


M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members
FROM: Jim H. Branson, Executive Director 
DATE: January 28, 1985
SUBJECT: Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery Management Plan

ACTION REQUIRED

Review and decide which proposals for plan amendments will be sent out for public review.

BACKGROUND

In April 1984 the Council adopted a cycle for amending the groundfish FMPs that provides specific deadlines for proposals, preparation of amendments, and final decisions. The cycle began in September with a preliminary review of the status of stocks, the needs of U.S. industry, and a call for proposals. The December meeting was designated as the deadline for proposals.

Scheduled for this meeting is a Council review of the 1985 proposal package and selection of proposals to be included in this year's amendment cycle. The Gulf of Alaska Plan Team has reviewed the proposals and prioritized them. The proposal package and the Team's recommendations were sent to you in a Council mailing. A list of the proposals is provided as item D-2(d)(1).

Proposals selected by the Council will be prepared by the Plan Team as amendments. A draft amendment with the accompanying analysis will be available for review at the March Council meeting. As discussed in Issues Statement 85-2, the number of submitted proposals and the complexity of the issues can easily overwhelm existing staff and team capabilities to prepare an amendment package by the required March deadline. A possible solution would be to categorize submitted proposals into the three following categories:

- (1) Immediate Attention - proposals warranting action by emergency rule; or receiving the Council's top-most priority. These proposals would be identified for this year's amendment cycle.
- (2) High Priority - proposals recognized by the Council as addressing important problems but do not rank as high as Category 1. These could be analyzed by the plan team during the year and will become a part of next year's amendment package.
- (3) Low Priority - proposals in this category would not be worked on by the plan team during 1985. They could be resubmitted by the public, team and management agencies during the 1986 call for proposals if still needed.

Proposals falling into Category 1, or chosen for the 1985 amendment would be placed on the following schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
March 27-29	Council reviews draft decision documents; sends package out for public review.
May 22-24	Council reviews public comments; final decision on amendment package.
June	Submit amendment to Secretary of Commerce.
November	Amendment implemented.

Plan Team Meeting
Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska
January 7-8, 1985

LIST OF AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

1. (Independent Fishermen of Alaska) - Establish SE Alaska east of 140°W longitude as a hook and line exclusive area when fishing for sablefish.
2. (Eric Jordan) - Establish SE Alaska east of 147°W longitude as a hook and line exclusive area when fishing for sablefish.
3. (Eric Jordan and others) - Restrict legal gear for the directed sablefish harvest to hook and line fisheries.
4. (Klenzak, Wakefield, and Kikono) - Do not address the hook and line sablefish issue until any detrimental aspects of pots and bottom gillnets to the biological aspects of the fishery are determined.
5. (Deep Sea Owner's Association) - Allow for the catch of sablefish in the Gulf (and in the Bering Sea) by longliners only.
6. (FVOA) - Allow sablefish to be taken with hook and line only with a trace amount to be available to other gear types as an incidental species.
7. (Jubilee Fisheries Inc.) - Establish the sablefish fishery as exclusively a longline and pot fishery with the number of participants frozen at 1984 end of year levels, and provide assistance in the development of longline/pot fishermen's association.
8. (Eric Jordan) - Accounting System for Salisbury Sound to Cape Ommaney quota area on demersal shelf rockfish on October. (Establish a season October 1, and a rockfish quota for Salisbury Sound - Cape Ommaney).
9. (ALFA) - Prohibit fishing for black cod between January 1 and March 15.
10. (Independent Fishermen of Alaska) - Establish Dixon Entrance - 140°W longitude as a management area for demersal shelf rockfish.
11. (Eric Jordan) - Delete Federal management of demersal rockfish in the Gulf.
12. (Eric Jordan) - Establish a 1.5-2.0 million pound quota for demersal shelf rockfish between Salisbury Sound and Cape Ommaney.
13. (Eric Jordan) - Establish a 10,000-pound weekly trip limit for demersal shelf rockfish between Salisbury Sound and Cape Ommaney.

14. (Eric Jordan) - Establish a 6,000-pound trip limit for demersal shelf rockfish between Salisbury Sound and Cape Ommaney.
15. (Council Staff) - Change the beginning of the fishing year for foreign fleets from January 1 to February 1.
16. (Regional Office) - Implement intent of Magnuson Act amendment that deleted SE Alaska intrusions from Federal jurisdiction over groundfish.
17. (Alan G. Kapp) - ??? Encourage the domestic fleet to harvest the entire optimum yield in the Gulf (and Bering Sea) and to develop optimum methods and gear types in harvesting the sablefish stocks.
18. (ADF&G and Regional Office) - Require catcher/processors to submit weekly catch reports to management agencies.
19. (ADF&G) - Limit the near-shore rockfish harvest off Southeast Alaska to no more than the 1984 harvest; formulate a management strategy for this fishery to possibly include time-area closures, rotating harvest areas, control areas, smaller management sub-units, gear restrictions, and limited entry.
20. (ALFA) - Establish a minimum size limit for sablefish of 22 inches and establish a trip limit for incidentally caught sablefish of less than 22 inches of 2,000 pounds.
21. (ADF&G) - Provide for mandatory on-board observers, under certain circumstances, for the domestic trawl fleet and provide for time-area closures to conserve crab resources.
22. (a) (Garvey, Schubert, Adams & Barer) - Amend regulations to allow fishing for other species when the OY for any one species has been reached.

(b) Eliminate all pelagic trawl restrictions when new measures to regulate the catch of prohibited species are adopted.

(c) Framework of the FMP to allow OYs to be adjusted annually and during the fishing season.
23. (ADF&G and Regional Office) - Amend the current boundaries used in the management of the sablefish fishery.
24. (?????) - Establish a loading zone on SE corner of Kodiak Island.
25. (Korea Deep Sea Fisheries Association) - Combine the management areas in the Gulf plan with those of the Bering Sea plan.
26. (Korea Deep Sea Fisheries Association) - Refers to proposal #25.
27. Bd #602 (ADF&G) - Close a portion of District 13 to fishing for rockfish.

Bd #603 (Homer Sutter) - Close District 13, Section 13B, all waters of Sitka Sound and contiguous waters inside a line from Cape Edgecumbe to Pt. Woodhouse to Dorothy Narrows, to commercial fishing for miscellaneous finfish.

Bd #605 (ALFA) - Counter proposal to ADF&G recommended rockfish sanctuaries. An area-wide index system to be used in conjunction with a rockfish sanctuary located in the area of Noyes Island.

Bd #607 (Dan Falvey) - Limit number of permits for rockfish to those who are actively fished in 1984; institute an area-wide closure on rockfish from July 1 to July 31.

28. (Regional Office) - Revise December 7, 1984 list:

- * Revise the halibut PSCs in the domestic groundfish fisheries.
- * Establish new OYs as determined at Council's December, 1984 meeting.
- * Establish PSCs for 0-JVP and 0-TALFF species.
- * Define biodegradable panels on sablefish pots.
- * Restructure current FO authority to allow time-area adjustments on the basis of newly obtained information.
- * Establish check-in/check-out procedures for catcher/processors similar to existing requirements in the foreign fisheries.
- * Change the existing requirement that a new year's specification of JVP must equal the previous year's catch when a new year's specification of DAP has priority.
- * Implement NMFS habitat policy.
- * Implement a framework procedure for specifying pre and inseason adjustments in groundfish species OYs.

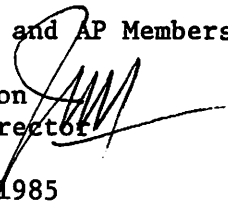
29. Authorize the use of time/area closures as a mechanism for reducing incidental bycatch of Pacific salmon in the trawl groundfish fisheries.

RJBERG/lj 1-7-85
plan team/RJBERG

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Jim H. Branson
Executive Director 

DATE: January 30, 1985

SUBJECT: Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Management

ACTION REQUIRED

- (1) Review status of the rockfish resource, its problems, and management.
- (2) Review and discuss proposals for Southeast Alaska shelf rockfish management.
- (3) Provide direction to Plan Team on development of management program for this species category.

BACKGROUND

In November 1984, the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team received a report from ADF&G on potential management problems with shelf rockfish. These species are now aggregated into the "other rockfish" category for purposes of management. With domestic interest building for individual species within this category, new species definitions, management areas, and separate OYs are needed. A report prepared by ADF&G discussing this problem and possible solutions is provided in your notebooks as item D-2(d)(2). An oral summary will also be provided at this meeting.

In December 1984, the Council reduced the gulfwide "other rockfish" OY from 7,600 mt to 5,000 mt in response to concerns over the possible overexploitation of the shelf rockfish stocks. The 1984 harvest of other rockfish species was about 2,300 mt of which foreign and joint venture catches were approximately 1,500 mt, with most of the fish taken from the slope rockfish stocks. The remaining 800 mt was taken in a directed fishery in Southeast Alaska, all from the shelf rockfish population. The Plan Team and the SSC have expressed their concern over the possible overexploitation of shelf rockfish in Southeast Alaska.

Fishermen from Kodiak and Seward at the December meeting expressed their intent to develop a shelf rockfish fishery in the westward portion of the Gulf of Alaska. These new fisheries are currently within state waters, but could in the near future move into the FCZ. The SSC noted that in the Pacific region similar resources have, in the early stages of commercial development, been overfished. This is in part a result of managers providing large quotas early in the fishery and discovering later, as they learned more about the resources, that they had exceeded MSY. An alternative to this approach would have been to slowly build a fishery to MSY with lower quotas.

The SSC commented that setting a ceiling on the current FCZ harvest (2,300 mt) would restrain the development of the westward fisheries. To accommodate that concern the Council set the 1985 OY at 5,000 mt.

There are several problems with the rockfish OY. It is gulfwide, allowing the harvest to be taken anywhere in the Gulf of Alaska. If the OY is taken in a westward fishery it will close the southeast fishery. If a large part of the OY is harvested in Southeast Alaska where protection is most needed the NMFS would be unable to close the Southeast fishery to protect the stock as long as some OY was left in the gulf. An OY apportioned by regulatory area and districts would enable both fisheries to proceed with the appropriate protection placed on the Southeast rockfish resource.

Another problem with the current OY is that the "other rockfish" species category consists of three groups: near-shore pelagic rockfish, slope rockfish, and shelf rockfish. All three possess their own species complex, distribution, and harvest limitations. An OY for each species group may be needed to prevent overharvest of any one group.

Enclosed in your meeting materials are copies of rockfish proposals submitted to the Board and Council [item D-2(d)(3)]. Topics addressed include a longline only rockfish fishery, trip limits, federal management delegation to the state, and subarea quotas. Of particular interest to both the Board and Council are proposal numbers 12, 19 and 27 (606) which focus on quotas and the overall management problem of rockfish.

The Council and Board need to discuss future management of this species. As a first-step, joint recognition of each species group, the species composition of each group, their distribution and a harvest limit would aid management of rockfish. The Council may view the rockfish problem as an emergency. This initial step could be followed with a more comprehensive, long-term management program developed by the Plan Team and agency staff for presentation to the Council and Board at a later date.

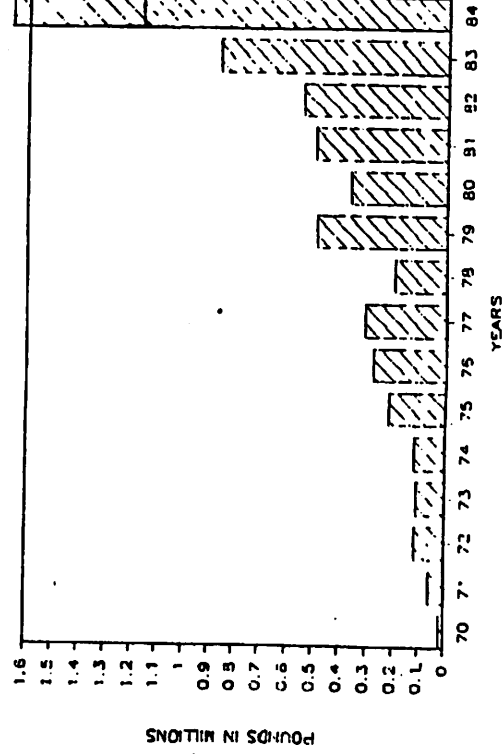
SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA CONTINENTAL SHELF DEMERSAL ROCKFISH FISHERY

By: ADF&G Staff - November 7, 1984

A major new domestic fishery for rockfish in the rocky nearshore areas of the continental shelf off Southeastern Alaska has developed in recent years. This fishery is second in importance only to the sablefish fishery in Southeastern Alaska. The species assemblage harvested by this new longline fishery is not addressed in the Gulf of Alaska Fishery Management Plan. There are currently no state or federal management regulations which directly apply to this fishery. Since the annual harvest is escalating at an exponential rate, it is urgent that management guidelines be developed.

The gulf of Alaska Fishery Management plan currently contains an "other" rockfish category. The MSY, EY, and OY for this category are based on foreign trawl fishery harvests from 1973 through 1975. However these trawl fisheries occurred on the continental slope and harvested a different species assemblage from that harvested in the new Southeastern Alaska rockfish longline fishery on the continental shelf. The shelf demersal rockfish species occur in an entirely different habitat from the slope assemblage described in the FMP and cannot be harvested by the same gear types. Separate management regulations should be used to regulate the harvest of these two species assemblages.

Annual harvests are escalating rapidly in the Southeastern Alaska nearshore rockfish fishery:



Most (80% in 1984) of this harvest is concentrated in the nearshore areas of the outer coasts of Baranof and Chichagof Islands, over an 80 mile latitudinal range. ADF&G staff have received numerous requests for information from additional fishermen and processors interested in entering this fishery in 1985, indicating that the fishing effort will continue to expand.

Appropriate sustained yield harvest levels for the shelf demersal rockfish assemblage cannot be determined with conventional techniques. These species occur very close to the bottom in rocky habitats strewn with boulders and pinnacles where trawls cannot be used, so that biomass cannot be estimated from conventional trawl survey area-swept expansions. Reliable acoustic estimates of densities are also doubtful. The fishery has developed so rapidly that there are far too few data points for a stock-production model determination of MSY. There are no time series of catch-at-age data to allow cohort analysis estimates of initial biomass. Furthermore, the fishery harvests a multi-species assemblage so that conventional single species population models are probably not applicable. Since ecological interactions among the component species are poorly defined, the production response of the entire assemblage is unknown.

Given that guideline harvest levels cannot be determined from biomass or production estimates in the near future, fishery management must be based on relative trends in abundance determined from survey or fishery catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE). A few limited surveys have been performed on the shelf demersal rockfish assemblage, using fishing gear suitable for the habitat. However, there are too few surveys to determine whether stock abundance is increasing or decreasing. Fishery CPUE determined from skipper interviews has not yet shown any substantial decline. However, trends in fishery CPUE may be confounded by other factors in the fishery. Target species in the fishery fluctuate because of changes in market conditions. Fishing efficiency increased markedly in 1984 as virtually the entire fleet switched to circle hooks. CPUE determined from skipper interviews also has a high inherent variance since a vessel may fish several fishing grounds and depth zones over the course of a single trip. CPUE determined from skipper interviews represents the average of all the grounds fished during a single trip so that declines on a single fishing ground may go undetected.

There are some other indications that localized depletion is beginning to occur, particularly in the heavily fished areas closest to Sitka, the major port of landing. The Kruzof Island and Cape Edgecumbe/Sitka Sound subareas were the major fishing grounds in 1982 (Figure 1). By 1984, much of the effort had transferred out of these areas to the more southerly Whale Bay and Redfish Bay subareas. Fishermen have indicated to ADF&G staff that declines in fishing success are responsible for the changes in fishing grounds.

The history of rockfish management on the Pacific coast is not encouraging. Rockfish are extremely long lived (some species have been aged in excess of 140 years) and slow growing. Hence the sustainable yield that can be taken from a given biomass is much lower than for a comparable biomass of faster growing species such as gadids. Rockfish populations are very easily and quickly overfished. Nearly every rockfish population on the Pacific coast is in poor condition due to overfishing. Rebuilding overharvested rockfish populations (e.g. Pacific Ocean Perch) to near-MSY levels may take 50 to 100 years, even with little or no fishing. Faced with lack of information about appropriate harvest levels for rockfish species, the risk of overharvesting the resource is great.

Management of the Southeastern Alaska rockfish fishery requires joint state-federal action. The current fishery occurs in nearshore, relatively shallow

(< 100 fathom) waters, but approximately 50% of the potential fishing grounds are in the Fishery Conservation Zone (FCZ). Obviously state and federal actions will have to be closely coordinated.

In view of the above we recommend that the Council work closely with the Board of Fisheries to define this new rockfish fishery and establish preliminary harvest limits to prevent overfishing. This issue is already on the Board's agenda during their February 1985 meeting in Sitka. We see the following options for Council action:

1. Accept the risk of overharvesting and allow the fishery to continue unrestricted, pending the results of further studies.
2. Allow the Board of Fisheries to restrict the harvest in State waters only, with no restrictions in the FCZ.
3. Together with the Board of Fisheries, temporarily restrict harvests to current levels in all waters of Southeastern Alaska, pending results of further studies. This option would involve a plan amendment which defines the species composition of the shelf demersal rockfish assemblage and establishes an OY temporarily set at the current harvest level. State and Federal emergency regulations may have to be implemented as interim measures, prior to adoption of the amendment.
4. Together with the Board of Fisheries, temporarily restrict harvests to current levels in the area of the current intensive fishery off the coasts of Baranof and Chichagof Islands only, pending results of further studies. This option would involve a plan amendment as in #3 above, but 2 or more management areas would be defined within Southeastern Alaska. Only harvest in the Baranof Island area would be restricted at the present time.

We recommend option 4. Because of the above mentioned concerns with this new fishery, we believe that some management guidelines must be implemented as soon as possible. We feel there is insufficient time to wait for further studies (option 1) before taking action. Option 2 would not effectively restrict the harvest since 50% of the fishing grounds are in federal waters. In addition option 2 would create severe enforcement and regulatory problems. Option 3 would restrict harvests, but would permit overfishing in the vicinity of Baranof and Chichagof Islands. Option 4 would protect these grounds, while not restricting fishermen from developing new fishing grounds. Fishermen and processors have already expressed an interest and are currently developing other grounds and major ports of landing in southern Southeastern Alaska.

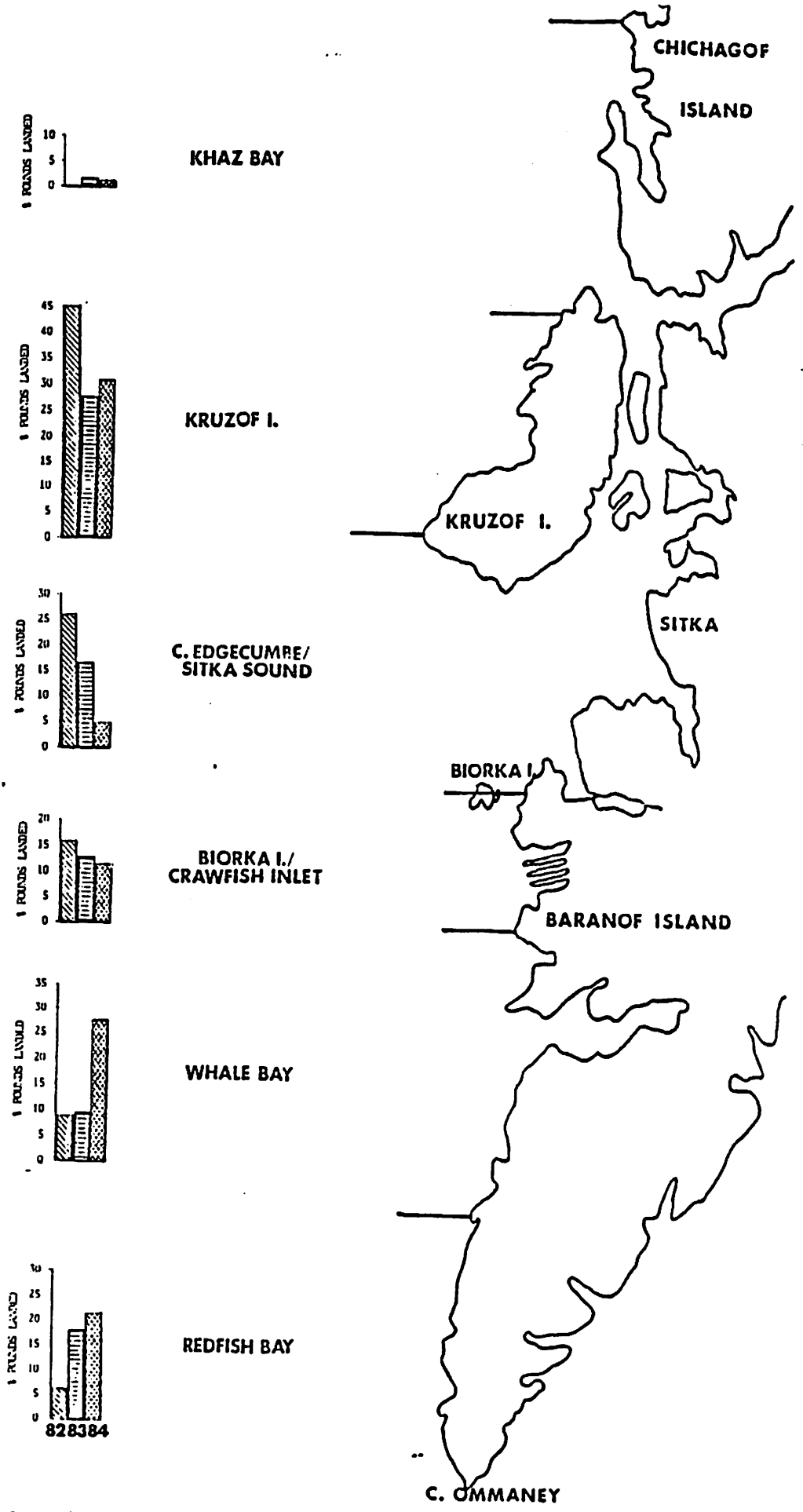


Figure 1. Percent of rockfish landings by area in the Southeastern Rockfish fishery, 1982-84.

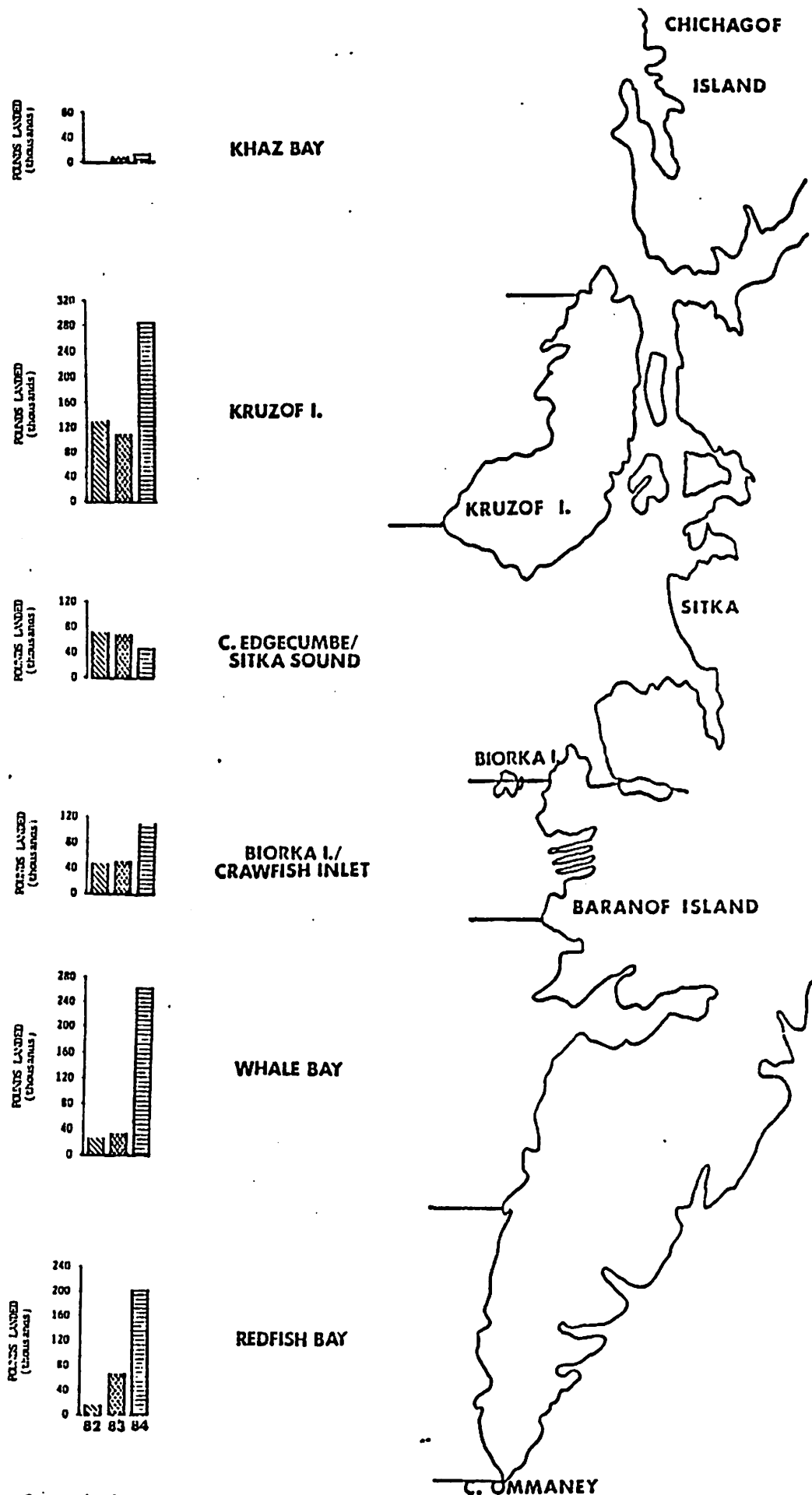


Figure 2. Pounds of rockfish landed by area in the Baranof - Chichagof rockfish fishery, 1982-1984.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA #2

RESTRICT THE DIRECTED DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH FISHERY TO
HOOK AND LINES EAST OF 147 DEGREES WEST

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE: Restrict the directed harvest of demersal shelf rockfish to hook and lines east of 147 degrees west.

DATE AND ORIENTATION OF PROPOSAL: December 1984, Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee and Eric Jordan.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: A profitable fishery for rockfish has been developed in just a few years in the Sitka area. This fishery extends throughout the year, provides a high quality product for consumers, a fishing income for area fishermen, crews, and processors. Most of this fishery has been in State waters but is expanding into the FCZ.

This is a hook and line fishery. Entrance of trawlers into this fishery would disrupt it and likely result in over exploitation of the resource and loss of value per pound of product. It is the opinion of fishermen and processors that hook and line fishermen are and will be able to harvest the optimum yield of demersal shelf rockfish east of 147.

OBJECTIVE: 1. Conserve the demersal shelf rockfish resource.

OBJECTIVE: 2. Optimize the quality and value of the demersal shelf rockfish to fishermen and consumers.

PREFERRED SOLUTIONS: 1. The proposal is the only preferred alternative.

EXPECTED BENEFITS: Conservation of Demersal Shelf Rockfish.
Optimum economic return per pound of resource.
Conservation and enhancement of developing fishery.

URGENCY: This is a rapidly expanding and valuable fishery. Resource and fishery problems could develop without adequate regulation. Emergency action may be required while this proposal is working its way through the federal system. With the rapidity of entry and full exploitation by americans into gulf fisheries this valuable and relatively delicate resource could be adversely impacted in a very short time without protection from other gear types.

NTIONAL STANDARDS: Nothing in this proposal will violate national standards. Federal oversight to insure such is

requested. National standards for conservation and optimizing value from fishery resources will likely be violated without the proposed action.

FMP AMENDMENT: This will require an amendment and emergency action in the interim should be considered.

OTHER FISHERIES: This proposal does not have a significant impact on other fisheries in the area at the present time. It will impact the potential for other fisheries. However development of other known fisheries could have a negative impact on the resource, the existing fishery, the value of the resource to fishermen, and consumers.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING
SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA

Establish an October 1 - Sept. 30 accounting year for
demersal shelf rockfish in the Gulf of Alaska east of
Middleton Island.

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE: Establish an October 1 - Sept.
30 accounting year for demersal shelf rockfish in the Gulf
of Alaska east of Middleton Island

Date and Orientation of Proposal: December 1984, Sitka Fish
& Game Advisory Committee and Eric Jordan.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: A profitable fishery for rockfish has
been developed in just a few years in the Sitka area. This
fishery extends throughout the year, provides a high quality
product for consumers, a fishing income for area fishermen,
crews, and processors. Most of this fishery has been in
State waters but is expanding into the FCZ.

The highest value for this product is in the fall,
winter, and spring fresh markets. The spawning season for
these species appears to peak in late spring and early
summer. The fish are not as prime during and shortly after
spawning. Setting up an accounting system as proposed will
maximize the chance that the season will be open when the
fish are in the best condition and worth the most.

OBJECTIVE: Optimize the quality and value of the demersal
shelf rockfish to fishermen and consumers.

EXPECTED BENEFITS: Conservation of Demersal Shelf Rockfish.
Optimum economic return per pound of resource.
Conservation and enhancement of developing fishery.

URGENCY: This is a rapidly expanding and valuable fishery.
Resource and fishery problems could develop without adequate
regulation. A quota without this system of accounting could
lead to production of a lower quality product and loss of
the best markets. Emergency action may be required while
this proposal is working it's way through the federal
system.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: Nothing in this proposal will violate
national standards. Federal oversight to insure such is
requested. National standards for conservation and
optimizing value from fishery resources will likely be
violated without the proposed action.

FMP AMENDMENT: This will require an amendment and emergency action in the interim should be considered.

OTHER FISHERIES: This proposal does not have a significant impact on other fisheries in the area at the present time with the exception that small incidental catches of these species in the longline and troll fisheries should be estimated and allowed to continue during those seasons. It will impact the potential for other fisheries. However development of other known fisheries would have a negative impact on the existing fishery and the value of the resource to fishermen and most probably consumers.

GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH PROPOSAL #10

Proposal

Management of demersal shelf rockfish in Southeast Alaska.

Justification

- (1) The State of Alaska adopt the National Standards as the basis for co-managing the Alaskan and FCZ demersal shelf rockfish resource in Alaska.
- (2) The state and NPFMC jointly manage the demersal shelf rockfish resource.
- (3) The Southeast Alaskan area from Dixon Entrance to 140°W. should be managed as an independent biological area for other rockfish (demersal shelf rockfish).
- (4) The NPFMC adopt a quota for the Southeast area FCZ of 3,000 mt total.
- (5) The NPFMC will support an onboard observer program and/or an indexing program of hook and line methods to help the state assess the biomass and distribution of demersal shelf rockfish. Financial support would be greatly appreciated to expedite a growing industry and management concern due to a great deficiency in useable data.
- (6) The demersal shelf rockfish will be harvested by hook and line methods only due to the "wise use" directives of the National Standards socioeconomic and conservation goals.
- (7) A monthly quota of rockfish should be determined to ensure the marketability of a high quality, high valued product year-round. This marketing strategy has been proven effective in Southeast Alaska for five years.

Independent Fishermen of Alaska

John T. Maher

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING
SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA

DELEGATE MANAGEMENT OF DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH TO STATE OF
ALASKA

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE: Turn over management of demersal shelf rockfish east of Middleton Island to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Date and Orientation of Proposal: December 1984, Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee and Eric Jordan.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: A profitable fishery for rockfish has been developed in just a few years in the Sitka area. This fishery extends throughout the year, provides a high quality product for consumers, a fishing income for area fishermen, crews, and processors. Most of this fishery has been in State waters but is expanding into the FCZ. The representatives of the industry involved are concerned that adequate management be implemented to protect the resource, to protect investments already committed, and to protect the year round production needed to obtain the most value per pound of product. They feel that given the nature of this resource and fishery, which exists without consideration for legal and political lines drawn on maps, that one management agency should be responsible for this resource and fishery management. They feel that the ADF&G is best equipped to do the kind of research, planning, and management needed to conserve this resource while developing the most valuable fishery to fishermen and consumers. The State of Alaska has proven to be much more sensitive to the social economic impacts of management. Fisherman and processors feel that the NPFMC does not have the resources, is not likely to receive adequate funding, does not have the management flexibility, and is not close enough to the fishery, to do an adequate job of management for conservation of this delicate and valuable resource.

OBJECTIVE: 1. Reduce the risk of over or underharvesting demersal shelf rockfish in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska.

OBJECTIVE: 2. Optimize the quality and value of the demersal shelf rockfish to fishermen and consumers.

PREFERRED SOLUTIONS: 1. State management
2. Joint State Federal Management with the ADF&G designated lead agency.

EXPECTED BENEFITS: Conservation of Demersal Shelf Rockfish.
Optimum economic return per pound of resource.
Conservation and enhancement of developing fishery.

In season management flexibility.
Responsiveness to socioeconomic conditions.

URGENCY: This is a rapidly expanding and valuable fishery. Resource and fishery problems could develop without adequate research and management. Emergency action may be required while this proposal is working it's way through the federal system.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: Nothing in this proposal will violate national standards. Federal oversight to insure such is requested. National standards for conservation and optimizing value from fishery resources will likely be violated without the proposed action.

FMP AMENDMENT: This will require an amendment and emergency action in the interim should be considered.

OTHER FISHERIES: This proposal does not have a significant impact on other fisheries.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING
SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA

Establish a sub-area quota of 1.5-2.0 million pounds in the
area from Salisbury Sound to Cape Omaney

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE: Establish a sub-area quota of
1.5-2.0 million pounds in the area from Salisbury Sound to
Cape Omaney

Date and Orientation of Proposal: December 1984, Sitka Fish
& Game Advisory Committee and Eric Jordan.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: A profitable fishery for rockfish has
been developed in just a few years in the Sitka area. This
fishery extends throughout the year, provides a high quality
product for consumers, a fishing income for area fishermen,
crews, and processors. Most of this fishery has been in
State waters but is expanding into the FCZ.

A potential for overharvest exists without some type of
management restrictions on harvest and a ceiling on catch.
Representatives of processors and fishermen in Sitka, who
have pioneered and developed this fishery feel a quota of
1.5-2.0 million pounds until adequate research is completed
to determine the optimum annual harvest in the area will
conserve the resource and the fishery. The key to the high
value rockfish is jet airports to transport the fish to the
markets fresh. Without research and quota's localized
populations nearest these airports could be adversely
impacted. This proposal regulates the existing fishing area
while allowing for development of unexploited adjacent areas
within range of airports.

OBJECTIVE: 1. Conserve the demersal shelf rockfish in this
area and the existing high quality, high value, hook and
line fishery.

OBJECTIVE: 2. Optimize the quality and value of the demersal
shelf rockfish to fishermen and consumers.

PREFERRED SOLUTIONS: This proposal is the preferred solution
by Sitka area fishermen, processors, and was supported
unanimously by the Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee
representing all user groups in the Sitka area.

EXPECTED BENEFITS: Conservation of Demersal Shelf Rockfish.
Optimum economic return per pound of resource.
Conservation and enhancement of developing fishery.

URGENCY: This is a rapidly expanding and valuable fishery. Resource and fishery problems could develop without adequate regulation. Emergency action may be required while this proposal is working it's way through the federal system.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: Nothing in this proposal will violate national standards. National standards for conservation and optimizing value from fishery resources will likely be violated without the proposed action.

FMP AMENDMENT: This will require an amendment and emergency action in the interim should be considered.

OTHER FISHERIES: This proposal does not have a significant impact on other fisheries in the area at the present time. It will impact the potential for other fisheries. However development of other known fisheries would have a negative impact on the existing fishery and the value of the resource to fishermen and most probably consumers.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING
SEA AND GULF OF ALASKA

Establish Weekly Limits Of 10,000 Pounds in the area from
Salisbury Sound to Cape Omaney

PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE: Establish Weekly Limits Of
10,000 Pounds in the area from Salisbury Sound to Cape
Omaney.

Date and Orientation of Proposal: December 1984, Sitka Fish
& Game Advisory Committee and Eric Jordan.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: A profitable fishery for rockfish has
been developed in just a few years in the Sitka area. This
fishery extends throughout the year, provides a high quality
product for consumers, a fishing income for area fishermen,
crews, and processors. Most of this fishery has been in
State waters but is expanding into the FCZ.

The highest value for this resource is by flying out to
fresh markets over an extended season. It is hoped that
this proposal will prevent lots of high poundage deliveries
which will reduce the season, flood the markets, and reduce
the overall value of the resource to fishermen and
consumers.

Objective: 1. Spread the harvest over time.

OBJECTIVE: 2. Optimize the quality and value of the demersal
shelf rockfish to fishermen and consumers.

EXPECTED BENEFITS: Conservation of Demersal Shelf Rockfish.
Optimum economic return per pound of resource.
Conservation and enhancement of developing fishery.

URGENCY: This is a rapidly expanding and valuable fishery.
Resource and fishery problems could develop without adequate
regulation. Emergency action may be required while this
proposal is working it's way through the federal system.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: Nothing in this proposal will violate
national standards. Federal oversight to insure such is
requested. National standards for conservation and
optimizing value from fishery resources will likely be
violated without the proposed action.

FMP AMENDMENT: This will require an amendment and emergency
action in the interim should be considered.

OTHER FISHERIES: This proposal does not have a significant impact on other fisheries in the area at the present time. It will impact the potential for other fisheries. However development of other known fisheries would have a negative impact on the existing fishery and the value of the resource to fishermen and most probably consumers.

GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH PROPOSAL #14

Proposal

6,000 pound trip limits in Salisbury Sound to Cape Omaney quota area on demersal shelf rockfish (FCZ and state).

Justification

Spread harvest over time. Maintain high market values.

Eric Jordan

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A Proposal For Limiting Nearshore
Rockfish Harvest In The Southeastern Area
Of The Eastern Gulf of Alaska

By: ADF&G Staff - November, 1984

A major new domestic fishery in the nearshore areas of the continental shelf off Southeastern Alaska has developed in recent years. This fishery is growing in economic importance and is currently second in value only to sablefish in the Southeastern area groundfish fisheries. Effort and harvest have increased substantially from 1983 levels and it now appears that the Southeastern harvest will exceed 2 million pounds during 1984, over twice the 1983 harvest. Most of the increase has occurred in the nearshore waters of northern Southeastern adjacent to Baranof and Chichagof Islands with Sitka as the primary port of landing. Harvest in that area had exceeded 1.0 million pounds by mid-November.

This fishery has developed so quickly that there is not sufficient data to recommend harvest levels from standard fishery management techniques. The CPUE data that has been collected is inconclusive due to changes in market demand for various species and sizes of fish, changes in gear and skipper efficiency, and the ability of skippers to move to new areas during a trip if production declines. However records of fleet distribution and testimony from participating fishermen indicate that the fleet is having to move progressively farther from the primary port of landing to maintain profitable catch rates.

The rockfish harvested in the Southeastern nearshore area are different species than those caught in association with Pacific Ocean perch in the historic offshore fishery and therefore are not included in survey results that are designed to assess POP and slope rockfish stock condition. The "other rockfish" category in the FMP was based on rockfish caught in the POP target fishery and, therefore, the species that are being harvested in the nearshore domestic fishery have not been addressed in the FMP.

The nearshore species group harvested in the expanding longline fishery are primarily long-lived, slow growing, bottom dwelling fish and, in other areas, have been extremely vulnerable to overexploitation. Based on performance of other West Coast rockfish fisheries, there is a high probability that this valuable fishery could be lost if management action is delayed until conclusive proof of overexploitation is obtained or until enough data is collected to develop optimal harvest levels from fishery population models. This fishery is split between State and FCZ waters and therefore requires joint State-Federal management action.

For these reasons, the ADF&G staff recommends that nearshore rockfish harvests in the outer coastal area of Southeastern Alaska be limited to no more than the 1984 harvest level until status of stocks are evaluated and appropriate harvest levels are determined. Furthermore, the NPFMC should work together with the Alaska Board of Fisheries, NMFS, ADF&G, and the industry to formulate a management strategy for this fishery. Other management options that should be considered are: time-area closures, rotating harvest areas, control areas, smaller management sub-units, gear restrictions,, and limiting effort.

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troll fleet's percentage allocation should be increasing in accordance with relative takes envisaged in the "Comprehensive Salmon Plan," and the increasing contribution of hatchery cohos to the overall catch.

Proposed by: Alaska Trollers Association (50)

PROPOSAL #591 - 5 AAC 33.365. Restore the proportional share of coho taken by drift gillnetting to pre-1978 levels by amending the troll management plan to read:

(7) recognizing that the recent trend of higher percentages of coho salmon taken in outer coastal areas troll fisheries reduces the manageability of the fishery and intensifies allocation problems, the Board of Fisheries has established the objective of returning the proportional share of the coho salmon harvest in the drift gill net fisheries to pre-1978 levels by 1985.

JUSTIFICATION: The drift gill net share of coho salmon has been reduced by half since 1978, largely due to greatly increased troll catches in outside waters. Reduced availability of coho in inside waters has resulted in major loss of area to an already overcrowded fall gill net fishery and at times to a loss of fall chum harvests in order to protect coho needed for spawning.

Proposed by: Jack Pasquan, Dick Greg, Jim Becker, and Jev Shelton (103)

PROPOSAL #592 - 5 AAC 39.120. Change the registration deadline for troll vessels to the day before the start of the summer season.

JUSTIFICATION: This would allow more time for fishermen to register their vessels. The intent of the regulation will be maintained by requiring that vessels be registered prior to the start of the summer season.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #593 - 5 AAC 39.270. Allow a power troller holding a valid hand troll permit, to hand troll if he wants to.

JUSTIFICATION: The present reg is discriminatory in that it applies to power troll only. Also, the reg does not serve

any biological or conservation purpose. On the contrary, it forces one to use 20 plus hooks instead of four, and eventually if the reg is not repealed, the permit will be sold and in all probability, to a full time user.

Proposed by: Chuck Porter (6)

PROPOSAL #594 - 5 AAC 39.270. Allow hand troll vessels to operate four hand gurdies aboard each vessel.

JUSTIFICATION: With shorter and shorter fishing seasons we can afford no longer to suffer silently or be expected to hock ten to 15 years of our lives to the state for loans to buy permits so we can fish four lines. Now many hand trollers will not bother to add the extra two lines, or some may add just a third line to cut down excessive cranking, it's a lot of damn work cranking all that gear, so I foresee only the professional hand trollers will expand their effort while the weekenders and tourist hand trollers will find two lines plenty. So it's not going to kill any fish runs to let us make the most of our time we spend fishing. In fact with one seine boat catching 30,000 pounds of fish in one set, I don't see how the board can continue to keep hand trollers locked in poverty due to unfair and unnecessary laws and restrictions. We only ask equal rights we once had with power trollers. Don't drive us to extinction.

Proposed by: Joseph D. Sebastian (114)

SOUTHEAST - BOTTOMFISH

PROPOSAL #595 - 5 AAC 33.410. Open the northern southeast sablefish fishery on July 1 instead of September 1.

JUSTIFICATION: In recent years many trollers have geared up for the blackcod fishery because the troll and sablefish seasons dovetail. This increased effort on the sablefish stocks has caused the season to shrink dramatically (five days in 1984). Traditional longliners who, in the past, have depended solely on the halibut and sablefish fisheries (both of which are unprotected by limited entry) have seen their seasons cut back alarmingly in recent years by increased effort due to fishermen entering the longline fishery from salmon fisheries, which is protected from increased effort by limited entry programs. This places the undue burden of sharply restricted seasons on the traditional longliner.

Proposed by: Angela Westman (110)

PROPOSAL #596 - 5 AAC 33.410. Change the northern area opening date for sablefish to allow the fishery to be opened by field announcement between the 1st and 15th of September.

JUSTIFICATION: With the progressively shorter seasons, it is necessary to open the season during a low tide series to spread out the effort over the entire area. Portions of lower Chatham Strait are impossible to fish if the opening corresponds with a high tide series. Also, a noon starting time is needed to enforce the opening.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #597 - 5 AAC 33.410. Change time of opening for Chatham Strait blackcod fishery from midnight, September 1 to noon, September 1 in districts 9, 10, 11, 12, 13-C, 14, and 15.

JUSTIFICATION: The Chatham fishery has become a highly competitive "derby" with participants struggling to utilize every hour the fishery is open. The midnight opening has caused gear conflicts, overcrowding, and chaos in known productive areas and has created difficulties for other forms of maritime commerce (tug and barge, tour boat, and Alaska ferry traffic). Too much emphasis is now placed on electronic navigation, putting smaller boats at a disadvantage. Flag lights and radar reflectors fail, radars and LORAN malfunction on the most meticulously maintained vessels. Opening at noon would provide a visual assessment of gear concentration and allow participants to spread out in a more orderly fashion in the first critical hours. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, fishermen are increasingly weary, mistrustful of, and hostile to any form of management which can be seen as squeezing, stampeding, or harassing them. In addition, the noon starting time would allow cheaper and more effective enforcement of opening and closing times.

Proposed by: Robert L. Chevalier (24)

PROPOSAL #598 - 33.410. In the sablefish fishery in Chatham and Clarence Straits, change the opening time from 12:00 midnight to 12:00 noon and closing time to 12:00 noon instead of 12:00 midnight.

JUSTIFICATION: Several vessels set gear early this past year in the dark, this would end that problem.

Proposed by: John A. Svensson (30)

PROPOSAL #599 - 5 AAC 33.410. Conduct the Chatham Strait sablefish fishery on tides rather than a set date (i.e., to have the fishery when during the small tides of the month and not during the large tides which jam everyone into a very small area.

JUSTIFICATION: This regulation would spread the fishing effort throughout Chatham, cutting down on gear conflicts and harvest the whole resource not just a portion.

Proposed by: John A. Svensson (31)

PROPOSAL #600 - 5 AAC 33.415. Increase the northern area guideline harvest range to 500,000 to 1,500,000 pounds (227 to 680 m.t.) dressed weight.

JUSTIFICATION: Sablefish stock conditions have improved over the past three years, and the harvest has reached or exceeded the upper end of the current range since 1981. The proposed range better reflects the current stock condition and provides a more accurate estimate of the anticipated harvest for the next few seasons.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL # 601 - 5 AAC 33.420. Repeal the registration requirement for the northern are sablefish and delete the references to the registration from sections (b) and (c) of this section. Suggested wording for the regulation is as follows: (b) Operators of vessels fishing sablefish in the northern area shall unload all sablefish taken in the northern area and notify a representative of the department before taking sablefish in another area. (c) Operators of sablefish fishing vessels may not take sablefish in the northern area when sablefish that were taken from another area are on board.

JUSTIFICATION: The call-in registration that has been required in this fishery has been determined unenforceable. Roughly 10% of the participating vessels fishing since the regulation went into effect have not been registered. Vessel surveys during the fishery have provided a good estimate of effort, and so a requirement for written registration is not considered justifiable. The sections of the regulation requiring vessels to off load prior to and after fishing in the northern are have been retained as it

is necessary to accurately determine the northern area harvest to manage that fishery.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #602 - 5 AAC 33.410. Close a portion of District 13 to fishing for rockfish. Suggested wording for the regulation is as follows: there is no closed season for other species of bottomfish except that rockfish may not be taken in that portion of District 13 north of the latitude of Puffin Point and south of the latitude of White Scar (56°10'17"N. lat.) on Baranof Island and north of the latitude of Cape Edwards and south of the latitude of Point Urey on Chichigof Island.

JUSTIFICATION: The area closure proposed for Baranof Island is part of a closed area proposed to the Board in 1982, which was deferred to obtain more public comment. The staff feels that closures are needed to serve as control areas so the impacts of fishing in the remainder of District 13 can be compared to the unexploited areas. One area is to the north and the other to the south of where most of the fishing now occurs. Also, some index work has been completed in both of the proposed areas.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #603 - 5 AAC 33.450. Closed Waters. Close District 13, Section 13B, all waters of Sitka Sound and contiguous waters inside of a line from Cape Edgecumbe to Pt. Woodhouse to Dorothy Narrows, to commercial fishing for miscellaneous finfish.

JUSTIFICATION: The waters near Sitka have received heavy pressure from the developing "rockfish fishery." Several areas which were good fishing for subsistence and sport fishing are now very poor fishing. A limited area near Sitka should be protected for individuals who enjoy eating fresh fish. This closure will not significantly impact the commercial operators.

Proposed by: Homer Sutter (7)

PROPOSAL #604 - 5 AAC 33.4xx. The proposed sanctuaries should be moved to an area that is not currently utilized, and will give more accurate information concerning the state of the industry. No quota be instituted until proper research is done to determine guidelines and stock levels.

JUSTIFICATION: There has been no accurate stock, or fishing impact assessment done yet. The guidelines for the proposed quota are based mostly on the last two years catch record. This being a new fishery we are still learning grounds and techniques, so each year production should go up.

Proposed by: Dan Falvey (100) and David Shoemaker (98)

JUSTIFICATION: Sanctuaries are not feasible because they have no means of studying the areas. The areas are 15% of the waters of Baranof and Chichagof Islands. This would restrict local fishermen from good anchorages and increase pressure on the remaining local areas.

Proposed by: Mark H. Nevers (99)

PROPOSAL #605 - 5 AAC 33.4xx. Counter proposal to staff recommended rockfish sanctuaries. At sea, stock assessment be conducted by staff to determine rockfish stock. An area wide index system be used in conjunction with a rockfish sanctuary located in the area of Noyes Island.

JUSTIFICATION: Of the sites proposed by staff, one has very limited stocks and the other is an established fishing area. Preemption of grounds does not appear in the best interest of the fishery not would it be a good reference area for staff since the grounds have been affected by fishing. A sanctuary in the area of Noyes Island could serve as the reference area for grounds affected by fleets from Sitka, Petersburg, and Ketchikan.

Proposed by: Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association (104)

PROPOSAL #606 - 5 AAC 33.415. Establish a guideline harvest range of 500,000 to 1,000,000 pounds for the District 13 rockfish fishery.

JUSTIFICATION: Signs of localized depletion have been observed in the middle portion of District 13 near Sitka. The 1983 and mid-season 1984 harvest average of approximately 600,000 pounds lead to that decline. The rockfish species targeted in this fishery are long lived and extremely slow growing. The history of rockfish fisheries on both coasts is one of overexploitation. For those reasons, it is necessary to implement a harvest level. The actual harvest will be determined in season using fishery indicators.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #607 - 5 AAC 33.450. Institute regulations on rockfishing that put a ceiling on the number of permits issued for rockfish to those who are actively fishing in 1984. Institute an area wide closure on rockfish from July 1 to July 31, 1985.

JUSTIFICATION: Since the fishery does not yet have enough information to establish a quota, but is obviously in danger if it continues to go unregulated. Limiting the number of boats to what is currently fish will hold the industry stable until more information is gathered and the necessary steps taken.

Proposed by: Dan Falvey (101)

SOUTHEAST - SALMON (SPORTFISH)

PROPOSAL #608 - In streams on Prince of Wales Island, provide that steelhead trout may be taken from February 1 through April 30 and from August 1 through October 30.

JUSTIFICATION: Harvest pressure on steelhead has increased dramatically in the past several years on Prince of Wales Island. Community expansion through state land disposal programs along with increased recreational development on National Forest lands has resulted in intensification of harvest pressure on the steelhead resource. Effort during the month of May is intense. Ninety-five percent of the fish harvested during May have spawned out and are in the process of downstream migration to the ocean. These short-run river fish are in good condition after spawning and the incidence of repeat spawning is high (approximately 30%). Unwarranted harvest during May eliminates the reproductive potential of this resource. A small, highly susceptible fall run of steelhead have been identified in the Thorne River and Eagle Creek. These fish enter fresh water usually in October and November and are subject to intense fishing pressure for an extended period (3-4 months). Without some form of protection, this genetically distinct race of fish will disappear from Island streams.

Proposed by: Richard D. Uberuaga (5)

PROPOSAL #609 - Open Thomas Basin to salmon fishing seaward of a line between department markers, and make Thomas Basin a single hook water.

Justification: The area is currently closed from January 1

through July 31 to protect chinook brood stock. This closure may not be necessary in 1985 and probably won't be necessary in 1986. It would be better to open the area for salmon fishing, (with no-snagging stipulations) and close it only if necessary.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #610 - 5 AAC 46.050. Close Herring Cove Creek (near Ketchikan) to sport fishing from June 15 through October 15.

JUSTIFICATION: To protect chinook and coho salmon brood stock destined to be used at the Whitman Lake Hatchery.

Proposed by: Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, Inc. (3)

PROPOSAL #611 - Close Pullen Creek (Skagway) to fishing above Second Avenue from September 15 through November 30.

Justification: Pullen Creek is only 6 to 10 feet wide and one foot deep upstream from Second Avenue. A small educational hatchery produces some fish for the sport fishery in the lower reaches, but the stream above Second Avenue is too small and coho brood stock too vulnerable to allow fishing in this portion of the stream.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game

PROPOSAL #612 - Open Montana Creek to fishing for Dolly Varden with a two fish limit, but prohibit the use of bait.

Justification: Montana Creek has been closed to Dolly Varden fishing since 1980; however, studies conducted in 1983 indicate a migratory population of approximately 19,000 Dolly Varden using the system. A Dolly Varden population of this magnitude in a system the size of Montana Creek will support a limited sport fishery. The conservative Juneau area bag limit of two Dolly Varden per day and the use of artificial lures only on this system will reduce the harvest and hooking mortality.

Proposed by: Department of Fish and Game