seattle
April 6-14, 2015, Anchorage
June 1-9, 2015, Sitka
October 5-13, 2015 Anchorage
December 7-15, 2015, Anchorage

(T) = Tentative