

Handout - Tweet

## STELLER SEA LION BRIEFING POINTS FOR PROPOSED COUNCIL LETTER

The Council received a briefing from NMFS regarding the results of the 2009 surveys, and issues relating to the preparation of the SSL BiOp. From that discussion, the Council requests clarification on issues that came to light during the briefing: *THE COUNCIL WOULD APPRECIATE A RESPONSE BY MID-JANUARY, PRIOR TO THE NEXT MEETING OF ITS SSL/MC.*

1. In response to questions from the Council, it was unclear what years NMFS was going to use to measure performance of the current fishery measures. The Council understands that this BiOp is to look at the status quo. In other words evaluate the effect of the current mitigation measures. As such the Council believes that the BiOp analysis must be based on the 2000 to 2008/2009 SSL population trend data for the WDPS. This is also consistent with the SSL Recovery Plan (SSLRP) which uses 2000 as the base year from which to measure performance with recovery criteria. Is this the approach the agency is taking in the BiOp analysis?

2. With respect to trends in Western DPS (WDPS) non-pups, NMFS reported in February an overall 14% increase (2000 to 2008) for the WDPS. NMFS reported that this equates to a 1.7% annual rate of increase. At that time, NMFS posed a hypothesis that the counts in the eastern GOA were inflated due to animals from the EDPS moving to Kayak Island. Partial counts were done this summer and now NMFS is reporting that the overall increase may be around 12%, or a 1.4% annual rate of increase. NMFS has indicated that further genetic or tagging work is needed to confirm the hypothesis. Since the 1.4% number is linked to a hypothesis, will the 1.7% increase measured last year be used in the BiOp?

How will WDPS animals (as determined by genetic and branding data) found in the EDPS region be accounted for in WDPS trends used in the BiOp? For example, there are two rookeries (Graves and White Sisters) in the EDPS where genetic samples and observations of branded animals indicate that 60% and 40% of these animals and their pups are of WDPS origin. Are these females and their pups accounted for in the 1.7% annual rate of increase for pups and non-pups in the WDPS?

3. The 2008 SSLRP reported the total US non-pup population in the WDPS at 42,500. How was this calculated? What would the total US WDPS non-pup population estimate be today if calculated using this methodology?

4. In conducting the analysis for the BiOp, NMFS has indicated that it will consider the recovery criteria in the SSLRP. Will the agency be using the downlisting criteria as the guidance for the analysis?

5. The Council is requesting that NMFS provide the Council with an opportunity to review the draft terms of reference for the CIE review of the BiOp at our next regularly scheduled meeting and provide comments prior to letting the contract.

6. The Council recommends that NMFS change the BiOp schedule such that the draft BiOp is made available for comment by the public and the Council prior to submittal to the CIE. Following this review, the draft BiOp, along with any comments from the Council, the SSC, and the public could be provided to the CIE as part of the review. In this way the CIE will have the full spectrum of scientific information and critique to utilize in its evaluation. The Council believes that this would be a more robust and transparent process, and strengthen the CIE evaluation of the scientific basis of the BiOp.

The Council makes this recommendation because it is concerned about the process outlined by NMFS for preparation of the BiOp, the CIE review, and review by the Council. We believe that the CIE review would be stronger if all of the information were presented to the panel, instead of just select information as was described by NMFS at our briefing. As is recognized in the SSLRP, there is considerable scientific debate about the effects of predation, environmental change, or other factors identified in the recovery plan that may affect recovery. From the presentation we received, it appeared that NMFS was only going to provide the scientific information used by NMFS in the BiOp to support its analysis and conclusions, excluding reports and scientific information that does not support NMFS analysis.

<sup>MITIGATION</sup>  
7. The Councils SSL committee has requested updated fishery data presented as updated tables from the 2003 BiOp supplement showing catch inside and outside critical habitat before and after SSL protection measures. These tables would be updated with fishery data through 2008 or 2009, whichever is currently available. The Council is concerned that this data is not readily available to the public in, at least, a basic form. Please provide to the Council the fishing that occurs inside and outside critical habitat at 0-3, 3-10, 10-20, miles which reflect the zonal approach taken by the agency in development of the last BiOp. Please provide it for each of the three affected fisheries (cod, pollock and Atka mackerel) by region and in aggregate.

AND OUTSIDE  
20 IN FORAGING  
AREAS

<sup>BY YEAR</sup>  
The Council continues to be mystified why this data is not readily available, or why it wasn't reported to the Council by NMFS in previous years if there were concerns about the amount of SSL prey species removals from critical habitat. Any information NMFS can provide regarding when the level of prey removals under the existing mitigation measures became a concern would be useful. } OR LOCATION

8. NMFS reported on its plans for future SSL research. It appears the NMFS is devoting the majority of its resources to continued investigations in the Northern Gulf including branding and genetics work. The Council requests that instead of continuing to focus on this region, that emphasis be placed on filling the gaps in the western Aleutian Islands where surveys have not been completed for several years. In addition, natality studies in areas such as the eastern Aleutian Islands would be useful. These data could be used to compare natality rates with other areas of the WDPS in an attempt to better understand the dynamics affecting pup production AND SURVIVAL.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members  
FROM: Chris Oliver *Chris*  
Executive Director  
DATE: December 3, 2009  
SUBJECT: Staff Tasking

ESTIMATED TIME  
2 HOURS

**ACTION REQUIRED**

Review tasking and committees and provide direction

**BACKGROUND**

Committees and Tasking

The list of Council committees is attached as Item D-3(a). An updated workplan for implementing the programmatic groundfish management policy is attached as Item D-3(b). Item D-3(c) is the three meeting outlook, and Item D-3(d) provides a summary of current projects and tasking. The Council may wish to discuss priorities for completing ongoing projects, as well as any new tasks assigned during the course of this meeting.

The Ecosystem Committee met earlier this week, and you will receive the committee's recommendations on MPAs and EFH under those respective agenda items. The Council may elect to receive the balance of the committee's report during staff tasking.

**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(Revised December 3, 2009)

AGENDA D-3(a)  
DECEMBER 2009

**Council/Board of Fisheries Joint Protocol Committee**

Updated: 8/10/07	<u>Council:</u> Dave Benson Ed Dersham Eric Olson	<u>Board:</u> Larry Edfelt John Jensen Mel Morris
Staff: Jane DiCosimo		

**Council Coordination Committee**

[Designated and renamed by Magnuson Act reauthorization April 2007]

Appointed: 4/05 Updated: 7/23/09          Staff: Chris Oliver	<u>CFMC:</u> C: Eugenio Pinerio ED: Miguel Rolon	<u>NPFMC:</u> C: Eric Olson ED: Chris Oliver
	<u>GMFMC:</u> C: Robert Shipp ED: Steve Bortone	<u>PFMC:</u> C: Dave Ortmann ED: Don McIsaac
	<u>MAFMC:</u> C: Richard Robins ED: Dan Furlong	<u>SAFMC:</u> C: Duane Harris ED: Bob Mahood
	<u>NEFMC:</u> C: John Pappalardo ED: Paul Howard	<u>WPFMC:</u> C: Sean Martin ED: Kitty Simonds

**Council Executive/Finance Committee**

Updated: 8/10/07	Eric Olson (Chair) Doug Mecum (NMFS) Alt. Sue Salvesson Dave Hanson (PSMFC) Denby Lloyd (ADFG) Alt. Dave Bedford Roy Hyder (ODFW) Bill Tweit (WDFW)
<u>Status:</u> Meet as necessary	
Staff: Chris Oliver/Dave Witherell/Gail Bendixen	

**Bering Sea Crab Advisory Committee**

Appointed 4/25/07	Sam Cotten (Chair)	Lenny Herzog
Revised 11/15/07	Jerry Bongen	Kevin Kaldestad
	Steve Branson	Frank Kelty
	Florence Colburn	John Moller
	Linda Freed	Rob Rogers
	Dave Hambleton	Simeon Swetzof
	Phil Hanson	Ernest Weiss
Staff: Mark Fina	Tim Henkel	

# NPFMC Committees & Workgroups

(Revised December 3, 2009)

## BS/AI Pacific Cod Split Committee

<b>Pending appointment</b>
Staff: Nicole Kimball

## Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch Workgroup

Appointed: 3/07  Staff: Diana Stram	Stephanie Madsen (Co-chair) Eric Olson (Co-chair) Becca Robbins Gisclair John Gruver Karl Haflinger	Jennifer Hooper Paul Peyton Mike Smith Vincent Webster (BOF)
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## Comprehensive Economic Data Collection Committee

Appointed: 12/07 Updated: 2/9/09  Staff: Jeannie Heltzel	John Henderschedt (Chair) Bruce Berg Michael Catsi Dave Colpo Paula Cullenberg	Brett Reasor Ed Richardson Mike Szymanski Gale Vick
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## Crab Interim Action Committee

[Required under BSAI Crab FMP]

Doug Mecum, NMFS Denby Lloyd, ADF&G Jeff Koenings, WDF
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## Ecosystem Committee

Updated: 10/22/07  <u>Status</u> : Active  Staff: Diana Evans	Stephanie Madsen (Chair) Jim Ayers Dave Benton Doug DeMaster/Bill Karp Dave Fluharty John Iani Jon Kurland Caleb Pungowiyi
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# NPFMC Committees & Workgroups

(Revised December 3, 2009)

## Enforcement Committee

Updated: 7/03	Roy Hyder (Chair) LCDR Lisa Ragone, USCG Major Steve Bear, AK F&W Protection Martin Loefflad, NMFS Herman Savikko, ADF&G Lisa Lindeman/Garland Walker, NOAA-GC Sherrie Meyers/Ken Hansen, NMFS-Enforcement Sue Salvesson, NMFS
<u>Status</u> : Active	
Staff: Jon McCracken	

## Fur Seal Committee

Updated: 8/10/07	David Benson (Chair) Larry Cotter Aquilina Lestenkof Paul MacGregor Heather McCarty Anthony Mercurief
<u>Status</u> : Active	
Staff: Bill Wilson	

## GOA Groundfish Rationalization Community Committee

Appointed: 11/04	Hazel Nelson (Chair) Julie Bonney Duncan Fields Chuck McCallum	Patrick Norman Joe Sullivan Chuck Totemoff Ernie Weiss
Staff: Nicole Kimball		

## Halibut Charter Stakeholder Committee

Appointed: 1/06 Revised: 11/5/07 <u>Status</u> : Idle, pending direction	Dave Hanson (Chair) Seth Bone Robert Candopoulos Ricky Gease John Goodhand Kathy Hansen Dan Hull	Chuck McCallum Larry McQuarrie Rex Murphy Peggy Parker Charles "Chaco" Pearman Greg Sutter
Staff: Jane DiCosimo		

## IFQ Implementation Committee

Reconstituted: 7/31/03 Updated: 11/09	Dan Hull (Chair) Bob Alverson Julianne Curry Tim Henkel Dennis Hicks Don Iverson	Jeff Kauffman Don Lane Kris Norosz Paul Peyton
Staff: Jane DiCosimo		

**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(Revised December 3, 2009)

**Non-Target Species Committee**

Appointed: 7/03 Updated: 8/10/07  Staff: Jane DiCosimo, NPFMC/ Olav Ormseth, AFSC	Dave Benson (Chair) Julie Bonney John Gauvin Ken Goldman Karl Haflinger Simon Kinneen	Michelle Ridgway Janet Smoker Paul Spencer Lori Swanson Jon Warrenchuk
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**Observer Advisory Committee**

Reconstituted: 6/09 Updated: 7/09 <u>Status</u> : Active  Staff: Chris Oliver/ Nicole Kimball	Denby Lloyd (co-Chair) Bill Tweit (co-Chair) Bob Alverson Christian Asay Jerry Bongen Julie Bonney Kenny Down Matt Hegge	Michael Lake Todd Loomis Paul MacGregor Tracey Mayhew Brent Paine Theresa Peterson Kathy Robinson Ann Vanderhoeven
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**Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee**

Appointed: 2/07  Staff: Diana Stram	Steve Minor (Chair) Keith Colburn Lance Farr Phil Hanson Kevin Kaldestad Garry Loncon Garry Painter	Rob Rogers Vic Sheibert Gary Stewart Tom Suryan Arni Thomson, Secretary (non-voting)
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**Rural Outreach Committee**

Appointed: 6/09  Staff: Nicole Kimball	Eric Olson (Chair) Paula Cullenberg Duncan Fields Jennifer Hooper Tom Okleasik Ole Olsen Pete Probasco
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# NPFMC Committees & Workgroups

(Revised December 3, 2009)

## Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee

Appointed: 2/01 Updated: 11/09  [formerly SSL RPA Committee; renamed February 2002]  Staff: Bill Wilson Advisor: Dan Hennen	Larry Cotter (Chair) Jerry Bongen Julie Bonney Kenny Down John Gauvin Pat Hardina Sue Hills Frank Kelty	Steve MacLean Stephanie Madsen Max Malavansky, Jr Gerry Merrigan Mel Morris Art Nelson Glenn Reed Beth Stewart
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## VMS Committee

Appointed: 6/02  <u>Status</u> : Idle, pending direction  Staff: Jane DiCosimo	Roy Hyder (Chair) Al Burch Guy Holt Ed Page LCDR Lisa Ragone Lori Swanson
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# Groundfish Workplan

Priority actions revised in February 2007, status updated to current

General Priority (in no particular order)	Specific priority actions	Related to management objective:	Status (updated 12-1-09)	2009					2010					2011						
				Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Oct	Dec	
<b>Prevent Overfishing</b>	a. continue to develop management strategies that ensure sustainable yields of target species and minimize impacts on populations of incidentally-caught species	5	Aggregate ABC/OFL for GOA 'other species' in Apr 08 BSAI skates TAC breakout in Oct 2009 remaining other species mgmt addressed under ACLs; review alts in Dec 09	█	█	█														
	b. evaluate effectiveness of setting ABC levels using Tier 5 and 6 approaches, for rockfish and other species	4	AFSC responding to CIE reviews as part of harvest specifications process																	
	c. continue to develop a systematic approach to lumping and splitting that takes into account both biological and management considerations	5	BSAI Pcod split discussion in Apr 10 report from non-target species committee in Dec 09	█		█														
<b>Preserve Food Web</b>	a. encourage and participate in development of key ecosystem indicators	10	ecosystem SAFE presented annually; AI FEP identified/refined indicators for the Aleutians	█						█									█	
	b. Reconcile procedures to account for uncertainty and ecosystem considerations in establishing harvest limits, for rockfish and other species	11	report from non-target species committee in Dec 09	█																
	c. develop pilot Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the AI	13	FEP brochure published Dec 07 FEP team meeting in Jan 2010	█	█	█														
<b>Manage Incidental Catch and Reduce Bycatch and Waste</b>	a. explore incentive-based bycatch reduction programs in GOA and BSAI fisheries	15	partially addressed in BSAI salmon bycatch EIS																	
	b. explore mortality rate-based approaches to setting PSC limits in GOA and BSAI fisheries	20	partially addressed in BSAI salmon bycatch EIS																	
	c. consider new management strategies to reduce incidental rockfish bycatch and discards	17																		
	d. develop statistically rigorous approaches to estimating bycatch in line with national initiatives	14, 19	National Bycatch Report update in Dec 07																	
	e. encourage research programs to evaluate population estimates for non-target species	16	Part of research priorities, adopted in June 2007																	
	f. develop incentive-based and appropriate biomass-based trigger limits and area closures for BSAI salmon bycatch reduction, as information becomes available	14, 15, 20	bycatch limit for Chinook adopted Apr 09; discussion paper on chum measures for Dec 09	█																
	g. assess impact of management measures on regulatory discards and consider measures to reduce where practicable	17	partially addressed by GOA arrowtooth MRA analysis (Council action Oct 07)																	



December 7, 2009 Anchorage, AK Hilton Hotel	February 8, 2010 Portland, OR Benson Hotel	April 6, 2010 Anchorage, AK Hilton Hotel
<p>Joint meeting with BOF: Dec 8</p> <p>Arrowtooth MRAs: <b>Data report</b> CQE Permits/Recency: <b>Data report</b> MPA Nomination Process: <b>Discuss &amp; action as necessary</b></p> <p>GOA P. cod sector split: <b>Final Action</b></p> <p>AI Processing Sideboards: <b>Initial Review</b></p> <p>Am 80 Cooperative Formation: <b>Initial Review</b></p> <p>CGOA Rockfish Program: <b>Refine Alternatives</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab Amendment package: <b>Refine alternatives</b> BSAI Crab WAG Emergency Rule: <b>Discussion paper</b></p> <p>BSAI Opilio&amp;Tanner Crab Rebuilding Plans: <b>Review Alts</b></p> <p>CQE Permits from Recency: <b>Report and action as nec.</b> Salmon Bycatch Data Collection: <b>Final Action</b> BS Chum Salmon Bycatch: <b>Report/refine alternatives</b> Rural Community Outreach Cttee: <b>Report</b></p> <p>Groundfish ACL Requirements: <b>Review Alternatives</b></p> <p>Bristol Bay Trawl Closure &amp; Walrus: <b>Discussion Paper</b> Heigermeister Is. Walrus protection: <b>Discussion Paper</b></p> <p>Halibut pre-sorting EFP: <b>Report</b> Halibut Charter Logbook: <b>Receive report (Council only)</b></p> <p>Groundfish Final Catch Specifications: <b>Approve</b></p> <p>EFH 5-Year Evaluation/HAPC Priorities: <b>Preliminary Review</b></p>	<p>H&amp;L Catch Accounting: <b>Discussion paper</b> IPHC Report AFA Coop Reports Catch Shares Task Force: <b>Report</b></p> <p>AI Processing Sideboards: <b>Final Action (T)</b> Am 80 Lost Vessel Replacement: <b>Initial Review (T)</b> Am 80 Cooperative Formation: <b>Final Action</b></p> <p>CGOA Rockfish Program: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Obs Program Implementation Plan: <b>Progress/ OAC Report</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab activities: <b>Action as necessary</b> BSAI Crab ROFR: <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Proposals: <b>Review &amp; action as necessary</b> CQE Program: <b>Review/Disc paper</b></p> <p>BS Chum Salmon Bycatch: <b>SSC review of analytical methods</b></p> <p>Groundfish ACL Requirements: <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>Crab and Scallop ACLs: <b>Action as necessary (T)</b> Crab Rebuilding Plans: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>AI FEP addendum: <b>Report and action as necessary (T)</b></p> <p>HAPC Criteria: <b>Review/Adopt</b></p>	<p>BS&amp;AI P.cod Split: <b>Discuss plan/action as necessary</b> GOA P.cod sideboards for crab vessels: <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>Am 80 Lost Vessel Replacement: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>CGOA Rockfish Program: <b>Initial Review</b></p> <p>Observer Program Implementation Plan: <b>Progress Report</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab activities: <b>Action as necessary</b> BSAI Crab ROFR: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>Economic Data Collection: <b>Disc paper (T)</b></p> <p>Northern BS Research Plan: <b>Review Progress</b></p> <p>Groundfish ACL Requirements: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>GOA Tanner Crab Bycatch: <b>Initial Review (T)</b> GOA Chinook Salmon Bycatch: <b>Discussion paper (T)</b></p> <p>Crab and Scallop ACLs: <b>Preliminary Review (T)</b> Crab Rebuilding Plans: <b>PT report; Preliminary Review (T)</b></p> <p>Scallop SAFE: <b>Plan Team Report</b> Scallop ACLs: <b>Preliminary Review (T)</b> EFH 5-Year Evaluation/HAPC Priorities: <b>Action as necessary</b></p>

AI - Aleutian Islands  
GOA - Gulf of Alaska  
SSL - Steller Sea Lion  
BOF - Board of Fisheries  
FEP - Fishery Ecosystem Plan  
CDQ - Community Development Quota  
VMS - Vessel Monitoring System  
EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit  
BiOp - Biological Opinion  
(T) Tentatively scheduled

TAC - Total Allowable Catch  
BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands  
IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota  
GHL - Guideline Harvest Level  
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement  
LLP - License Limitation Program  
SAFE - Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation  
MPA - Marine Protected Area  
ACL - Annual Catch Limit  
HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

**Future Meeting Dates and Locations**

February 8-, 2010 in Portland OR  
April 6-, 2010 in Anchorage (start on Tuesday)  
June 7 - , 2010 in Sitka  
Oct 4-, 2010 in Anchorage (Captain Cook)  
Dec 6- 2010 in Anchorage Hilton  
January 31-February 8, 2011-Seattle  
March 28-April 5, 2011-Anchorage  
June (TBA)  
September 26-, 2011 in Unalaska

# NPFMC/NMFS Action - updated 12/2/09

## Timeline

Action	Status	Staffing	2009		2010						
			November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	
Blue = Post Council Action, Rulemaking											
Chinook Salmon Bycatch	Preparation of Final EIS and regulations	NMFS 70% Council 30%									
Halibut Catch sharing plan	Preparation of final analytical documents and rulemaking package	NMFS 80% Council 20%									
LLP recency actions	Preparation of final analytical documents and rulemaking package	NMFS 80% Council 20%									
Recent Crab Rationalization program changes	Preparation of analytical documents and rulemaking package	NMFS 80% Council 20%									
Litigation workload	Ongoing	NMFS 90% Council 10%									
BSAI fixed gear parallel waters	Final action in June 2009, rulemaking to follow	NMFS 70% Council 30%									
Halibut Charter Moratorium	Final Rule	NMFS 100% Council 0%									
Permit fees in all fisheries	Preparation of final analytical documents and rulemaking package	NMFS 100% Council 0%									
BSAI skate amendment	Proposed and Final Rule	NMFS 100% Council 0%									
Hired Skipper 20% Rule	Final Rule	NMFS 100% Council 0%									
Bottom trawl sweeps	Preparation of final analytical documents and rulemaking package	NMFS 90% Council 10%									
Observer Reg. Package	Preparation of Final Rule	NMFS 90% Council 10%									
Remove inactive Halibut/Sablefish QS	Proposed and Final Rule	NMFS 100% Council 0%									







