


MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke 
Executive Director

DATE: November 22, 1991

SUBJECT: Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish

ACTION REQUIRED

Review and approve Draft Environmental Assessments (EAs) for the 1992 groundfish specifications for the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries.

BACKGROUND

As part of this year's groundfish specifications process, NMFS has prepared an Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (EA/RIR/IRFA) to assess potential impacts to the marine environment of the Council's proposed groundfish specifications for the 1992 fishing year. Draft EAs are submitted for both the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish specifications. These Draft EAs need to be reviewed by the Council and the public during the week of this Council meeting; they need to be approved when the Council makes final approval of the groundfish specifications later in the week.

The draft EAs analyze the environmental and socioeconomic effects of the proposed 1992 TACs recommended by the Council in September. The draft EAs also address the 1992 ABC recommendations contained in the final SAFE document for the 1992 fisheries, especially relative to the overfishing level. The subject of the draft EAs, however, is primarily the level of the 1992 TACs proposed in September relative to the 1991 TACs. After the December Council meeting, final EAs will be prepared based on the specifications recommended by the Council at this meeting. When the final specifications are published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, probably in late January, the final EAs will be made available for public review.