MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver
Executive Director

DATE: May 21, 2002

SUBJECT: Staff Tasking

ESTIMATED TIME

2 HOURS

ACTION REQUIRED

(a) Review existing tasking and provide direction.
(b) Discuss annual proposal cycle.

BACKGROUND

Tasking

There are three items for reference under this tab: (1) the familiar table summarizing current Council projects - I will go over these in further detail; (2) a specific breakdown of each staff members' current tasking and availability for new projects (noting that weeks currently projected do not include projects on the 'potential new projects' or 'lower priority' list); and, (3) a three-meeting outlook for reference.

One other item to mention is Council Committees. At the April meeting we established several new Committees, including a Community QS Purchase Committee, a Bycatch Committee, a VMS Committee, a Data Collection Committee in conjunction with crab rationalization, and a Binding Arbitration Committee, also in conjunction with crab rationalization. The latter two Committees are already active, while the first three are pending appointment. All five will likely be active between now and October, in addition to existing Committees, some of which will also be active over the summer (EFH, Observers, GOA Rationalization, Sea lion, Subsistence). We tried to reflect these, to the extent Committee schedules are known at this time, in each staff members' current tasking. An updated list of Committees is under Item D-2(a). We also have a Council/Board Joint Protocol Committee meeting scheduled over the summer to address a number of items, including initiatives relative to marine protected areas.

While these are rough estimates, it is obvious that there is limited staff time available for new projects, and such time is only available for certain staff. The new Plan Coordinator position will not be filled, and up and running, till about October.

Annual Proposal Cycle

Another issue, related to staff tasking, that I want to discuss with the Council is our annual proposal cycle. Our Standard Operating Practices and Procedures (SOPPs) detail an annual proposal cycle whereby we solicit proposals each summer, review them in the fall, and determine which proposals to move forward into a formal analytical/amendment process. For the past two years we have not solicited groundfish proposals (IFQ proposals are already on a two-year cycle) due to the backlog of existing projects and the press of often unexpected events. However, many new amendment proposals are initiated by the Council outside of the

formal proposal process, under staff tasking or other agenda items at each meeting. These are often by necessity, reacting to events as they unfold (and represent a necessary flexibility), but sometimes are by virtue of public proposals submitted to the Council on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

Having been questioned on numerous occasions about the process for submitting proposals, I would like to have some Council feedback on whether you feel the annual proposal cycle is still relevant to our process. It may well be obsolete, particularly given the major rationalization initiatives currently underway. We are in the process of updating our SOPPs, to reflect new guidelines published last fall, and I would like to clarify this process in the new SOPPs. The 'regulatory streamlining process' I mentioned under the ED report will also impact the overall process of developing amendments, in terms of both content of analyses and timing of Council review and approval.

New proposals

Under Item D-2(b) are two proposals leftover from the April meeting, where we did not get to the staff tasking agenda item. One is a letter from Max and Scott Hulse, requesting the Council to re-visit it's scallop LLP decision, and alter the single, six foot dredge limit for certain LLP licenses. This issue is currently under litigation - the court rule in favor of the agency, supporting the Council's original decision, but the case is currently under appeal.

The other item is a letter from Council member Bob Penney to the Alaska Board of Fisheries regarding near shore depletion of halibut in Cook Inlet, and potential measures to address this issue. Action through the LAMP process is being requested, so it is unclear whether any Council action is necessary, though it was requested that this issue be discussed at the June meeting. It also appears that some of these measures, such as legal size for retention, fall under authority of the IPHC.

Council Project Summary Updated May 20, 2002

	Mandated Actions	Projected Weeks	Council/ NMFS %	Comments
1	Programmatic Groundfish SEIS (revision)	8	10/90	Finalize alternatives for analysis in June 2002 (David, Diana)
2	FMP Updates	3	90/10	Concurrent with DPSEIS (David/Jane)
3	EFH EIS	16	40/60	Major project for 2002 (David/Cathy)
4	Crab FMP EIS	8	30/70	Will dovetail with crab rationalization after June (Mark, Chris)

Council Priorities *Bold =Highest priority

5	**BSAI Crab Rationalization***	4	90/10	Add'l work anticipated after June meeting (Darrell, Chris, Mark + contract help)
6	**Halibut Subsistence (new reg amendments/BOF mtgs)***	1	95/5	Final Action on subsistence in April (Jane). Finalize Document
7	**Community based QS (GCCC buy in proposal)***	2	90/10	Final action in April 2002 (Nicole) Requires finalizing.
8	**IR/IU**	1	80/20	Initial review in June 2002. Primarily outside contract w/ AFA funds.
9	**CDQ Amendment (policy committee)***	4	50/50	Final action in June. Further work required (Nicole)
10	**SSL Trailing Amendment***	1	10/90	Final action in June (Dave/Cathy, plus contract assistance)
11	**SR/RE retention***	2.5	80/20	Not started. (Jane/NMFS)
12	Halibut Charter IFQ	3	100/0	Prepare SOC Document (Jane)
13	BSAI pot cod split- amendment 68	1	100/0	Final Action in June (Nicole).
14	Shark/Skate FMP amendment	2	90/10	Review in the fall (Jane)
15	GOA Rationalization	?	90/10	Discuss in June - Council direction (Jane,Mark,Jon) Major Project
16	Other Species (Target and non-target)& CDQ aspects	4	40/60	Further analysis required (NMFS/Council Staff) Review this fall.(Jane)
17	Additional P. Cod sideboards (Prichett proposal)	1	100/0	Initial review in October. (Jon)
18	AFA single geographic location change	1	100/0	Final Action in June. (Jon)
19	Observer Program (long-term)	4	50/50	Committee and work over summer (Nicole/Chris)

Other Projects Previously Tasked

20	BSAI Amendment 64 - P.cod fixed gear allocations	6	90/10	Sunsets December 31, 2003
21	GOA Salmon Bycatch Caps	8	80/20	Tasked but on hold pending GOA rationalization progress.
22	TAC Setting Process	1	10/90	Initial review in June (Jane)
23	Opilio VIP	2	50/50	Tasked in February - Not started
24	Catch/bycatch disclosure (vessel level)	1	70/30	Discussion paper in February (Elaine) - Postponed
25	Scoping paper on fee/loan program for IFQ Charter (NMFS?)	1	10/90	Sometime in 2002
26	Pollock roe-stripping reg. Changes	1	10/90	Initial Review in October
27	F_{40} Independent Review	3	90/10	Will occur between May and September (Chris/David).
28	Independent Legal Review	2	100/0	Will occur between May and September (Chris).

Potential New Projects or Lower Priority Projects

29	Differential gear impacts	?	90/10	Review workplan in June. Major project after June. Possible contract help.
30	AFA s/b caps to quotas and trawl LLP recency	10	80/20	Pending further Council direction and staff availability
31	IFQ amendments (1999)	4	90/10	Pending Staff availability
32	Charter IFQ Community Set-Aside	4	90/10	Pending Council Direction
33	BSAI P.cod gear allocations (trawl vs. fixed gear)	?	90/10	Pending Council Direction
34	Industry proposal for pollock bycatch	?	90/10	Pending proposal and Council Direction
35	Bycatch Measures	?	60/40	Pending Committee report and Council direction
36	Trailing Amendment for Crab Ratz. (Regionalization)	4	90/10	Pending Staff Availability/Priorities
37	Trailing Amendment for Crab Ratz. (Sideboards)	4	90/10	Pending Staff Availability/Priorities

Analytical Staff Scheduling Through the October 2002 Meeting (as of June 3, 2002)

(Does not include "potential new projects" or "lower priority")

Analytical Staff	Calendar Weeks to October 10	Work Weeks Already Committed	Leave Time	Committee & Other Meetings	Council Meetings & Preparation	"Administrative" Overhead*	Total Committed	Available for new projects
David Witherell Admin EFH Differential Gear Impacts F40 Review	18 weeks	8 weeks	3 weeks	3 weeks SSL EFH, F40 Ecosystem	3 weeks	3.5 weeks (20%)	20.5 weeks	0 weeks
Jane DiCosimo Charter/IFQ BOF/Council GOA Rationalization Groundfish Issues	18 weeks	6 weeks	3 weeks	5 weeks Plan Teams GOA Rationalization BOF/Protocol VMS	2 weeks	2.5 weeks (15%)	18.5 weeks	0 weeks
Cathy Coon EFH GIS Salmon Bycatch	18 weeks	7 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks EFH SSL GIS	3 weeks	1.25 weeks (7.5%)	16.25 weeks	1.75 weeks
Nicole Kimball Community QS CDQ Observer Program Sociocultural	18 weeks	7 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks Observer Socioeconomic Community QS	3 weeks	1.25 weeks (7.5%)	16.25 weeks	1.75 weeks
Jon McCracken AFA Crab Rationalization/EIS Misc.	18 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	4 weeks Crab Rationalization National Guard IMPLAN	3 weeks	1.25 weeks (7.5%)	14.25 weeks	1.75 weeks
Elaine Dinneford Data Support AKFIN Crab Rationalization	18 weeks	5 weeks	4 weeks	3 weeks AKFIN GOA Rationalization Data training	2 weeks	1.25 weeks (7.5%)	16.25 weeks	2.75 weeks
Mark Fina Crab Rationalization/EIS AFA General Oversight Crab Trailing Amendment	18 weeks	9 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks GOA Rationalization Socioeconomic Binding Arbitration Data Collection	3 weeks	2.5 weeks (15%)	17.5 weeks	0 weeks
Diana Evans NEPA/DPSEIS MISC	18 weeks	8 weeks	1.5 weeks	2 weeks DPSEIS Other	3 weeks	1.25 weeks (7.5%)	14.75 weeks	2.25 weeks
Darrell Brannan 35% time only (Misc.)	6 weeks	2 weeks	0.5 weeks	1 week	1 week	0 weeks	4.5 weeks	1.5 weeks

* "Administrative" overhead = approximate % of time for phone calls, staff meeting, teleconferences, correspondence, public liaison, etc. (conservative estimate)

DRAFT NPFMC Three Meeting Outlook

June 3, 2002 Dutch Harbor	September 30, 2002 Seattle	December 2, 2002 Anchorage
DPSEIS: ***Identify Alternatives for analysis***	DPSEIS: ***Action as necessary***	DPSEIS: ***Action as necessary***
	Initial Groundfish Specifications	Final Groundfish Specifications
BSAI pot cod split (Amendment 68): ***Final Action***	VMS: ***Committee report and discussion***	
IR/IU adjustment: ***Initial Review***	IR/IU adjustments: ***Final action***	
	Amendment 64--Fixed Gear Cod Allocations: ***Discuss***	
	P.cod s/b proposal: ***Initial Review***	P.cod s/b proposal: ***Final Action***
GOA Rationalization: ***Committee Report***	GOA Rationalization: ***Committee Report and direction***	GOA Rationalization: ***Status Report***
SSL Trailing Amendments: ***Final Action***	SSL Trailing Amendments: ***Action as necessary***	
AFA SGL change: ***Final Action***	HMAP/Bycatch measures: ***Committee Report and discussion***	HMAP/Bycatch measures: ***Progress Report***
CDQ Policy Amendments: ***Final Action***	Shark/Skate Amendment: ***Initial Review***	Shark/Skate FMP: ***Final Action (T)***
		GOA Salmon Bycatch caps: ***Initial Review (T)***
	SR/RE Retention: ***Initial Review (T)***	SR/RE Retention: ***Final Action (T)***
	Pollock Roe Stripping Regulations: ***Initial Review***	Pollock Roe Stripping Regulations: ***Final Action***
TAC-setting process: ***Initial Review***	TAC-setting process: ***Final Action***	
Crab Rationalization amendment: ***Select Preferred Alternative***	Crab SEIS: Initial Review	Crab SEIS: ***Report***
	Rockfish/Other species breakout: ***Initial Review (T)***	Rockfish/Other species breakout: ***Final Action (T)***
Differential Gear Impacts: ***Review work plan/Direction***		
EFH: ***Report and Direction***	EFH: ***Identify Alternatives for Analysis***	EFH: ***Action as necessary***

*NOTE: This tentative timeline will be updated periodically, particularly after each Council meeting, as the Council works through its decision process.

TAC - Total Allowable Catch
IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
AFA - American Fisheries Act
HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
LLP - License Limitation Program
PSC - Prohibited Species Catch
QS - Quota Share
MSA - Magnuson Stevens Act
SGL - Single Geographic Location
SSL - Steller Sea Lion
GHL - Guideline Harvest Level
SEIS - Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
CDQ - Community Development Quota
GCCC- Gulf Coastal Communities Coalition
SAFE - Stock assessment and fishery evaluation
CV - Catcher Vessel CP- Catcher Processor
SR/RE - Shortraker/Rougheye
MSST - Minimum Stock Size Threshold
FMP - Fishery Management Plan
(T) Tentatively scheduled

NPFMC COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS

BSAI Crab Binding Arbitration Committee

Appointed: 4/18/02 Status: Active Staff: Mark Fina	**Co-Chair: John Garner** **Co-Chair: Jake Jacobsen** Gordon Blue Walt Christensen Lance Farr	Terry Leitzell Garry Loncon Gary Painter Joe Plesha Joe Sullivan

BSAI Crab Data Collection Committee

Appointed: 4/18/02 Status: Active **Discussion Leaders:** Darrell Brannan Mark Fina	Terry Cosgrove John Garner Kevin Kaldestad Terry Leitzell Gary Painter Joe Plesha Glenn Reed Doug Wells	

BSAI Crab Rationalization Committee

Appointed: 12/15/00 Last update: 10/25/01 Status: Deactivated pending analysis and further Council direction. Staff: Mark Fina	**Chair:** Dave Hanson Gordon Blue Paula Brogdan Tom Casey Terry Cosgrove John Garner Don Giles Leonard Herzog Kevin Kaldestad Frank Kelty Linda Kozak	Steve Minor Brent Paine Gary Painter Joe Plesha Dale Schwarzmiller Jeff Steele Jeff Stephan Tom Suryan Arni Thomson Karen Wood-Dibari

Bycatch Committee

Status: Pending Appointment

CDQ Policy Committee

Appointed 2/16/01	**Chair:** Rick Lauber Ragnar Alstrom Eugene Asicksik Greg Baker John Bundy Jeff Bush Morgen Crow Phillip Lestenkof John Moller
Staff: Nicole Kimball/Sally Bibb	Robin Samuelsen

Community QS Purchase Implementation Team

Status: Pending Appointment

Council/Board of Fisheries Joint Committee

Last update: 10/25/01	Dennis Austin Dan Coffey Grant Miller Russell Nelson Bob Penney
Staff: Chris Oliver	Robin Samuelsen

Crab Interim Action Committee

[Required under BSAI Crab FMP]

Dennis Austin, WDF Jim Balsiger, NMFS Kevin Duffy, ADF&G

Ecosystem Committee

Last update: 10/25/01 Staff: David Witherell	**Chair:** David Fluharty Stosh Anderson Dorothy Childers Tony DeGange Dan Falvey George Hunt, Jr. Patricia Livingston Donna Parker	Other Staff Support Steve Davis Doug Eggers

Essential Fish Habitat Committee

Appointed: 5/15/01 Last Update: 10/25/01 Staff: Cathy Coon	**Chair:** Linda Behnken **Vice Chair:** Stosh Anderson Gordon Blue Ben Enticknap John Gauvin Earl Krygier Heather McCarty Ted Meyers Glenn Reed Michelle Ridgway Scott Smiley

Finance Committee

Last Update: 10/25/01 Staff: Gail Bendixen/Chris Oliver	**Chair:** David Benton Dennis Austin Jim Balsiger Kevin Duffy Dave Hanson Roy Hyder Richard Marasco

GOA Working Group

Appointed February 2002 Last Update: 2/20/02 Staff: Jane DiCosimo	**Co-Chairs:** Stosh Anderson Stephanie Madsen	Julie Bonney Dorothy Childers Dan Falvey Beth Stewart

Halibut Charter IFQ Implementation

Status: Pending Appointment

Halibut Subsistence Committee

Status: Active Last Update: 1/7/02 Staff: Jane DiCosimo	**Chair:** Robin Samuelsen David Bill Theodore Borbridge Arne Fuglvog Adelheid Herrmann	Jennifer Hooper Brett Huber Dan Hull Matt Kookesh Flore Lekanof

IFQ Implementation & Cost Recovery Workgroup

Status: Reconstituted as shown (October 2001). Staff: Jane DiCosimo	**Chair:** Jeff Stephan Bob Alverson Beau Bergeron Norman Cohen Arne Fuglvog Dennis Hicks	Don Iverson Jack Knutsen Don Lane Gerry Merrigan Kris Norosz Paul Peyton

Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization Committee

Status: Pending appointment of additional members. Staff: Chris Oliver	**Chair:** David Benton Dennis Austin

Observer Advisory Committee

Last update: October 2001 Staff: Chris Oliver/ Nicole Kimball	**Chair:** Joe Kyle Francine Bennis* Julie Bonney Paula Cullenberg* Kim Dietrich [Alt: Gillian Stoker] John Gauvin	Trevor McCabe Bob Mikol Kathy Robinson Susan Robinson Jeff Stephan* Arni Thomson *Pending replacement

Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee

Last Update: 12/12/01 3/5/02-Election of Officers Staff: David Witherell	**Chair:** Gary Painter David Benson Keith Colburn Lance Farr Phil Hanson Larry Hendricks Kevin Kaldestad	Garry Loncon Rob Rogers Clyde Sterling Gary Stewart Arni Thomson, Secretary [non -voting]

Socioeconomic Data Committee

Last update: 10/25/01 Status: Idle until early 2002; will be reconstituted then. Staff: Mark Fina	**Chair:** Dennis Austin Keith Criddle John Gauvin	Jeff Hartman Seth Macinko Richard Marasco Ed Richardson

Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee

Appointed: 2/10/01 Updated: October 2001 Pending membership adjustment [formerly SSL RPA Committee; renamed at Feb 02 meeting) Staff: David Witherell	**Chair:** Larry Cotter David Benson Jerry Bongen Shane Capron David Cline Tony DeGange Doug Demaster Wayne Donaldson Steve Drage John Gauvin	Sue Hills Gerry Leape Terry Leitzell Matt Moir Alan Parks Fred Robison Bob Small Beth Stewart Jack Tagart John Winther

Steller Sea Lion Steering Committee

Appointed: 12/13/00 Staff: Chris Oliver	**Chair:** David Benton Dennis Austin Jim Balsiger Kevin Duffy

U.S.-Russia International Committee

Status: Pending reconstitution. Staff: Chris Oliver	**Chair:** David Benton Dennis Austin David Fluharty

VMS Committee

Status: Pending Appointment

Max Hulse/Scott Hulse
P. O. Box 770881
Eagle River, Alaska 99577
March 25, 2002

David Benton, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2817

Re: Scallop License Limitation Program

Dear Mr. Benton:

I am writing to petition the Council to reexamine a decision it made regarding the scallop license limitation program (LLP) that has greatly affected me and my son Scott and our ability to sustain our scallop fishing business. I ask that you please consider this under agenda item D-1 at your upcoming meeting.

We have lived in Alaska since 1966, own and operate the *F/V La Brisa,* and received one of the nine licenses that were issued under the LLP. However, our license has an endorsement that limits us to using a single 6-foot dredge wherever we fish, in Cook Inlet or in statewide waters. You may recall that the Council was faced with a choice of imposing this endorsement on vessels that had never fished outside Cook Inlet or on vessels that had not fished outside Cook Inlet during the recent qualification period, and it chose the more restrictive option. We were the only fishermen who were affected by this option as we fished in statewide waters historically, but were not able to do so during the two recent moratorium years as a result of a series of circumstances that began with closure of the scallop fishery after the *F/V Mr. Big* incident. We explained those circumstances in our public comments and testimony on the scallop LLP, and why we thought, in fairness, that we should be allowed to fish in statewide waters in the same manner as the rest of the fleet. Your Advisory Panel agreed, and recommended that the 6-foot endorsement only be imposed on vessels that had never fished statewide waters, but the Council voted against this recommendation.

The analytical documents that accompanied the LLP (*e.g.*, the EA/RIR/IRFA) recognized that a vessel with the 6-foot gear limit would not be economically viable in the statewide fishery, and that such vessels would effectively be limited to fishing in Cook Inlet only. Our experience has borne this out. In 2000, before the LLP took effect, we fished in statewide waters around Cordova and employed 2 6-foot dredges. Even with this gear, we barely broke even. (I don't use that term in the same sense as used in the break-even analysis in the EA/RIR/IRFA, which included what staff referred to in testimony as a normal share profit or boat share. I mean break even in the sense of barely exceeding our out-of-pocket expenses.) Based on this poor economic experience in 2000, we didn't even try to fish in statewide waters with a single 6-foot dredge during the 2001 fishery when the LLP had been implemented, since we knew we would lose money. There simply is no way we can get the kind of production we need to sustain our business at even a minimal level using a 6-foot dredge.

Nor can we make it by fishing Cook Inlet alone. The quota there is small

(0 – 20,000 pounds) and at $ 6.00 or so per pound, would only produce a total ex-vessel value of around $ 120,000. Divided among the three smaller boats in the LLP fleet which are likely to fish in Cook Inlet, this is simply not enough to keep us going. The Council was aware that the Cook Inlet fishery was probably overcapitalized, but never performed any sort of break-even analysis for the vessels that would be relegated to fishing there. We believe if you had, you might have seen the inequity of confining us to Cook Inlet via the 6-foot dredge restriction, and perhaps afforded us a measure of relief in statewide waters. The point is, we cannot maintain our business by fishing Cook Inlet alone.

We understand that the Council's intent in adopting the 6-foot dredge restriction, was to avoid an increase in harvesting capacity in statewide waters because this was believed to be potentially detrimental to the economic viability of the other vessels operating there. But we, having the only restricted vessel with fishing history in statewide waters, do not really pose any threat to the larger operations. We don't operate year-round but only in the summer months. Your break-even analysis assumed that the vessels receiving licenses would be fishing full time, but that is not the case. Nor do we ask for permission to use the full complement of gear allowed for the others – two 15-foot dredges. We cannot use dredges that size with our boat, but instead are looking to use two 10-foot dredges, or about two-thirds the gear permitted the others. Moreover, the Council allowed another "Cook Inlet" boat to obtain a license without the restrictive gear endorsement and we think that it would be fair to give us similar treatment. This was the *F/V Northern Explorer*, which never fished with a dredge larger than 6 feet and had no historical fishing history in either statewide waters or Cook Inlet (in fact, we helped the owner of that vessel get into the fishery in the early 1990s). The owner avoided the gear limit because he had made a couple landings from statewide waters during the recent qualification period. (The owner of that vessel has since sold his permit, something we do not intend to do; with the Council's help on this gear problem, we intend to be in the fishery for many years to come.)

In short, we appeal to the Council's sense of basic fairness and ask that you give us some relief from the restrictive gear endorsement. We have been in the scallop fishery since the early 1980s, but will not be able to stay in the fishery without your help. We simply want the ability to maintain a viable fishing business, which we cannot do under the restrictive gear endorsement.

We assume you are aware that we went to court on this issue. We would have preferred not to have to litigate, but with a 30-day statute of limitations under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we had little choice but to move quickly to protect ourselves. The court recently ruled against us and in favor of the government, and we have now appealed. But we would certainly favor a solution coming from the Council rather than continuing our case, if you can provide one.

Scott and I plan to hopefully address the council when it discusses this petition and will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning our request. Thank you very much for considering this matter.

Sincerely,

Max Hulse

Scott Hulse

cc: Council Members

interoffice
MEMORANDUM

to: Members, Board of Fisheries
from: Bob Penney

date: October 19, 200[illegible]

As a member of the NPFMC, I am very interested in how Halibut is managed in 3A and 2C.

With 35 years of active participation in 3A (Cook Inlet), I am very concerned about what appears to me to be a possibly serious case of near shore depletion in Cool Inlet Halibut fishery.

To me as an individual and as a council member, preservation of the resource is of primary concern. If we over harvest these stocks, it may be very difficult to get them back.

I believe the LAMPS projects your board is doing is the most important single research that has been done of and for this fishery. I sincerely thank you for your efforts, from myself, our family and for the tens of thousands of Alaskans who fish for halibut in these waters.

I ask that you address the 5 points in the attached "proposed measures..." as part of your LAMPS review. They are conservative in nature and I believe would help protect these stocks.

Thank You.

Cc: Dave Benton

Office (907) 276-2222 Fax (907) 273-0896

Proposed Management Measures for Inclusion as part of a LAMP Guided and Non-Guided Anglers

Crew Fish

The intent of this measure is to not allow crew members or skippers to harvest halibut while guiding clients. The regulation would limit the numbers of poles fished to the number of clients onboard.

- Under current regulations crew members and skippers can harvest halibut while guiding clients.
- About 10-15% of the charter harvested halibut are "crew fish."

You Hook it's your Fish

The intent of this measure is to stop the practice of "boat limits"

- You hook the fish then it is your fish - no handing off to another angler.
- When you have landed your halibut limit, then no more fishing for bottom fish that day.

100 Pound Maximum Size Limit (60 inch-Maximum Size Retention

The intent of this measure is to restrict the harvest of large females.

- Nearly all halibut over 100 pounds (about 60 inches in length) are females
- About 5% of the charter harvested halibut are over 100 pounds.
- Large females are highly fecund.

Mandatory Use of Circle Hooks

The intent of this measure is to require the use of circle hooks in the halibut charter fishery.

- There is no current restriction on the type of hook allowed to fish for halibut.
- Currently, both circle and J-hooks are used in the halibut charter fishery.
- About 90% of the charter operators use circle hooks.
- Circle hooks have documented lower release mortality rates than do J-hooks.

Mandatory Use of Steel Hooks

The intent of this measure is to restrict the use of stainless steel hooks in the halibut charter fishery in order to reduce mortality.

- There is no current restriction on the type of hook allowed to fish for halibut.
- Currently, both stainless steel and steel hooks are used in the halibut charter fishery
- It is unknown what the breakdown of hook use in the charter fishery is.
- It is believed that steel hooks have lower release mortality rates than do stainless steel hooks given that steel hooks will rust away faster than stainless steel hooks.

Limit Multiple Day Trips

The intent of this measure is to only allow charter vessels to make one trip per day.

- Under current regulations a charter vessel may make multiple trips per day.
- Less than about 10% of the charter vessels currently make multiple trips per day.

AGENDA D-2
JUNE 2002
Supplemental

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 95009
SEATTLE, WA 98145-2009

TELEPHONE
(206) 634-1838

FAX:
(206) 632-2983

ESTABLISHED BY A CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA

AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 22, 2002

Mr. Chris Oliver, Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
605 West 4th Avenue, Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

Dear Mr. Oliver:

The staff of the International Pacific Halibut Commission was recently contacted by Council staff in regards to a proposal to impose an upper, or maximum, size limit on sport-caught halibut. This type of measure has been discussed several times in recent years and I would like to briefly outline our thoughts on the matter as it relates to halibut management. As background, I am enclosing the results of a 1999 staff analysis on the implications of imposing a maximum size limit.

IPHC's primary management goal is stock conservation. The harvesting strategy consists of limiting the fraction of the exploitable biomass that is harvested each year and, in addition, controlling the size of harvested fish by imposing a minimum size limit of 32 inches on the commercial landings. The size limit is set at a size that attempts to maximize the yield per recruit and also preserves the reproductive potential of the stock. We consider the effect of all removals on all age groups in setting the size limit and the quotas, and we set them so as to maintain a healthy level of spawning biomass among other things. As a result, the existing pattern and level of exploitation are not a problem and further measures are not needed.

In theory, a maximum size limit may be used by managers to further enhance the egg production of the stock. That is, protecting large females by not allowing retention increases the reproductive output of the stock. With halibut, this benefit is just not captured, as the number of large (>150 cm, or 80 pounds) females in the population isn't significant enough to make a difference. Placing such a limit solely on the sport fishery further dilutes the potential. For example, in 1996-2000 the sport harvest was 14% of the combined Areas 2C, 3A, and 3B sport/commercial harvests. Further dissipating any expected benefits from a maximum size limit would be the mortality associated with the capture and release of fish greater than the size limit. The enclosed analysis indicates that a maximum size limit would not have significant resource conservation benefits, and is therefore not a regulation IPHC would pursue.

Sincerely yours,

Gregg H. Williams

for Bruce M. Leaman
Executive Director

cc: Commissioners

Encl.

Effects of Imposing a Maximum Size Limit in Commercial Landings

by

Ana M. Parma

ABSTRACT

Limiting the size range of fish that can be harvested can protect the potential for renewal of a stock by creating a reproductive refuge that is independent of assessment uncertainties. The effects of different combinations of minimum and maximum size limits on expected yield and spawning biomass per recruit of Pacific halibut were evaluated using new estimates of growth, maturity and size selection by the fishery. The results show that the current minimum size limit of 32 in. (81 cm) is appropriate as the potential gains in yield derived from lowering it are small compared to the associated potential reproductive losses. Implementing a maximum commercial size limit of as low as 150 cm (about 80 lbs) does not appear to add substantial protection to the stock to justify a change in regulations. While large females can each spawn many more eggs than medium-sized females, their overall reproductive contribution is nevertheless small as not many females reach those large sizes under the current, reduced growth rates.

BACKGROUND

The harvesting strategy used for Pacific halibut consists of limiting the fraction of the exploitable biomass that is harvested each year and, in addition, controlling the size of harvested fish by imposing a minimum size limit of 32 in. on the commercial landings. Both components of the harvesting strategy–the harvest rate and the minimum size limit–were recently re-evaluated following the dramatic changes observed in the biology of halibut, as well as in recent abundance trends as estimated by the new assessment method. Harvest rates were adjusted down in part to compensate for the reduction in average lifetime reproductive contribution made by females under the current, reduced growth rates. The minimum size limit, on the other hand, was still found to be adequate in spite of the changes in life history parameters.

The 32 in. size limit was adopted in 1973 in order to increase yields when halibut growth rates were highest. Now that the growth rates have declined again, average yield per recruit could actually increase somewhat if the minimum size limit were lowered. As we discussed last year, however, potential increases in yield appear small compared to reproductive losses that would occur if the commercial selectivity shifted toward smaller fish in response to a drop in the size limit (Parma Unpub.). In other words, the current minimum size limit discourages the fleet from targeting smaller fish, reducing the possibility that too many fish are caught before they have a chance to reproduce. Along similar lines, it has been suggested that imposing a maximum size limit on the commercial landings might enhance the reproductive potential of the stock without jeopardizing yields. Because egg production is proportional to body weight, it appears *a priori* that protecting large females by carefully releasing them when caught might create a significant reproductive refuge, thus resulting in a more robust harvesting policy. Such a refuge could be an insurance against

potential pitfalls in the assessment and failures to maintain harvest rates within desired sustainable levels. Below, we compare the effects of implementing different combinations of maximum and minimum size limits on potential yields and spawning biomass per recruit, to evaluate whether a change in size limit regulations may be advantageous.

EFFECTS OF MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS ON YIELD AND SPAWNING BIOMASS PER RECRUIT

Yield and spawning biomass per recruit for Areas 2B and 3A were calculated for the current size limit (81 cm) and for a size limit of 60 cm, with and without the addition of a maximum size limit of 150 cm. The evaluation of the minimum size limit presented last year was based on a working value of natural mortality (M) equal to 0.20. While results discussed here correspond to a value of M= 0.15, conclusions were found to be robust to the choice of M values between 0.10 to 0.20.

Growth and selectivity schedules were estimated using data from the IPHC setlines surveys and from the commercial fishery for the period 1974-1997. The sex of halibut caught during setline surveys has been regularly determined and so separate growth schedules for males and females could be estimated based on those data, as shown in Fig. 1. As is the case in the stock assessment model, there is uncertainty about how to best model selectivity in the face of the substantial changes in size-at-age exhibited by Pacific halibut. Because the model used here is sex-specific, and males and females of a given age differ in size, selectivity was modeled as a function of both age and size. The idea behind this combined model is that availability of fish on the grounds would be a function of fish age, affecting the selectivity of both the survey and the commercial fishery. Vulnerability to the setline gear and targeting by the commercial fleet, on the other hand, would be mostly functions of fish size, which would differ for the survey and commercial operations. Age- and size-dependent components of the selectivities were assumed to be the same for males and females. As females grow faster, they tend to become selected when they are younger than males, and they make up the bulk of the catch in weight.

New maturity schedules were estimated from recent survey data (1995-1997) and contrasted with those observed in the 1980s (Fig. 2). The length at which 50% of females have reached maturity has decreased dramatically from 125 cm to 89 cm in Area 3A, and from 110 cm to 98 cm in Area 2B. The maturity schedules at age have been relatively more stable during this period, with age at 50% maturity remaining at 11-12 in both areas. While in Area 3A females reach sexual maturity at about the same age as they become selected to the commercial fishery, in Area 2B females become vulnerable to the fishery long before they start to reproduce (Fig. 3). Thus, under current selectivity and maturity schedules, the ability to control the harvest fraction is essential for successful reproduction.

A difficulty in evaluating yields for various size limits is that it is not at all clear how commercial selectivity might respond to a possible reduction in the minimum size limit. For example, fishing grounds that were abandoned when the 32 in. size limit was imposed due to high densities of fish smaller than the legal sized may be fished again. Due to this uncertainty, two alternative assumptions were made regarding the commercial selectivity schedule (Fig. 4). In the first, selectivity remained constant at the values estimated for 1997 in spite of changes in the size limit regulations. In the second, a drop in the minimum size limit resulted in a shift of the size selectivity towards smaller fish sizes. Only the size-dependent component of the selectivity was

assumed to change in response to a drop in size limit; the age-dependent parameters were assumed to be fixed. The effect of imposing a maximum size limit of 150 cm, and either maintaining the current minimum size limit of 81 cm or reducing it to 60 cm, was evaluated under these two selectivity assumptions.

The estimated selectivities in Areas 2B and 3A indicate that, under current regulations, few fish smaller than 80 cm seem to be caught at present (Fig. 4). As a result, yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit were little affected by the choice of minimum size limit when the commercial selectivity was assumed to remain fixed at currently estimated values (Figs. 5 and 6). Gains in yield per recruit were somewhat larger in both areas when selectivity was assumed to shift towards smaller sizes in response to a drop in the size limit (Figs. 5 and 6, thin dashed lines). Yield increases were however not without costs: dropping the legal size resulted in major reductions in spawning biomass per recruit when the drop was followed by a shift in commercial selectivity towards smaller fish sizes. The addition of a maximum size limit did not result in significant reproductive gains in either of the cases. Trade-offs are summarized in Figure 7 for a 20% harvest rate. Increases in spawning biomass per recruit derived from protecting the large females were small (less than 5%) as only a small number of females survive to a size of 150 cm. This percentage would be even smaller if realized harvest rates were unintentionally allowed to exceed the target due to errors in the assessment. Thus, the implementation of a maximum size limit would not be an effective safeguard against recruitment overfishing in the case of severe overestimation of stock biomass. These results indicate that the current size limit regulations continue to be adequate, and that implementing a maximum size limit would not result in significant reproductive savings under the current growth schedules.

REFERENCES

Parma, A. M. Unpub. Re-evaluation of the 32-inch commercial size limit. International Pacific Halibut Commission Report of Assessment and Research Activities, 1997.

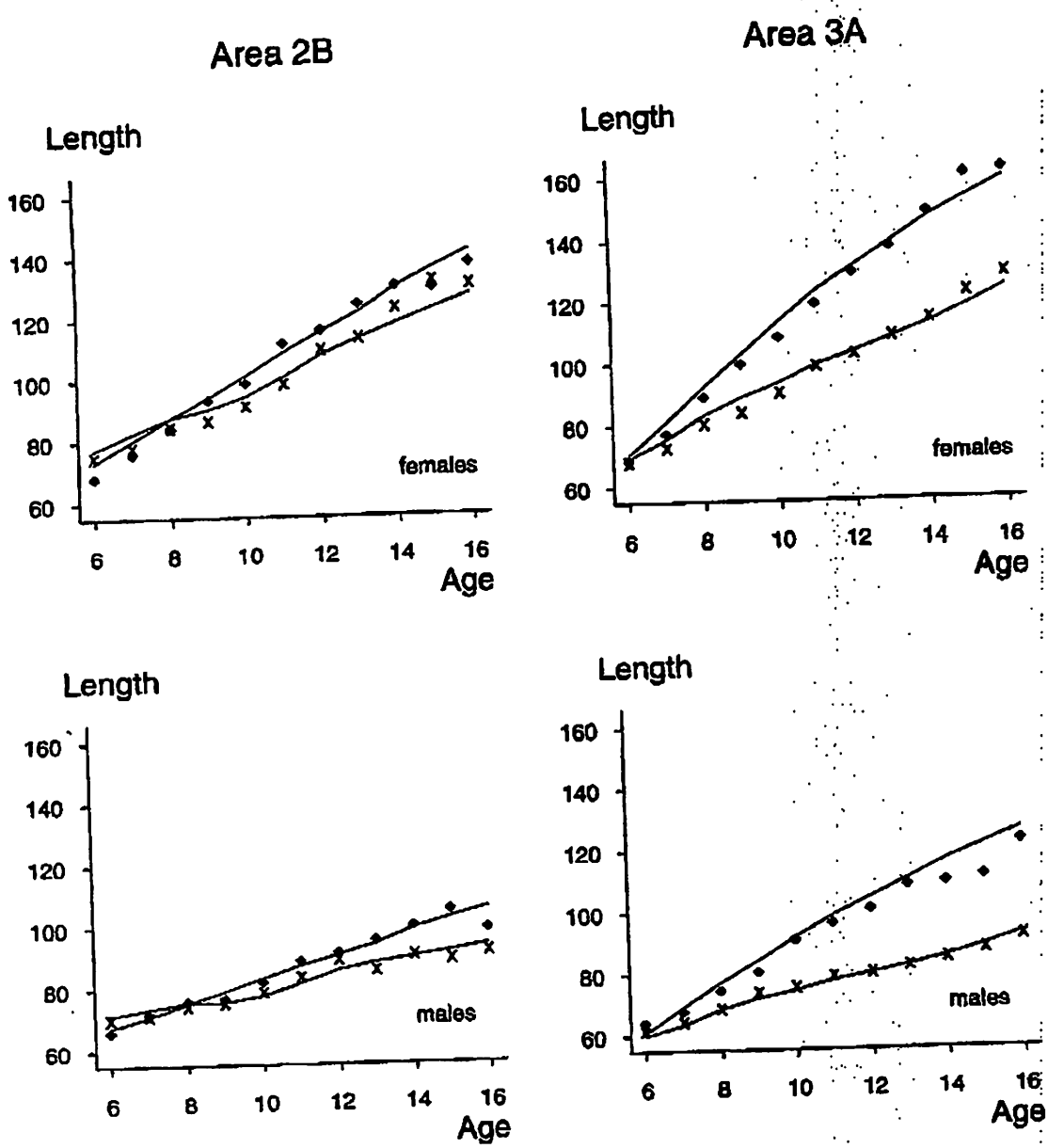


Figure 1. **Observed and predicted growth schedules for 1986 (dots) and 1997 (crosses) in Areas 2B and 3A.**

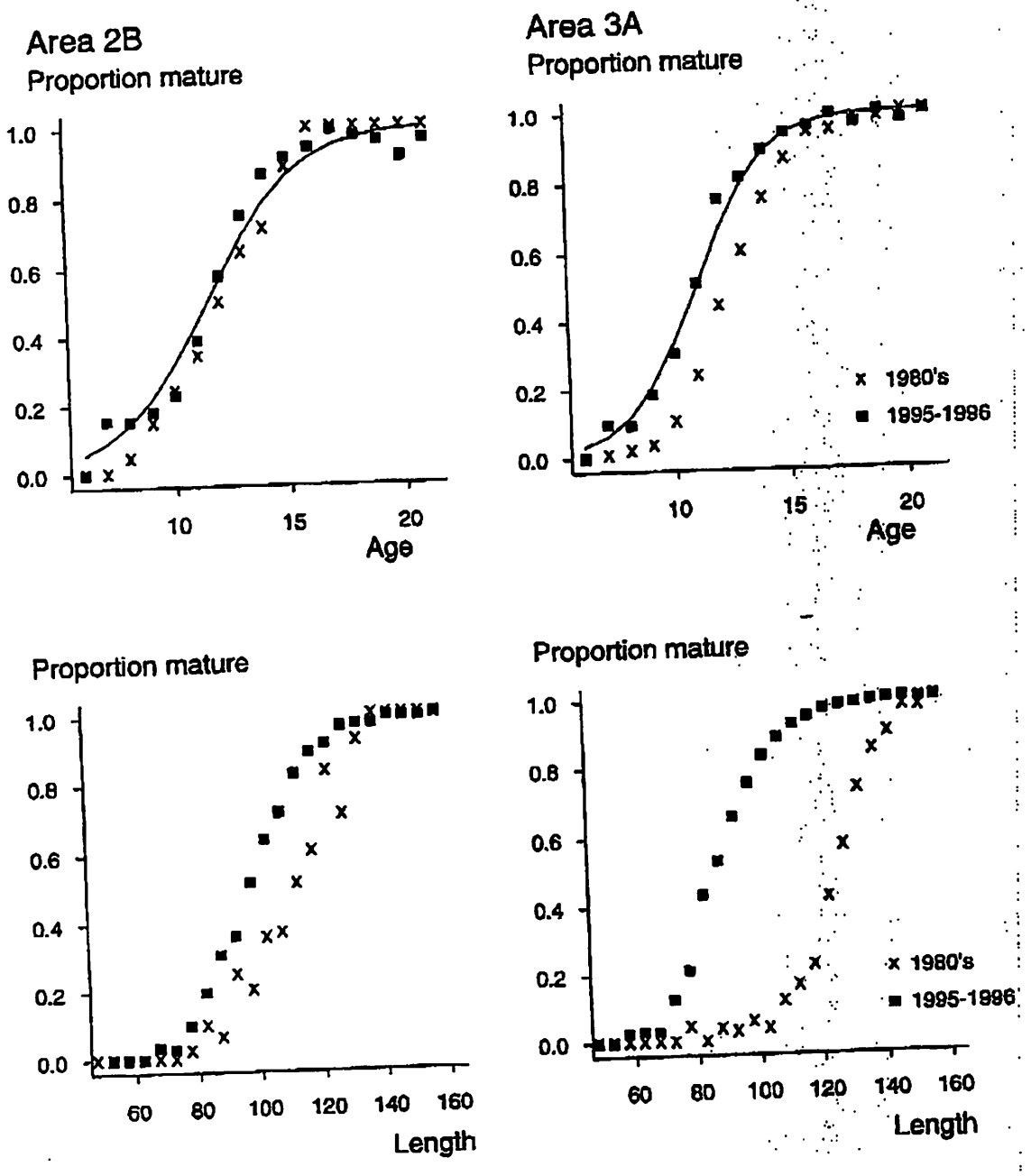


Figure 2. **Female maturity schedules in Areas 2B and 3A. Solid line is a model fitted to data from 1995-1997.**

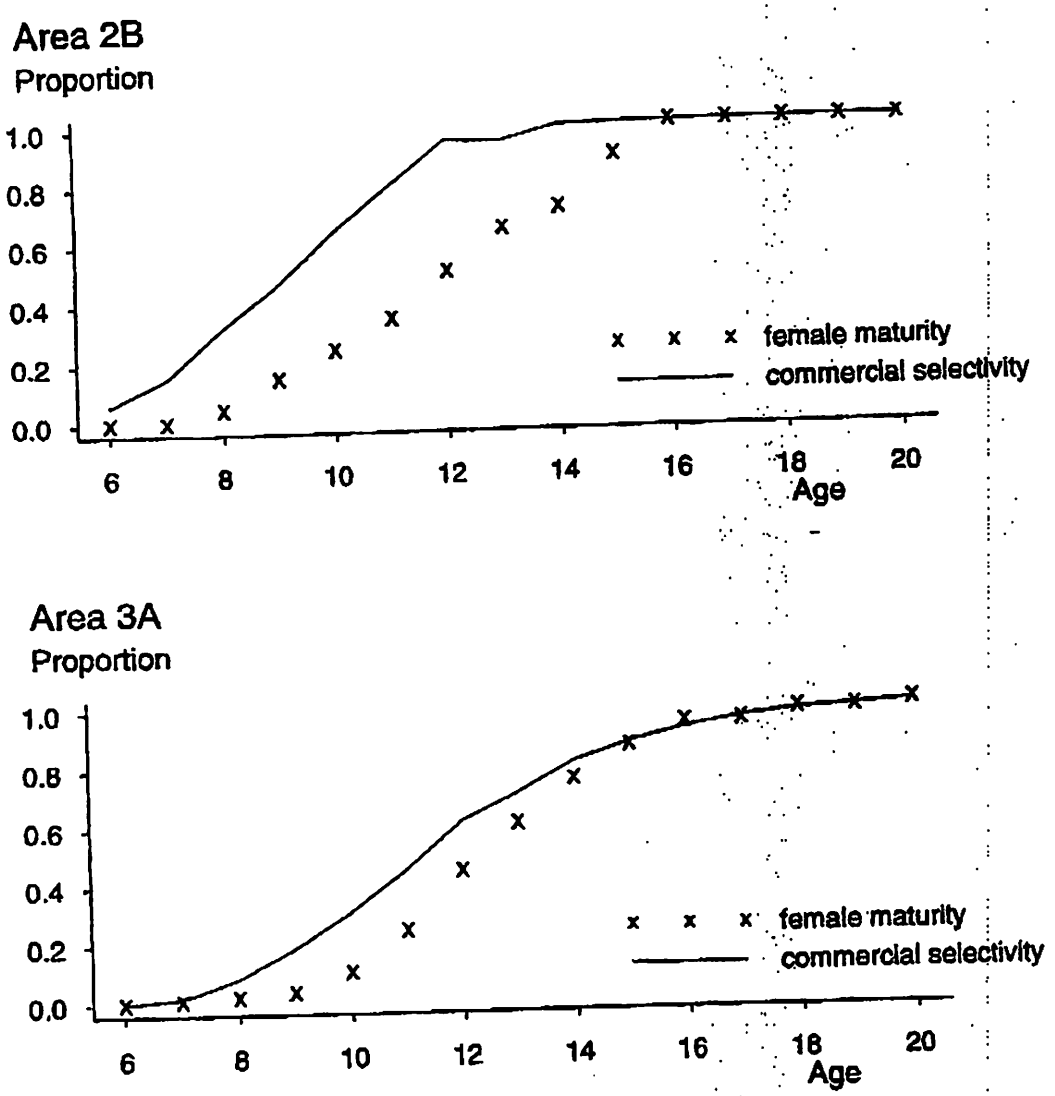
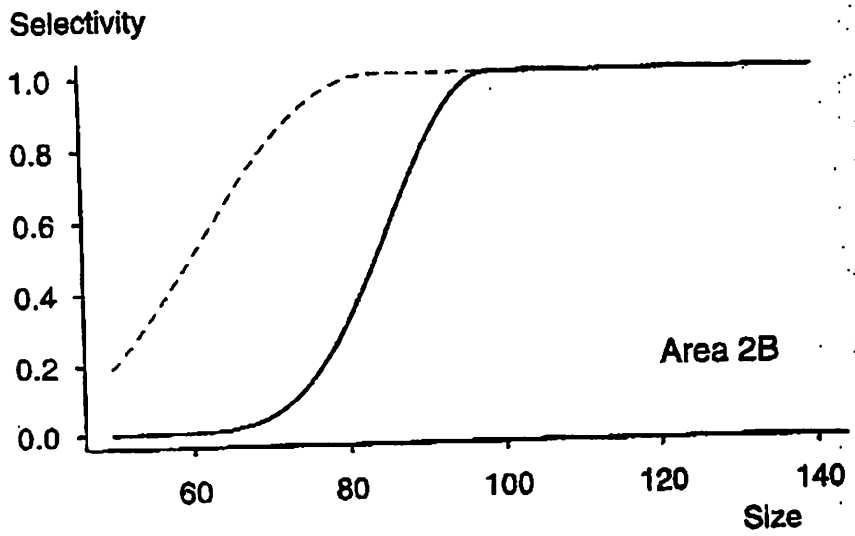


Figure 3. **Female maturity by schedule (average for 1995-1997) and commercial selectivity of females in Areas 2B and 3A.**



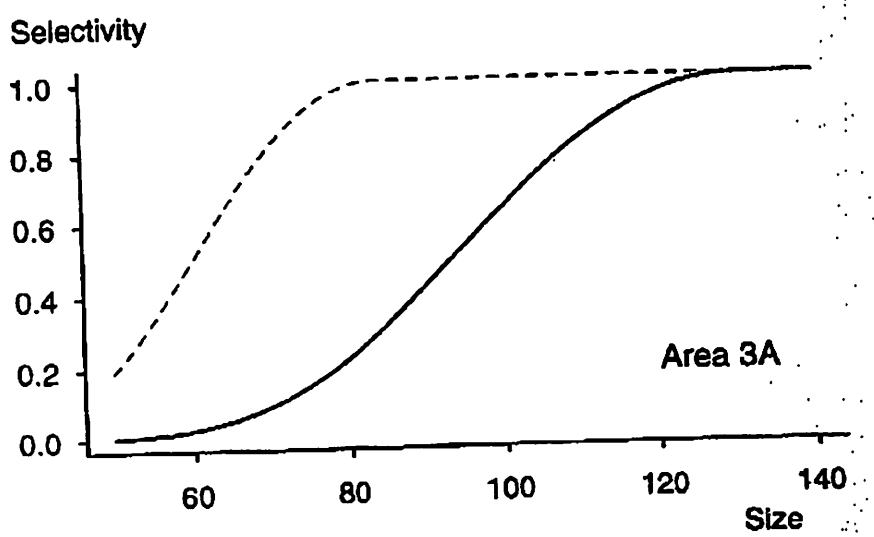


Figure 4. **Two alternative assumptions about setline selectivity were used to compute yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit (1) selectivity remains fixed at the values estimated for 1997 (solid lines) or (2) selectivity shifts to smaller fish sizes (dashed lines).**

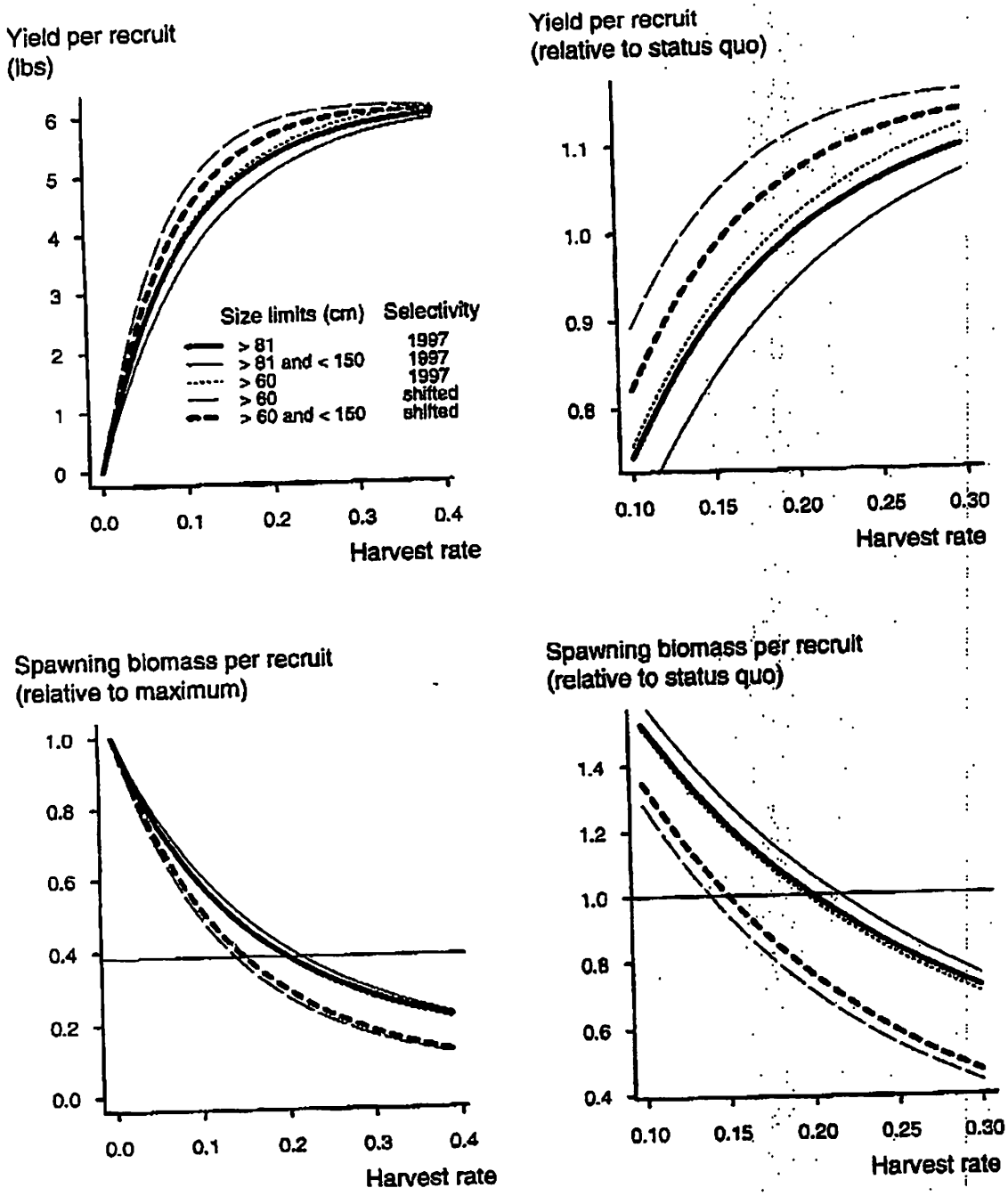


Figure 5. **Area 3A female + male yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit. Thick solid lines show status quo (minimum size limit = 81 cm and selectivity as estimated for 1997) other lines indicate the effect of different combinations of minimum and maximum size limits when selectivity is as estimated for 1997 and when it shifts left in response to a drop in the size limit.**

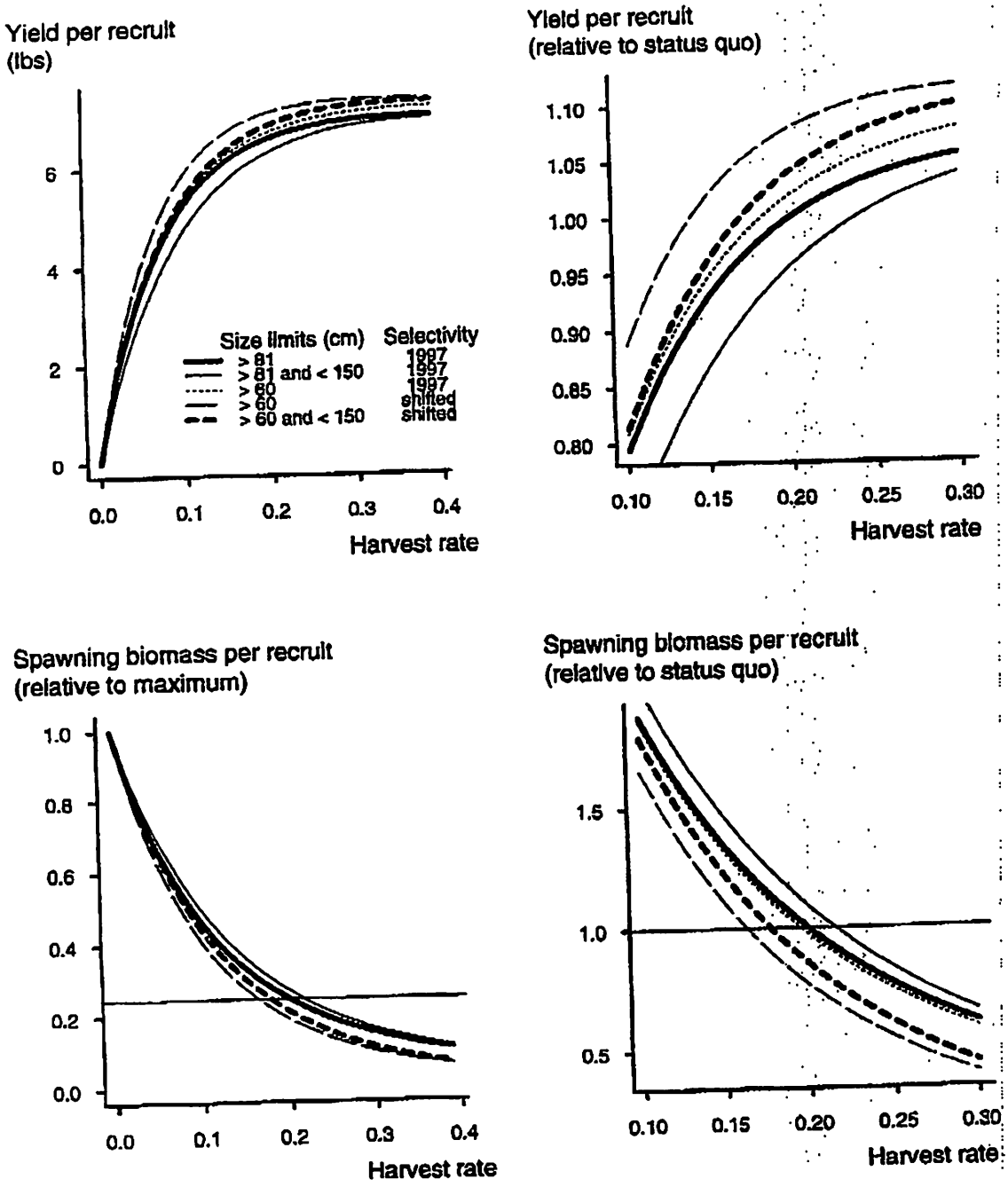


Figure 6. **Area 2B female + male yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit. Thick solid lines show status quo (minimum size limit = 81 cm and selectivity as estimated for 1997) other lines indicate the effect of different combinations of minimum and maximum size limits when selectivity is as estimated for 1997 and when it shifts left in response to a drop in the size limit.**

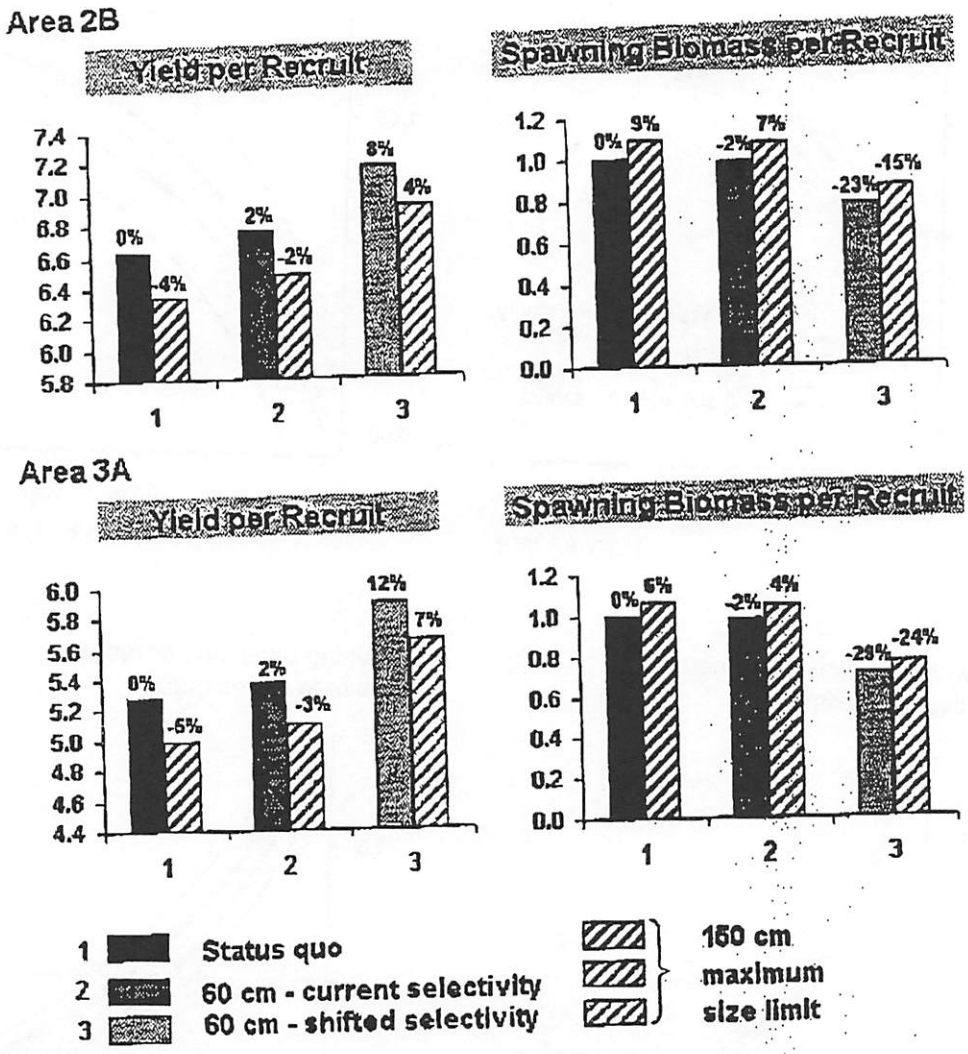


Figure 7. Yield per recruit and spawning biomass per recruit for Areas 2B and 3A computed under (1) status quo (i.e. minimum size limit = 81 cm, setline selectivity as in 1997 and harvest rate = 0.20), (2) minimum size limit = 60 cm and selectivity fixed at the 1997 value, and (3) minimum size limit = 60 cm and selectivity shifted to smaller sizes. Columns show the effects of adding a maximum size limit = 150 cm.

D-2(a)

The North Pacific Management Council

I would like the council to address the amount of pacific cod quota and bycatch allocated to the 60 feet and under fishery. As you are reading this the quota will probably have about 40% of the left. Unfortunately after June 10 the small longliners will no longer be able to participate because there is no bycatch allocation. The only time of year that the weather allows the small vessels to participate, this fishery is effectively closed to small longliners without a halibut bycatch allocation.

According to the Dutch Harbor NMFS representative 25 mt would keep us fishing through the summer months. Not a lot to ask for.

The second part of the problem is the amount of p. cod quota allocated to Alaskans.

Hook-and –line catcher vessels .03 %

Catcher vessels < 60 feet LOA using Hook-and –line or Pot gear 1.4 %

This quota will be caught this year by Alaskan fisherman, the back bone of the coastal communities of Alaska.

With the introduction of sealion conservation measures, the Gulf of Alaska coastal communities lost 40% of the catchable quota of p. cod. I say catchable because we are allocated 40 % of the TAC in Sept. when it isn't financially feasible for a pot or longline vessels to even bother to participate. The fish are too dispersed.

Now to stay in business some of us have had to move our vessels west to the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island area. The number of vessels from the coastal communities of Alaska participating in this fishery is growing each year. With the state of the salmon fisheries, and the economic pressures on the < 60 fleet in the coastal communities, the number of participants will continue to grow.

We would like some of Alaska back!

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