

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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MINUTES

205th Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
September 27-October 4, 2011, Dutch Harbor, Alaska

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| 1. Public Attendance Register | 7. Tanner Crab Rebuilding Action Plan |
| 2. Time Log | 8. BSAI Specifications |
| 3. AP Minutes | 9. BSAI PSCs |
| 4. SSC Minutes | 10. GOA Specifications |
| 5. Draft CIE TOR | 11. GOA Halibut PSCs |
| 6. CV/Processor EDR Alternatives | 12. GOA Halibut PSC Motion |

MINUTES

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APPROVED: 

DATE: October 4, 2011

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in Dutch Harbor, Alaska September 27-October 4, 2011. The following Council, SSC and AP members, and NPFMC staff attended the meetings.

Council Members

Eric Olson, Chair
Dave Benson, Vice Chair
Sam Cotten
Duncan Fields
Dave Hanson

John Henderschedt
Roy Hyder
Dan Hull
Cora Campbell/Stefanie
Moreland

Jim Balsiger
Bill Tweit
CAPT Greg Sanial/LT Tony
Keene

NPFMC Staff

Gail Bendixen
Jane DiCosimo
Mark Fina

Nicole Kimball
Peggy Kircher
Steve MacLean
Sarah Melton

Chris Oliver
Maria Shawback
Diana Stram

Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC met from September 26 - 28, 2011 at the Grand Aleutian Hotel, Dutch Harbor Alaska. Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

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

Jennifer Burns
University of Alaska Anchorage

Robert Clark
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Anne Hollowed
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

George Hunt
University of Washington

Gordon Kruse
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Kathy Kuletz
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Franz Mueter
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Jim Murphy
University of Alaska Anchorage

Lew Queirolo
NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region

Terry Quinn
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Seth Macinko
University of Rhode Island

Kate Reedy-Maschner
Idaho State University, Pocatello

Ray Webster
International Halibut Commission

Doug Woodby
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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Advisory Panel

The AP met from September 26 – 29, at the Unisea conference room in Dutch Harbor, Alaska.

Kurt Cochran
Craig Cross
John Crowley
Julianne Curry
Jerry Downing
Tom Enlow
Tim Evers

Jeff Farvour
Becca Robbins Gisclair
Jan Jacobs
Bob Jacobson
Alexus Kwachka
Chuck McCallum
Matt Moir

Theresa Peterson
Ed Poulsen
Neil Rodriguez
Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

ATTACHMENT 1 contains the public sign in register and **ATTACHMENT 2** a time log of Council proceedings, including those providing reports and public comment during the meeting.

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting from June 2011. Motion passed unanimously.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eric Olson called the meeting to order at approximately 8:07 am on Wednesday, September 28, 2011.

Dr. Jim Balsiger swore in the newly re-appointed Council members: Eric Olson and John Henderschedt.

Election of Officers:

Commissioner Campbell nominated Eric Olson as Chairman, and Dave Benson as Vice-Chairman, and complimented both of them on their service over the past year. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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

The agenda was approved as published.

B. REPORTS

The Council received the following reports: Executive Director's Report (B-1); NMFS Management Report (B-2); ADF&G Report (B-3); USCG Report (B-5); and Protected Species Report (B-7). Additionally, they received a report from Nicole Ricci, US State Department, and a written report (B-6) from USF&W.

Executive Director's Report:

Chris Oliver reviewed his written report, and updated the Council on the various meetings and workshops scheduled. He specifically noted the importance of having the fishery management councils involved in regional planning bodies, such as the newly formed Ocean Research Advisory Panel, and noted the importance for the councils to be involved in a meaningful consultation process. Mr. Oliver has submitted his name to have a seat on that same panel.

Mr. Oliver updated the Council on the Fisheries Leadership and Sustainability Forum, and noted that it provided a good opportunity for the Council to learn ways they can be involved and benefit from the coastal management initiative.

There was brief discussion regarding a workshop to review the halibut migration models and stock assessment processes. He noted that he has been working with the IPHC and that the timing may not work until February or March of 2012. The workshop would include a review of NPFMC's halibut bycatch estimation procedures in the groundfish fisheries and concern over pending changes in the estimation methods was noted.

NMFS Management Report

Mr. Glenn Merrill provided an update on the status of actions on various amendments and proposed and final rules and answered questions from the Council. There was general discussion regarding coordination between state and federal processes. He referenced his handout which is included in the Council notebooks, and reviewed the final and proposed rule timelines.

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Mr. Merrill also reviewed a written update on the Halibut Catch Sharing Plan Proposed Rule. There was substantial discussion and questions of clarification from the Council members. It was generally agreed to discuss this item further after all the B reports and public comment.

Mary Furuness gave the summer and fall in-season management highlights and catch reports through mid-September and answered questions from Council members.

ADF&G Report

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

USCG Report

Lt. Tony Keene of the USCG provided the Coast Guard Enforcement Report after a brief introduction of Capt. Greg Sanial from the Chairman.

Protected Species Report

After a brief introduction by the Chairman, Steve MacLean gave an overview of the status of protected species issues, including a recent meeting of the Steller Sea lion independent review panel. He noted that a draft report from that meeting is available on the Council's website, and the final report should be available early October. Mr. MacLean also presented the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a review of the BSAI Groundfish Biological Opinion by the CIE, and noted that NMFS is seeking comments from the Council on the ToR.

He briefly also reviewed USF&W's written report; the satellite tracking of walrus, a request for review of harvest regulations for the Northern fur seal, and a draft plan for recovery of polar bear. Mr. MacLean answered various questions from the Council regarding SSL timing issues and the expected recommendations and comments from the Council. Dr. Balsiger noted that NMFS will take comments into consideration and integrate into the CIE review to the extent practicable.

US Department of State Report

Nicole Ricci gave a brief report on international matters of interest to the Council and distributed a written overview. The Council discussed the North Pacific Fishery Commission and the international negotiations to establish management measures on species that are not currently regulated. Dave Benson gave a brief update on that meeting he had attended.

Public comment was taken on all B agenda items.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

SSL Issues

There was brief discussion on the SSL CIE ToR, and it was generally agreed the Council should address any formal action under staff tasking.

Halibut Catch Sharing Plan

Ed Dersham recommended NMFS review the CSP after the many public comments and that the Council have an opportunity to comment after the incorporation of those comments. He noted the Council should schedule time in December to discuss guidance to the IPHC for their January meeting on 2012 GHM management. He also suggested comparing logbook data vs. statewide harvest survey data and consider making the logbook data the official data source on this issue. He would like the Council to discuss the timeline for this issue during staff tasking. Discussion continued regarding the proposed rule and recommendations the Council could make to the IPHC. Mr. Merrill noted that during NMFS' review process of comments on the CSP, a number of issues may require clarification from the Council as he outlined in a memo, and that he anticipated providing a document in December that would describe what the GHM would be and the suite of management measures that have been recommended. Mr. Fields noted his concern that the current CSP may generate lengthy public comment that may lead to reworking the entire CSP. It was generally agreed that the Council would have a narrowly focused discussion on halibut GHM in December, and that allocation would not be discussed.

Mr. Olson noted that there was not a motion, and it was generally agreed that this was the direction for the Council discussion on this issue in December.

Steller Sea Lion CIE Terms of Reference

Mr. Tweit noted that the Council should respond to a request for comments from Dr. Balsiger on the ToR, and that there should be a discussion on re-convening the SSL mitigation committee to work with NMFS on the RPAs.

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded by Commissioner Campbell, that:

- 1. The Council re-affirms interest in working with NMFS to develop the terms of reference for a Center of Independent Experts review and the process under which the review would be conducted.**
- 2. The Council adopts the attached draft TOR (ATTACHMENT 5) to facilitate discussion between the Council and NOAA to develop the process and ToR for the review. These discussions would be led by the Council Chair, Executive Director, and representatives of the State of Alaska and State of Washington.**

The Council will schedule review of the agreed ToR and process for the December meeting and consider next steps.

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion and briefly reviewed the draft ToR and noted that it is an important part of the CIE review process. Dr. Balsiger noted that although the ToR advocates a comprehensive review under this process, the proposed ToR may not work with the current CIE review process. Mr. Tweit noted the committee may review the contract and discuss a way to accommodate their concerns. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Tweit discussed future SSL Mitigation Committee work around spring 2012, and suggested tasking the committee at the February meeting with issues related to engaging with NMFS and collaborative RPAs. There was discussion regarding the framework and new material available before the committee can be tasked. It was generally agreed the Council will address this issue in February.

ADF&G BOF Proposals

Mr. Fields noted timing is an issue in the BOF proposals, and that comment is both appropriate and necessary. Mr. Dersham noted the Council should make comments to the BOF relative to impacted proposals, and that he would be at the Board meetings. It was agreed the issue should be addressed under staff tasking.

State Department Report

Mr. Tweit thanked Ms. Ricci for the presentation and noted that the Council should be kept informed of other North Pacific management organizations' decision, and that the Council's management actions are consistent with what is being done in international waters and in trans boundaries. The Council should restate its interest to the State Department in remaining involved in advisory groups and processes. **Mr. Tweit moved the Council draft a letter with three points, which was seconded by Mr. Fields:**

- 1. The importance of our continued involvement as a Council**
- 2. Supporting the Bering Sea Advisory Council**
- 3. A suggestion as the utility of the ICC as a forum for working with Russia to develop common positions for the NPFMC.**

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that the Council suggest elevating the NPFM Commission on the ICC Agenda. He noted that he is only interested in the Russia bi-lateral, because it has been successful in the past and is already in the ICC.

Mr. Benson moved to amend to add to the letter which was seconded, "Encourage the Department of State to hold early stakeholder consultation on UN/US Policy, including North Pacific RFMO Development, with regard to UN FAO guidelines on VME encounter protocol."

There was brief discussion regarding the next meeting, and it was agreed that the next meeting of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission would be in November. **The amendment passed without objection, and the main motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Fields noted that while response time was slower during an incident in Kodiak, there were no problems with communication infrastructure.

FORMAT FOR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FOR 'C' AND 'D' AGENDA ITEMS

Each agenda item will begin a brief background from part of the "Action Memo" from the Council meeting notebook. This section will be set in a different typeface and size than the actual minutes. Expanded portions and background of any agenda item are available in the Council notebooks and upon request. Following the Action Memo will be a very brief summary of the Staff, Advisory Panel, and Scientific and Statistical Committee Reports. Last will be a section describing Council **Discussion and Action**, if any.

C. MAJOR ISSUES/FINAL ACTION ITEMS

C-1 Salmon FMP

BACKGROUND

The Council is in the process of reviewing and updating the Salmon FMP in order to comply with recent Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) requirements and to reflect the Council's policy with regard to the State of Alaska's continued management authority over the sport (i.e., recreational) and commercial salmon fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Though the FMP has been amended nine times in the last two decades, there has not been a comprehensive analysis of management strategy or scope of FMP coverage since 1990. State fisheries regulations and Federal and international laws affecting Alaska salmon have changed and the reauthorization of the MSA has expanded the requirements for FMPs. Further, the FMP is vague with respect to management authority for three directed commercial salmon fisheries that occur in the West Area EEZ (west of Cape Suckling).

At its April 2011 meeting, the Council received a preliminary analysis that provided a review of the FMP and a basic discussion of how and to what degree Federal requirements are addressed in the FMP. The preliminary analysis also provided options for modifying FMP provisions and highlighted areas where the Council could recommend changes to the FMP's management measures. The Council selected Alternative 3 as its preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) and provided direction for FMP provisions the Council is considering modifying, removing, or adding. At this meeting, the Council will review an Initial Review draft environmental assessment (EA) analyzing the alternatives and options the Council identified, and a Salmon FMP public workshop report to determine whether to modify the alternatives and options or request further information.

Sarah Melton (NPFMC) and Gretchen Harrington (NMFS) gave the staff report on this issue. Ms. Melton gave the workshop report, and Ms. Harrington gave a background on the Salmon FMP issue to date and an overview of the Salmon FMP EA. Lance Nelson (NOAA GC) answered legal questions regarding regulatory and logistical impacts of the revised Salmon FMP. The AP and SSC reports on the agenda item were given. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Campbell moved to release the analysis for public review with the following direction:

The Council retains Alternative 3 as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) to modify the federal Salmon FMP to specifically exclude the three historical net commercial salmon fishing areas in the West Area EEZ, consistent with Council action in April 2011. The FMP would maintain the prohibition on commercial fishing in the remaining West Area.

In addition, the sport fishery for salmon in the West Area would be removed from the FMP under the PPA. In the East Area, the FMP would still apply to the directed commercial salmon troll fishery and the sport fishery in federal waters, and management would continue to be deferred to the State of Alaska.

With this refined fishery management unit, the Council moves to adopt the options for the FMP provisions identified in the working draft FMP as part of the PPA, including management and policy objectives (Chapter 3), stock status determination criteria (Chapter 5), optimum yield, and the federal review of state management measures for the East Area (Chapter 9).

Ms. Campbell briefly spoke to her motion, noting that the Council adopted this PPA and provided staff direction on updating the salmon FMP to comply with current federal requirements in April. She stated that it re-affirms the Council's current position and, by supporting the current options, it endorses the direction and continued development. Additionally, she requested staff address points raised in the SSC minutes to the extent practicable when preparing the analysis for public review. Final action should be on track for December.

There was brief discussion on boundary maps, and it was generally agreed that the State boundaries would be double-checked to ensure they are consistent with the NMFS maps within the current analysis. Ms. Harrington noted that NMFS will work closely with ADF&G to make sure the maps are indicative of the current boundaries.

Motion passed without objection.

C-3 (a) BSAI Crab Economic Data Collection

BACKGROUND

Over the course of several meetings, the Council has considered the revision of the crab Economic Data Reports (EDR) to improve the accuracy and reduce the cost of that program and eliminate redundancy with other data collection. Based on discussion papers, reports, public testimony, and its experience with the data collection initiatives, the Council finalized alternatives for an amendment package to revise the crab EDR at its April 2011 meeting

Mark Fina gave the staff report on this issue. Both the AP and the SSC gave their reports on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council members. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Moreland moved the Council refine the catcher vessel and processor/floating processor EDR alternatives as shown in ATTACHMENT 6, to incorporate and address relevant information from the CIE review, and to release the analysis for public review. She also moved to add a new component to analyze the current confidentiality protections vs. an alternative to remove blind formatting.

Ms. Moreland spoke to her motion, noting she revisited the purpose and needs statement and that it meets the Council's stated intent. Additionally, by incorporating CIE review info, it gives the Council more information and time to construct a preferred alternative. She noted that the range of alternatives includes status quo, and the motion includes analysis of blind formatting. Ms. Moreland noted it is important to fully explore blind formatting, so she can be comfortable eliminating other alternatives and data sources.

Mr. Henderschedt questioned the timing of CIE review and how it would impact the timing of future consideration of EDR. Ms. Moreland noted the report would be out the week after the Council meeting and would be available for analysts. There was brief discussion of the ability for the Council to make revisions and it was generally agreed if there was new material available, the Council would be able to revisit. There was also discussion on confidentiality, and specifically who has access to the data, and is it FOIA-able. It was agreed staff would include this discussion in the next analysis.

Mr. Fields moved to amend, which was seconded by Mr. Cotten, to add under Alternatives 2 and 3 vessel owners be required to submit with their EDR reports unique skipper/crew contracts in all settlement sheets by crab fishery for analysis.

Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, noting that there is a need to pursue data of greater detail and reliability. He would hope the analysts would review submission of data, and that it would give the Council a sense of magnitude involved in collection as well as utility of this type of data. Mr. Tweit noted his opposition to the structure, and that it may slow down the analysis. There was discussion on the timing of reports, and the different type of arrangements of crew contracts for analysts to interpret. Mr. Henderschedt stated if the information cannot be gained from the EDR process, then we may not get it from a survey, and he will not support the amendment. Mr. Hull noted his reservations about the amendment and the utility of the data, but also stated it would help him compare with what is in the package now. Mr. Balsiger noted that NMFS could determine what the costs would be for this type of paperwork analysis. Ms. Moreland stated the Council should go forward with the EDR but make this a trailing amendment.

Amendment passed 7/4, with Tweit, Benson, Henderschedt and Hyder objecting.

Mr. Henderschedt responded to the SSC's draft minutes about the failure of the Crab EDR program and noted that the alternatives in Ms. Moreland's motion are improvements to the program and not a failure of the EDR program in any way.

The amended main motion passed without objection.

Chairman Olsen announced that the Council discussed the use of electronic tablet devices for the use of document management only, and that consistent with the SOPPS, two-way communication of these devices would be disabled. He noted this policy will be reviewed at a later date.

C-3 (c) BSAI Crab SAFE

BACKGROUND

The Crab Plan Team met September 19-22 to review draft BSAI Crab stock assessments and provide recommendations for OFL and ABC for six of the ten stocks. There are 10 crab stocks in the BSAI Crab FMP and all 10 must have annually established OFLs. This year following approval of Amendment 38 to the Crab FMP, to comply with Annual Catch Limit provisions, annual ABCs are recommended by the SSC. Four stocks (Norton Sound red king crab, AI golden king crab, Pribilof Island golden king crab and Adak red king crab) had OFLs and ABCs recommended in the spring. The remaining stocks will have OFLs and ABCs recommended at this meeting. The stock assessments for these stocks as well as the Ecosystem Considerations Chapter were mailed to the SSC and copies are available at the meeting as needed. The Introduction to the Crab SAFE containing the CPT recommended OFLs and ABCs will be handed out at the meeting, as will the CPT Report containing additional recommendations and minutes from the September CPT meeting.

Diana Stram and Bob Foy gave an overview of the BSAI Crab SAFE including stock status for each of the ten stocks. The AP and SSC reports were given, and there was no public comment.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Moreland moved to approve the 2011 Crab SAFE report, and the SSC's recommended OFLs and ABCs. The motion was seconded.

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Ms. Moreland noted that the SSC recommendations were responsive to the new ABC requirements and to the challenges of addressing and understanding uncertainty. She urged continued work toward OFL development, and improvement in accounting for uncertainty over time. Mr. Henderschedt noted his appreciation for the motion, considering the additional work required of the stock assessment authors, the CPT and the SSC. Mr. Tweit also expressed congratulations to those involved in re-formatting the stock assessment into the new model in a timely and effective format. Mr. Fields noted his concern with the buffer with the understanding that in later years it will be better defined. **Motion passed without objection.**

Ms. Moreland noted the compressed timeline of the SSC's discussion on the crab OFL and ABC and the State of Alaska's crab TAC setting process. She requested the assistance of all parties involved to accommodate the short turnaround of the SSC minutes and facilitation in the State's process.

Pat Livingston gave the remainder of the SSC minutes.

Ms. Stram gave a brief update and notice that later in the meeting there will be a correction in the SSC's recommendations of the Tanner crab OFL.

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

BACKGROUND

*At this meeting the Council will take final action on the Pribilof Blue King Crab Rebuilding Plan EA/RIR/IRFA. This analysis evaluates proposed alternative rebuilding measures for the Pribilof Islands blue king crab (*Paralithodes platypus*) stock. The Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock remains overfished and the current rebuilding plan has not achieved adequate progress towards rebuilding the stock by 2014. This revised rebuilding plan considers five alternatives. The impacts of these alternatives on rebuilding the Pribilof Island blue king crab stock as well as the environmental and social/economic impacts of these measures are considered in this analysis. Analysis of the impacts of these closure configurations on the rebuilding potential for the PIBKC stock shows limited effect on rebuilding between the ranges of alternative closures.*

The primary purpose of the June data review was to determine if there were differences in the applicable fisheries to which proposed closures would apply based upon examination of catch over the entire Pribilof District as compared with catch only in area 513 as in the previous analysis. Following review of these data, it was determined that the flathead sole fishery no longer met the criteria for inclusion in the closures. The fisheries which meet the threshold criteria are the trawl fisheries for rock sole, yellowfin sole, and other flatfish, as well as the Pacific cod hook-and-line and pot fisheries. The analysis has been substantially revised since the April draft both to evaluate changes to alternatives from the Council's motion as well as to evaluate impacts on incidental catch of PSC species as well as economic implications due to estimated fleet redistribution outside of the proposed area closures.

Diana Stram gave the staff presentation on this agenda item. The SSC had given their report earlier, and Lori Swanson gave the AP report and answered questions from the Council. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

There was brief discussion and questions of clarification, and NOAA GC Lisa Lindeman noted that Council action must reflect adherence to the national Standards.

John Henderschedt moved the following, which was seconded:

The following option 2c should be added to Alternative 2:

Option 2c: Vessels fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear in the existing Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone (PIHCZ) must carry 100% observer coverage. Pacific cod pot fishing in the PIHCZ will be closed for the year if total PIBKC bycatch across all fisheries reaches:

- i) 20%**
- ii) 30%**

of the overall trigger closure cap.

Additionally, the Council should adopt the following as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative:

Alternative 2, Option 2B – Close the PIHCZ to fishing for groundfish with pots

Alternative 5, Suboption 4, Closure Option 5d

- Establish as a closure area the portion of the area representing PIBKC 84-09 distribution (Alternative 4) that lies within the PIBKC management area.**
- Establish a trigger cap of 75% of ABC. When that trigger cap is reached, all fishing subject to this action would be prohibited in the closure area.**
- Sector-level trigger caps:
Trawl Gear – 45% of trigger cap
Pot Gear – 45% of trigger cap
H&L Gear – 30% of trigger cap**

This analysis should include qualitative discussion of the following:

- The effects of the alternatives to minimize the risk of overfishing**
- The likely impacts of the proposed alternative(s) on fleets subject to this action**
- Management options and constraints relevant to the implementation of this action, with particular attention to:
 - a. In season management of a trigger closure, including the monitoring and enforcement of sector-level triggers**
 - b. The ability of NMFS to manage sector-level triggers through inter-sector rollovers**
 - c. Assignment of observers to vessels operating in the PIBKC management area under the new observer delivery model**
 - d. Observer sampling protocol for PIBKC in the PIBKC management area**
 - e. Extrapolation methodology used to assign PIBKC bycatch rates to unobserved vessels fishing in the PIBKC management area.****

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion, noting that he is not moving to take final action at this time due to a number of reasons, but specifically an adoption of a new OFL for PIBKC. He urged the Council to keep in mind that the difference in implementation timing between final action at this meeting, or in February is only a few months. The analysts will be able to re-calculate impacts the entire Pribilof Island district area and to better inform the Council of their actions. He reviewed his reasoning for each point in the motion, and specified the Council needs creative and responsible management to meet the National Standards. There were questions of clarification from the Council members.

Mr. Henderschedt noted there has to be a balance in PSC with balancing a desire to protect each sector. NMFS will also have flexibility in managing sector level allocations through rollovers and other inseason management measures. Ms. Campbell noted that it was good to identify a PPA, but it is also good to

know which fisheries are qualifying fisheries for this action. Mr. Henderschedt noted that the fisheries presently included in the analysis are the same ones subject to this action.

Mr. Benson moved, which was seconded, to add an option: iii - 50% to Alternative 2, Option 2c. He spoke to his motion, noting that this option is better than a year round closure, and an analysis that comes back would examine other percentages. Mr. Benson noted there is a loss of control when (a closure) is across all sectors and all fisheries.

The amendment passed without objection.

Mr. Merrill moved, which was seconded by Mr. Fields, to clarify Option 2B as a closure to “fishing groundfish with pots” should be specific to “fishing Pacific cod with pots.” He noted that it would align the closure to the specific fisheries in the analysis that contribute to the largest portions of bycatch. **Motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Henderschedt discussed specific allocation percentages, and that the smaller the allocation percentage, the more flexibility can be built in. There was brief discussion regarding variables outside the fishing industry that prohibit rebuilding.

The Council members discussed boundary lines and area closures that are parts of the PPA. It was generally agreed that in regard to timing, December may be too soon.

Mr. Merrill thanked Mr. Henderschedt for his motion, which addresses the purpose and need of reducing overfishing and rebuilding stocks. He noted that the Council has challenges in meeting the rebuilding goal, but the alternatives presented will look at a series of different measures that will reduce the risk of overfishing. He also was appreciative of the format in the context of a PPA which would help the analysts and the agency focus comments and more effectively work with the data.

Amended main motion passed without objection.

C-3 (e) Tanner Crab Rebuilding Plan Alternatives

BACKGROUND

*On October 1, 2010, the Council was informed by NMFS that the Bering Sea Tanner crab (*Chionoecetes bairdi*) stock is overfished according to criteria in the Fishery Management Plan for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner crab. This notification was based on the most recent stock assessment for Tanner crabs indicating that the stock biomass had declined below its minimum stock size threshold (MSST). The 2010 estimate of mature male biomass (MMB) at mating was 62.70 million pounds, below the MSST of 92.37 million pounds.*

In order to comply with section 304(e)(3) of the Magnuson-Steven Act (MSA), the Council and NMFS thus have two years from that notification to develop and implement a plan to rebuild the overfished Tanner crab stock. Under section 304(e)(4) of the MSA, the rebuilding plan must specify a time period for rebuilding the fishery that is as short as possible, taking into account the status and biology of the stock, the needs of fishing communities, and the interactions of the stock within the marine ecosystem. The rebuilding plan shall not exceed 10 years, except if the biology of the stock of other environmental conditions dictate otherwise. At this meeting the Council will consider alternative management measures for rebuilding the Tanner crab stock. These measures may include a combination of directed fishery constraints, bycatch constraints in other fisheries and other considerations.

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The Council reviewed a discussion paper in April 2011 that provided an overview of the Tanner crab stock status, development of an assessment model and recent catch estimates in both directed Tanner crab fishery as well as non-directed catch in other crab fisheries, groundfish fisheries and scallop fisheries. The Council noted that it will need to work with the BOF on consideration of catch constraints in crab fisheries given that these are delegated to the State of Alaska under the FMP. The Council requested the CPT discuss alternative management measures for rebuilding the Tanner crab stock in conjunction with their September meeting and provide these for Council consideration in October. The Crab Plan Team report contains the discussion on the developing model and recommendations on alternative management measures to be considered in a forthcoming rebuilding plan analysis

Diana Stram gave the staff report on this issue. The SSC had given their report earlier, and Lori Swanson gave the AP report. There was no public comment.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Campbell moved, which was seconded, the following problem statement and the alternatives outlined in the Action Plan (ATTACHMENT 7).

Problem Statement:

The Bering Sea Tanner crab stock is overfished. To comply with provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) a rebuilding plan must be implemented prior to the 2012/13 fishing season.

The Council is encouraged with the progress made on the Tanner crab stock assessment model and recognizes the importance of the model in developing an effective rebuilding plan. A fully developed model is integral in estimating the maximum/minimum time to rebuild and in selecting a target year for rebuilding. This action focuses on the directed Tanner crab and snow crab fisheries as the main sources of fishing related mortality of Tanner crab. The Council notes that Tanner crab bycatch in the groundfish fisheries have decreased in recent years due to changes in groundfish fishery management.

This action is necessary to comply with requirements of the MSA to rebuild the Tanner crab stock. Currently, the state is preventing overfishing. ADF&G has closed the directed Tanner crab fishery in 2010/11 and will likely do the same in 2011/12 based on the application of the state's harvest strategy. In the TAC-setting process, the state also has the flexibility to constrain the snow crab fishery to prevent overfishing of Tanner crab.

Ms. Campbell spoke to her motion, noting that this is a starting point to move the analysis forward, and outlines the requirements under MSA. She anticipates refining it as the model becomes more developed and staff can estimate the alternatives and timeframes for rebuilding. There was brief discussion.

Motion passed without objection.

C-2 (a) 2012/2013 BSAI and GOA Specifications

BACKGROUND

During their meetings on August 30 - September 1, 2011, the BSAI and GOA Groundfish Plan Teams recommended proposed groundfish harvest specifications for 2012 and 2013, adopted revisions to the 2012 research priorities, and considered numerous informational reports. The Council is scheduled at

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this meeting to recommend proposed BSAI and GOA groundfish harvest specifications for the next two-year period for the sole purpose of notifying the public of likely outcomes for Council action to set final harvest specifications in December. The Teams' recommendations for the next two fishing years are based on rollovers of the established 2012 final specifications, with minor exceptions. The rollover approach was adopted by the Council in 2007. Following this practice, 2012 specifications, which were adopted in December 2010, were published in the Federal Register in March 2011 and will start the groundfish fisheries in January 2012. Proposed specifications for 2013 will be adopted at this meeting and are set equal to the 2012 specifications. Any proposed specifications for 2012/2013, including Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) limits for halibut, red king crab, Tanner crab, opilio crab, and herring and their gear type and target fishery apportionments, should be adopted by the Council at this meeting so that the final rule, based on final specifications from December 2011, is a logical outgrowth of the proposed rule. Final harvest specifications will be based on stock assessments included in the respective Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports for the BSAI and GOA.

Jane DiCosimo and Diana Stram gave the staff report of this issue. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and the SSC had given its report earlier. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved to adopt the AP motion under C2(a) to roll over the BSAI groundfish ABCs and OFLs contained in the table on page 26 of the joint plan team minutes and rollover and approve the 2012/2013 TACs as shown on the AP table, (ATTACHMENT 8) further approve the PSC specifications and apportionments as shown on the action memo, and attachment 2 of the AP minutes (ATTACHMENT 9).

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion noting that the Council is following through from the 2010 stock assessments, and rolling over last year's recommendations for 2012 and as extending them to 2013. He expressed concern regarding how to allocate TACs for non-target species, and the Council should consider all catches of incidental species. He also discussed setting TACs for directed, targeted species and that the Council has an obligation for making transparent TAC-setting decisions absent guidance from the industry. He considers the performance of fisheries in balance with the needs to accommodate the variability of fishing conditions in the various fisheries to be a factor in making allocation changes. He considers the TAC apportionments for 2011 and the performance against them to be a factor in determining allocations for 2012. Mr. Fields noted his concurrence, and also evaluates performance of the fisheries. Mr. Hyder and Mr. Tweit also voiced their support of the motion and the stated rationale for the recommended TACs. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, that the Council adopt proposed specifications for GOA groundfish fisheries as indicated by the SSC/AP. (ATTACHMENT 10) He spoke to his motion, noting that there have been changes in management recommendations for dusky, widow, and yellowtail rockfishes. There was brief discussion regarding expectations for setting specifications in December, and that industry should provide recommendations for TACs for 2012 and 2013 that reflect a level of TAC increase to provide flexibility to prosecute the fishery. Mr. Tweit also noted Pacific cod TACs are adjusted to allow for the State GHs, and that halibut PSCs have not been addressed in this motion, pending the next agenda item. Mr. Cotten noted his concern over not having TAC equal to ABC in some cases, and is alerting the public to those changes. **The motion passed without objection.**

After concluding Agenda C-2(b), Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, to adopt halibut PSC limits for the GOA as shown in tables in the C2(a) action memo. (ATTACHMENT 11) Mr. Tweit noted the Council had postponed dealing with setting PSC limits until after discussion of the next action

item and the decision was to maintain these tables for the specifications process, as opposed to an FMP amendment process. **Motion passed without comment or objection.**

C-2 (b) GOA Halibut PSC limits

BACKGROUND

The Council is scheduled to take an initial review of an analysis that examines proposed changes to the management of commercial groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). Prohibited species catch (PSC) limits on removals of halibut can stop fishing activity once those limits are taken. After reviewing discussion papers on this topic, the Council adopted a range of proposed reductions in April 2011 for this analysis. In addition to the No Action Alternative, the proposed alternative (Alternative 2) includes options for reductions of a) 5 percent, b) 10 percent, and c) 15 percent for the 2,000 mt trawl PSC limit and 300 mt fixed gear PSC limit. Two suboptions address effects on trawl PSC limit apportionments. In June 2011, the Council reviewed the suite of alternatives for analysis and reorganized the suboptions. The Council has noticed the public of its interest implementing the proposed action through the GOA groundfish harvest specifications process for 2012/2013. The analysis outlines an implementation plan for 2012.

During initial review of this analysis in October 2011, the Council will determine whether it has the information necessary to adopt a Preliminary Preferred Alternative; this step is necessary for selection of a Final Preferred Alternative in December 2011 and implementation in early 2012.

Jane DiCosimo gave an overview of the analysis, Mike Downs gave a report on community impacts, and Darrell Brannan gave a report on the economic impacts. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and the SSC report had been given earlier. Public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

Mr. Dan Hull moved, which was seconded, a 3 page motion which is included in these minutes as ATTACHMENT 12.

Mr. Hull spoke to his motion. He thanked the Council and agency staffs for their efforts in writing a well-organized and thorough document that links the analysis for specific reductions to actions to achieve those reductions. He noted that in the long run, the Council is better served by changing the FMP to put halibut PSC in regulations as opposed to using the TAC-setting process. Although still concerned, the Council has the responsibility to maintain harvest and management goals, and it has been a very long time since the Council has changed PSC limits.

Mr. Hull noted it is his intent that halibut PSC limits would apply to the full 2000 mt amount in the 5th season, and that early next year the Council would have an initial review of a new analysis, and the regulations would be implemented for 2013.

There were questions for clarification from the Council members. Mr. Cotten noted, and it was agreed, that analyzing a number between 5, 10, and 15% would be available to choose at initial review. There was also brief discussion regarding mid-season implementation and complications that could arise. Mr. Merrill noted that the regulations could be drafted for implementation of a final rule in the middle of the year, rather than have to wait until the start of 2014.

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Mr. Tweit commented on his interest is an expanded discussion of community impacts, and it was agreed that while the request for additional information was broad, the analysts should comply to the extent practicable. Ms. Moreland noted that information from the halibut stock assessment workshop could be included if it falls in the timeline of the analysis. Mr. Cotten requested more information in the analysis on whether or not there would be a separate PSC for a separate regulatory area.

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend, which was seconded, to strike the last portion of the problem statement paragraph and replace it with, “while the IPHC accounts for bycatch mortality when establishing GHs for the directed fisheries in order to maintain the halibut stocks’ productivity, it is the Council’s responsibility to manage halibut PSC limits and meet the requirements of National Standard 9 to minimize bycatch.”

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his amendment, and thanked Mr. Hull for his motion. He noted that because the Council’s responsibility and requirement is to reduce bycatch to the extent practicable, it is more appropriate to state that than to capture the role of the IPHC. **Dr. Balsiger moved to amend, which was seconded, to change “GHL” with “catch limits.”** There was brief clarification of those terms, and Dr. Balsiger noted that “GHL” typically only has been used in the charter fishery. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Fields spoke against the amended problem statement and felt it focused too narrowly on the Magnuson Stevens Act instead of encompassing the entire analysis.

The amendment passed 8/3, with Cotten, Fields, and Hull opposing.

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded by Mr. Tweit, to add a point 4 on page 3 to read: “A discussion of the potential benefits and impacts of modifying seasonal and fishery complex apportionment of the trawl halibut PSC limit, and application of an annual, rather than seasonal, amendment 80 sideboard.” Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion, noting that his intention is not to complicate the process or slow the decision on this issue, but rather to provide a balance by protecting various sectors by providing flexibility. There was discussion on adding this issue as a separate analysis, vs. inclusion in the current suite of alternatives as a discussion of additional tools which could reduce bycatch. Ms. Moreland noted she would be voting in favor of the amendment, and would also like a discussion of the process; what can be achieved through the existing specifications process, etc.

Amendment passed with Cotten in objection.

Mr. Tweit thanked Mr. Hull for a thorough motion, and commented on his concern that the 5th season only approach may have disproportionate impacts to fleets, processors, and communities. He also noted that he is interested in more tools for the fleet to manage its own bycatch. There was brief discussion regarding Mr. Henderschedt’s previous amendment, which he clarified by stating that he was requesting a qualitative section, noting who the affected stakeholders are, and how the opportunities to managing PSC limits differently might be expanded by eliminating existing restrictions.

There was general discussion regarding the IPHC workshop report, timing, and how the information will be incorporated into the analysis. It was generally agreed that there would be a placeholder in the analysis for this information.

Ms. Moreland moved to amend, by striking in bullet 3: “Include relevant material from the Halibut Stock Assessment Workshop.” Her motion was seconded by Mr. Fields. She spoke to her motion noting that to state this information in the motion is redundant, as the information from the

workshop, which was an initiative by the Council, would be given to the Council and staff as already designed. At that time, the Council can then decide what information it wants to incorporate. **Motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Benson moved, which was seconded, to add “a discussion of halibut bycatch and available info on state-managed fisheries, including: pot and jig Pacific cod, PWS hook and line Pacific cod, sablefish (PWS, Chatham, and Clarence strait) and rockfish.” Mr. Benson spoke to his motion, noting he would like to look at other fisheries to get an ideal of total overall halibut removals. **Mr. Dersham moved to amend, to add “state water, state managed” fisheries, to be clear.** He noted that the State of Alaska uses that terminology, and the new language would make it consistent. **Amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Benson clarified that a discussion regarding available information, monitoring of those fisheries, and what kind of accountability of halibut bycatch in those fisheries is the specific information he would like included. There was brief discussion, and the **amendment passed with Mr. Cotten objecting.**

There was discussion regarding timing and the ability to incorporate all the information to the extent practicable, and it was generally agreed to keep initial review scheduled for February.

Mr. Fields commented on the main motion, thanked staff that worked on the analysis, and stated his continued concern regarding keeping the timeframe of a February 2012 initial review and April 2012 final action. Mr. Cotten noted his disappointment with not taking final action in December 2011 and stated that his opposition to the current amendments was concern that adding them would slow down the analysis and would further delay final action. **Amended main motion passed without objection.**

C-2 (c) Discussion paper on Individual Bycatch Quotas

BACKGROUND

Over the course of the last several meetings, the Council has addressed a variety of halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) issues. Among the concerns raised by stakeholders has been the absence of individual accountability for halibut prohibited species catch and the lack of individual accountability tools for individual fishery participants. At its April 2011 meeting, in response to these concerns, the Council requested staff to prepare a discussion paper reviewing the use of individual bycatch quotas (or IBQs) in other fisheries.

Mark Fina gave the staff report on this issue and briefly reviewed the white paper. Gregg Williams, IPHC, also briefly addressed the Council to answer questions regarding halibut.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, to take no further action on this agenda item. Mr. Fields noted his concerns of the continued discards of halibut. Mr. Hyder voiced his opposition to the motion, and would prefer the Council continue pursuing alternative tools for the fleet to use to control halibut bycatch. Chairman Olson noted that a no action motion does not prohibit the Council from pursuing this issue at a later date. Mr. Hull noted that the Council can still schedule further work as part of the PSC discussion. There was general interest in the comparative analysis of British Columbia Trawl Quota Program. It was agreed to be discussed during staff tasking. **Motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Hull requested, and generally agreed, to bring up during the staff tasking agenda the drafting of a letter to the joint protocol committee, requesting to the Board of Fisheries that some of the state water fishery opening dates could coincide with the halibut seasons, managing bycatch in state water/state managed fisheries.

C-4 Observer Program

Nicole Kimball gave a brief background and timeline of current observer issues and reviewed the Observer Advisory Committee report. Martin Loefflad gave an update on potential federal funding and staffing in the observer program. Brandee Gerke reviewed the draft regulations and answered questions from the Council. Dan Falvey presented a report on the halibut/sablefish EM pilot project. Dan Hull, Chair of the OAC, noted that the recent OAC agenda was very detailed and the committee had a lot of issues to evaluate and discuss. He thanked staff and those that attended. The AP gave their brief report that no action was taken; the SSC did not address this issue, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

After brief questions of clarification, **Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, that the Council deems the proposed final regulations, that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of the Council's review of the draft regulatory package to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303c and therefore, the Council authorizes the Executive Director and the Chairman to review the draft proposed regulations when provided by NMFS to ensure that the proposed regulations to be submitted to the Secretary under section 303(c) are consistent with these instructions. Additionally, the Council requested the following changes prior to the regulations being published in the Federal Register:**

- **There is considerable flexibility in the draft regulations to develop an EM program as applicable. However, the preamble narrowly defines the use of EM to instances where vessels are incapable of carrying an observer. The Council believes this is unnecessarily limiting and may create an undesirable precedent. There will likely be instances where EM could be a preferred tool for some uses and sectors. The Council recommends the preamble be revised to reflect the potential integration of EM as an independent tool in the long-run in the research plan and not conditional on a vessel's ability or inability to carry an observer.**
- **The Council recognizes that the scope of EM may be limited in the initial year, and NMFS will need to prioritize vessels in determining whether they receive EM (i.e., all small vessels that identify a preference to using EM in the deployment system may not receive EM). The preamble should highlight to the public that EM will not be available to all vessels; the priority, as identified by the OAC and Council, is to focus the initial effort on 40' to 57.5' 60' IFQ vessels (those vessels that are not managed by real-time data and are not constrained by PSC). The committee supports dedicating funds from start-up funding and fee proceeds toward EM development.**
- **The Council recommends adding language in the preamble that better describes the process and timing for receiving a 'release' from observer or EM requirements from the NMFS Regional Administrator.**
- **The regulations need to include a requirement that any IFQ vessel that fished in the previous year must register for the following year with the observer deployment system by the December 1 deadline. The regulations must also include a requirement that any IFQ**

vessel that did not register by December 1 of the preceding year, but decides to start fishing during the season, must register with the deployment system before fishing.

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion noting that this is the first step in the deeming process. The Council had previously directed NMFS to allow the Council to review the regulations at this meeting, and Mr. Tweit is comfortable that with the inclusion of the above bullets, the Council can deem the regulations at this meeting. Mr. Fields noted his concurrence and urged close scrutiny at the final review of the regulations by the Executive Director and Chairman. **The motion passed without objection.**

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

1. **The Council recommends sending a letter to the AFSC, supporting internal observer program funding request for EM.**
2. **The Council recommends sending another letter to NOAA, requesting start-up funds for the restructured observer program (to fund year-1).**
3. **The Council requests NMFS to continue to work on making sure that a receipt of observer program fees is provided to fishermen for each trip.**
4. **The Council requests that the agency bring back a progress report on the program restructuring in April 2012, including that part of the deployment plan that addresses:**
 - a) **Vessel selection policy, for those in the vessel selection pool**
 - b) **Potential requirements for electronic monitoring (EM) use and logistical requirements**
 - c) **Deployment rate in the vessel selection pool**
 - d) **The release or un-select policy for both the trip selection pool and vessel selection pool**
5. **Finally, the Council urges the agency to make as many EM systems available as possible to vessels in the vessel selection pool in order to advance the Council's goal of integrating EM into the observer program as an alternative tool for meeting program requirements.**

Mr. Hull spoke to his motion, noting that the first two bullets are directly from the OAC recommendations, and the others are from public comment and comments to NMFS. He noted that the last request is a good example of how industry and agencies can work together with balancing risk to make EM work. The Council had questions of clarification. Mr. Fields noted his concerns that requests for EM from a vessel owner would not be unreasonably denied, and does not share confidence that the Council is on the right path, but can adjust over time so that it is a viable option. There was discussion on EM generally, the framework, requirements, the selection process, and deployment plan. Dr. Balsiger noted that NMFS is working towards electronic monitoring. **Motion passes without objection.**

C-5 Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Program

(a) Initial Review/Final action on CQE vessel use caps (GOA Am. 94)

BACKGROUND

The Council approved the Community Quota Entity (CQE) Program as an amendment to the halibut and sablefish IFQ Program in 2002 (GOA Amendment 66), and the program was implemented in 2004. Under the original IFQ Program, only persons who were originally issued catcher vessel quota share (B, C, and D category QS) or who qualify as IFQ crew members¹ were allowed to hold or purchase catcher

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

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vessel quota share. Thus, only individuals² and initial recipients could hold catcher vessel quota share. The CQE Program was developed to allow a distinct set of 42 small, remote coastal communities located in the Gulf of Alaska to purchase halibut and sablefish catcher vessel quota share, in order to maintain access to these fisheries.

In order to participate, eligible communities must form non-profit corporations called Community Quota Entities (CQEs) to purchase catcher vessel QS, and the IFQ resulting from the QS is leased to community residents annually. In effect, the CQE remains the holder of the QS, creating a permanent asset for the community to use to benefit the community and its residents. Twenty-six of the eligible communities have formed CQEs to-date; however, only two CQEs have purchased quota share thus far.

The existing CQE Program limits the annual amount of halibut QS that can be fished on a vessel to 50,000 lbs of IFQ halibut, if that vessel is used to harvest any amount of IFQ halibut derived from QS held by a CQE. Similarly, it limits the annual amount of sablefish QS that can be fished on a vessel to 50,000 lbs of IFQ sablefish, if that vessel is used to harvest any amount of IFQ sablefish derived from QS held by a CQE. The vessel use caps for IFQ derived from CQE-held QS are inclusive of any individually-held IFQ being used on the vessel, on an annual basis, and are not based on a percentage of the IFQ TAC. This limitation was established in the regulations of the original CQE Program, in tandem with a limit on the annual amount of IFQ that an individual could lease from a CQE, in order to ensure a broad distribution of QS, and thus benefits, among qualified residents of the CQE community.

This analysis was initiated by the Council in December 2010, in response to public testimony in December 2010 and a previous IFQ proposal, stating that the current vessel use caps are unnecessarily restrictive and may reduce the flexibility that small communities need to develop long-term plans for using the potential opportunities afforded by the CQE Program. CQEs have stated they wish to purchase QS and lease it to individuals who may not own vessels, so that they may find employment as crew members and fish the IFQ derived from CQE-held QS. Under the status quo, once any amount of IFQ derived from CQE-held QS is used onboard, the vessel is limited by the 50,000 pound vessel use cap. This limitation may discourage vessels from using IFQ derived from CQE-held QS onboard, as the vessel would otherwise be subject to the higher individual vessel use caps for the IFQ Program in general. The proposed action would amend the GOA FMP and Federal regulations to make the vessel use caps applicable to vessels using IFQ derived from CQE-held quota similar to those applicable to vessels using IFQ derived quota held by individuals.

The Council has not yet approved a problem statement for this action and may choose to do so at this meeting. Upon initiation of this amendment package, the Council determined it may be sufficiently straightforward to warrant initial review and final action at one meeting. Thus, upon review at the October meeting, the Council could determine that additional data and/or analysis are necessary prior to final action, or the Council could select a preferred alternative for recommendation to the Secretary of Commerce.

Nicole Kimball gave the staff report on this issue and answered questions from the Council. The AP gave their report, the SSC did not address this issue, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, to adopt Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative, to revise the current regulations so that no vessel may be used during any fishing year to harvest more than 50,000 lbs of IFQ halibut derived from QS held by the CQE; and no vessel may be used during any

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

fishing year to harvest more than 50,000 lbs of IFQ sablefish derived from QS held by the CQE. The vessel would be subject to the same vessel use caps applicable in the overall IFQ program. Additionally, the following problem statement is adopted:

CQE communities were approved by the Council in 2002 to provide Gulf of Alaska Communities with an opportunity to mitigate the migration of halibut and sablefish quota shares from their communities. The Council sought a distribution of benefits among community residents from CQE activities by imposing CQE individual and vessel use caps. Current vessel cap regulations may have developed from a misinterpretation of the Council’s original CQE motion. Consequently, the CQE program currently limits fishing CQE quota to vessels that fish less than 50,000 lbs of quota – both CQE and non-CQE quota. The CQE vessel limitation eliminates the opportunity for community residents awarded CQE quota from fishing on a vessel that has, or will fish more than 50,000 lbs of quota, even if it is the only vessel available in a community. In addition, the rule restricts the option for several residents awarded CQE quota from combining their quota on a vessel if the cumulative quota, both CQE and non-CQE, exceeds 50,000 lbs. These restrictions limit CQE use opportunities and may inhibit some CQE purchases. Changing the vessel CQE vessel cap will ease vessel use restrictions and thereby provide additional opportunities for CQE use and purchase.

Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, noting that Alternative 2 reflects the original intent of the Council’s motion in 2004. The ability for the CQE to have their quota fished on larger vessels, if necessary, or combine quota on a single vessel, increases safety at sea, and does not impact other IFQ program participants. **Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, to delete “Current vessel cap regulations may have developed from misinterpretation of the Council’s original CQE motion. Consequently,...”** Mr. Tweit noted that the language is speculative and unnecessary. **The amendment passed without objection.**

There was discussion on the final motion. Ms. Moreland noted her support for the motion and specific impacts from the action; she expects the motion to be consistent with National Standard 8, allowing for the sustained participation of coastal communities by aligning harvest restrictions with the regular IFQ program. There was discussion of meeting the national standards and that the motion helps to achieve CQE program goals.

Mr. Tweit moved to amend, which was seconded, **“that the Council deems proposed regulations that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of this motion to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303c, and 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.”** He spoke to his motion briefly, noting that this is the typical language if both NMFS and the Council understand the process; the Executive Director and Chairman can review in lieu of the full Council looking at the regulations. **The amendment passed without objection.**

The main motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

(b) Initial review of proposed action to establish a CQE Program in Area 4B

BACKGROUND

The Council approved the Gulf of Alaska Community Quota Entity (CQE) Program as an amendment to

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the halibut and sablefish IFQ Program in 2002 (GOA Amendment 66), and the program was implemented in 2004. Under the original IFQ Program, only persons who were originally issued catcher vessel quota share (B, C, and D category QS) or who qualify as IFQ crew members³ were allowed to hold or purchase catcher vessel quota share. Thus, only individuals⁴ and initial recipients could hold catcher vessel quota share. The CQE Program was developed in order to allow a distinct set of small, remote coastal communities located in the Gulf of Alaska to purchase halibut and sablefish catcher vessel quota share, to maintain access to these fisheries. In order to participate, eligible communities must form non-profit corporations called Community Quota Entities to purchase catcher vessel QS, and the IFQ resulting from the QS is leased to community residents annually. The existing program is limited to IPHC regulatory Area 2C, Area 3A, and Area 3B.

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

Please note one correction in the analysis regarding the provisions under the potential use of D category halibut QS by the Adak CQE. There is an option under consideration that would allow the CQE to purchase D category halibut QS in Area 4B, under the provisions for 'vessel size restrictions'. The analysis incorrectly implies that D category IFQ held by the CQE could be fished on a vessel of any size. While that is correct for B and C category IFQ held by the CQE, D category IFQ must be fished only on D category halibut vessels ($\leq 35'$ LOA), according to the proposed option. This will be corrected in the public review draft analysis.

Nicole Kimball gave the staff report on this agenda item. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and the SSC did not address this issue. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Duncan Fields moved, which was seconded by Mr. Cotten, that the Council send the analysis out for public review with the change indicated by the AP regarding language describing the ownership entity and that the Council select the following as the Council's preferred alternative:

Alternative 2: Establish a CQE Program in area 4B.

(All language in Alternative 2 is selected as the preferred alternative, with the options specified below.)

2. Ownership Entity

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

3. Use caps for Individual Communities

³IFQ crew member means any individual who has at least 150 days experience working as part of the harvesting crew in any U.S. commercial fishery, or any individual who receives an initial allocation of QS (50 CFR 679.2).

⁴Per 50 CFR 679.2: Individual means a natural person who is not a corporation, partnership, association, or other such entity.

Select option 2: 15% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool and option 4: 15% of the Aleutian Island sablefish QS pool.

4. Cumulative Community Use Caps

Select option 2: 15% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool and option 4: 15% of the Aleutian Island sablefish QS pool.

5. Purchase, Use and Sale Provisions

Use Restrictions

Select option 1. The CQE must lease QS to residents of the community it represents.

Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, and it was agreed it was the Preliminary Preferred Alternative, as final action is scheduled for a later meeting. He stated Adak is trying to grow a civilian community while trying to retain a processor, and the economic needs are unique. He noted that it may be difficult to attract participants with the current residency requirements.

Mr. Cotten moved to amend, which was seconded, under “use restrictions” that the CQE may elect to disregard the 150 days at sea requirement when leasing to IFQ residents. Cotten speaks to motion noting that many younger residents may not have had the opportunity to establish days at sea in other fisheries. **The amendment passed without objection and is included as part of the PPA.**

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend, which was seconded, under “use restrictions” to replace option 1 with option 2, which allows leasing to non-residents for up to 5 years. He spoke to his motion noting that by requiring residency, when it is residency the Council is trying to encourage, is problematic, and the Council should allow greater flexibility as requested in public comment. **Amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Hull moved to amend, which was seconded, under “use caps” to change to 10% of the Area 4B halibut QS pool. Mr. Hull spoke to his motion, noting that 10% is more closely aligned to what is currently allowed in the GOA. **The motion failed 8/3 with Benson, Hull, and Hyder voting in favor.**

The vote on the amended main motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Balsiger moved to amend the problem statement in the 4th sentence, by changing the words “lease to eligible fishers” instead of “eligible residents.” **The motion passed unanimously.**

(c) Discussion of whether to schedule final action on a proposed regulatory amendment to allow IFQ derived from Category D QS to be fished on Category C vessels in Area 4B

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the Council called for proposals to amend the halibut and sablefish IFQ and CDQ programs. One proposal, which was recommended by the IFQ Implementation Committee in September 2009, requested a halibut IFQ amendment that would allow IFQ derived from Category D QS to be fished on Category C vessels in Area 4B. The Council approved this proposal for analysis in February 2010. The Council scheduled final action on the analysis in December 2010.

In December 2010 the Advisory Panel unanimously recommended, “. . . the Council take no action at this time but schedule final action to run parallel with action on the CQE program in Area 4B.” The Council tabled the action at the same meeting. During its April 2011, meeting the Council decided to consider scheduling of final action for this proposed action coincident with another proposed action that addresses an amendment to the Community Quota Entity program for Area 4B (see Agenda C-5(b)).

The proposed action under this agenda item would relieve a restriction placed on IFQ halibut fishery participants and would further program goals by increasing the amount of IFQs that may be harvested by vessels \leq 60' LOA and increasing safety at sea for that fleet. The proposed action would make minor changes in this fishery affecting up to 12 Area 4B Category D QS holders, who hold < 3 percent of IFQs in one area, and a few owners of larger vessels. The Council has received a number of comment letters over the last several years from the proposer who continues to request that the Council recommend the proposed action.

Jane DiCosimo briefly reviewed the background on this issue. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, the SSC did not discuss this issue, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded by Mr. Cotten, that the Council take no action on this agenda item. Mr. Fields spoke to the motion and noted that there are changing variables in this fishery; that is, the established processor in Adak will provide market for small boats and establishing CQE will provide market for D class holder to sell their shares. He remarked that D class quota is 3% and should provide entry level opportunities, and in about 3 years they can re-evaluate the “fish up” proposal.

Mr. Tweit moved to substitute the following motion: The Council should move forward with final action on the analysis, and that the analysis include discussion on the effects of fish-up on the price of D class quota, and the original intent of D class quota in the IFQ program. Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that tabling the issue would hold it for a while, and is opposite from some of the public comment the Council has received. He noted it would be beneficial to hear some of the concerns of the Atka fishermen. Ms. Moreland spoke to the issue of tabling and its appropriateness so that the changes in Adak and the potential to the shore based plant can be fulfilled and evaluated. Mr. Henderschedt noted that the Council expresses intent even though the issue is off the table and may drive behavior of the fishery. Mr. Benson supports the substitute motion to keep it in the forefront. **The substitute motion failed 6/5 with Moreland, Cotten, Dersham, Fields, Hull, and Olson voting against.**

The original main motion passed 7/4 with Tweit, Benson, Henderschedt, and Hyder voting against.

D-1 Groundfish Issues

D-1 (b) Draft Regulations for freezer longliner Catch Monitoring and Enforcement

BACKGROUND

The freezer longline cod fleet began fishing as a voluntary cooperative in August of 2010, and members of the cooperative have worked with NMFS Inseason Management staff to ensure that Pacific cod total allowable catch and halibut prohibited species catch amount were not exceeded. On December 22, 2010, the Longline Catcher Processor Subsector Single Fishery Cooperative (Act) was signed by President Obama. In brief, the Act allows freezer longline vessels participating in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands area directed Pacific cod fishery to form a single cooperative and requires that NMFS implement enabling regulations within two years of receiving a request from holders of at least 80 percent of the eligible licenses as defined in the Act.

In February 2011, the Council received a report on catch monitoring and accounting issues associated with voluntary cooperative formation in the freezer longline Pacific cod fishery. NMFS staff noted that

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fishery cooperatives, whether formed voluntary or by regulation authorized under a fishery management plan, create new demands for enhanced catch accounting, monitoring, and enforcement. NMFS recommended that the current monitoring regulations for these vessels must be revised to ensure that accurate catch information is obtained, so that NMFS can meet its conservation and management responsibilities. The Council concurred, and recommended that NMFS proceed without further Council direction to develop a monitoring program for this fleet to meet these objectives in other cooperative and quota-based fisheries off Alaska.

To facilitate the development of improved monitoring regulations for these vessels, members of the Freezer Longline Coalition have worked closely with NMFS staff, exploring possible options for improved catch accounting under a cooperative structure. Based on that collaborative approach, NMFS over the summer developed the necessary analytical documents to support a regulatory amendment to the current regulations.

The revised catch accounting and monitoring measures are designed to ensure legally defensible catch accounting for allocate species. For catcher processors, this package includes requirements that all catch be weighed on NMFS approved scales; increase observer coverage to ensure that all hauls or sets are observed, and provision of an observer sampling station.

At this meeting, NMFS will present the analysis and draft regulations to provide an opportunity for Council members and the public to identify questions or other areas of concern with the draft regulations. It is not necessary for the Council to take action on this issue, unless the Council wishes to review the analysis and draft regulations more thoroughly at a future Council meeting. Therefore, unless otherwise recommended by the Council, NMFS intends to promulgate these regulations. NMFS will address questions or concerns raised by the Council on the public in the draft proposed rule.

Jennifer Watson (NMFS) gave the staff report on this agenda item. Neither the AP nor the SSC had a report on this agenda item. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt noted that although there is no action required, he thanked all those involved and for keeping the Council informed.

D-1 (d) Gulf of Alaska Pollock D-season TAC Redistribution

BACKGROUND

In June 2011, the Council took final action to establish a 25,000 chinook salmon PSC limit in the Western and Central GOA pollock fisheries. The Central GOA will be capped at 18,316 chinook salmon and the Western GOA at 6,684 Chinook salmon.

The Council also requested a discussion paper on the potential to redistribute GOA D-season pollock TAC to the A-, B-, and C-seasons to reduce fleet exposure to chinook PSC. Steller sea lion protection measures in the GOA disperse fishing effort temporally into four seasons with 25% of the pollock TAC allocated to each season. Based on the most recent completed biological opinion, these harvest restrictions decrease the likelihood of disturbance, incidental take, and competition for prey to ensure the groundfish fisheries do not jeopardize the continued existence or modify the designated critical habitat of the western Distinct Population Segment of Steller sea lions. The discussion paper notes that while the D-season re-apportionment may reduce bycatch rates of chinook salmon, the D-season bycatch rates are highly variable from year to year. Further, such a change would likely require re-initiation of a formal

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Section 7 consultation (i.e, preparation of a new Biological Opinion). At this meeting the Council will review the discussion paper, and consider whether they wish to take further action to reallocate GOA D-season pollock TAC.

Steve MacLean gave the staff report on this item and answered various questions from the Council. There was general concern and questions regarding allocative impacts across the central and western GOA. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, the SSC did not address the issue and public comment was taken.

John Henderschedt thanked Ms. Swanson for all her work on the AP and allowing the Council members to make informed decisions, however Mr. Henderschedt noted the Council may want to address staffing issues in the AP in the future so that reporting is not reliant on one person. It was generally agreed to discuss this during the Staff Tasking agenda item at a later date.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION /ACTION

Mr. Cotten moved, which was seconded by Mr. Fields, to include description of the current apportionment process and the existing seasonal allocations and narrow the focus to the WGOA, and consider alternative distribution options. He spoke to his motion, noting that one of the goals is to test the ability of the Council to make regulatory changes aimed at improving the fishery, and in this case, to protect king salmon. He noted that the Council would get better information as observer coverage increases, and would like 2011 numbers. Mr. Henderschedt noted that it would be difficult to take action on CGOA, without having impacts Gulf-wide. Mr. Cotten noted it was narrowly focused to achieve a chance of success.

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend the motion to have the discussion paper examine different application of D season in WGOA and CGOA. He noted that with the concern of the salmon bycatch in the Pollock fishery, the Council needs to pursue any avenues increase the practicability of bycatch in the GOA, but not if the focus is narrowed. It was generally agreed that if it led to analysis, there would be separate alternatives for WGOA and CGOA, and be structured in a way to measure allocations. **The amendment passed without objection.**

There was discussion on content of the discussion paper. It was generally agreed that the information would be qualitative rather than analytical.

Mr. Fields moved to amend, which was seconded, to include, if available, current spatial telemetry data in the GOA of sea lion feeding patterns in relation to rookeries and haulouts. Mr. Fields noted that such detailed information can direct us how to proceed in a surgical way. **Amendment passed without objection.**

Mr. Tweit noted his mixed reaction at a likely section 7 consultation and is not sure that there will be any more new information available, although he is agreeable to giving fleets tools to move fish around to manage bycatch.

Mr. Dersham noted his is not opposing the motion, however timing will have to be discussed under the staff tasking agenda item, and changes that are happening in 2012. Mr. Hyder noted that work that needs to be done, but the data available may not inform the decision.

The motion passed without objection.

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Diana Stram updated the Council regarding an error in the calculation of the Tanner crab OFL which results in a change in the SSC's recommended OFL and ABC. Dr. Stram noted the corrected OFL is 2.75 thousand tons, and a 10% buffer applied to that to estimate the ABC, which would result in an SSC recommendation of 2.48 thousand tons. The SSC minutes have been revised. The changes are due to an oversight in not using the current survey biomass estimate in the calculations of the OFL. The State of Alaska has already been given the revised numbers to use in their deliberations. Dr. Stram noted that the numbers affect Tanner crab as bycatch in the snow crab fishery, and, will thus affect the TAC considerations in the snow crab fishery.

Ms. Moreland moved to amend C-3(c) catch specifications for BSAI crab to adopt new numbers as revised by the SSC based on new information, and direct the staff to revise the SAFE documents accordingly. Ms. Moreland noted that Dr. Stram described the action thoroughly, and is pleased the error was found before announcing TACs for the year and the **motion passed without objection.**

D-1 (e) Review discussion paper on analytical approach regarding management of BSAI Pacific cod sector allocations under a potential BS and AI Pacific cod ABC/TAC split; action as necessary

BACKGROUND

In February 2011, the Council reviewed a discussion paper intended to provide background information for discussion of the management implications of establishing separate Pacific cod sector (non-CDQ) allocations in the BS and AI. The paper provided a description of the problem statement and four alternatives, focusing on the management implications of establishing separate Pacific cod sector allocations in the BS and AI, should the BSAI ABC and TAC be split into separate area ABC and TACs in a future harvest specifications process.

Upon review in February, the Council determined that two of the proposed action alternatives, which would establish separate BS and AI allocations to each individual sector, are not viable management alternatives, potentially creating significant winners and losers and increasing the potential for some sectors' allocations to become inaccessible. After taking into consideration the discussion paper, biomass estimates, and public testimony, the Council approved initiating a formal analysis for review, and removed the two alternatives that would create separate BS and AI allocations from further evaluation. The analysis was pared down to evaluate the impacts of Alternative 1 (status quo) and Alternative 2 (retain the combined BSAI sector allocations) from the February discussion paper. The Council noted that it did not intend to force a conservation decision on this issue at a particular time, but that the intent was to have a clear default position, should a TAC split be determined necessary in the future.

Neither alternative proposes any changes to the existing BSAI Pacific cod allocations for the nine non-CDQ industry sectors, nor do they require any substantive changes to the regulations or BSAI FMP. Staff determined that these issues should be outlined in a discussion paper, in part to determine whether a formal analysis is necessary to implement the Council's stated intent, and in part to describe how NMFS would manage the existing combined BSAI Pacific cod allocations should an ABC/TAC split occur.

Upon review of this discussion paper, combined with its previous review of analyses of various alternatives, the Council could clarify its policy direction to NMFS, in effect, to maintain the current BSAI Pacific cod allocations in the FMP and Federal regulations in the event of a BSAI Pacific cod ABC/TAC split. However, specific action by the Council to make this clarification is not necessary. If the Council splits the BSAI Pacific cod TAC into separate BS and AI TACs and does not revise 50 CFR 679.20, NMFS will interpret that the sector allocations currently in effect will continue to apply at the BSAI-wide level. This interpretation is consistent with the Council's intent about the sector allocations under Amendment 85.

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One could anticipate that the SSC would be in a position to recommend separate OFLs and ABCs for BS and AI Pacific cod at such a time that the stock assessments are developed sufficiently to do so, and the Council could recommend separate area TACs based on those assessments. The stock assessment for AI Pacific cod (Tier 5 assessment) is scheduled for evaluation at the August BSAI Groundfish Plan Team meeting and October Council meeting, and the Council can expect recommendations from the Groundfish Plan Team and SSC regarding the 2012/2013 assessments and a plan of action for future BSAI Pacific cod assessments in October 2011.

Nicole Kimball gave the staff report on this agenda item. There was no AP report, and the SSC did not address the issue. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Benson moved to eliminate option 2.1 from the analysis. It was seconded by Mr. Henderschedt. Mr. Benson noted staff's comment that it is no longer relevant, and the option would create more licenses in the AI. There was discussion regarding this motion and Ms. Moreland requested to add discussion of the 3% AI State water GHF fishery to the joint protocol agenda at the next meeting. **The motion passed without objection.**

D-2 Staff Tasking

Chris Oliver reviewed the items for staff tasking:

- Approve minutes
- Board of Fisheries (BOF) Pacific cod proposals
- Sector allocations of Pacific cod
- Discussion of letter to BOF halibut bycatch in state water/state managed fisheries
- Timing and priority of catch sharing plan
- Center for Independent Experts review and Terms of Reference
- Activation of SSL mitigation committee
- Observer seat on Observer Advisory Committee
- Presentation on Plan Team report, stock assessment priorities.
- Discussion on more info Individual Bycatch Quota programs
- Timing of D season paper
- Freezer longliner vessel replacement issue

He walked through the December meeting agenda and noted it would be full and reviewed the 3-meeting outlook. Mr. Fields noted he would like a discussion of the trawl survey limitations in the past year, and try to compensate for those surveys that haven't been undertaken in 2011. Mr. Hull requested staff clarification and comment on the Salmon FMP on issues brought up in written public comment.

Mr. Dersham would like to clarify that during the Halibut CSP considerations in December, he would like to discuss the logbook data becoming the official data source, although he realizes it may not happen at the December meeting. Mr. Fields noted that the logbook data may become a better source of information, and will let Mr. Dersham take the lead on incorporating the data.

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Mr. Oliver noted that HAPC skate sites agenda item may be moved to February. Mr. Hyder would like to set aside time to discuss VMS.

Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved to approve the minutes from June, which was seconded by Mr. Hull. The motion passed without objection.

GOA Cod Sector Split/Freezer Longliners

Mr. Henderschedt noted that during the proposed rule review for the GOA Pacific cod sector split, there were concerns that it may have impacts on five freezer longliners and the Secretary will have to take that under consideration. **Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, to draft a discussion paper to examine the impacts on the FLL fleet as a result of the calculations of crab sideboards as a result of the cod split, and to review management measures which include removal of the sideboard.** He noted that the Council will have to wait until the final rule is out for the split, then discuss the timeline for the paper. **Motion passed without objection.**

Board of Fisheries Proposals

Mr. Dersham moved, which was seconded, that the Council recognize that the NMFS proposed rule regarding the Pacific cod sector split has provided maximum flexibility to the BOF in adjusting its state GHL and parallel cod fisheries. In taking final action on the GOA Pacific cod sector split, the Council supported providing increased opportunity to the jig fleet and considered that fishery as the primary tool for the Council and the board to provide true entry level opportunity.

The Council requests the BOF to consider these goals during its deliberations on the proposals before them. The Council recognizes that the BOF will be balancing these goals with the desire of the BOF to fully harvest state-managed GHs and address State management considerations of the effects of the sector split. The Council further recommends that the BOF considerations at this October meeting for the jig fishery in 2012 be focused on state water considerations relative to the NMFS proposed rule and any longer term solutions be a separate discussion, following a joint protocol meeting on Pacific cod fisheries, at a time when the BOF chooses.

The Council further requests the BOF to consider options that will provide jig opportunity concurrently in state and federal waters when the regulations allow and the BOF and state managers find it implementable.

Mr. Dersham spoke to his motion. He noted this motion is expressing Council intent from the action on the sector splits and asks the Board to work within the assumption that the proposed rule on GOA Pacific cod sector splits will be the same that are fished under in 2012. **The motion passed without objection.**

Letter to BOF on halibut bycatch

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded by Mr. Benson, that the Council write a letter to BOF in support of that part of proposal #34 under the Prince William Sound (PWS) Pacific cod management plan to establish a season start date in the state waters state managed Pacific cod PWS longline fishery to coincide with start date of the directed commercial halibut IFQ federal fishery to minimize halibut bycatch. Mr. Hull noted this is very specific, and the Council should only be concerned about a portion of the stated proposal. The proposal would open the PWS longline Pacific cod

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fishery simultaneously with the halibut IFQ fishery, and would maximize benefits for fishers and processors, as well as minimizing halibut bycatch. **Motion passed without objection.**

Halibut Catch Sharing Plan

Mr. Tweit noted that the Council needs to comment to the IPHC on 2012 charter halibut measures for Area 2C for its January meeting, and needs feedback from NMFS on what guidance it is requesting to proceed with final rulemaking on the halibut CSP as raised under the B report, so this issue needs priority on the December agenda. Mr. Dersham noted that he would like to have the charter logbook as an official data source, although it would be a long-term priority. Mr. Hull noted that the IPHC will have published its staff recommendations for total CEY by then, but it is not known if it will rise or fall, but the Council should be prepared to make recommendations for management measures that will hold the charter sector to their GHs. It was generally agreed that Chris Oliver and Eric Olson will keep this as a priority for the December meeting.

Mr. Oliver briefly discussed a request for a letter to the BOF regarding halibut bycatch information in the state waters, state managed fisheries. It was generally agreed that the information is to supplement the Council's work on halibut PSC, and that the Department work directly with Council staff to incorporate the requested information into the new halibut PSC limit analysis.

Ms. Moreland noted that in discussing Pacific cod sector allocations, that there are some management actions that the BOF will be taking into account, specifically in regard to concurrent fishing. She noted that the Department submitted a letter to NMFS that discussed coordination issues with the federal and state water jig season dates and is available if interested.

Observer Advisory Committee

Mr. Olson noted there has been interest in having an active observer or observer representative on the OAC, and there will be a solicitation for that position. There was brief discussion, and Mr. Hull noted there had been a seat for an observer previously, and after speaking with many involved, it would be helpful in implementation to have someone who has "on-the-ground" experience and insight that providers may not be thinking about.

Letter to NMFS on Priorities on Stock Assessment

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded by Mr. Henderschedt, to draft a letter of concern for the proposed stock assessment tool which echoes concern voiced by the Plan Teams and the SSC regarding the potential effects that could jeopardize baseline surveys in the North Pacific. He spoke to his motion noting that it has been covered in the SSC report and Council members are aware of the issue. One possible outcome of the stock assessment tool as proposed, is that within each region it would be ranked in priority, but not in a national priority. If the Council drafts the letter now, it may affect the outcome of the stock assessment tool. **Motion passed without objection.**

Western British Columbia IBO Program

Mr. Olson noted that the Council requested more information on the program, and staff may invite some representatives of the management system to give a presentation and background on the program. Dr. Balsinger noted that public testimony had mentioned the IPHC had a Bycatch Committee which has produced a report which includes a review and a description of the Canadian system and the West Coast system relative to the way bycatch is treated. It should be out in a technical memo at a later date and he would be sure the Council had a copy of it. Mr. Tweit requested a comparison of the efficiency rate the Canadians have been able to achieve in the trawl fleet relative to our fleet and fisheries. There was discussion that February in Seattle would be appropriate timing for this issue.

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Discussion Paper on Pollock D Season

Mr. Olson noted there has been additional information that has been requested, and it was generally agreed that although the priority is not high on this issue, it is an important issue to pursue. Mr. Cotten noted it would be in the best interest to put the issue on hold while waiting to get more information on the fishery.

Salmon FMP and potential clarifications

Ms. Moreland noted there has been written public comment distributed requesting further clarifications on the Salmon FMP, and reassured the Council that staff will be working on those clarifications and incorporating them into the document. In addition to clarification, there was a request for additional information on sportfishing activity that occurs in federal waters. Ms. Moreland noted it is possible to forward that information into the next analysis.

Discussion Paper on Trawl Surveys in the GOA

Mr. Tweit moved, and was seconded by Mr. Benson, the Council write a letter to NMFS concerning hydroacoustic surveys in the GOA and express concerns about missing surveys. He requested to ask 3 questions:

- **What happened in 2011?**
- **Why is the Dyson currently being re-allocated when it cannot meet current assessments in GOA?**
- **What can be done in 2012 to get a good survey?**

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that the Council has heard reference to the difficulty to getting full surveys on pollock in the GOA which complicates management of pollock in Gulf. This information is becoming more critical to basic management. There was brief discussion regarding combining letters to NMFS, and it was generally agreed that the letters should stay separate. **The motion passed without objection.**

Rural Outreach Committee Report (RCOC)

Mr. Henderschedt remarked that the work of that committee has had a positive effect on the Council's ability to reach out to stakeholders. He strongly supports that work going forward, and that type of work is best captured in the list of short-term priorities from the September 13 Outreach Committee report. Mr. Henderschedt stated his concerns about the RCOC expanding its scope to long-term projects that were not anticipated for that committee. Mr. Tweit concurred and noted that the Council should be thinking about outreach in general, for every action. The RCOC should be considering how the Council would outreach to stakeholders who haven't been traditionally engaged in the process. There was further discussion, and it was generally agreed the Council should focus outreach efforts on communities where the Council does not hold meetings.

Ms. Moreland stated her appreciation for the work of the RCOC, and requested that the Council should provide staff for federal subsistence regional advisory councils, or other boards and commissions that may have questions regarding Council issues.

It was generally agreed the Council will adopt the RCOC's recommended short-term priorities, and that a meeting of the RCOC should be held sometime in the spring.

Vessel Monitoring System

Mr. Hyder moved, which was seconded, to prepare a VMS discussion paper which would include, but not be limited to, VMS utilization in other Council regions, and VMS requirements and exemptions in the North Pacific region.

Mr. Hyder spoke to his motion, noting recent events, passage of time, and new technology should cause the Council to take a comprehensive look at VMS. The discussion paper should look at requirements and restrictions, and a list of fisheries where VMS would be useful and effective or not. He noted he is mostly interested in other regions that are covered under the Magnuson Stevens Act. He also stated it is not an urgent priority but the Council should review the paper before it progresses further.

Mr. Hull moved to amend, which was seconded, to direct the IFQ Implementation Committee to review the discussion paper before it comes back to Council. He spoke to his motion, noting that the Council should poll the wide variety of the fleets, get information and recommendations from the Committee, and gather information from the bottom up. Mr. Henderschedt noted that while the IFQ Committee should be consulted, the Council should first make a decision to pursue, then frame the issue for the Committee. There was discussion regarding the first review of the discussion paper, and it was generally agreed that the Committee would be given direction from the chairman, and a committee meeting scheduled. **The amendment passed without objection, and the main motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Henderschedt requested the Council request updates during the NMFS management report on the status of the vessel replacement rulemaking (Amendment 80) and an update on implementation of Amendment 97.

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded by Mr. Benson, to develop a discussion paper that provides a description of the trawl and longline Greenland turbot fishery and the effects of implementation of Amendment 80 and the formation of a voluntary freezer longliner coop have had on the prosecution of that fishery. The paper would primarily review how these factors have impacted overall harvest by sector and seasonal distribution of that effort. Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion noting that it would be difficult to approve a purpose and needs statement as presented in public testimony without knowing how the fishery has changed and developed in the last 5 years.

There was general discussion, and noted disappointment that the issue cannot be resolved at an industry level. Ms. Moreland noted that this issue is tied to BSAI flatfish flexibility, and Mr. Henderschedt noted that it is also related to Pacific cod, which will be addressed in a separate motion. It was noted that this motion is a response to a simple allocation issue. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded by Mr. Hyder, to include in the BSAI flatfish specifications flexibility discussion paper, a discussion of the impacts of managing Pacific cod as a hard cap in the Amendment 80 sector. Mr. Henderschedt spoke to his motion noting that the cod issue is beyond allocation and addresses efficiency. He would like to allow the Amendment 80 sector to take advantage of their cooperative agreements and take advantage of OY. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded by Mr. Benson, to request a briefing from NMFS of EFH, with two components: 1) summary of last year or two of range or scope of consultations the agency has conducted within our region, and how they are responding to those; and 2) recommendations of Council engagement in EFH consultation. Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion that the Magnuson Act provides Councils with the opportunity to comment on EFH issues and make recommendations to a

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Federal Agency. Mr. Tweit would like to know the range of issues the Council is facing, and noted that it could be included on our agenda under the B items. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Dersham noted it may be necessary for the Council to clarify to the public the process in the Halibut Catch Sharing issue, and he will be addressing it at the next implementation committee meeting.

D-2 (a) Rural Community Outreach Report

BACKGROUND

Rural Outreach Committee

The Rural Community Outreach Committee (committee) was appointed by the Council in June 2009. The primary purposes of the committee are: 1) to advise the Council on how to provide opportunities for better understanding and participation from Alaska Native and rural communities; 2) to provide feedback on community impacts sections of specific analyses; and 3) to provide recommendations regarding which proposed Council actions need a specific outreach plan and prioritize multiple actions when necessary. The committee has convened four times since it was established.

The committee met on September 13, in Anchorage, in order to receive updates from staff on general outreach efforts; receive an update on NMFS' progress on improving the tribal consultation process; and discuss several topics that may continue to improve outreach and communications with rural Alaskans. The committee was also tasked by the Council with reviewing the Bering Sea chum salmon bycatch outreach efforts and analytical schedule to-date, and discussing whether or what further outreach is necessary on this issue. (Note that both the Bering Sea chum salmon bycatch outreach plan and outreach report are posted on the Council website.) The committee also reviewed other ongoing and potential new projects that may warrant a targeted outreach effort.

Nicole Kimball gave a report from the recent Rural Community Outreach Committee meeting and answered questions from the Council. Capt. Sanial mentioned the Coast Guard has significant outreach on the schedule, especially in regards to the Arctic, and may be able to partner with the Council when it has to do with safety and enforcement issues.

Mr. Olson thanked the members, staff and the City of Unalaska and the Port of Dutch Harbor, and especially Frank Kelty and Tom Enlow. The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 am.

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

(Wed) Sept 28, 2011 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
GLENN REED	PSPA
Kenny Down	FLC
Todd Loomis	Cascade Fishing, Inc.
Merrick Barden	MCA
Simeon Swetzof Jr.	City of ST. Paul
Anni Thomson	ACC / UFA
Lori Swanson	APP
Heather McLarty	H McLarty & Assoc. Juneau AK
Russ Noroz	Ice Seafoods
CRAIG CROSS	ALUTIAN SPRAY FISHERIES
Frank Kelly	City of UNALASKA
BRENT PAINE	U B
CHUCK McCallum	GOACB / LK Pen. Bor.
Paul MacGy	At-Sea Processors Com.

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Time Log of meeting: September 28 – October 4, 2011

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
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Wednesday, September 28, 2011

0:00:00	8:04:59	Call to order
0:02:17	8:07:38	Swearing in of members: Henderschedt, Olson
0:03:44	8:08:45	Election of Officers
0:04:35	8:09:35	Approval of agenda
0:05:26	8:10:27	B-1 ED Report
0:20:00	8:24:59	B-2 NMFS Management Report, Glenn Merrill
0:58:34	9:03:20	Discussion regarding Catch Sharing Plan
1:16:55	9:21:26	In-Season Management rpt, Mary Furness
1:37:33	9:41:58	B-3 Karla Bush, ADFG report
2:00:34	10:05:00	<i>break</i>
2:20:26	10:24:31	B-4 USCG Report
2:28:26	10:32:28	B-4 Sanial, Keene
2:32:38	10:36:57	B-7 Protected Species Report, Steve MacLean
2:48:05	10:52:05	Nicole Ricci, US State Department
2:59:41	11:03:34	Public Testimony: Merrick Burden MCA
3:06:25	11:10:19	Julie Bonney, AGDB
3:15:39	11:19:29	Dave Benton, Paul MacGregor
3:32:32	11:36:07	Kenny Down
3:51:45	11:55:23	Scott Hansen
3:53:49	11:57:15	<i>lunch break</i>
3:54:03	13:29:09	Council Discussion on B items
4:37:20	14:12:14	Bill Tweit, B motion SSL TOR
5:06:09	14:40:44	<i>break</i>
5:06:17	15:02:04	C-1 Salmon FMP, Sarah Melton
5:09:36	15:05:21	Gretchen Harrington
5:53:21	15:49:06	Lance Nelson, NMFS GC
5:59:13	15:54:42	AP report, Lori Swanson
6:01:39	15:57:10	SSC Report, C1b
6:12:09	16:07:31	Public Testimony: Arni Thompson
6:19:48	16:15:06	Becca Robbins Gisclair
6:30:54	16:26:06	Recess

Thursday, September 29, 2011

0:00:00	8:34:23	Call to order
0:07:05	8:41:31	C-3 Crab Issues, Mark Fina
1:23:37	10:21:21	SSC Report
1:50:27	10:48:05	AP report, Lori Swanson
2:00:48	10:58:20	Public Testimony on C-3(a) Crab EDR
2:01:09	10:58:45	Elizabeth Wiley
2:05:31	11:03:00	Ed Poulsen
2:18:31	11:16:01	Steve Minor
2:28:04	11:25:26	Stefanie Moreland motion
2:51:04	11:48:19	Discussion on Fields amendment

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Time Log of meeting: September 28 – October 4, 2011

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
2:54:42	11:51:50	Stop Recording [11:51:50 AM]
2:54:42	14:19:44	Start Recording [2:19:44 PM]
2:54:46	14:19:51	C-3(c) Crab SAFE
3:04:52	14:31:39	Diana Stram, Bob Foy
4:43:11	16:07:36	AP report C3c, Lori Swanson
4:43:41	16:08:01	SSC Report
4:43:46	16:08:07	Pat Lvingston
5:04:30	16:28:43	Report of remaining SSC minutes
5:28:45	16:52:45	Recess until 8:30

Friday, September 30, 2011

0:00:00	8:32:35	Call to order
0:00:10	8:33:06	C-3(d) Prib Island blue king crab rebuilding
0:02:27	8:35:09	Diana Stram,
1:09:29	9:41:40	Lori Swanson, AP report
1:11:13	9:43:28	Public Comment
1:11:36	9:43:47	Simeon Swetzoff
1:13:42	9:46:02	Scott Hansen, Beauty bay
1:16:15	9:48:22	Lori Swanson
1:24:02	9:56:08	Bob Hezel
1:27:07	9:59:12	Donna Parker
1:33:31	10:05:30	Kenny Down
1:40:29	10:12:23	<i>break</i>
1:40:30	10:32:07	Lisa Lindeman
2:52:18	11:43:39	C-3(e) Bering Sea Tanner Crab Rebuilding, Diana Stram
2:52:28	11:43:55	AP Report C3e, Lori Swanson
2:54:57	11:46:12	Campbell motion
2:57:05	11:48:32	<i>lunch break</i>
2:59:11	13:21:24	Jane DiCosimo, Diana Stram
2:59:16	13:21:29	C-2 Groundfish Specifications
3:35:43	13:57:46	J. DiCosimo/D. Stram clarify questions on timing
3:36:38	13:58:36	AP report, Lori Swanson
3:45:53	14:08:05	Public Testimony: Julie Bonney
4:09:22	14:31:03	<i>break</i>
4:09:25	14:50:56	Henderschedt motion
4:29:41	15:11:14	Public comment out of order, Theresa Peterson
4:33:29	15:14:56	C-2(b) GOA Halibut PSC, Jane DiCosimo
4:33:38	15:15:01	Initial Review of GOA PSC
6:03:22	16:44:07	Recess until 9am

Saturday, October 1, 2011

0:00:00	9:05:11	Call to order
0:00:09	9:09:19	Continue with C-2 (b) Darrell Brannan
1:10:28	10:15:11	<i>break</i>

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Time Log of meeting: September 28 – October 4, 2011

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
1:11:14	10:35:13	Mike Downs
2:15:09	11:38:45	Lori Swanson, AP report
2:24:51	11:48:27	Donna Parker, Public Comment
2:29:58	11:53:24	<i>lunch break</i>
2:30:49	13:18:29	C-3(e) Tanner Crab OFL, Diana Stram
2:38:27	13:26:09	Public Testimony
2:38:39	13:26:13	Merrick Burden
2:44:56	13:32:28	Mike Szymanski
2:49:56	13:37:29	Bill McGill
2:54:16	13:41:50	Bob Hezel/Dave Wood
3:12:03	13:59:23	Lori Swanson
3:18:43	14:06:19	Don Ashley
3:21:39	14:10:50	Jason Anderson
3:23:20	14:10:55	Julie Bonney
3:55:39	14:43:00	Julianne Curry, Jeff Farvour
4:04:56	14:52:17	Linda Behnken
4:13:41	15:00:57	Brent Paine
4:25:57	15:13:08	Kenny Down
4:41:02	15:28:05	Rob Wurm
4:44:24	15:31:25	Gregg Williams
6:05:59	17:12:59	Recess

Sunday, October 2, 2011

0:00:02	8:02:14	Call to order
0:00:37	8:02:51	C-2(a) PSC in GOA
0:44:16	8:58:19	C-4(b) Observer Restructuring
1:05:57	9:20:18	Nicole Kimball, Martin Loefflad, Brandee Gerke
2:30:10	10:43:38	<i>break</i>
2:40:14	10:53:33	Dan Falvey, Electronic Monitoring
3:01:47	11:14:49	C-4(a) Observer Committee report, Nicole Kimball
3:48:52	12:01:33	<i>lunch break</i>
3:49:05	13:20:52	Public Testimony C4
3:49:27	13:21:08	Linda Behnken
4:06:40	13:38:14	Julianne Curry
4:22:52	13:54:17	<i>break</i>
4:22:52	14:12:12	C-5(a) CQE Vessel Use Cap, Nicole Kimball
5:41:06	15:30:06	AP report, Lori Swanson
6:33:18	16:22:20	C-5(b) CQE in Area 4B, Nicole Kimball
6:57:00	16:45:20	AP Report, Lori Swanson
6:59:52	16:48:09	Recess

Monday, October 3, 2011

0:00:02	8:05:01	Call to order
0:02:55	8:08:01	Public Testimony C-5(b): Dave Fraser

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Time Log of meeting: September 28 – October 4, 2011

Recording Hour	Time (24-hr)	Topic of Discussion
0:10:08	8:15:03	Clem Tillion
0:14:53	8:19:47	Chuck McCallum
0:20:44	8:25:35	Fields motion
0:35:21	8:40:13	C-5(c) Fish-up proposal, Jane DiCosimo
0:37:37	8:42:26	AP Report C5c, Lori Swanson
0:40:54	8:45:46	Public Testimony on Area 4-B fish-up
0:41:06	8:45:49	Clem Tillion
0:43:18	8:48:02	Everette Anderson
0:47:00	8:51:40	Dave Fraser
1:02:34	9:07:06	<i>break</i>
1:03:08	9:28:43	D-1(e) Nicole Kimball
1:36:52	10:02:05	Public Testimony: Dave Fraser
1:44:19	10:09:31	Public Testimony: out of order Linda Behnken
1:49:28	10:14:35	D-1(b) Jennifer Watson
2:13:35	10:38:31	Public comment, Kenny Down
2:24:55	10:49:46	John Henderschedt motion
2:26:21	10:51:07	<i>break</i>
2:27:13	11:03:58	D-1(d) GOA Pollock TAC, Steve MacLean
2:52:14	11:28:46	AP report D1d, Lori Swanson
3:19:35	11:55:49	Diana Stram update on crab TACs
3:24:42	13:22:33	Nicole Kimball
3:24:42	12:00:51	<i>lunch break</i>
3:25:07	13:22:39	Rural Community Outreach Committee Report
4:22:13	14:19:23	Staff tasking listing
4:22:19	14:19:29	AP report, Lori Sawnsen
4:26:18	14:23:21	<i>break</i>
4:28:53	14:43:56	Public Testimony on D2
4:29:48	14:44:48	Kenny Down
4:44:55	14:59:53	Lori Swanson, Jason Anderson
4:54:48	15:09:39	Julie Bonney
5:06:49	15:21:37	Capt. Sanial on IUU boat
5:07:00	15:21:44	Recess

Tuesday, October 4, 2011

0:00:25	8:31:01	Call to order
1:20:23	9:50:25	D-2 Staff Tasking
1:20:27	9:50:46	Adjourn

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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FINAL ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES North Pacific Fishery Management Council September 26-29, 2011 Dutch Harbor, Alaska

The following (20) members were present for all or part of the meetings:

Kurt Cochran
Craig Cross
John Crowley
Julianne Curry
Jerry Downing
Tom Enlow
Tim Evers

Jeff Favour
Becca Robbins Gisclair
Jan Jacobs
Bob Jacobson
Alexus Kwachka
Chuck McCallum
Matt Moir

Theresa Peterson
Ed Poulsen
Neil Rodriguez
Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

Minutes of the June 2011 meeting were approved.

C-1(b) Salmon FMP

The AP recommends that the Council release the analysis for public review with Alternative 3 as their preliminary preferred alternative and include additional discussion on preventing unregistered fishing in the areas excluded from the FMP.

Motion passed 18/0.

C-3(a) Crab Economic Data Collection

The AP recommends that the Council refine the catcher vessel and processor/floating processor EDR alternatives as shown in Attachment 1. Refine catcher processor EDR alternatives to be consistent with the catcher vessel and processor changes. In addition, catcher processors should be revised to capture consistent data for any operation type (CV/Processor). *Motion passed 19/0.*

A motion to recommend the Council send this to a workgroup composed of industry, crew, other stakeholder, Council and AFSC staff and other economists to refine alternatives and incorporate any relevant recommendations from the CIE review, failed 7/12.

Minority Report on Crab EDR - A minority of the AP felt that the crab EDR action is a significant one and may have implications for data reporting in other catch share programs. It is therefore important to ensure that we're collecting accurate data to address the issues we want to monitor. The current alternatives take an approach of eliminating inaccurate data and additional work is warranted to develop better ways of asking for some of these data elements rather than eliminating them (leasing and crew payment details in particular). This type of work is best suited for a committee, and committee work is the approach we've used in the development of EDRs in the past. A committee can incorporate additional stakeholders and will give us the benefit of including any relevant recommendations from the CIE review.

Signed by: Becca Robbins Gisclair, Jeff Farvour, Tim Evers, Theresa Peterson, Alexis Kwachka, Chuck McCallum, Julianne Curry.

C-3(c) BSAI Crab SAFE report and catch specifications

The AP recommends that the Council approve the BSAI Crab SAFE report as well as the Crab Plan Team's recommended OFLs and ABCs for crab stocks in the BSAI area. *Motion passed 19/0.*

C-3(d) Pribilof Island Blue King Crab Rebuilding Plan

The AP recommends that the Council delay action until December on this issue to allow further analysis of the impact of the revised OFL and impacts on additional fisheries. *Motion passed 20/0.*

The AP recommends that the Council add an Option 2c under Alternative 2 to read:

Option 2c: Vessels fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear in the existing Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Zone (PIHCZ) must carry 100% observer coverage. Pacific cod pot fishing in the PIHCZ will be closed for the year if total PIBKC bycatch across all fisheries reaches:

- i) 20%
- ii) 30%

of the overall trigger closure cap. *Motion passed 20/0.*

The AP recommends that the Council revise Alternative 5 so that no closure extends beyond the boundaries of the Pribilof Island blue king crab management area. *Motion passed 20/0.*

C-3(e) Bering Sea Tanner Crab Rebuilding

The AP recommends the Council move forward with development of a problem statement and alternatives. *Motion passed 18/0.*

C-2(a) Groundfish Harvest Specifications for 2012/2013

The AP recommends that the Council approve groundfish specifications for the Gulf of Alaska as listed in the table on pages 36 and 37 of the Joint Plan Team minutes. The TACs should be set equal to ABC for all species for 2012/13 except Pacific cod, which would be adjusted as shown on page 4 of the action memo, as well as approve the PSC limits as detailed on page 4. *Motion passed 12/8.*

Minority Report on proposed specifications for 2012 - A minority of the AP opposed this motion because they felt that the Halibut PSC limits were set too high and should be reduced in the 2012 harvest specifications for all the reasons set forward in the minority report under the C-2(b) Halibut PSC agenda item.

Signed by: Becca Robbins Gisclair, Julianne Curry, Theresa Peterson, Tim Evers, Chuck McCallum, Alexis Kwachka, Jeff Farvour.

The AP recommends that the Council roll over Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands area groundfish ABCs and OFLs contained in the table on page 26 of the Joint Plan Team minutes, and roll over and approve 2012/13 TACs as shown on the table. *Motion passed 20/0*

The AP recommends that the Council approve preliminary BSAI PSC specifications and seasonal apportionments as shown in Tables 7a, b and c on pages 2 and 3 of the action memo.

Motion passed 20/0.

Revised AP tables are included as Attachment 2.

C-2(b) Gulf of Alaska Halibut PSC Limits

The AP recommends to the Council that this action be done through an amendment to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP to set halibut PSC limits in regulations. The AP recommends revising Alternative 2, option 1 to read:

Option 1: Reduce the halibut PSC limit for HAL gear

- a) For CP sector
 - a. 5 percent
 - b. 10 percent
 - c. 15 percent
- b) For CV sector
 - a. 5 percent
 - b. 10 percent
 - c. 15 percent

Further, the AP recommends that the document be released for public review with the following additions:

1. Comparison of the first wholesale value for halibut and groundfish.
2. Benefits to the CEY and revenue impacts for stakeholders in the first year of the action and subsequent years.
3. Expanded discussion of rationale for seasonal apportionments for halibut PSC throughout the year.
4. Incorporate a discussion of total halibut biomass trends.
5. Clearly specify when referring to exploitable biomass, total biomass, or female spawning biomass.
6. Expanded discussion of community impacts (municipal services, processing workers, processor labor, and shipping) for groundfish and halibut dependent communities.
7. Ecosystem impacts of reduced arrowtooth flounder harvest.
8. Add newest stock status information from the 2012 specification process.
9. Incorporate results of the IPHC/Council workshop anticipated to occur in spring 2012.

The AP recommends that the Council review and revise the problem statement.

Motion passed 11/8/1.

Minority Report on Halibut PSC - A minority of the AP supported the following motion:

The AP recommends the Council adopt the following Alternative as a PPA for implementation through the 2012 catch specification process:

Alternative 2, option 2(b) to reduce the halibut PSC limit for trawl gear by 10%.

Suboption 1: Apply the full trawl PSC limit reduction to the 5th season

Suboption 2: (a): AFA/Amendment 80/Rockfish Program sideboard limits will be applied as percentages against the GOA Halibut PSC limit

Gulf-wide exploitable biomass has decreased by over 50% over the last decade and the directed commercial and halibut charter fisheries have faced huge reductions. As a matter of conservation and equity, it is incumbent on us to reduce halibut bycatch now.

The minority felt that a 10% reduction represented a compromise from the 15% overwhelmingly requested in the written public comments. Understanding that the hook and line sector has taken reductions in PSC limits in 1995 and through sector splits, the reduction here is applied only to trawl. The minority felt that applying the PSC limit reduction to the 5th season significantly reduces economic impacts to the groundfish fisheries (\$1.08 million vs. \$6.75 million). Applying sideboard limits as a percentage applies reductions equitably between fisheries, otherwise under suboption 2 (b) other fisheries end up with a greater than 10% reduction. The minority felt the analysis was ready to release for public review and should be moved forward for action through the 2012 catch specification process.

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

C-4 Observer Report

The AP received a report from staff on the Observer Advisory Committee meeting. No action was taken.

C-5(a) CQE Vessel Use Caps – Halibut Management

The AP recommends that the Council move forward with final action adopting Alternative 2 as revised in bold.

Alternative 2. Revise current regulations such that:

- No vessel may be used, during any fishing year, to harvest more than 50,000 lbs of IFQ halibut derived from quota share held by a CQE; and no vessel may be used, during any fishing year, to harvest more than 50,000 lbs of IFQ sablefish derived from quota share held by a CQE.
- The vessel would also be subject to the same vessel use caps applicable in the overall IFQ Program. **The existing vessel use caps for the IFQ Program that would be applicable under Alternative 2 are: 1% of Area 2C halibut IFQ TAC and 0.5% of the entire halibut IFQ TAC; 1% of Southeast sablefish IFQ TAC and 1% of the entire sablefish IFQ TAC.**

Grandfathered QS holders over the individual cap cannot lease CQE quota.

Motion passed 19/0.

C-5(b) CQE in Area 4B – Halibut Management

The AP recommends that the Council send the analysis out for public review with the following changes:

To revise Alternative 2 language on the ownership entity, on page 45 of the analysis, to read, **“A non-profit entity, approved by NMFS as the holder of the Adak community allocation of Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab will be recognized as the CQE for the community of Adak.”**

The governing body in the community (City of Adak) must approve the CQE to operate on behalf of the community.

Motion passed 17/0.

C-5(c) Area 4B Fish-up – Halibut Management

The AP recommends that the Council move forward with final action on the analysis, and that the analysis include discussion on the effects of fish-up on the price of D class quota, and the original intent of D class quota in the IFQ program. *Motion passed 14/3/1.*

D-1(d) Discussion paper on GOA pollock D season

The AP recommends that the Council take no further action on this item. *Motion passed 20/0.*

D-1(e) BS & AI Pcod Sector Split Discussion Paper

The AP heard a report from staff. No action was taken.

D-2 Staff Tasking – Outreach Report

The AP received a report from staff on the Rural Community Outreach Committee meeting. The AP recommends that the Council adopt the short-term priorities listed on page 8 of the Rural Outreach Committee report. *Motion passed 19/0.*

The AP requests the Council ask the IFQ Implementation Committee to clarify a regulation noted on page 61 of the CQE discussion paper (footnote 52), to specifically address:

1. further clarification of the reason for regulation,
2. whether it's really applicable to current IFQ management, and
3. whether it should be maintained or rescinded.

Motion passed 19/0.

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

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

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

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

DRAFT Proposed GOA OFL, ABC and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2012-2013 from SSC/AP (9/29/11)

Species	Area	2011 final			8/20/2011	2012 final			2012 proposed			2013 proposed		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	AP rec TAC	OFL	ABC	AP rec TAC
Demersal shelf rockfish	SEO	479	300	300	72	479	300	300	479	300	300	479	300	300
Thornyhead rockfish	W		425	425	140		425	425		425	425		425	425
	C		637	637	267		637	637		637	637		637	637
	E		708	708	131		708	708		708	708		708	708
	Total	2,360	1,770	1,770	538	2,360	1,770	1,770	2,360	1,770	1,770	2,360	1,770	1,770
Atka mackerel	GW	6,200	4,700	2,000	1,571	6,200	4,700	2000	6,200	4,700	4,700	6,200	4,700	4,700
Big skate	W		598	598	44		598	598		598	598		598	598
	C		2,049	2,049	1,373		2,049	2049		2,049	2,049		2,049	2,049
	E		681	681	94		681	681		681	681		681	681
	Total	4,438	3,328	3,328	1,511	4,438	3,328	3328	4,438	3,328	3,328	4,438	3,328	3,328
Longnose skate	W		81	81	22		81	81		81	81		81	81
	C		2,009	2,009	585		2,009	2,009		2,009	2,009		2,009	2,009
	E		762	762	56		762	762		762	762		762	762
	Total	3,803	2,852	2,852	663	3,803	2,852	2,852	3,803	2,852	2,852	3,803	2,852	2,852
Other skates	GW	2,791	2,093	2,093	612	2,791	2,093	2,093	2,791	2,093	2,093	2,791	2,093	2,093
Other species	GW													
Squids	GW	1,530	1,148	1,148	223	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148
Sharks	GW	8,263	6,197	6,197	368	8,263	6,197	6,197	8,263	6,197	6,197	8,263	6,197	6,197
Octopuses	GW	1,273	954	954	247	1,272	954	954	1,272	954	954	1,272	954	954
Sculpins	GW	7,328	5,496	5,496	547	7,328	5,496	5,496	7,328	5,496	5,496	7,328	5,496	5,496
Total	GOA	723,930	590,121	318,288	143,435	743,422	603,990	335,078	743,422	603,992	603,992	743,422	603,990	603,990

Final 2011 and 2012 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs from final 2011-2012 harvest specifications rule.

For the November PT meeting the Council's recommendations for the proposed 2012-2013 and catch through November 12, 2011 will be included

Pacific cod catch in 2010 does not include catch from State managed fisheries.

2012 final amounts were used as a place holder for 2012-2013 OFLs and ABCs.

**REPORT
of the
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE
to the
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 26th – September 28th, 2011**

The SSC met from September 26th through September 28th, 2011 at the Grand Aleutian Hotel, Dutch Harbor Alaska.

Members present were:

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

Members absent were:

Vacant
Oregon Dept. Fish and Wildlife

C-1 (b) Initial review revised Salmon FMP

Sarah Melton (NPFMC) presented a workshop report and Gretchen Harrington (NMFS-AKR) provided details from the initial review draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for Amendment 12 to revise the FMP for salmon fisheries in the EEZ off the coast of Alaska (Salmon FMP). The scope of the current Salmon FMP covers all of the EEZ off Alaska and is divided into the East Area (EEZ waters east of Cape Suckling) and the West Area (EEZ to the west of Cape Suckling). There was no public testimony.

The SSC recommends that this document be released for public review, after minor comments and suggestions have been addressed.

The SSC appreciates the concise analysis of alternatives for the geographic scope of the FMP. Clear descriptions of each alternative are given as well as the pertinent National Standards that apply to the alternative to include or exclude the historical net fishing areas in the West Area EEZ. Although no specific examples are given, there is adequate description of how inclusion (Alternative 2) of the historic

net fishing areas in the FMP would complicate and duplicate state management of salmon in these areas. As explained in the text and accompanying tables of catch, all three historic net fishing areas are portions of larger state-managed fishing districts that also include State waters. The EA argues that State management of fish stocks in these areas is identical to and coordinated with management of these salmon stocks in state waters. The draft EA then goes on to explain how the exclusion of these areas of the West Area EEZ from the FMP (Alternative 3) is consistent with guidelines for application of National Standard 3 (managing stocks as a unit across their range) and National Standard 7 (management measures should minimize costs and avoid unnecessary duplication).

The SSC also commends the analysts for a very thorough review of the current FMP with an analysis of revisions required to meet MSA provisions and clarify the delegation of salmon management to the State of Alaska. The draft EA clearly describes the escapement-based management system that the State of Alaska uses and how it relates to MSA provisions for an FMP as an alternative approach to meeting guidelines for National Standard 1 to prevent overfishing and achieve optimum yields. The draft EA explains that the State of Alaska also has regulatory policies and procedures for setting escapement goals, for addressing scientific uncertainty in setting goals and managing for them, and for conducting scientific peer review. These processes can be used as an alternative process to preparation of SAFE documents, SSC recommendations for OFL and ABC, and setting exploitation rate-based ACLs/AMs, such as those used for crab and groundfish.

The SSC provides the following comments and suggestions to be addressed before release to the public:

- The draft EA needs to clarify that under alternative 3, ESA issues in the three exempted net fisheries in the West Area would be handled through Section 10 consultations with the State of Alaska.
- Similarly, the draft EA needs to describe potential actions (e.g., amendment of the FMP) that could be taken if new or expanding salmon fisheries were developed in the three historical net fishery areas under alternative 3.
- Several written public comments that resulted from the Salmon FMP Workshop are concerned with competing interests and conflicts between user groups in the upper Cook Inlet area, and subsequent resolution as specified in National Standard 7. These drift net fishermen who fish in the EEZ are concerned that under alternative 3 they will lose federal oversight and the ability to appeal management decisions made by the State of Alaska to the Federal Courts. The EA should more clearly explain the impact of the PPA on these users and perceived loss of oversight and an appeals process. These sections from the FMP may not be sufficient to address these issues.
- The prey analysis for humpback whales needs to be included in the relevant section of the EA (page 136 of the draft EA).
- Provisions for management and monitoring of interactions of the three historic net fisheries with marine mammals needs to be more fully described for alternative 3 (the PPA).
- Observer data for interactions between marine birds and drift gill net fisheries in the West Area EEZ (page 142 of the draft EA) need to be reviewed more carefully and updated with the latest information.

C-2 (a) Groundfish

General Groundfish Plan team recommendations

The SSC received a number of recommendations from the BSAI and GOA Plan teams. The SSC would also like to receive an electronic copy of the GPT research recommendations as soon as those are finalized. Grant Thompson (NMFS-AFSC) presented an Aleutian Islands Pacific cod report describing a tier 5 approach for estimating OFL's and ABC's in the Aleutian Island region. The SSC anticipates that finer geographical divisions of BSAI Pacific cod ABC and OFL will be considered during next year's specification process.

The SSC supports the GPT recommendations in a number of areas:

- Octopus natural mortality rate. The SSC recommends that the author consider and mention in the analysis whether any of the predation amounts from the predation-based estimate might be from fishery discards of octopus and not due to direct predation on octopus.
- Moving to a biennial schedule for updating SAFE chapters for Tier 5/6 stocks when new survey information is available is supported. Executive summaries only are prepared in off-years.
- The SSC echoed the GPT concerns about the NMFS stock assessment priority tool and the possible disadvantages it may have for providing support and continued improvement to the stock assessments for the well-managed North Pacific stocks.
- Incorporating total catch data into SAFE appendices this year as a precursor to incorporating into the stock assessment. This allows for assessment of the reliability of the data and allows examination of whether double-counting might be occurring, etc. before these data are actually used.
- Continued efforts to move grenadier into the FMP. The SSC continues to support this as a priority and has previously commented on this.
- Alternative methods for Bogoslof pollock ABC control rules.
- Explore an alternative for splitting skates into Alaska skate and Other skates, including improved species identification.
- AI cod model alternatives in the short term (Kalman filter approach for the next assessment cycle) and long term (age structured model)
- Provide additional information in the assessment on maturation studies supporting northern/Dusky rockfish.
- The SSC requests the GPT to verify whether dusky rockfish research recommendations are included in the GPT's research recommendations.

Harvest Specifications

The SSC received a presentation from Grant Thompson (NMFS-AFSC) on the proposed harvest specifications for groundfish in both the BSAI and the GOA for 2012 and 2013. The SSC recommends approval of these specifications, noting that these include moving yellowtail and widow rockfish out of the GOA pelagic shelf rockfish complex into the GOA other shelf rockfish group.

Pacific cod model run proposals

Grant Thompson (NMFS-AFSC) reported on the Teams' recommendations for Pacific cod model scenarios in the BSAI that will go forward for consideration at the November Plan Team meeting. The Teams examined five models that remained for consideration following the May Plan Team and June

SSC meetings. Model performance was measured by: 1) how often the fits with random starting points reached the MLE (match rate), 2) the root mean squared deviation of the negative log likelihood from the minimum (likelihood variation), and 3) the CV of the estimate of present biomass.

The Teams requested Models 2b and 4 in November, and requested a brief investigation into the reasons for performance issues with Model 3. The Teams wanted to include Model 3 as well if a short investigation would improve performance. Grant resolved the issue with Model 3 and presented the results to the SSC and the SSC agrees that this model should be brought forward for consideration.

The SSC supports the Team's suite of models and two additional model runs. First, the SSC would like last years based model (Model 1) brought forward for consideration. Second, the SSC also requests an additional run using Model 3, but excluding the mean-size-at-age composition data, because of concerns with incorporation of this dataset. The conclusion may be that excluding these data sources is not a good idea, but at least an evaluation will have been done. The SSC notes that the Author has discretion for modest changes to the above models to improve performance.

C-2 (b) GOA Halibut PSC limits

The SSC received a presentation from Darrell Brannan and Mike Downs (NPFMC consultants). Public testimony was received from Bob Hezzle (Fisherman's Finest), Merrick Burden (Marine Conservation Alliance), Julie Bonney (Alaska Groundfish Databank) and Donna Parker (F/V Sea Star).

The draft RIR reflects an impressive effort to address this large and complex body of information and statistical data. The analysts have compiled a draft RIR that is exhaustive and comprehensive, while remaining accessible. The recommended modestly revised Council Problem Statement, presented in the draft, is a much improved characterization of the action under consideration.

The SSC appreciates the effort made by the analysts/authors to adhere to clear, consistent, and concise use of terminology, especially pertaining to the distinct categories of removals in the groundfish fisheries defined as incidental catch, PSC, and bycatch. The effort enhances clarity for the reader, avoiding the need to guess as to which category is being referenced. Care should be taken when expressing revenue estimates, to identify them correctly (e.g., 'gross') each time they are cited, and attribute them to the appropriate market transaction level (e.g., exvessel, first wholesale, export, final user/consumer).

The distinction between "personal-use" and "subsistence-use" has very important legal, management, social, and cultural implications. Confounding these two separate and unique forms of use, as has been done in sections of the RIR impairs the ability of the Council and the public to fully appreciate the nature, distribution, and significance of the projected impacts of halibut PSC allowance reductions.

Criticism has been leveled in the past at the static nature of the economic impact estimates, and it remains a concern with the current analysis. However, until the necessary operational and economic data become available and dynamic behavioral models of 'expected' vessel-level response to changes in input conditions, including management constraint can be developed, the analyst can do little more than speculate. In the present context, the static outcome has been presented as an example of a worse (not

worst) case result, supplemented with hypotheses of how more dynamic assumptions about fleet behavior may play out.

With specific reference to Appendix 7, the section contains a report on socioeconomic work contracted by the Council to examine how the proposed action affects communities. This is a compilation of existing and limited quantitative datasets and its presentation is constrained by confidentiality requirements. Qualitative analyses are meant to overcome the deficiencies in these data, however there is limited existing research to draw upon, beyond the community profiles. Inclusion of findings from research by Courtney Carothers, Laurie Richmond, Emilie Springer, and Meredith Marcione could strengthen the document. Gale Vick of the Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition is also a useful contact to enhance the social impact analysis.

Public testimony indicated that awareness and analyses of potential effects on communities and fishery sectors of the action are inadequate. For example, Appendix 7 has identified three communities that are most likely to be affected by the proposed action: Kodiak, Sand Point, and King Cove. The empirical basis for this expectation is limited. The ability to address how proposed actions might affect individual operations, local support services, or the sustained participation of the communities is compromised without additional information. This could be improved through short-term research in each community to assess community-level engagement and dependency on groundfish and halibut fisheries and potential effects on individual operations and support services. The conclusions of Appendix 7, that the communities and individual operations will not likely be significantly affected, have not been demonstrated nor sufficiently incorporated into the RIR.

Taking the EA/RIR/IRFA in total, the SSC has identified a number of deficiencies in the document: opportunities to improve the community impact analysis; interpretation of >26" halibut PSC savings economic and distributional impacts; inadequate evaluation of impact of alternatives on apex predators (e.g., marine birds and mammals); among other technical matters. For example, the section addressing marine birds is generic to the GOA or even all of Alaska, and makes overarching statements about seabirds feeding over 'vast areas of ocean' on primarily plankton and fish, and therefore unaffected by the alternatives; these statements oversimplify marine bird use of specific habitats and benthic prey species in the GOA, resulting in little support for findings of no impact. The SSC notes that in estimating halibut catch and revenue impacts, the incorrect table from Appendix 5 has been used. The authors' intent was to estimate impacts on 026 (>26 inches) fish, for which the correct Appendix 5 table is Table 3. Some discussion of U26 impacts should be included, although we note these accumulate over the longer term. The addition of more detailed information on halibut migration patterns in the EA would help the reader interpret the estimated impacts, which are based on the assumption of no movement of halibut.

The SSC recommends release of the draft for public review, once the suggested edits have been evaluated and appropriately addressed to the extent practicable. The SSC notes that no preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) has yet been identified. If the Council identifies a PPA at this meeting, the draft document must address the procedural requirements of the RFA, prior to release.

The SSC also notes that the Groundfish Plan Team recommended consideration of a biomass-based cap. The SSC looks forward to hearing discussions of the Plan Team on how this might be analyzed in the future.

C-3 (a) Crab Economic Data Reports

The SSC received a staff report from Mark Fina (NPFMC) on this agenda item. Public testimony was provided by Edward Poulsen (Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers Association) and Steve Minor (Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee).

The SSC has long been on record commenting on the qualitative treatment of economic and social impacts in analyses that come before the Council. The legal and policy barriers to acquiring these data finally changed during MSA reauthorization and under provisions of the Crab Rationalization authorizing legislation. As a result, NMFS and the Council, with considerable assistance from industry, developed the Economic Data Reports (EDR) as a mechanism for systematically acquiring, compiling, and analyzing these critically needed data in the context of BSAI crab fisheries.

The EDR process is charting a new path that offers the potential to significantly improve the quality of the economic analyses presented to the Council. Although this process has admittedly been imperfect and a source of frustration among all parties involved, **the collection of data beyond the revenue and landings data that are typically used in Council analyses is essential.** The SSC is concerned that should the crab EDR program fail, it will adversely impact the Council's ability to improve data collection in other fisheries and will be a lost opportunity to improve the economic analyses for years to come. Paradigm shifts are not simple to achieve and mandatory economic data collection for fisheries managed by this Council is just such a shift.

The SSC commends the work of the analyst. However, the document presented to the SSC for initial review raises a number of concerns. The assertion contained in the Problem Statement and embedded in the reconsideration action that the costs of the status quo are too great and that the benefits are minimal or altogether lacking is misleading. The Problem Statement, as currently worded, frames Alternative 1 (status quo) as a non-viable option, yet lacks a substantive analysis of how the benefits and costs of the status quo compare with those of the other two alternatives presented in the document. The SSC recommends that the Council revisit its Problem Statement, avoiding statements that foreclose its options and to broaden the suite of alternatives that can offer a middle-ground between status-quo and abandoning the efforts and investments made to date.

The SSC acknowledges that revisions to the current EDR program are necessary. The current EDR program reportedly imposes a substantial burden on industry (average 37 hours) and a revised EDR with lower compliance costs should be considered. The SSC also recognizes that, although there are data quality issues that should be addressed in a revised EDR, the statement regarding Alternative 2 on page 44 of the Initial Review Draft incorrectly states that "the types of analyses that may be undertaken are not reduced substantially." Both action alternatives propose to eliminate collection of most/all cost information, and as a result, the quality of the analyses that may be undertaken is reduced substantially, essentially closing the door on any meaningful economic data collection. Rather than eliminate data elements with quality concerns, the SSC recommends that a middle ground be explored that continues to

collect most of the key data elements in some form. This may entail scaling back the level at which the data are collected (e.g., aggregate across all crab fisheries, rather than by crab fishery). While there may still be issues about the data quality, an expectation of perfection in any complex program is simply unreasonable. Iterative improvement should be regarded as success and encouraged. As hard as it may be to carry this process forward, the need for these data has not diminished and the SSC still maintains strong support for the concept of a comprehensive Economic Data Collection Program.

The SSC also recommends that the Council reconsider whether the blind data collection process (described in section 2.4) needs to be continued. Although the SSC recognizes the importance of maintaining confidentiality, especially with the collection of cost data, it does not appear that the benefits of this added layer are justified by costs and complexities.

Finally, the formal report from CIE review of the EDR program is due next week. Although the CIE review was not intended to inform Council action, it is possible that the review may contain useful input to assist in the development of new alternatives for consideration.

The SSC requests an opportunity to review the EDR Revision document in its next iteration. **Given the concerns about the problem statement and the suite of alternatives, the SSC does not recommend release of the analysis for public review at the present time.**

C-3 (c) Crab SAFE

The intent of establishing ACLs was to provide a framework that would lead to a consistent approach for incorporating uncertainty into the specification process based on the best available assessment of stock status. However, assessment authors, the plan team, and the SSC continue to struggle with how to account for the generally recognized and considerable uncertainties in specifying OFL distributions. These uncertainties are illustrated by the large range of OFL estimates among different models for snow crab (Table 10 in snow crab assessment) and are not reflected in the often minimal buffer between maximum ABC and OFL (with $P^* = 0.49$ and model-based uncertainty only). We are concerned that this may result in somewhat arbitrary choices about additional precaution and potential inconsistencies in the way uncertainties are incorporated for different stocks. The SSC has strived for consistency and, with the exception of one stock, has applied a 10% buffer as recommended for some stocks by the CPT. However, we note that this approach has no rigorous basis except that it reflects the 10% buffer adopted for Tier 5 stocks. The SSC looks forward to seeing the results of the plan team's OFL pdf workgroup, and requests that this group consider this issue and provide recommendations on a unified approach for quantifying and incorporating uncertainty in OFL distributions under the current control rule.

In reviewing Table 5 of the Introduction to the Crab SAFE, the SSC noted that overfishing did not occur in 2010/11 for any of the crab stocks.

SSC recommendations for September 2011(stocks 1-6). Note that recommendations for stocks 7-10 represent those final values recommended by the SSC in June 2011. Note diagonal fill indicates parameters are not applicable for that tier level. Values in 1,000 (t), bold values indicate SSC recommendation differs from Crab Plan Team .

Chapter	Stock	Tier	Status (a,b,c)	F _{OFL}	B _{MSY} or B _{MSYproxy}	Years ¹ (biomass or catch)	2011/12 ² ³ MMB	2011 MMB / MMB _{MSY}	γ	Mortality (M)	2011/12 OFL	2011/12 ABC
1	EBS snow crab	3	b	1.42	147.48	1979-current [recruitment]	133.8	0.91		0.23(females) 0.319 (imm) 0.299 (mat males)	73.50	66.15
2	BB red king crab	3	a	0.32	27.3	1984-2011	29.76	1.05		0.18default Estimated ⁴	8.80	7.92
3	EBS Tanner crab	4	b	0.05	83.33	1974-1980	26.06	0.31	1.0	0.23	1.57	1.41
4	Pribilof Islands red king crab	4	b	0.08	5.14	1991/92- 2010/11	2.58	0.50	1.0	0.18	0.393	0.307
5	Pribilof Islands blue king crab	4	c	0	4.49	1980/81- 1984/85 1990/91/- 1997/98	0.37	0.08	1.0	0.18	0.00116	0.00104
6	St. Matthew Island blue king crab	4	a	0.18	3.11	1989/90- 2009/10	7.17	2.31	1.0	0.18	1.7	1.5 [total male catch]
7	Norton Sound red king crab	4	a	0.18	1.13	1983-current [model estimate]	2.13	1.9	1.0	0.18	0.30	0.27
8	AI golden king crab	5				See intro chapter					5.17	4.66
9	Pribilof Island golden king crab	5				See intro chapter					0.09	0.08
10	Adak red king crab	5				1995/96- 2007/08					.054	0.014

¹ For Tiers 3 and 4 where B_{MSY} or B_{MSYproxy} is estimable, the years refer to the time period over which the estimate is made. For Tier 5 stocks it is the years upon which the catch average for OFL is obtained.

² MMB as projected for 2/15/2012 at time of mating.

³ Model mature biomass on 7/1/2011

⁴ Additional mortality males: one period 1980-1984. Females three periods: 1980-1984; 1976-1979; 1985 to 1993. See assessment for mortality rates associated with these time periods.

Snow crab

The SSC received a presentation on the snow crab stock assessment from Jack Turnock (AFSC) and a summary of the relevant Crab Plan Team (CPT) discussions from Bob Foy (AFSC) and Diana Stram (NPFMC). In response to previous CPT and SSC recommendations, the current assessment explored 13 alternative models that focused on three primary issues: natural mortality (fixed vs. estimated), availability of crab to the BSFRF survey (logistic function vs. smooth function), and new growth estimates for snow crab from a recent analysis by Dave Somerton.

The SSC appreciates the clear presentation and documentation of the alternative models and the extensive outputs and diagnostics for three of the models. This model has undergone extensive revisions and improvements since last year and the SSC thanks the authors, CPT, and modeling workshop participants for working on a tight timeline to bring forward the current suite of informative models.

The SSC agrees with the CPT's recommendation to adopt model 6 as the best model for specification purposes and provides the following rationale:

- Natural mortality (M): There is considerable uncertainty about appropriate mortality rates for snow crab. The author's preferred model (Mod. 7) fixes M for females, immature males, and mature males based on uncertain estimates of maximum age of snow crab at $M=0.23$ (estimated by Hoenig's method). Estimating either immature M (Model 1) or mature M (Model 2, similar to the model approved last year) inside the model resulted in a much higher M and lower Q, while estimating both M values (Model 3) resulted in more modest increases in M with a higher mortality for immature males than for mature males. The resulting Q was close to empirical estimates of selectivity from the side-by-side comparisons and provided a much better fit to the length composition data and to other data components including survey biomass. The estimates of natural mortality and differences among models were similar for models 4-6, which used a smooth curve instead of a logistic curve for availability of crab to the BSFRF survey.
- Survey availability (Q): The smooth curve resulted in a considerable reduction in the negative log-likelihood (~ 11) and a further improved fit to the length composition data components (Table 16). Although the improved model fit nominally used 40 additional parameters, the actual difference in degrees of freedom judging by the shape of the smooth curves (Fig. A-25 of the supplemental Model 6 results) is likely to be closer to 3 or 4, thus the penalty for the additional parameters ($\sim 2*4=8$) is exceeded by improvement in the likelihood. While the SSC was troubled by the shape of the curve, as well as the difference in curves between 2009 and 2010, we agreed with the CPT that differences in availability of certain size classes to the BSFRF survey could result in the estimated patterns.
- Growth: A new relationship between pre-molt carapace width and molting increment was recently estimated by Dave Somerton (Fig. A-21 in supplement) and was used in models 8-10. The estimated curve differs from the current assumption in the model that growth increments increase linearly with size of crab. The SSC shared the CPT's concerns about the data used to estimate this growth curve and believes that it would be premature to adopt a model using these growth estimates. Moreover, the SSC suggests that the new growth information, after appropriate review, should be incorporated in the model by allowing a similar quadratic or asymptotic increase in growth increment with carapace width and using the parameters of the estimated curve as priors in the model.

The SSC offers these additional recommendations for the stock assessment authors:

- Because of considerable uncertainty in natural mortality (M) and difficulties in estimating M internally in the assessment, the uncertainty in estimates of M should be fully characterized in the assessment by including standard errors or a full posterior distribution for M.
- Female mortality remains fixed at $M=0.23$ in the model although females are generally believed to have higher mortality rates than males. Therefore, the authors should explore estimating female mortality in the model (as in the new Tanner crab model) or provide a better rationale for the choice of female M.
- Further examination of the survey availability curves is warranted to assess the justification for using a smooth curve in the model. The SSC suggests the use of the DIC instead of the AIC for selecting among alternative models as it provides an objective method for determining the effective number of parameters.
- To compare model-estimated selectivity to the empirical (Somerton) estimates, the weighting scheme for the empirical estimates of selectivity should be reviewed and clarified. In particular, the SSC is uncertain about whether estimates of selectivity at a given location were weighted twice in the process of scaling selectivity estimates up to the "average" selectivity experienced by the snow crab population within the survey area (p. 13).

ABC determination

The range of models examined in the current assessment highlights the considerable uncertainty in the choice of an appropriate model for specification purposes. We note the wide spread in the estimates of OFL among alternative models (Table 10), which arises from considerable uncertainty about natural mortality, growth, and the appropriate structure of the model. **Because of this uncertainty, the SSC recommends setting the ABC for snow crab below maximum permissible. After considerable discussion, the SSC selected a buffer of 10% between the estimated OFL and the ABC, resulting in a 2011/12 ABC for snow crab of 66,150 t.** The buffer was largely chosen for consistency with other stocks and with the recommended buffer for Tier 5 stocks. The SSC would have preferred to handle uncertainty in the OFL through use of extra uncertainty under the P^* approach, but this approach does not result in any meaningful buffer between OFL and ABC with a $P^* = 0.49$. We note that even with the 10% buffer, the resulting ABC exceeds the OFL estimates from many of the alternative models, implying considerable risk that the chosen ABC exceeds the "true" OFL.

For the next assessment cycle, the SSC further supports all of the CPT recommendations in the September 2012 CPT report. In addition, we request that the CPT discuss the SSC's long-standing concern over potentially high harvest rates on the southernmost portion of the stock, which may be disproportionately important to its overall reproductive success. The SSC would like to receive a recommendation from the CPT regarding the desirability of developing a spatial model for snow crab given limited resources and other priorities.

Bristol Bay Red King Crab

Drs. Robert Foy (NMFS-AFSC) and Diana Stram (NPFMC) provided an overview of the Bristol Bay Red King Crab stock assessment. The authors (Jie Zheng and Shareef Siddeek, ADF&G) introduced 11 models during the May CPT meeting. The SSC reviewed these models during their June 2011 meeting and accepted the authors' and CPT's recommendations that Model 7ac be used for this assessment.

Relative to last year's assessment, Model 7ac has 3 levels of molting probabilities, estimates length proportions for the initial year, includes the BSFRF survey, estimates effective sample sizes, and uses standard survey tows only for males and use survey re-tows for females.

The SSC appreciated receiving a detailed evaluation of the rationale for calculation of B_{ref} . The SSC agrees with the CPT recommendation that the time period for estimation of B_{ref} should be changed to the period 1984 to 2011.

The SSC reviewed the sources of scientific uncertainty and agrees with the CPT that an additional buffer between ABC and OFL is needed. The sources of scientific uncertainty are as follows:

The 2011 survey biomass showed an unexpected decline in MMB.

- The 2011 survey shows below average recruitment since 2005.
- A retrospective pattern was detected where the model estimates of MMB have been adjusted downward for the last 5 years.
- The justification for special natural mortality periods for males and females requires additional exploration (see suggestions for next year).

The SSC did not accept the CPT's method for calculating an additional uncertainty buffer. As noted in June 2011, there is no agreement within the scientific community regarding when or if adjustments should be made to correct for retrospective trends in stock assessments. The SSC recommends that the buffer should simply be based on a 10% reduction from the OFL to provide a modest buffer between OFL and ABC and for consistency with other stocks.

The SSC recommends that the BBRKC stock should be managed as a Tier 3 stock. Specifically, the stock is projected to be in Tier 3a. The OFL and ABC for the 2011/2012 season are 8,800 t and 7,920 t, respectively.

Recommendations for next year:

The SSC notes that the authors' preferred model Model 7ac continues to apply higher M for the period 1980 through 1984 for males and 1980 through 1984, 1976 through 1979 and 1985 through 1993 for females. The SSC would like additional justification for these additional natural mortality periods. The SSC requests that the author include two new options next year: (1) an option with no additional M periods and (2) an option without additional M periods and an additional survey selectivity period in the early 1980s. The author's justification for adding additional mortality based on increasing predation by Pacific cod is inconsistent with the Ecosystem Chapter that states that there is little evidence for predation on BBRKC by Pacific cod.

The SSC also recommends that if the authors change their preferred model in the upcoming year they should bring forward the most recent SSC approved Model 7ac as well as the preferred model in the final SAFE. This will allow the SSC to compare the implications of adopting the proposed new model configuration. Proposed changes to the model should be brought forward for consideration during the May CPT meeting.

Bob Foy informed the SSC that the 2011 re-tow data revealed a marked decline in male survey catches. He speculated that this was due to dispersion of males during the summer. The CPT discussed this issue and concluded that the current practice of eliminating re-tow data for males should be continued to maintain the integrity of the time series. The SSC requests that the authors review the re-tow data for males to determine whether the decision to eliminate re-tow data for males is still the best use of the available data. Specifically the SSC is concerned that if the reduction in biomass was due to dispersion of males that the estimate based on more dispersed distributions may be the best estimate of biomass. Spatial patterns of male catches within the re-tow area may provide insights.

Other issues and concerns:

Figures 4 and 5 should be pivoted to allow one to see modal progressions.

Tanner crab

A stock assessment model has not yet been approved for use in annual management, although much progress has been made. The SSC anticipates that a model will be ready for use in the 2012/2013 cycle. In the interim, area-swept estimates of biomass from the eastern Bering Sea trawl survey are used to estimate biomass of mature males, legal males, and females. Male mature biomass was 23% higher than last year.

The methodology upon which the 2011 assessment is based is virtually identically to that used in 2010, except for a change in base years used for OFL calculations. Three options were presented: (a) 1974 through 1980, (b) 1974 through 1980 where mature male biomass was adjusted for catches under the F_{msy} proxy rather than actual catches, and (3) 1974 through 2010. The CPT recommended basing OFL on the B_{msy} proxy based on 1974 through 1980 without the adjustment reflecting advice from the February 2011 stock assessment workshop.

The CPT recommended a total catch OFL of 1,570 t for 2011/2012. This equals the author's value in the table on page 3 of the SAFE chapter (1,460 t) plus an additional loss of 110 t of females projected as bycatch discards. For ABC, the CPT recommended the maximum permissible ABC (i.e., $ABC=OFL$), because of an inherent buffer in the area-swept assessment, the lack of upward adjustment for catchability and gear selectivity. Namely, q is assumed to be 1.0 in the area-swept estimates, but field studies and ongoing modeling indicates that $q < 1.0$ (as used in the assessment model under development). However, the SSC was uncomfortable with the lack of a buffer between ABC and OFL, given uncertainties in OFL itemized on p. 17 of the BSAI Crab SAFE Introduction: (a) pre-specified population dynamics parameters and life-history rates such as natural mortality, size-weight, and maturity; (b) the assumption $F_{msy} = M$; and (3) the assumption that B_{msy} is the average biomass over 1974 through 1980. The SSC discussed the author's recommendation to adjust OFL by 82% based on an assumed additional uncertainty of 0.3, but felt this estimate was too high, given the smaller buffers for stocks with less information.

For 2011/2012, the SSC supports the CPT's recommended OFL of 1,570 t. However, the SSC recommends an ABC of 1,410 t, based on a 10% adjustment for uncertainty in OFL for reasons listed above. For next year's assessment, the SSC requests the assessment authors and CPT to reconsider appropriate methods to specify an ABC that accounts for uncertainty in OFL estimation. In addition, in the unlikely event that the Tanner crab stock assessment model is not approved for next year's

assessment, the SSC requests that the authors estimate biomass under tier 4 using estimates of $q < 1$ based on NMFS field studies (underbag experiments) and ongoing modeling efforts. Additional recommendations are provided under the Tanner crab stock assessment modeling section of the SSC report.

Pribilof Islands Red King Crab

The fishery for red king crab in the Pribilof Islands district has been closed since 1999 due to concerns of low abundance, imprecision of biomass estimates, and pot bycatch of sympatric blue king crab, which are classified as overfished. Fishing mortality since the closure of the directed fishery has been limited to incidental catches in other crab fisheries and in groundfish fisheries.

The SSC supports the CPT recommendation to continue using the same base years as used previously (1991 to the current year) for determination of B_{MSY} for the Pribilof Islands red king crab stock. The SSC also supports a Tier 4b designation for this stock, noting that the estimate of mature male biomass (2,577 t) is below B_{MSY} (5,143 t) and only slightly above $MSST$ (2,572 t).

The SSC agrees with the CPT recommendation to include additional uncertainty ($\sigma_b = 0.4$) when calculating the ABC using the P^* approach, which results in a multiplier of 0.78 times the estimated OFL (393 t). The resulting ABC is 307 t. The SSC's support for this approach is based in large part on the recognition that the brief history of exploitation of this stock makes it difficult to identify an appropriate period of time suitable for establishing B_{MSY} , such that the true distribution of the OFL is poorly known. The SSC recognizes that the appropriate value for σ_b is uncertain, and we accept the plan teams' choice given their expertise and their prior discussions on this issue.

Estimates of mature male biomass (MMB) were calculated in the assessment as a three-year moving average using the target year's value averaged with the prior 2 years. The SSC agrees with the assessment author and the plan team that a more appropriate calculation would center the average on the target year and encourage consideration of other methods, including weighted averages, in subsequent assessments. The SSC continues to look forward to the implementation of a catch-survey analysis for this stock.

Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab

The Pribilof Islands blue king crab fishery has been closed since 1999, due to low stock levels. The stock was declared overfished in 2002; a revised rebuilding plan is set for final action by the Council in October 2011.

The SSC agrees with the CPT recommendation for management of Pribilof Islands blue king crab under Tier 4, where $\gamma=1$, $M=0.18$. Estimates of mature male biomass (MMB) were calculated in the assessment as a three-year moving average using the target year's value averaged with the prior 2 years. The SSC agrees with the assessment author and the plan team that a more appropriate calculation would center the average on the target year and encourage consideration of other methods, including weighted averages, in subsequent assessments.

The CPT also recommended that the time periods for determining average MMB as a proxy for B_{MSY} be changed by adding in the earlier 1975/76 through 1979/80 time period to the time period used in the

September 2010 assessment (1980/81 through 1984/85 and 1990/91 through 1997/98; BMSY = 8,840 t). The CPT based their inclusion of these earlier data on a lack of evidence of a change in reproductive potential of the stock over these time periods. While the SSC understands the rationale for including the earlier time series into the BMSY proxy calculation, the addition of these data into the calculation more than doubles the estimate of BMSY (and MSST) over past assessments, with very little biological justification for adding these highly influential and uncertain data. The SSC recommends that the time periods from the September 2010 assessment be used to determine the average MMB as a proxy for BMSY (4,490 t)

The SSC agrees that this stock is in Tier 4c and accepts the CPT recommendations for OFL (116 t) and ABC (104 t) for 2011/12 based on the Tier 5-based method of averaging non-directed catch mortalities during 1999/00-2005/6 to determine the OFL and using a 10% buffer on OFL to determine the ABC. The SSC appreciates the recalculation of non-directed catches and mortalities in the SAFE chapter and continues to look forward to the implementation of a catch-survey analysis for this stock.

St Matthew Island Blue King Crab

The SSC was presented with a brief review of the fishery and the SAFE document. The stock is listed as Tier 4, and ABC/OFLs are calculated based on NMFS trawl survey estimates of male biomass. It was pointed out that total male biomass is now being used for this purpose, rather than mature male biomass as presented in the SAFE document. The SSC supported the CPT's recommendation for the ABC, including the use of a 10% buffer to account for uncertainty due to the mismatch between survey station distribution and the distribution of the crab stock. The author continues to refine the stock assessment model following recommendations from the CPT, and the SSC looks forward to reviewing the model in 2012. The SSC found the material on the model to be nicely presented, but had some recommendations for the authors. The way effective sample size is determined differs from what others do, and some explanation would be helpful. Also, the assumption of high mortality in 1998/99, and a rationale for that assumption needs to be provided. Finally, a couple of alternative models would be useful for comparison, including one that does not rely on assumption of high mortality in 1998/99.

Ecosystem SAFE

Bob Foy (NMFS-AFSC) summarized the rationale for selecting the ecosystem indicators, and the comments provided by the CPT at their September 2011 meeting. There were no public comments. The crab ecosystem SAFE chapter allows a synthetic treatment for all crab stocks, rather than having each factor being treated individually within the individual stock assessments. The focus is on identifying and selecting a suite of biological and physical ecosystem indicators that are known to impact crab populations, that can be correlated with crab population trends, and that are useful in predicting future crab population trends.

The SSC welcomed the approach presented in the ecosystems chapter for the crab SAFE, and appreciates the effort by the authors in developing the document and conducting such a thorough literature review. Once this document is more fully developed, the SSC would appreciate reviewing the ecosystem SAFE first, so that it may inform our reviews of the individual crab stocks.

The inclusion of an executive summary at the start of the chapter that provides information on the current status of the ecosystem indicators selected would improve readability. The SSC recommends that the authors should distinguish between core ecosystem level changes that provide synthetic evaluations of changes for multiple crab stocks, and specific indicators that should be considered in the species specific SAFE chapters.

For example, core ecosystem level indicators might include an assessment of whether a regime shift has occurred that would influence carrying capacity or the shape of the stock recruit relationships. This ecosystem level assessment would be used when considering where to break the time series for estimation of Bref. The SSC (and the CPT) urges consideration of ecosystem data from before the deployment of the M2 mooring, and inclusion of information on the status of larger-scale climate indicators such as PDO. In developing this section, it might be useful for the authors to consider the risk (susceptibility) analysis plots that have been developed by the Aleutian Islands FEP team. This would involve plotting risk based on exposure to the factor and vulnerability to the factor for a variety of crab stocks.

In all cases, the selected ecosystem indicators should have clear mechanistic links that tie them to important life history parameters of crab populations, and these links should be detailed and appropriate references provided. Lists of currently ongoing and proposed crab ecosystem research should provide information on the timing and status of the efforts (PIs, dates, funded?) so that the time frame for model improvements could be anticipated, and data gaps and needs could be targeted in the future.

In this effort, the SSC echoes the CPTs concern that time-lags between indicator status and stock response be carefully considered. Throughout, the SSC felt that it was important that indicator status, and the data linking indicators to crab parameters, be maintained as up-to-date as possible. This is particularly true for indices that may reflect state-changes in the ecosystem, or for data that was collected prior to currently recognized state changes and may therefore no longer be relevant. Similarly, care should be taken that the temporal and spatial resolution of the data be considered when possible, particularly as they differ from the M2 dataset. For example, predation and competition rates developed in one season (summer) may not be appropriate to apply to other seasons, when vulnerability may differ (such as during crab molt). The SSC urges an investigation into whether additional information on predator stomach contents (and the presence/amount of crab therein) exists, and/or if it would be possible to gather more appropriate data through spring cruises or alternate methodologies such as stable isotope analysis.

Conversely, the document highlights numerous cases where an environmental factor might impact a key aspect of the life history of a particular species of crab. The SSC recommends that these species specific case histories should be considered and discussed in the species specific SAFE chapters. Examples include: time trends in predation as a factor influencing M, time trends in temperature and/or prey availability on growth increments, and temperature on availability of crabs to fisheries or surveys.

In both the ecosystem chapter and the species specific SAFE chapters, authors should strive to transition from an assessment of the correlative relationship between environmental factors and population responses to a formal incorporation of environmental factors in the assessment. In addition, while single indicators may not correlate well with crab stock status, it may be useful to consider the cumulative impacts with appropriate time lags (e.g. total groundfish biomass rather than species specific biomass),

and/or the impacts in spatially or temporally restricted areas (e.g. seabird predation during summer in the area immediately surrounding Pribilofs).

Finally, although chapters mainly addresses how change in the ecosystem affects crab, the SSC notes that an ecosystem chapter could also address the impact of crab availability to other predators; e.g., marine birds that might not be abundant enough to influence crab recruitment, but that themselves might be influenced by the availability of crab larvae and juveniles. Additional detailed editorial comments were provided by SSC members to Dr Foy.

Aleutian Island Golden King Crab Model

The SSC received a presentation from Siddeek (ADFG) on ongoing model development for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab stock. Authors incorporated many of the SSC and CPT recommendations into this version.

Although the current model fits some datasets well (e.g., length frequencies), several important issues remain. First, it is not clear that the length frequency data are very informative; that is, they seem almost static and it is not clear that time series of length frequency data show the progression of strong year classes through the fishery. Second, recent sharp increases in fishery CPUE are at odds with declines in survey catches and the relatively stable discard length data. There is major concern that changes in fishing behavior since fishery rationalization may bias the fishery CPUE time series. The authors have trimmed the very largest and smallest CPUEs using a 95th percentile rule in an attempt to remove effects of very small or large CPUEs, but very few outliers were actually removed. Although it may be wise to eliminate non-representative data from the analysis and perhaps some type of data trimming should be further investigated, this approach does not address the potential for systematic bias associated with potential widespread changes in fishing behavior. Third, the SSC is also concerned that the large number of penalty functions in the model may drive model results.

A detailed review of this assessment is planned for a crab modeling workshop in January 2012 and the SSC looks forward to receiving a revised assessment in the future. In preparation for this workshop, the SSC offers the following recommendations:

- Include models that evaluate and contrast alternative selectivity curves.
- Observer and retained data should be treated as in the Tanner assessment to illuminate the effects of observer assigned animals as discarded when they are actually landed.
- Investigate retained and bycatch CPUE time series in relation to soak times and time period and provide rationale for standardization. Cite any relevant published studies on soak time effects.
- Document and justify all penalty functions, constraints and weighting. The mean CPUE ratio penalty should not force the fit to be equal to the observed data. This issue needs more attention at the workshop.
- Properly document sample sizes and confidence intervals for CPUE time series.
- The extent and causes of legal discards should be more fully explained.
- Attempt to resolve fundamental issues among survey catches, fishery CPUE, and discard length data, particularly during the post-rationalization period. Divergent abundance trends inferred by CPUE from the pot survey and fishery are disconcerting. If trends in fishery CPUE data are largely due to fisher behavior, then model results based on them may not be useful. One approach

to partially address these concerns is to try fitting the model without fishery CPUE data and other versions leaving out other data (e.g., length frequencies or survey data). This could also inform uncertainties about how informative the length frequency data may be. A second approach is to consider whether the rapid increase in biomass inferred from fishery CPUE is biologically possible, knowing what is known about golden king crab demographics. Finally, reconsider the length-frequency data. Is it possible that fishers are targeting depth zones with crabs of particular sizes?

- Carefully evaluate residuals for evidence of systematic patterns indicating model misspecification. For instance, residual plots seem to imply that the retention curve should be steeper in the discard length data to show a drop off in legal size.

C-3 (d) Pribilof BKC Rebuilding plan

The SSC received an informational report on the methodology for estimating catch estimates in the Pribilof district. We had no comments or recommendation.

C-3 (e) Tanner crab model and rebuilding alternatives

Tanner crab rebuilding alternatives

Jack Turnock and Lou Rugolo (NMFS-AFSC) presented information on stock projections and rebuilding analyses. The base version of the Tanner crab stock assessment model is being used to evaluate alternatives, including $F=F_{35\%}$, $F=0.75F_{35\%}$, and $F=0$ (except for groundfish discard mortality).

The CPT has provided useful advice on modifications of the rebuilding analyses, including, among other things, spatial analyses that lead to consideration of spatial closures in the snow crab fishery to avoid Tanner crab bycatch. The CPT noted that rebuilding does not appear to be sensitive to groundfish bycatch and therefore alternatives for additional constraints on the groundfish fishery do not appear to be necessary.

The SSC agrees with the CPT recommendations to expand the rebuilding alternatives. In addition, the SSC recommends that scenarios with $F=0$ should consider discard mortality of Tanner crabs in the snow and red king crab fisheries. Given trends in snow crab biomass, it may be necessary to explore various assumptions about future snow crab catches when examining this $F=0$ scenario. Finally, rebuilding analyses should consider the appropriate starting year, which serves as year 1 in the rebuilding analysis.

Tanner crab stock assessment model

Jack Turnock and Lou Rugolo (NMFS-AFSC) gave an update on progress they have made in developing a stock assessment model, with the goal of using the model for stock assessment next year and in the rebuilding analysis for this “overfished” stock. **The authors have made significant advances in model development and the SSC is optimistic that it will be ready for use in next year’s assessment and in the rebuilding analysis.** The authors were very diligent in responding to previous CPT and SSC comments and suggestions.

The authors carefully compiled and validated data from the directed fishery and from discards in the snow crab, red king crab, and groundfish fisheries, including data on length frequencies. Model parameters include logistic survey selectivity parameters (3 periods), a prior on Q (0.88) in the third period, directed

fishery selectivity (retention and total, 2 periods), discard selectivities for the three fisheries (3 periods), growth, natural mortality (including annual variation), recruitment means (2 periods) and deviations, and maturity.

Having 3 selectivity periods rather than 2 in the previous model solved a major lack of fit in the two peaks of the biomass estimates. There was an excellent fit to MMB and an adequate fit to female biomass. The fits to both male and female selectivities were excellent. Fishery, discard, and survey selectivity all varied over time by period. Recruits were better estimated than in the previous model. The model with the best AIC had implausible MMB estimates, so further work is needed. The authors did find a base model that they believe is reasonable and have developed the code for doing projections and rebuilding analyses. They plan to use the average of selectivity over the last three years.

There will be another crab modeling workshop January, 2012 (with stock assessment authors, CPT members, SSC members, and perhaps others), and the Tanner crab model is one of the high priority models to examine and ideally finalize. The SSC endorses several suggestions in the CPT report to be considered before or during the workshop.

The SSC offers these additional suggestions:

- strengthen the rationale for a breakpoint in survey selectivity in 1987/88, which was chosen in part simply to coincide with that in the snow crab assessment, but does not necessarily reflect a major change in the survey,
- see if there is an alternative or additional breakpoint in survey selectivity around 1994 (potentially add a fourth selectivity period),
- profile the likelihood versus M to check its estimability,
- there was an underpowered survey vessel used in a few years; determine if the vessel should have its own Q,
- there has been discussion about M in several documents; it would be helpful to synthesize those discussions,
- as an alternative to distinct selectivity periods (or annually estimated Qs), examine if temperature affects survey Q,
- examine percent barren females versus sex ratio to check for changes in reproductive potential,
- strengthen justification for survey selectivity changes by working with the RACE survey group to see what likely direction of changes would be expected from the evolution of survey protocols over the years,
- consider whether the time series of length frequencies (Fig. 3 and 4) helps judge alternative models – for instance, is the apparent collapse in size structure in the early to mid 1980s more consistent with fishing or natural mortality than change in catchability, and
- change the scale on the x-axis of Fig. 4 so that any changes in female length frequencies can be more readily discerned.

DRAFT

Terms of Reference

Center for Independent Experts

Review of the 2010 National Marine Fisheries (NMFS) Biological Opinion on the Effects of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska Federal Groundfish Fisheries and the State of Alaska Parallel Fisheries on ESA Listed Species and Designated Critical Habitats, Including Steller Sea Lions and Their Designated Critical Habitat

Scope of Work and CIE Process: This project is to task the Center for Independent Experts (CIE) with conducting a peer review of this Biological Opinion (BiOp) as it pertains to the Western Distinct Population Segment (WDPS) of Steller sea lions (SSL).

The subject of review would be the entire scientific record (including information contained in the biological opinion and information not included in the biological opinion) relevant to the BiOp analysis. The panel will be asked to comment on the adequacy of the best available science and of the appropriate use of that science in the BiOp. The panel shall be specifically tasked to review and comment on the rationale, and subsequent findings contained in the Biological Opinion regarding factors affecting SSL population status, their critical habitat, and recovery including in particular the findings regarding the effects of fisheries on SSL population status, vital rates, and critical habitat.

The reviewers would be asked to critically evaluate whether NMFS thoroughly analyzed and critically evaluated the potential effects of other factors that may affect SSL population dynamics including predation, environmentally-driven conditions, emigration or movement of SSL within and between the WDPS or subregions identified in the BiOp, or exposure to contaminants.

Pre-review Background Documents: The CIE reviewers shall be given adequate time (not less than 90 days, more if warranted) to review background material and shall read all documents in preparation for the peer review. These pre-review documents may be supplemented by information presented to the panelists during the public sessions of the review process identified below.

Information provide to the reviewers by NMFS prior to the review shall include:

1. Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Areas. North Pacific Fishery Management Council. April 2009.
2. Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska. North Pacific Fishery

Management Council. April 2009. Available at:

3. Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan. North Pacific Fishery Management Council. December 2007. Available at:

4. 2000 Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation Biological and Incidental take Statement. Authorization of Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries based on the Fishery Management Plan for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish; and Authorization of Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries based on the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska. November 2000. National Marine Fisheries Service. 2000. Available at:

5. 2001 Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statement. October 2001. Authorization of Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries based on the Fishery Management Plan for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish as modified by amendments 61 and 70; and Authorization of Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries based on the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska as modified by amendments 61 and 70. Parallel fisheries for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel, as authorized by the State of Alaska within 3 nm of shore, plus selected supporting documents. National Marine Fisheries Service. 2001. available at:

6. 2003 Supplement to the Endangered Species Action Section 7 Biological Opinion and Incidental take statement of October 2001, plus appendices. National Marine Fisheries Service. 2003. available at:

7. Historical and current fishery stock assessment data for relevant WDPS SSL prey species including but not limited to pollock, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod by area; population assessment data for SSL predators by area, particularly Orca data; SSL population data including survey information showing survey results by rookery and haulout by year, with confidence intervals for population estimates by subarea and WDPS as a whole.

8. All of the relevant scientific and commercial information necessary to conduct this review. This shall include both the scientific record contained in the BiOp, the information provided to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee, all comments received by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS during the public review of the draft BiOp, and the report prepared by the scientific review conducted by the States of Alaska and Washington, including the comments received as part of that state review process.

A listing of all pre-review background documents and information provided to the reviewers by NMFS shall be made available to the public at the time the documents are made available to the CIE.

Specific Terms of Reference.

In addition to the above, this review will be conducted pursuant to the following Terms of Reference:

1. Three to five (3-5) scientists will be impaneled to review the BiOp and produce a report of results of their review. The CIE Coordination Team and Steering Committee, none of whom shall be employees of NOAA or be contracted by NOAA during the time of the review, shall select the panelists. The panelists will be experienced scientists in one or more fields of fisheries management, fishery stock assessments and biology, animal population dynamics, and marine mammal biology. None of the panelists will be federal employees, receive any funding from NOAA at the time of the review, or have any direct connection with development of biological opinions regarding SSLs under the ESA.
2. The panel is tasked to review and comment on the final BiOp, including information used, rationale developed, and the subsequent findings regarding factors potentially affecting SSL population status, vital rates, critical habitat, risk of extinction, and recovery including in particular the findings regarding the effects of fisheries on SSL population status, vital rates, and critical habitat.
3. The panel shall evaluate the quality and completeness of the scientific and commercial information used in the BiOp analysis, and identify if the BiOp analysis is comprehensive or if there are relevant scientific or commercial data or information that was not used in the BiOp analysis. In conducting this evaluation, the panel shall also consider and report on the use of scientific or commercial information from non-NMFS sources and whether the work of independent scientists was accurately described, analyzed, and incorporated into the BiOp analysis.
4. The panel is specifically tasked to evaluate the scientific basis for the findings of the final 2010 BiOp, that fisheries are causing nutritional stress in SSLs which in turn is causing lower reproductive rates. The panel shall evaluate and comment on whether or not the data indicate a strong link between fishery removals, SSL reproductive rates, and recovery of the WDPS. As part of this consideration, reviewers shall also assess the scientific record to determine whether adequate consideration has been given to the likelihood that factors other than fishing are negatively affecting the population status or recovery of the WDPS including predation, changes in the ecosystem/carrying capacity, emigration, exposure to contaminants, or other factors.
5. In making these evaluations, the panel should consider and address the following questions:
 - a. Are the findings of the BiOp contradicted by any scientific, economic, and social information presented in, or omitted from, the BiOp?

- b. Do the data provide a correlation between fishery removals or impacts, and the apparent population dynamics of SSL for the WDPS as a whole, or the sub-population areas discussed in the BiOp? Do the findings represent the most likely scientific explanation for apparent SSL population dynamics given the current state of knowledge?
 - c. Were alternative scientific explanations to the apparent population dynamics of the WDPS or sub-population areas thoroughly analyzed and evaluated, such as explanations involving but not limited to predation, disease, and exposure to contaminants, ecosystem /carrying capacity, or emigration?
6. The panel shall be provided access to all of the relevant scientific and commercial information necessary to conduct this review. This shall include both the scientific record contained in the BiOp, all of the information provided to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee, all comments received by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS during the public review of the draft BiOp, and the report prepared by the scientific review conducted by the States of Alaska and Washington, including comments received as part of that panel. This information should be made available to the panel well in advance (90 days) of their first meeting.
7. The review shall operate as a panel. The panel will conduct at least one public session to receive presentations from NMFS regarding the BiOp analysis and related scientific information, as well as presentations by experts from environmental organizations, the fishing industry, and affected communities. This information will be considered by the panel as it prepares its draft report.
8. The panel will prepare a draft report which will be released for public comment. There will be a 45 day public comment period on the draft. The panel will hold at least one public session at the end of this period to take public comment on the draft. These comments will be considered by the panel when they prepare their final report.
9. The panel will prepare and submit a final report to NMFS and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council no later than { DATE }.

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

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

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

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

Action Plan – Bering Sea Tanner Crab Rebuilding Plan

9/27/11

Proposed action

Amend the BSAI King and Tanner Crab FMP to establish a rebuilding plan for the overfished Bering Sea Tanner crab stock.

Purpose and need

The Council has not yet drafted a problem statement for this analysis.

Analysis

EA

Range of alternatives

Alternative 1: Status Quo – No action

Alternative 2: Rebuild the stock in the minimum timeframe possible (T_{MIN})

Alternative 3-?: Rebuild the stock in X years (T_{TARGET}) where $T_{TARGET} > T_{MIN}$. [Note the target (X) years will be determined during the course of the analysis using the projection model].

Alternative X: Rebuild the stock in the maximum time frame allowable (T_{MAX}) noting that T_{MAX} should not exceed 10 years unless the stock is not projected to rebuild within 10 years under $F = 0$.

Note that Alternatives 3-X may involve a combination of catch constraints on the directed Tanner crab and directed snow crab fisheries.

Options (apply to all alternatives): Area closures in the directed snow crab fishery to reduce Tanner crab bycatch

Applicable laws

MSA, NEPA

Staff resources

NPFMC	Diana Stram	Project and document coordination, work with AFSC and ADF&G staff to finalize impact analysis and EA sections (additional NPFMC staff TBD)
ADFG	Doug Pengilly, Bill Gaeman	Analysis for proposed area closures in snow crab fishery
	Karla Bush	Consultation re: BOF and ADF&G management
AFSC	Lou Rugolo, Jack Turnock	Tanner crab projection model, analysis of alternatives on rebuilding Tanner crab stock, catch constraints on Tanner and snow crab fishery
NMFS AKR	Gretchen Harrington	TBD
NOAA GC	Clayton Jernigan	legal guidance

Timeline to implementation

October 2011	Council adopts purpose statement and draft alternatives
January 2012	Crab modeling workshop on Tanner crab model, projections, review proposed area closures
February 2012	Council reviews preliminary review draft and draft projection analysis
March 2012	Board of Fisheries review and comments on analysis and alternatives
April 2012	Initial Review
June or October 2012	Council selects preferred alternative, Final action
October 2012	Board of Fisheries action (as needed)

If the Council takes final action in June, many of the rebuilding measures could be implemented for the 2012/2013 fishing year through the OFL, ABC, and TAC setting processes.

TABLE 7a-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS

PSC species	Total non-trawl PSC	Non-trawl PSC remaining after CDQ	Total trawl PSC	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ ¹	CDQ PSQ reserve ¹	Amendment 80 sector	BSAI trawl limited access fishery
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	900	832	3,675	3,349	393	2,325	875
Herring (mt) BSAI	n/a	n/a	2,273	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1 ¹	n/a	n/a	197,000	175,921	21,079	87,925	53,797
<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ ²	n/a	n/a	8,310,480	7,421,259	889,221	3,647,549	2,385,193
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 1 ²	n/a	n/a	830,000	741,190	88,810	312,115	348,285
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 2	n/a	n/a	2,520,000	2,250,360	269,640	532,660	1,053,394

¹ Section 679.21(e)(3)(i)(A)(2) allocates 326 mt of the trawl halibut mortality limit and § 679.21(e)(4)(i)(A) allocates 7.5 percent, or 67 mt, of the non-trawl halibut mortality limit as the PSQ reserve for use by the groundfish CDQ program. The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of

² Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of zones.

TABLE 7b-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	195	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ¹	33	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish ²	16	n/a
Rockfish	12	n/a
Pacific cod	33	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	1,737	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{3,4}	247	n/a
Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁵	n/a	49,250
Total trawl PSC	2,273	197,000

¹ "Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

² "Arrowtooth flounder" for PSC monitoring includes Kamchatka flounder.

³ Pollock other than pelagic trawl pollock, Atka mackerel, and "other species" fishery category.

⁴ "Other species" for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

⁵ In October 2010 the Council recommended that the red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance (see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)(2)).

TABLE 7c--PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR AND NON-TRAWL FISHERIES

BSAI trawl limited access fisheries	Prohibited species and area ¹				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	167	47,397	2,247,640	293,234	1,005,879
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	0	0	0	0	0
Turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish ³	0	0	0	0	0
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	0	3,821	0	848
Pacific cod	453	6,000	95,523	50,816	42,424
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴	250	400	38,209	4,235	4,242
Total BSAI trawl limited access PSC	875	53,797	2,385,193	348,285	1,053,394
Non-trawl fisheries	Catcher processor	Catcher vessel			
Pacific cod-Total	760	15			
January 1-June 10	455	10			
June 10-August 15	190	3			
August 15-December 31	115	2			
Other non-trawl-Total	58				
May 1-December 31	58				
Groundfish pot and jig	Exempt				
Sablefish hook-and-line	Exempt				
Total non-trawl PSC	833				

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas.

² "Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

³ "Arrowtooth flounder" for PSC monitoring includes Kamchatka flounder.

⁴ "Other species" for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

DRAFT Proposed GOA OFL, ABC and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2012-2013 from SSC/AP (9/29/11)

Species	Area	2011 final			8/20/2011 Catch	2012 final			2012 proposed			2013 proposed		
		OFL	ABC	TAC		OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	AP rec TAC	OFL	ABC	AP rec TAC
Demersal shelf rockfish	SEO	479	300	300	72	479	300	300	479	300	300	479	300	300
Thornyhead rockfish	W		425	425	140		425	425		425	425		425	425
	C		637	637	267		637	637		637	637		637	637
	E		708	708	131		708	708		708	708		708	708
	Total	2,360	1,770	1,770	538	2,360	1,770	1,770	2,360	1,770	1,770	2,360	1,770	1,770
Atka mackerel	GW	6,200	4,700	2,000	1,571	6,200	4,700	2000	6,200	4,700	4,700	6,200	4,700	4,700
Big skate	W		598	598	44		598	598		598	598		598	598
	C		2,049	2,049	1,373		2,049	2049		2,049	2,049		2,049	2,049
	E		681	681	94		681	681		681	681		681	681
	Total	4,438	3,328	3,328	1,511	4,438	3,328	3328	4,438	3,328	3,328	4,438	3,328	3,328
Longnose skate	W		81	81	22		81	81		81	81		81	81
	C		2,009	2,009	585		2,009	2,009		2,009	2,009		2,009	2,009
	E		762	762	56		762	762		762	762		762	762
	Total	3,803	2,852	2,852	663	3,803	2,852	2,852	3,803	2,852	2,852	3,803	2,852	2,852
Other skates	GW	2,791	2,093	2,093	612	2,791	2,093	2,093	2,791	2,093	2,093	2,791	2,093	2,093
Other species	GW													
Squids	GW	1,530	1,148	1,148	223	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148
Sharks	GW	8,263	6,197	6,197	368	8,263	6,197	6,197	8,263	6,197	6,197	8,263	6,197	6,197
Octopuses	GW	1,273	954	954	247	1,272	954	954	1,272	954	954	1,272	954	954
Sculpins	GW	7,328	5,496	5,496	547	7,328	5,496	5,496	7,328	5,496	5,496	7,328	5,496	5,496
Total	GOA	723,930	590,121	318,288	143,435	743,422	603,990	335,078	743,422	603,992	584,442	743,422	603,990	584,440

Final 2011 and 2012 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs from final 2011-2012 harvest specifications rule.

For the November PT meeting the Council's recommendations for the proposed 2012-2013 and catch through November 12, 2011 will be included

Pacific cod catch in 2010 does not include catch from State managed fisheries.

2012 final amounts were used as a place holder for 2012-2013 OFLs and ABCs.

TABLE 7a-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS

PSC species	Total non-trawl PSC	Non-trawl PSC remaining after CDQ	Total trawl PSC	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ ¹	CDQ PSQ reserve ¹	Amendment 80 sector	BSAI trawl limited access fishery
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	900	832	3,675	3,349	393	2,325	875
Herring (mt) BSAI	n/a	n/a	2,273	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1 ¹	n/a	n/a	197,000	175,921	21,079	87,925	53,797
<u>C. opilio</u> (animals) COBLZ ²	n/a	n/a	8,310,480	7,421,259	889,221	3,647,549	2,385,193
<u>C. bairdi</u> crab (animals) Zone 1 ²	n/a	n/a	830,000	741,190	88,810	312,115	348,285
<u>C. bairdi</u> crab (animals) Zone 2	n/a	n/a	2,520,000	2,250,360	269,640	532,660	1,053,394

Section 679.21(e)(3)(i)(A)(2) allocates 326 mt of the trawl halibut mortality limit and § 679.21(e)(4)(i)(A) allocates 7.5 percent, or 67 mt, of the non-trawl halibut mortality limit as the PSQ reserve for use by the groundfish CDQ program. The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of

² Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of zones.

TABLE 7b-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	195	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ¹	33	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish ²	16	n/a
Rockfish	12	n/a
Pacific cod	33	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	1,737	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{3,4}	247	n/a
Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁵	n/a	49,250
Total trawl PSC	2,273	197,000

¹“Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

²“Arrowtooth flounder” for PSC monitoring includes Kamchatka flounder.

³Pollock other than pelagic trawl pollock, Atka mackerel, and "other species" fishery category.

⁴“Other species” for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

⁵In October 2010 the Council recommended that the red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance (see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)(2)).

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² Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of zones.

TABLE 7b-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	195	n/a
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Rockfish	12	n/a
Pacific cod	33	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	1,737	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{3,4}	247	n/a
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Total trawl PSC	2,273	197,000

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⁴ "Other species" for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

⁵ In October 2010 the Council recommended that the red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance (see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)(2)).

The Council has long been cognizant of and continues to recognize the extreme importance of halibut to all resource user groups. The Council also acknowledges that, for a wide variety of reasons, the dynamics of the directed and non-directed halibut fisheries have changed significantly since halibut PSC limits were first established. Given concerns with the current halibut PSC limits in the GOA, and the effect this bycatch has on both directed fishing opportunities and productivity of the stock, there is a need to evaluate existing halibut PSC limits and the way in which these limits are established.

MOTION:

The Council revises its previous approach to reducing halibut PSC limits in the GOA and initiate action to remove GOA halibut PSC limits from the annual harvest specifications process through an amendment to the GOA Groundfish FMP that would set halibut PSC limits in federal regulation whereby halibut PSC limits may be revised through subsequent regulatory amendment. This action, which would mirror the process for BSAI groundfish fisheries, is outlined as follows:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Currently, the GOA Groundfish FMP and NMFS rule-making harvest specifications annually establish a 2,000 mt halibut Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) limit for trawl gear and a 300 mt halibut PSC limit for hook and line gear. The GOA Groundfish FMP authorizes the Council to recommend, and NMFS to approve, annual halibut mortality limits as a component of the proposed and final groundfish harvest specifications. Halibut PSC limits are set separately for trawl and fixed gear, which may be further apportioned by season, regulatory area, and/or target fishery-PSC fishery category.

The Council is concerned about the feasibility of revising GOA halibut PSC limits through groundfish harvest specifications and recognizes that addressing halibut PSC limits in this manner on an annual basis is not in the best interest of the Council's deliberative process in the long run.

With the exception of ~~bycatch~~ PSC limit reductions in the IFQ sablefish fishery and the Rockfish Pilot Program, the current ~~bycatch~~ limits PSC limits have not been revised since 1989 for trawl gear and 1995 for hook and line gear (Amendment 18). Since that time there have been significant changes in groundfish and halibut management programs and fishing patterns, environmental conditions, fishing technology, and knowledge of halibut and groundfish stocks. Halibut is fully utilized in the directed sport, subsistence, and commercial fisheries and is of significant social, cultural, and economic importance to communities throughout the geographical range of the resource. Halibut PSC ~~allowances~~ limits are also critical to the prosecution of many groundfish fisheries operating in the GOA.

Since the existing GOA halibut PSC ~~caps~~ limits were established, the total biomass and abundance of Pacific halibut has varied and in recent years the stock has experienced an ongoing decline in size at age for all ages in all areas. Exploitable biomass has decreased 50 percent over the past decade. In recent years, the directed halibut catch limits in regulatory areas 2C, 3A and 3B have declined steadily. From 2002 to 2011 the catch limit for the combined areas 2C, 3A and 3B declined by almost 50 percent. ~~While total biomass is high, much of this biomass is made up of smaller fish that are more~~

vulnerable than larger fish to trawl gear. and the Guideline Harvest Level (GHL) to the charter halibut sector in Area 2C has been reduced by a similar percentage.

The Guideline Harvest Level (GHL) for the charter sector in Area 2C has declined from 1,432,000 to 788,000 net pounds in the last 5 years, and progressively restrictive management measures have been implemented to keep this sector within its GHL.

Recognizing the significant decline in exploitable biomass, the uncertainties about current halibut stock dynamics and the effect of current PSC limits bycatch levels on the halibut catch limits and biomass and all user groups, the Council acknowledges a need to evaluate existing halibut PSC limits and consider reductions.

While the IPHC accounts for bycatch mortality when establishing catch limits for the directed fisheries in order to maintain the halibut stock's productivity, it is the Council's responsibility to manage halibut PSC limits and meet the requirements of National Standard 9 to minimize bycatch.

Alternative 1 (Status quo). Retain the process for changing GOA halibut PSC limits through the annual groundfish harvest specifications process.

Alternative 2. Amend the GOA Groundfish FMP to remove setting GOA halibut PSC limits from the annual harvest specifications process. GOA halibut PSC limits would be established (and amended) in federal regulation.

Option 1 (Status quo). Retain the existing 2,000 mt trawl and 300 mt hook and line halibut PSC limits and write them into regulation.

Option 2. Revise the current GOA halibut PSC limits and write the new limits into regulation.

Suboption 1. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for hook and line gear CP sector by:

- a) 5 percent
- b) 10 percent
- c) 15 percent

Suboption 2. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for hook and line gear CV sector by:

- a) 5 percent
- b) 10 percent
- c) 15 percent

Suboption 3. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for trawl gear by:

- a) 5 percent
- b) 10 percent
- c) 15 percent

Suboption 3.1. Apply the full trawl PSC limit reduction to the 5th season only.

Suboption 3.2. AFA/Amendment 80/Rockfish Program sideboard limits will be:

- a) Applied as percentage against the GOA halibut PSC limit (Status quo)
- b) Redefined in mt, calculated against the status quo GOA halibut PSC limits

In addition, the GOA halibut PSC analysis should be revised to include (to the extent practicable):

1. A discussion of status quo management of the charter halibut sector under the GHL program, in addition to the proposed Catch Sharing Plan management program.
2. A discussion of mid-season implementation.
3. Comments from AP and SSC.
4. A discussion of the potential benefits and impacts of modifying seasonal and fishery complex apportionment of the trawl halibut PSC limit, and application of an annual, rather than seasonal, amendment 80 sideboard.
5. A discussion of halibut bycatch and available information on state water, state managed fisheries, including pot and jig Pacific cod fisheries, Prince William Sound hook and line Pacific cod fisheries, PWS, Chatham, and Clarence Strait sablefish fisheries, and rockfish fisheries.

Schedule: Initial Review in February 2012/Final Action in April 2012/Implementation in 2013 (mid-year)