

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver *Chris Oliver*  
Executive Director

DATE: May 31, 2006

SUBJECT: Staff Tasking

ESTIMATED TIME 2 HOURS
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**ACTION REQUIRED**

Review tasking and committees and provide direction.

**BACKGROUND**

The list of Council committees is attached as Item D-5(a). Item D-5(b) is the three meeting outlook, and Item D-5(c) and Item D-5(d) are the summary of current projects, timelines, and tasking. In April, the Council added one new project (BSAI crab vessel use caps) to the tasking list. The Council may wish to discuss tasking priorities to address previously tasked projects, as well as potential additions discussed at this meeting, given resources necessary to complete existing priority projects.

In 2004, the Council developed a workplan to bring groundfish management in line with its revised management policy (adopted as part of the PGSEIS). This workplan is reviewed by the Council at each meeting as part of the staff tasking agenda item, and is posted on the Council's website. The workplan, updated to reflect the current status of each item, and its relationship to the management objectives, is attached as Item D-5(e). The Council intends to discuss the management objectives and review priority actions in more detail during the October meeting.

**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(revised March 28, 2006)

Item D-5(a)  
JUNE 2006

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

Updated: 7/28/03	<u>Council</u>	<u>Board</u>
	Dave Benson	Mel Morris
Staff: Jane DiCosimo	Doug Hoedel	Art Nelson
	Eric Olson	(Vacant)

**Council Chairman and Executive Director Committee**

Appointed April 2005	<u>CFMC:</u>	<u>NPFMC:</u>
	C: Eugenio Pinerio	C: Stephanie Madsen
Staff: Chris Oliver	ED: Miguel Rolon	ED: Chris Oliver
	<u>GMFMC</u>	<u>PFMC:</u>
	C: Robin Riechers	C: Donald Hansen
	ED: Wayne Swingle	ED: Don McIsaac
	<u>MAFMC</u>	<u>SAFMC:</u>
	C: Ron Smith	C: Louis Daniel
	ED: Dan Furlong	ED: Robert Mahood
	<u>NEFMC</u>	<u>WPFMC:</u>
	C: Francis Blount	C: Frank McCoy
	ED: Paul Howard	ED: Kitty Simonds

**Council Executive Committee**

Updated: as needed	<b>Chair:</b> Stephanie Madsen
	Jim Balsiger/Sue Salveson
Staff: Chris Oliver	McKie Campbell
	Roy Hyder
	Jeff Koenings

**Crab Interim Action Committee**

[Required under BSAI Crab FMP]

Jim Balsiger, NMFS McKie Campbell, ADF&G Jeff Koenings, WDF
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**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(revised March 28, 2006)

**Ecosystem Committee**

Updated: January 2005	<b>Chair:</b> Stephanie Madsen Jim Ayers Jim Balsiger/Sue Salveson Dave Benton Doug DeMaster Dave Fluharty John Iani
<u>Status:</u> Active	
Staff: Chris Oliver/David Witherell/Diana Evans	

**Enforcement Committee**

Updated: July 2003	<b>Chair:</b> Roy Hyder Mike Cerne, USCG James Cockrell, F&W Protection Bill Karp, NMFS Earl Krygier, ADF&G Lisa Lindeman, NOAA - GC Jeff Passer, NMFS-Enforcement Sue Salveson, NMFS-Inseason Mgt
<u>Status:</u> Active	
Staff: Cathy Coon/Chris Oliver	

**Finance Committee**

Updated: 9/28/05	<b>Chair:</b> Stephanie Madsen Jim Balsiger/Sue Salveson McKie Campbell (ADF&G) Dave Hanson Roy Hyder Jeff Koenings (WDF) Gordon Kruse
<u>Status:</u> Meet as necessary	
Staff: Gail Bendixen/Chris Oliver	

**Fur Seal Committee**

Updated: 7/25/03	<b>Chair:</b> David Benson Larry Cotter Aquilina Lestenkof Paul MacGregor Anthony Merculief Steve Minor
<u>Status:</u> Active	
Staff: Bill Wilson	

**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(revised March 28, 2006)

**GOA Groundfish Rationalization Community Committee**

Appointed: November 2004	<b>Chair:</b> Hazel Nelson Julie Bonney Duncan Fields Chuck McCallum Patrick Norman Joe Sullivan Chuck Totemoff Ernie Weiss
Staff: Nicole Kimball	

**Halibut Charter Stakeholder Committee**

Appointed: January 2006	<b>Chair:</b> Dave Hanson Seth Bone Robert Candopoulos Ricky Gease John Goodhand Kathy Hansen Kelly Hepler	Dan Hull Joe Kyle Larry McQuarrie Rex Murphy Charles "Chaco" Pearman Greg Sutter
Staff: Jane DiCosimo		

**IFQ Implementation Committee**

<u>Status:</u> Reconstituted as shown (July 2003)	<b>Chair:</b> Jeff Stephan Bob Alverson Arne Fuglvog/Cora Crome Tim Henkel Dennis Hicks	Don Iverson Don Lane Gerry Merrigan Kris Norosz Paul Peyton
Staff: Jane DiCosimo		

**Non-Target Species Committee**

Updated: 8/6/04 Appointed: 7/26/03	<b>Chair:</b> Dave Benson Julie Bonney Ken Goldman Karl Haflinger Peggy Murphy	Michelle Ridgway Janet Smoker Paul Spencer Lori Swanson Dave Wood
Staff: Jane DiCosimo, NPFMC/ Sarah Gaichas, NMFS		

**Observer Advisory Committee**

Reconstituted: 1/31/06	<b>Chair:</b> Joe Kyle Bob Alverson Jerry Bongen Julie Bonney Rocky Caldero Paul MacGregor	Tracey Mayhew Brent Paine Peter Risse Kathy Robinson Susan Robinson Thorn Smith
<u>Status:</u> Active		
Staff: Chris Oliver/ Nicole Kimball		

**NPFMC Committees & Workgroups**  
(revised March 28, 2006)

**Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee**

Updated: 6/2/04  Staff: Diana Stram	<b>Chair:</b> Steve Minor Keith Colburn Lance Farr Phil Hanson Kevin Kaldestad Garry Loncon Gary Painter	Rob Rogers Vic Sheibert Clyde Sterling Gary Stewart Tom Suryan Arni Thomson, Secretary (non-voting)
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**Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee**

Appointed: 2/10/01 Updated: Jan 2006  [formerly SSL RPA Committee; renamed at Feb 02 meeting]  Staff: Bill Wilson	<b>Chair:</b> Larry Cotter Jerry Bongen Julie Bonney Sam Cotten Ed Dersham Kevin Duffy John Gauvin John Henderschedt	Sue Hills Frank Kely Terry Leitzell Dave Little Steve MacLean Max Malavansky, Jr Art Nelson
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**VMS Committee**

Appointed: 06/02  <u>Status:</u> Idle, pending direction  Staff: Cathy Coon	<b>Chair:</b> Earl Krygier Al Burch CDR Mike Cerne Guy Holt Bob Mikol	Ed Page Lori Swanson
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DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 5/31/06

June 5, 2006 Kodiak, Alaska	October 2, 2006 Dutch Harbor, Alaska	December 4, 2006 Anchorage, Alaska
<p>SSL Recovery Plan: <b>Review and Comment</b>                      ESA Consultation on FMPs: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Seabird Interactions with small vessels: <b>Receive Report</b>                      SSL Literature Compendium: <b>Receive Report</b></p> <p>Amendment 80: <b>Final Action; also data collection review</b></p> <p>Charter Halibut Management: <b>Committee Report and Moratorium Discussion</b></p> <p>MRA adjustments: <b>Initial review</b></p> <p>Observer Program: <b>Final Action; Review Discussion Paper on Video Monitoring</b></p> <p>BSAI Trawl CV Eligibility: <b>Discussion Paper and Direction</b></p> <p>Am 71: <b>Status Report</b></p> <p>GOA Rationalization: <b>1 day Public Hearing</b></p> <p>IFQ Omnibus 5 Amendments: <b>Final Action</b></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Review 2 Discussion Papers</b></p> <p>Crab Overfishing Definitions: <b>Model Review (SSC)</b>                      Crab Management: <b>Plan Team report</b></p> <p>Ecosystem Approaches: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Halibut Excluder EFP: <b>Review and comment</b></p> <p>Trawl Salmon Excluder EFP: <b>Progress Report</b></p>	<p>ESA Consultation on FMPs: <b>Review Draft BIOp (T)</b>                      Sea Otter BiOp: <b>Review and Comment</b>                      Seabird Interactions: <b>Review Discussion paper</b>                      Adak Pollock Fishery EFP: <b>Receive Report</b></p> <p>BSAI split for Pacific cod: <b>Preliminary review (T)</b></p> <p>Charter Halibut Management: <b>Initial Review of moratorium (T)</b>  <b>Permanent solution alternatives discussion paper (T)</b>  <i>Communities</i></p> <p>MRA adjustments: <b>Final Action (T)</b> <i>de</i></p> <p>Cost Recovery: Discussion Paper</p> <p>BSAI Trawl CV eligibility: <b>Initial review (T)</b> <i>g</i></p> <p>CDQ cost recovery program: <b>Initial Review (T)</b> <i>de</i>                      CDQ Am. 71: <b>Discussion paper (T)</b> <i>de</i></p> <p>Crab Vessel Use Caps: <b>Initial Review (T)</b> <i>mayhave</i></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Action as necessary</b> <i>do have Craig Rose in Feb.</i>  <i>assum we get data, Crab PT mtg.</i></p> <p>Other Species Breakout: <b>Review outline (SSC)</b></p> <p>GOA Dark rockfish: <b>Report/Update</b></p> <p>BSAI Crab SAFE Report: <b>Review and Approve</b>                      PGSEIS Workplan: <b>Review</b></p> <p>EIS for TACs: <b>Comment on draft EIS</b>                      Groundfish Specifications: <b>Adopt proposed specs for 07/08</b></p> <p>Ecosystem SAFE Report: <b>Review</b></p> <p>VIP Repeal: <b>Initial Review (T)</b> <i>lowfried</i></p> <p>Salmon Bycatch (B package): <b>Update and Direction</b></p> <p>VMS Requirements: <b>Initial Review</b></p>	<p>ESA Consultation on FMPs: <b>Review Draft BIOp (T)</b>  <b>Review SSLMC proposals (T)</b></p> <p>BOF AI pollock fishery: <b>Receive report</b></p> <p>BSAI split for Pacific cod: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Charter Halibut Management: <b>Final action on moratorium (T)</b>                      Halibut Separate Accountability: <b>Discuss/action as necessary</b>                      Halibut Subsistence Survey Report: <b>Review</b></p> <p>Observer Program: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>BSAI Trawl CV eligibility: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>CDQ cost recovery program: <b>Final Action (T)</b>                      CDQ Am. 71: <b>Initial Review (T)</b></p> <p>GOA Rationalization: <b>Review preliminary analysis and define alts.</b>                      Crab Vessel Use Caps: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>BS Habitat Conservation: <b>Action as necessary</b></p> <p>Other Species Breakout: <b>Preliminary Review (T)</b></p> <p>GOA Dark rockfish: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>                      Rockfish Management: <b>Action as necessary (T)</b></p> <p>EIS for TACs: Summary of <b>Comments</b>                      Groundfish Specifications: <b>Adopt final specs for 07/08</b></p> <p>VIP Repeal: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p> <p>VMS Requirements: <b>Final Action (T)</b></p>

TAC - Total Allowable Catch  
 BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands  
 IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota  
 GHl - Guideline Harvest Level  
 HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern  
 LLP - License Limitation Program  
 VIP - Vessel Incentive Program  
 PSC - Prohibited Species Catch

AI - Aleutian Islands  
 GOA - Gulf of Alaska  
 SSL - Steller Sea Lion  
 BOF - Board of Fisheries  
 FEP - Fishery Ecosystem Plan  
 CDQ - Community Development Quota  
 ESA - Endangered Species Act  
 (T) Tentatively scheduled

*Charter Detail Rpt on 5-fish limit issue*

**Future Meeting Dates and Locations**  
 February 5 - 13, 2007 in Portland  
 April 2 - 10, 2007 in Anchorage  
 June 4 - 12, 2007 in Sitka  
 October 1 - 9, 2007 in Anchorage  
 December 3 - 11, 2007 in Anchorage

Item D-5(b)  
 JUNE 2006

**Council Project Summary** Updated May 30, 2006

Projected Council/  
Weeks NMFS %

Council Projects			Comments
GOA Rationalization	?	70/30	Review Alts in Dec. (Mark,DianaE,DianaS,Nicole,Elaine,contractors,NMFS)
IR/IU flatfish adjustments (Am 79)	0	20/80	Approved. GRS set at 65% in 2008
IR/IU flatfish trailing amendments (Am 80)	4	80/20	Final Action in June (Jon /Mark/ contract help)
Halibut Charter IFQ/Moratorium	?	90/10	Stakeholder committee recommendations in June (Jane/NMFS)
Halibut Charter GHL Measures	2	50/50	Being prepared for Secretarial review (Jane/contractor/NMFS)
Break out other species category into TAC groups	6	60/40	Preliminary Review in December (T) (Jane/NMFS)
Non-target (other rockfish, other flatfish, other species) developmen	?	60/40	Ongoing committee discussions (Jane/NMFS).
Rockfish management	?	60/40	Discuss in December (Jane/NMFS).
Observer Program (fee and deployment mechanism)	2	80/20	Final action in June (Nicole/Chris)
Aleutian Islands Special Management Area	10	90/10	Ecosystem Committee recommendation in June (Diana E.)
BSAI Crab Arbitration Timing (Am 21)	0	50/50	Proposed rule comments thru May 30 (Mark/NMFS)
BSAI Pacific cod Allocations (Am 85)	2	90/10	Being Prepared for Secretarial Review (Nicole/NMFS)

VMS Requirements	16	10/90	Initial Review in Oct (NMFS/Cathy)
BSAI Salmon Bycatch (Package A)	0	80/20	Being prepared for Secretarial Review (DianaS/NMFS)
BSAI Salmon Bycatch (Package B)	10	70/30	Discuss in Oct. (Diana S./other)
GOA Dark Rockfish	4	90/10	Initial Review in December (Diana S./NMFS)
Bering Sea <i>C. bairdi</i> split (Am 20)	0	90/10	Proposed rule comments thru May 5 (Mark/NMFS)
IFQ Omnibus 5 Package	4	90/10	Final Action in June (Jane/Jim/NMFS)
SR/RE retention	4	80/20	Not started.
Repeal of VIP	2	0/100	Initial Review in October (T) (NMFS)
Opilio VIP	2	50/50	Not started - Pending action on existing VIP
GOA Salmon and Crab Bycatch Controls	12	80/20	Review data at future meeting (Diana S./Cathy/Elaine/ADF&G)
Catch/bycatch disclosure (vessel level)	2	70/30	Discussion paper - Postponed

GOA Rockfish Demonstration Program	1	10/90	Being prepared for Secretarial Review (Mark/NMFS)
Groundfish overfishing definitions	?	10/90	On hold pending EIS for NS 1 (NMFS HQ)
Halibut subsistence III amendment	1	90/10	Being prepared for Secretarial Review (Jane/Jim/NMFS)
Crab Overfishing definition revision	?	10/90	SSC model review in June (NMFS/ADF&G/Diana S)
CDQ eligible communities	0	20/80	Being prepared for Secretarial Review (Nicole)
CDQ Cost-Recovery	?	10/90	Initial Review in October (T) (NMFS/Nicole)
CDQ Amendment 71	?	50/50	Review alternatives in October (Nicole/NMFS)
CDQ: Management of CDQ Reserves	1	10/90	Being prepared for Secretarial Review (NMFS/Nicole)
Bering Sea habitat conservation	8	50/50	Discussion papers in June (NMFS/Cathy/DianaS)
Ecosystem-based Management	?	90/10	Ecosystem Forum for AI (Diana E)
MRA enforcement for non-AFA trawl section	?	10/90	Initial Review in June (NMFS)
BSAI Trawl CV Eligibility	8	90/10	Discussion paper in June (Jim/Mark/Elaine/NMFS)
Pacific cod BS and AI split	8	90/10	Discussion paper in October (Jon/Nicole/NMFS)
BSAI Crab Vessel Use Caps	8	90/10	Initial Review in October (Mark/NMFS)

#### Protected Species Issues

ESA-listed Salmon Consultation on FMPs	2	20/80	In progress (NMFS/Bill/DianaS)
Right Whale CH	?	90/10	Final rule in June (NMFS/Bill)
ESA Consultation on FMPs	12	90/10	SSL Mitigation Committee developing changes (NMFS/Bill)
SSL Research Summary	1	90/10	SSL compendium completed (Contractors/Bill)
Marine Mammal permits EIS	2	10/90	Permits vacated by judge 5/26 until EIS done (NMFS/Bill)
Seabird interactions/Cook Inlet belugas/Fur Seal Conservation Plan	8	50/50	Comments etc. (Bill/NMFS)
SSL Recovery Plan	2	10/90	Draft recovery plan for review in June (NMFS/Bill)



<b>Project timeline and major tasking for council staff. Updated 5/31/06</b>							
<b>Analytical Staff</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>December</b>
<b>Mark Fina, Sr. Economist</b> GOA Rationalization BSAI crab: vessel use caps Miscellaneous Oversight					Initial Review (T)		Final Action (T)
<b>Jon McCracken, Economist</b> Am. 80 IRIU (lead) P.cod BS and AI split (lead) Misc. economic assistance	Final Action				Discussion paper		
<b>Jim Richardson, Economist</b> GOA Rationalization (assist) IFQ omnibus 5 (assist) BSAI Trawl CV eligibility	Final Action Discussion				Initial Review (T)		Final Action (T)
<b>Elaine Dinneford, Fishery Analyst</b> Data Support (all projects) EcoSAFE, GOA bycatch AKFIN Liaison							
<b>Jane DiCosimo, Sr. Plan Coord</b> IFQ Omnibus 5 Package Rockfish Management Other species/non-target Halibut Charter Issues	Final Action   Report			BSAI PT 9/19-22	Discuss Initial Review (T)	BSAI PT 11/13-17	Discuss Prelim Review (T) Final Action (T)
<b>Diana Stram, Plan Coordinator</b> GOA Salmon/Crab Bycatch (Lead) BSAI Salmon bycatch (Lead) Scallop Issues Crab Management GOA dark rockfish		On leave thru 9/8			Discuss  Crab PT 9/13-15 GOA PT 9/19-22	Report	GOA PT 11/13-17 Initial Review (T)
<b>Bill Wilson, Protect Species</b> Marine Mammal issues Seabird Bycatch FMP Consultation	Reports Report SSLMC 6/26-30		SSLMC	SSLMC	Discuss	SSLMC	
<b>Diana Evans, NEPA Specialist</b> GOA Rationalization NEPA Lead EAM and AI FEP NEPA assistance	Report Workplan review				Review FEP (T)		
<b>Cathy Coon, Fishery Analyst</b> GOA Salmon/Crab Bycatch (assist) BSAI Salmon bycatch (assist) Being Sea EFH (lead)		Discussion					
<b>Nicole Kimball, Fishery Analyst</b> CDQ Projects (lead) Observer Program (lead) GOA Rationalization (community)		Final Action (T)			Discussion paper		Initial Review 71 (T) Discussion paper

General Priority (in no particular order of importance)	Specific priority actions	Related to management objective:	Status (updated 5-30-06)	2006			2007				
				Jun	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Oct	Dec
Protection of Habitat	a. complete EFH action as scheduled	27	Amendment approved by Council								
	b. recommend to NOAA Fisheries increased mapping of benthic environment	29	part of Council's research priorities, approved in April 06								
	c. develop and adopt definitions of MPAs, marine reserves, etc.	30	Marine Fisheries Review paper in press								
	d. review all existing closures to see if these areas qualify for MPAs under established criteria	30	Marine Fisheries Review paper in press								
	e. evaluate effectiveness of existing closures	26	Marine Fisheries Review paper in press								
Bycatch Reduction	a. complete rationalization of GOA fisheries	17 (32)	rockfish demonstration program approved; analysis ongoing for broader rationalization	█	█	█					
	b. complete rationalization of BSAI non-pollock fisheries	17 (32)	partially addressed through IRIU Amd 80 (final action Jun 06); also Pacific cod sector allocations (approved)	█							
	c. explore incentive-based bycatch reduction programs	15	partially to be addressed through GOA rationalization and BSAI salmon vessel bycatch accountability analyses								
	d. explore mortality rate-based approach to setting PSC limits	20									
	e. consider new management strategies to reduce incidental rockfish bycatch and discards	17	revised ranking system for species of concern		█						
Protection of Steller Sea Lions	a. continue to participate in development of mitigation measures to protect SSL including development of an EIS and participation in the ESA jeopardy consultation process	23	consider revisions to SSL management measures in 2006-07	█	█	█	█	█	█		
	b. recommend to NOAA Fisheries and participate in reconsideration of SSL critical habitat	23	NMFS requested to re-initiate FMP-level Section 7 consultation on DoC species	█	█	█	█	█	█		
Prevent Overfishing	a. continue to participate in the development of "lumping and splitting" criteria	5	GOA 'other species' amd approved; 'other species' breakout analysis initiated		█	█					
	b. consider new harvest strategies for rockfish	4	MSE of rockfish harvest strategy		█						
	c. set TAC at or < ABC	1	Amendment approved by Council								
Ecosystem Management	a. revisit calculation of OY caps	11, 4	research paper presented to SSC in Feb 05								
	b. recommend to NOAA Fisheries and participate in the development and implementation of ecosystem indicators as part of stock assessment process	10	development ongoing; ecosystem SAFE to be presented each year; PICES workshop to develop indicators for the BS (Jun 06)	█	█					█	
Improve Data Quality and Management	a. expand or modify observer coverage and sampling methods based on scientific data and compliance needs	38, 39	analysis reviews alternatives; final action scheduled for Jun 06	█							
	b. develop programs for economic data collection that aggregate data	40	partially addressed through GOA rationalization								
	c. modify VMS to incorporate new technology and system providers	41	global VMS analysis initial review in Jun 06	█							

**HALIBUT AND SABLEFISH IFQ PROGRAM  
AMENDMENT PROPOSAL  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Fax: (907) 271-2817**

Name of Proposer: *MICHAEL DOUVILLE* Date: *3/31/06*  
Address: *PO BOX 68 CRAIG, AK 99921*  
Telephone: *907 826 5407* EMAIL: *MYRNAMIKE@HOTMAIL.COM*

Brief Statement of Proposal:

To allow for the use of pots in the Gulf of Alaska southeast sablefish/blackcod fishery.

Objectives of Proposal (What is the problem?):

Provide fishermen an alternative type of gear to longline.

Need and Justification for Council Action (Why can't the problem be resolved through other channels?):

This proposal can address several problems which the Council is working on:

- a) sea bird by-catch
- b) interaction with whales

Foreseeable Impacts of Proposal (Who wins, who loses?):

There will be no negative impact on anyone. As an allowable gear type, fishermen could chose to use pots, but would not be required to invest, if they are happy with long line gear.

However, the use of pots could lead to a decline in bird by-catch, including albatross, and a decrease in fishing gear/whale activity. By catch of rock fish would also be reduced, less bait and man hours to catch the same amount of fish

Are there Alternative Solutions? If so, what are they and why do you consider your proposal the best way of solving the problem?

It is an excellent solution, because it provides a gear alternate opportunity for fishermen, and can lead to reductions in by-catch or unwanted marine mammal interaction.

The use of bird deterrent lines are cumbersome and unnecessary for many areas in Southeast Alaska. Research has demonstrated that whales will continue to take fish from longline gear.

Supportive Data and Other Information (What data are available and where can they be found?):

List of supportive data will follow

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

MICHAEL DOUVILLE  
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# Alaska Marine Conservation Council

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May 30, 2006

Stephanie Madsen, Chair  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
605 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99510

RECEIVED

MAY 9 2006

N.P.F.M.C.

## Re: Agenda Item D-5 – Staff Tasking

Dear Ms. Madsen,

In 2004 the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (the Council) adopted rockfish conservation as a priority for action in the Programmatic Groundfish EIS. AMCC appreciates this effort because rockfish need careful conservation attention to ensure their populations remain strong and resilient. Rockfish are long-lived, reproduce slowly and episodically, exhibit fidelity to localized habitats and have complex population structures. For these reasons, they are vulnerable to localized depletion and potentially overfishing. Recent research findings reinforce the basis for investing in greater rockfish conservation. To address these concerns and in support of the Council's rockfish priority established in the Programmatic EIS and the Council's commitment to building on its conservation record, AMCC recommends a specific course of action to establish rockfish refugia in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.

AMCC's proposal advances an approach that:

- Greatly reduces pressure on selected rockfish species to prevent overfishing or localized depletion by minimizing bycatch
- Focuses on three species: rougheye, shortraker and northern rockfish (perhaps there are others that rockfish scientists would recommend)
- Addresses all gear types that encounter significant rockfish bycatch
- Uses best available information
- Stimulates adaptive management as it leads to improved data collection from which to inform better management

The Council has adopted a series of management measures over a number of years to improve rockfish conservation. These include:

- Splitting rockfish management complexes to smaller assemblages or individual species (other red rockfish split apart to finer species management)
- Subdividing the ABC and OFL for Pacific Ocean perch into eastern, central and western in the Gulf and areas 541, 542, 543 in the Aleutians to distribute harvest relative to distribution (even without substantial data indicating that sub-stock structure existed in this population)

- Reducing MRA's for rockfish to prevent targeting and ballast fisheries from burgeoning
- Improvement in observer training to identify rockfish species at sea; especially distinguishing shorttraker from rougheye

After finalizing the Programmatic EIS, the Council called for a review of harvest rates, bycatch reduction and refugia as strategies for meeting the programmatic goals and objectives to minimize bycatch and prevent overfishing. The Council also requested a review of spatial and temporal bycatch information. Council staff coalesced pertinent retrospective information on rockfish biology and management and the Non-Target Committee has discussed rockfish in the context of the "species of concern" process now in progress for all non-target species.

Stock assessment biologists have recommended assigning separate catch limits for some species by area and sub-areas in the Bering Sea and Aleutians (most recently for rougheye rockfish based on genetic information). Scientists at the Alaska Fishery Science Center have presented rockfish research plans and the observer program has refined protocols to account for catch more accurately. Most recently, NMFS requested a peer review of rockfish assessments from the Center for Independent Experts.

As follow up to the Programmatic EIS, AMCC provided the Council with letters, testimony and a report (Conservation of North Pacific Rockfishes) recommending that action be taken to address some specific conservation needs. In 2005 AMCC and Ecotrust conducted a GIS assessment to identify areas of persistent rockfish bycatch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. In February 2006 we presented the assessment to over 60 scientists, fishing industry and conservation groups for discussion and comments.

Clearly there has been a great deal of thinking about rockfish and certain management improvements have been made for their conservation. Continued action is needed now to establish more refined spatial management of sensitive rockfish species in a way that fosters their reproductive success today and over time.

Please review the attached proposal for rockfish refugia and report from the AMCC/Ecotrust GIS presentation in February 2006.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Childers  
Program Director

Attachments:

- Proposal to Establish Rockfish Refugia in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
- Rockfish Bycatch: Spatial Analysis Using Observer Data in the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea – Report from Presentation & Discussion, Feb. 2006.

**Proposal to  
Establish Rockfish Refugia in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands**

**May 2006**

**Background**

Rockfish species are long-lived, have complex population structures, reproduce slowly and exhibit fidelity to localized habitats. Recent scientific studies show that some species (e.g. rougheye, shortraker and Pacific Ocean Perch) have genetically isolated populations with ranges that do not coincide with existing management boundaries. Managing some species across the combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands areas results in harvest levels that are disproportionate to actual distribution of the fish. This can result in overfishing inside a region or sub-area without exceeding the overfishing level for the broader management area. Because of these unique characteristics and current management practices, rockfish populations may be susceptible to age truncation (decline in large older year classes), localized depletions or overfishing.

A solution for certain species recommended by stock assessment authors or discussed by the SSC has been to apportion separate catch levels for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. The Council has not adopted this approach in most cases because NOAA Fisheries warns that managing small amounts of rockfish catch would potentially shut down large volume fisheries for commercially valuable species. However, the need for more refined spatial management to prevent over-harvesting of rockfish to unsustainable levels increases with each passing year.

**Purpose of Rockfish Refugia**

The purpose of rockfish refugia is to foster the reproductive success of sensitive species.

In the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands rockfish are managed as non-target species. Discard rates range from 13-95% depending on the species and gear type. (See Table 1.)

Since rockfish are non-target species and fleets targeting other groundfish are discarding significant amounts of rockfish, reducing incidental rockfish catch is a tool to relieve pressure on their populations. Refugia guard against potential overfishing by providing some discrete and strategically placed protection.

**Criteria to Apply to Rockfish Refugia**

Rockfish refugia would be designed:

- To address all relevant fishing gears
- To focus sites on the overlap between more than one rockfish species
- To prevent shifting of fishing effort for directed species into low productive grounds
- To gain more information about rockfish over time
- With criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of refugia through monitoring and management evaluation

(over)

Identifying sites where rockfish are regularly encountered is a starting point for designing appropriate refugia. There are other data, including industry data, that should be used to further inform decisions about where to site refugia to achieve the multiple design criteria above. Spatial data that would be useful in selecting refugia sites include:

- Distribution of incidental rockfish catch (to identify persistent areas where non-target rockfish are encountered)
- Distribution of target catch where rockfish are not encountered
- Distribution of total catch and rates of rockfish catch (to identify how rockfish catch relates to areas important for target catch)
- Rockfish surveys
- Rockfish catch by depth
- Rockfish catch by time of day (to account for diel activity)
- Genetic separation maps (e.g. rougheye)
- Overlapping distributions of rockfish species (to identify locations that would benefit more than one species at the same time)
- Essential fish habitat maps
- Physical and oceanographic features associated with priority rockfish species

#### Recommendation for Bering Sea & Aleutian Islands

- Focus refugia to reduce catch of specified rockfish species. We recommend rougheye, shortraker and northern but there may be other species that merit consideration.
- Initiate a spatial analysis that combines a variety of useful data sources (as suggested above) to fine tune possible sites in a manner that builds in substantial conservation benefits with the least disruption to target fisheries.

**Table 1.** Harvested, retained & discarded rockfish in 2003 (northern and shortraker/rougheye only).

Rockfish species	Sector	Harvested (mt)	Retained (mt)	Discarded (mt)	Discard Rate	Discard (lbs)
Northern	Trawl CP	4,563	194	4,369		
	Trawl CV	53	6	46		
	<b>Total trawl</b>	4,616	200	4,415	95.6%	9,733,000
	Longline CP	23	1	23		
	Longline CV	0	0	0		
	<b>Total longline</b>	23	1	23	96.8%	50,000
	<b>Total all gears</b>		4,639	201	4,438	95.6%
Shortraker/ Rougheye	Trawl CP	164	141	22		
	Trawl CV	2	1	0		
	<b>Total trawl</b>	166	142	22	13.2%	49,000
	Longline CP	87	40	47		
	Longline CV	2	2	0		
	<b>Total longline</b>	89	42	47	52.8%	103,000
	<b>Total all gears</b>		255	184	69	27%

Rockfish Bycatch:  
Spatial Analysis Using Observer Data in the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea

Report from a Public Presentation and Discussion  
Sponsored by Alaska Marine Conservation Council and Ecotrust

February 6, 2006  
Doubletree Hotel  
SeaTac, WA

### Introduction

In 2005 Alaska Marine Conservation Council (AMCC) and Ecotrust initiated a GIS assessment of persistent areas of incidental rockfish catch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI). The report is entitled: Rockfish Bycatch: Spatial Analysis Using Observer Data in the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea<sup>1</sup>. The objective is to inform decisions regarding rockfish management, bycatch reduction and related considerations with spatially explicit information.

On February 6, 2006, AMCC and Ecotrust presented the GIS assessment to fishery managers, scientists and interested members of the fishing industry and conservation organizations. It was presented as a work in-progress. The purpose of the presentation was to:

- Review and facilitate discussion about the analysis and its methodology;
- Focus on refinements to the study for further analyses; and
- Promote exchange of thoughts, information and future dialogue on spatial management of rockfish in the BSAI region.

Although the full GIS assessment included seven rockfish species (northern, rougheye, shortraker, sharpchin, shortspine thornyhead, dusky, and dark rockfish), the presentation looked at northern rockfish as an example to show the methodology used for each of the species. Following the presentation, participants weighed in on the factors they felt influence catch, distribution of fishing effort and catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of non-target rockfish. They commented on ways to interpret and use catch statistics and offered historic perspective on commercial fisheries for rockfish in the BSAI.

### Summary of Methods

The GIS assessment used North Pacific groundfish observer data<sup>2</sup> to identify locations of incidental rockfish catch within 10 by 10 km blocks. The blocks were scored to further identify locations of persistent rockfish bycatch. A definition of consistent catch (kg/hr/yr) from a preliminary study of localized depletion of light dusky rockfish provided a template for this analysis<sup>3</sup>. Areas of persistent rockfish bycatch in the analysis presented for

<sup>1</sup> Please see: <http://pearl.ecotrust.org/~charless/Amcc/>

<sup>2</sup> Non-confidential data provided by Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Resource Ecology and Fisheries Management Division, North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program, July 14, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Reuter R.F., and P.D. Spencer. 2003. 2003 BSAI Other Rockfish In: Stock assessment and fishery evaluation report for the groundfish resources in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands as projected for 2003. November 2003. Pages 681-710. North Pacific Fishery Management Council.



discussion were defined using threshold values of an adjusted abundance score. This score is a function of the annual variation in CPUE, the number of times a block of area was observed and the frequency of catch of a species in that block. The method is more general than used to assess Essential Fish Habitat<sup>4</sup> due to data confidentiality that prevents presentation and public analysis of catch by more specific area. The methods for all species of rockfish analyzed were explained by presenting maps, tables and graphs of sequential steps used to develop the adjusted abundance by block for northern rockfish.

Observed blocks were scored according to the number of years northern rockfish were observed caught in the block and these scored blocks were mapped to examine frequency of observed catch. In this case, the higher the score, the more years a rockfish species was observed caught. Blocks were scored again according to the number of years that any trawl or longline effort (hauls or sets) in the block were observed and these blocks were mapped to show areas of consistent observation. The higher the score, the more years observed effort. A ratio of the catch score to the effort score was used as an index of frequency of observed northern rockfish catch for a block. A block ratio of one means rockfish were only caught in observed haul/sets. A block ratio less than one means the block had more years observed than years rockfish were caught. The ratio value was colored coded and mapped to demonstrate a high frequency of ratio's of one. This means the measure gives the same weight to a block for each year counted independent of whether one rockfish was caught in one observed haul or set or some large biomass of rockfish was caught consistently every year. Therefore, annual scoring was refined to include CPUE.

A series of steps were described to define annual adjusted abundance for a block that incorporates both frequency of a species' observed catch and CPUE. A block's annual catch equaled total trawl or longline catch of a rockfish species by year in metric tons. Total catch is the sum of the observed catch and the estimated catch from a federal catch report and the observed catch rate. A block's total effort by year included all trawl hauls or longline sets independent of species. Annual block CPUE was sorted in descending order and partitioned into quantiles that were assigned abundance scores to group blocks with similar CPUE characteristics. The larger the abundance score, the higher the CPUE. Non-zero abundance scores were then averaged across all years for each block to calculate abundance score averages. Last, this average was multiplied by the ratio of catch score to effort score for each block over all years with the product being a score of the adjusted abundance.

To examine the relative significance of each block in terms of persistent catch by gear type and regional area the adjusted abundance scores were sorted and ranked. The higher the adjusted abundance score rank, the more persistent the catch of a species was in a block. Ranked adjusted abundance scores for blocks were plotted according to corresponding cumulative catch of northern rockfish and associated cumulative total effort. Steepness of the curve demonstrates whether a small or large number of blocks account for persistent catch and flattening of the curve indicates marginal catch per block. To examine this on a spatial scale for all years analyzed, the magnitude of total catch of

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<sup>4</sup> Fritz, W. W., A. Greig, and R.F. Reuter. 1998. Catch-per-unit-effort, length, and depth distributions of major groundfish and bycatch species in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska regions based on groundfish fishery observer data. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-AFSC-88, 179 p.

northern rockfish by block was color coded, mapped and presented by gear type by region for blocks with high adjusted abundance scores representing 20% of the species' cumulative catch. The same maps were produced for decreasing threshold values of adjusted abundance scores corresponding to 40, 60 and 80% of the total northern rockfish catch. Each map shown included superimposed pie charts scaled to represent magnitude of total northern rockfish catch for a block and percent of that catch associated with each probable target fishery.

The highest ranked blocks, where 20% of each of the eight species of rockfish analyzed was caught in the Aleutian Islands, were combined over years to locate areas of persistent rockfish catch. The 20% blocks in the Aleutian Islands were overlaid on the Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area (HCA), an extensive bottom trawl closure area adopted by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council in 2005. It was noted that a majority of the area with high CPUE and persistent rockfish catch occurs in blocks that are not part of the HCA.

Please also refer to the GIS assessment itself for further explanation of the methodology and maps.

### Discussion

The areas of persistent rockfish catch identified in this analysis provides a starting point for informal discussion on how to conduct spatial analysis of commercial catch data in a way that is useful for developing rockfish management measures. Discussion proceeded along three main topics: data limitations, data variables that need analysis, and regional factors influencing bycatch.

#### Data limitations:

- Observer information available for the GIS assessment was limited due to data confidentiality. Specifically, data for a 10x10 km block were excluded when less than three vessels caught the same target species per year.
- The available data include information on catch location necessary for GIS analysis, but excluded revenue associated with target species catch by area.
- More detailed information would be integral for weighing economic costs and benefits of alternative management strategies such as refugia.
- Data analyzed do not include depth of target fishing effort because detail on locations is lost when data is aggregated over 10x10 km blocks. Depth was considered important for mapping distribution of specific fishery effort over time.
- There was discussion about whether survey information would be suitable for the analysis. Survey data would lend itself well to this GIS approach but there are certain limitations of this data set. It was acknowledged that surveys usually occur in summer months; gear configuration results in catch of smaller sized fish than commercial gear; survey stations are limited in the Aleutian Islands. The multidisciplinary objectives of surveys that cover large geographic regions would not necessarily be suited for

spatial analysis of bycatch.

Data variables and regional factors influencing bycatch:

(A number of variables that influence the catch of target and bycatch species were discussed, chief among them were components of time.)

- Time of the day a haul or set occurs may affect magnitude and composition of catch due to diel activity.
- Timing of area closures and fishery opening and closing dates may introduce seasonal or within year components to areas where fishing fleets concentrate effort.
- Patterns and trends in the distribution of fishing effort over years may also be a function of fishing down of either a target or incidentally caught species.
- The sequence of years a species is caught in a specific block could be influenced by effort distribution over time and not necessarily an important location for rockfish.
- A number of factors influence annual fleet distribution, however the distribution of many rockfish species are localized and patchy.
- Significant regulation changes have led to new fishing strategies that contribute to changes in the patterns of catch. These variables are not explained by looking at observer data alone, but play a role in understanding the distribution of effort that can influence observed CPUE. For example, in 1997, the National Marine Fisheries Service prohibited targeted fishing for northern rockfish in the Aleutian Islands. Discussion of historic harvest by Japanese and Russian fleets was also noted for having changed the distribution and abundance of rockfish.
- It was suggested that the GIS assessment delineating high adjusted abundance blocks relative to depth of catch and times of year fished.
- The GIS assessment points out that the new Habitat Conservation Area in the Aleutians (EFH) will have negligible impact on reducing rockfish bycatch because the area open to the trawl fishery encompasses virtually all the locations where rockfish are encountered by the fleet.
- There was a comment that focusing only on rate of bycatch in blocks does not account for the importance of an area for target catch. The rate of bycatch is a function of total catch and independent of the amount of fishing effort. Therefore, shifting effort to a block experiencing high effort could result in increased or decreased bycatch.
- Another perspective was that focus on rate of bycatch does not address the importance of habitat integrity to rockfish or other species or rockfish's contribution to marine biodiversity. Areas of persistent bycatch by bottom tending fishing gear could be considered of marginal utility in terms of valuing habitat and biodiversity because of cumulative impacts of fishing in an area.

- Several fishery management plan amendments currently being considered by the NPFMC have significant potential for changing the dynamics of rockfish bycatch. There may be opportunity to refine rockfish management through these processes (e.g. Amendment 80 to the BSAI Groundfish Management Plan, Bering Sea EFH; annual total allowable catch setting; maximum retainable allowances, and non-target species management).

### Conclusion

The discussion established that the study has merit and is a useful contribution for resolving the problems of persistent rockfish catch in the BSAI region.

The study can be improved by exploring the variables of catch by time, depth, area and type of fishery. Further analysis depends on the availability of these data.

Designing rockfish management measures can be improved by understanding the distribution of catch using GIS analysis. Spatial analysis is a valuable tool for evaluating ecosystem functionality in multiple dimensions. It is instructive for isolating critical patterns which can lead to understanding the distribution and role of species in an ecosystem.

AMCC and Ecotrust welcome opportunities to work with members of the industry to further refine this approach as well as pursue other approaches and information to formulate concrete management proposals that reduce pressure on sensitive rockfish species in ways that accommodate target fisheries.

### Thank You

AMCC and Ecotrust wish to thank Michelle Ridgway for facilitating the presentation and discussion. We appreciate the ideas and input from all the participants who attended.

### Participants who signed in:

Al Burch	Ed Backus	Meghan Jeans
Allen Bingham	Ed Richardson	Michelle Ridgway
Anne Hollowed	Farron Wallace	Paul Peyton
Arni Thomson	George Hunt	Peggy Murphy
Bill Karp	Gerry Merrigan	Rob Wurm
Bill Wilson	Gordon Kruse	Sandra Moller
Cathy Coon	Jane DiCosimo	Seth Macinko
Charles Steinback	Jeff Stephan	Stephan Taufen
Clem Tillion	Jim Ianelli	
Dave Clausen	Joe Childers	
Dean Courtney	John Gauvin	
Diana Evans	Jon Warrenchuk	
Diana Tillion	Keith Criddle	
Dorothy Childers	Lisa Butzner	
Dorothy Lowman	Lori Swanson	
Doug Woodby	Mark Chandler	
Earl Krygier	Mark Wilkins	



# Public Testimony Sign-Up Sheet

Agenda Item D-5 STAFF TASKING

	NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	AFFILIATION
6 1 X	JOHN GALVIN	H-G ENVIRONMENTAL WORKGROUP
2 X	Darius Kaspzak	FIV Mallory
3 X	HAROLD BRUCE MAGNUSSON	FIV BREAKWATER Holly & Hardy Kay
4 X	Stephen Taufen	Groundswell
5 X	David Foster	F. Sherman
6 6 6 6 7 X	Paulie Ammy	AGDB
	Paul MacGyver	H-Sun Processor
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NOTE to persons providing oral or written testimony to the Council: Section 307(1)(I) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act prohibits any person "to knowingly and willfully submit to a Council, the Secretary, or the Governor of a State false information (including, but not limited to, false information regarding the capacity and extent to which a United State fish processor, on an annual basis, will process a portion of the optimum yield of a fishery that will be harvested by fishing vessels of the United States) regarding any matter that the Council, Secretary, or Governor is considering in the course of carrying out this Act.





HO from Taufen to  
me & Chair only,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
THE DIRECTOR

MAY 11 2006

Mr. Stephen Taufen  
Groundswell Fisheries Movement  
P.O. Box 19257  
Seattle, Washington 98109-1257

Dear Mr. Taufen:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Gutierrez regarding the April 9, 2006, North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting. I admire your patriotism and agree that our forefathers carefully crafted our individual political rights. I respect your thoughts regarding the display of the American flag and the Pledge of Allegiance. Regional Fishing Management Council procedures are governed by regulations at 50 CFR 600.105 – 600.155. Under these regulations, each regional Fishery Management Council determines its own internal procedures for conducting public meetings as part of its statement of organization, practices, and procedures. At an early opportunity, I will meet with our council chairs and executive directors and speak to them about the issues you have raised.

I have read carefully your other concerns about the operations of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. I hope you can appreciate the pressure under which the Council members work as they perform this public duty.

I appreciate your interest in these matters.

Sincerely,

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.



**June 2006 NPFMC Meetings**

**B-7 Reports**

**Revisions to Seabird Avoidance Requirements for Groundfish and Halibut Longline Fisheries**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Seabird Avoidance Requirements in Inside Waters**

- Based on data showing that sensitive seabirds are rare to absent in inside waters, the Council recommends that seabird avoidance requirements be eliminated for longline vessels fishing in the inside waters of Prince William Sound (NMFS Area 649), Southeast Alaska (NMFS Area 659), and state waters of Cook Inlet. Current regulations require vessels 26-32 ft and 32-55 ft (without masts, poles, or rigging) to tow one buoy bag line, and vessels 32-55 ft (with masts, poles, or rigging) and > 55 ft to tow a single streamer line while setting longline gear in inside waters. This action affects 42% of the Alaska longline fleet, which lands 10% of the Alaska longline catch. Of this affected segment of the fleet, 85% are small vessels (< 55 ft LOA) and over half fish with snap-on gear.
- The Council recommends, for the purpose of seabird avoidance regulations only, that ADFG statistical areas 345603 and 345534 in Chatham Strait, and 325431 and 325401 in Dixon Entrance be reclassified as "outside waters" where seabird avoidance regulations would continue to be required. This recommendation addresses the finding that black-footed albatrosses, northern fulmars, and shearwaters sometimes occur in southern Chatham Strait and Dixon Entrance of the Southeast Alaska region suggesting increased risk to seabirds from longline fishing in these small areas.
- Based on seabird distribution data from longline surveys and other sources, the Council notes that effective seabird avoidance requirements are essential in *all* outside waters.

**Seabird Avoidance Measures for Small Vessels (>26 to 55 feet LOA) fishing in outside waters**

Based on the most recent research, the Council recommends the following revisions to seabird avoidance requirements for small longline vessels fishing in outside waters (as amended above):

- All vessels > 26 LOA with mast, poles or rigging and using snap-on gear are required to deploy one streamer line while setting longline gear. Specifically, the streamer line must be a minimum of 45 m long and must be maintained with a minimum aerial extent of 20 m. This recommendation extends the current streamer line requirement for snap-on gear vessels over 55 ft LOA with infrastructure to all snap-on gear vessels >26 ft LOA with mast, poles or rigging.

- Vessels with mast, poles or rigging and using fixed gear are required to deploy one streamer line while setting longline gear. Specifically, the streamer line must be a minimum of 90 m long and must be maintained with a minimum aerial extent of 40 m. Current requirements for vessels >26–55 ft LOA setting fixed gear and with mast, poles, or rigging do not include a performance standard for streamer lines.
- Vessels without mast, poles or rigging, and not capable of adding poles or davits to accommodate a streamer line, must tow a buoy in such a way as to deter birds from the sinking hookline as they deploy longline gear.
- The Council recommends that the requirement for small vessels fishing outside waters to use a second seabird avoidance measure (adding weight, deploying a second streamer line or buoy or strategic offal discharge) be eliminated. The uncertainty that led to this requirement is addressed by the specific requirements for streamer line performance standards recommended here. In addition, this change addresses the fact that this requirement is difficult to enforce.
- Recognizing that the newly developed light streamer lines currently available to the Alaska longline fleet at no cost through USFWS facilitate compliance with these revised seabird avoidance requirements for small longline vessels, the Council strongly recommends that these lighter streamer line continue to be made available to Alaska longline vessels at no cost.

### **Institutionalize Seabird Surveys**

- Seabird sighting data collected in the course of fish stock assessment surveys have proven extremely valuable with regard to ecosystem-based fisheries management. The Council strongly supports efforts to institutionalize the collection, management and analysis of these seabird observation data from fish stock assessment surveys at NMFS and IPHC, and strongly supports making these data available through the North Pacific Pelagic Seabird Database.
- The Council strongly encourages efforts to expand this seabird survey protocol to all Alaska surveys to broaden the temporal and spatial scope of this data set for application to other fisheries. Incorporating this protocol into North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program data collection should also be explored to expand temporal and spatial coverage.



**B-7 Protected Species**

The AP supports the SSC's intent to thoroughly review and comment on the draft SSL Recovery Plan and recommends the Council request that NMFS extend the comment period to facilitate their efforts. *Motion carried 16/0*

The AP recommends that existing seabird avoidance requirements be maintained in all outside waters. *Motion carried 14/0*

**C1 – IRIU**

**Amendment 80**

AP recommends moving forward with the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (starting on page 7 of the Action Memo) with the following amendments:

Component 3 and 13– Change the allocation of yellowfin sole to the non-AFA trawl CP sector to 95% of the ITAC and in Component 13, adopt the following table for threshold levels and sector allocations of ITAC above the threshold:

Threshold Level of ITAC	Allocation to Non-AFA Trawl CPs	Limited Access
87,500	87.5%	12.5%
95,000	82%	18%
102,500	76.5%	23.5%
110,000	71%	29%
117,500	65.5%	34.5%
125,000+	60%	40%

*Motion carried 10/6*

Component 6

For halibut, the AP recommends 6.1.4 with a possible increase to the floor and ceiling for non-AFA trawl CP fleet to account for the impacts of Amendment 85 allocations and with consideration of taxing rollovers of halibut PSC from limited access fishery. *Motion carried 10/6*

*Minority Report*

*The undersigned minority opposes the halibut PSC allocation formula under Option 6.1.4. The formula under-funds the non-AFA trawl CP sector's needs while over-funding the limited access fishery. The non-AFA trawl CP sector may be unable to harvest its allocations of Amendment 80 target species with this limited amount of halibut PSC, and will have no assurance of rollovers from the limited access fishery. This is contrary to the problem statement to "...provide the opportunity for participants in this sector to mitigate the cost, to some degree, associated with bycatch reduction." Signed: Lisa Butzner, Lori Swanson and John Moller*

For crab, the AP recommends that an amount equal to the sum of the AFA CV and CP crab sideboards would be available to the limited access fishery. The remainder of the crab caps would be allocated to the non-AFA trawl CP sector. *Motion carried 16/0*

Component 11

Vessel use caps – No vessel shall harvest more than 30% of the non-AFA trawl CP allocation in the aggregate. *Motion carried 15/1*

Component 13

See Component 3

The AP recommends that the data necessary for monitoring and enforcement be collected under Amendment 80. Data collection necessary to evaluate the impacts of Amendment 80 should be developed as a trailing amendment. *Motion carried 16/0*

## C-1(c) MRA

The AP recommends that the final send out the EA/RIR/IRFA for public review with modifications as described below and for final action in October.

### Components and options for changing MRA accounting

The following components are proposed to address this MRA regulatory amendment:

**Component 1: Define Species-** Increase the enforcement interval for all groundfish species (excluding pollock, sablefish, Alaska plaice, "other species," and squid). This includes the following species: cod, yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, Atka mackerel, BSAI Pacific ocean perch, "Other flatfish", and arrowtooth flounder, ~~greenland turbot and rockfish.~~

**Option 1:** Applies to cod, yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, "Other flatfish" and arrowtooth flounder.

**Option 2:** Applies to Amendment 80 species (yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, Atka mackerel, Aleutian Islands Pacific ocean perch) as well as cod, "Other flatfish," and arrowtooth flounder.

**Component 2: Define Sector-** Any increase in the current enforcement MRA interval applies only to the non-AFA trawl C/P sector (under the Department of Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2005, Public Law No. 108-447)

**Component 3: Define Time Period-** The MRA enforcement period for species defined in Component 1 would be increased from any time during a fishing trip to:

**Option 1:** the end of a fishing trip or (if a suboption is selected whichever option or suboption comes first), or

**Option 2:** at the time of offload (changed from "point of offload").

### **Alternatives for MRA enforcement of selected species**

**Alternative 1.** No action, and no change in MRA enforcement period.

**Alternative 2.** In the BSAI, allow the calculation of the MRA of cod, yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, "other flatfish", and arrowtooth flounder to occur at the end of a fishing trip, for the non-AFA trawl C/P sector.

**Option:** Include Aleutian Islands Pacific ocean perch and Atka mackerel.

**Alternative 3.** In the BSAI, calculate the period of enforcement for MRA of cod, yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, "other flatfish", and arrowtooth flounder, ~~Atka mackerel and AI pacific ocean perch~~ at the time of offload, (previously read: "at the point of an offload") for the non-AFA trawl C/P sector.

**Option:** Include Aleutian Islands Pacific ocean perch and Atka mackerel. ~~Greenland turbot and rockfish species~~

Due to the interaction of Amendment 80 and changes to BSAI MRAs, the AP recommends that the Council request staff to expand the cumulative effects section to address relevant elements under the Council's most current Amendment 80 package. *Motion carried 17/0*

### **Corrected C-3 CV Trawl Eligibility**

The AP recommends the Council adopt the following problem statement:

The trawl catcher vessel groundfish fisheries in the BSAI and trawl vessel groundfish fisheries in the GOA are fully utilized. In addition, the existence of latent licenses may exacerbate the disadvantages to GOA dependant CVs resulting from a lack of comprehensive rationalization in the GOA. Competition for these resources is likely to increase as a result of a number of factors, including Council actions to rationalize other fisheries, favorable current market prices and a potential for TAC changes in future years. Trawl catcher vessel owners who have made significant long-term investments, have long catch histories, and are significantly dependent upon BSAI and GOA groundfish resources need protection from others who have little or no recent limited history and with the ability to increase their participation in the fisheries. This requires prompt action to promote stability in the trawl catcher vessel sector in the BSAI and trawl vessel sector in the GOA until comprehensive rationalization is completed.

*Motion passed 15/0*

The AP requests the Council adopt the staff language to clarify that Council intent is to use a license basis for action. *Motion passed 14/0*

Additionally, the AP requests the following components and options be included:

#### **Component 1 – Area / subarea endorsements**

Option 1: Catch thresholds will be applied at the management area level in the BSAI/GOA. Failure to meet the management area threshold will result in the removal of all subarea endorsements in the management area.

Option 2: Catch thresholds will be applied at the endorsement subarea level in the BSAI/GOA. Failure to meet the threshold for an endorsement subarea will result in the removal of that subarea endorsement.

*Motion carries 13/0/1*

**Component 2** In addition to the threshold information already provided in the analysis, the AP recommends inclusion of the following additional landing requirements:

Option 1. Trawl LLPS (BSAI CV and GOA CV and CP) – trawl landing requirement (except sablefish)

1. No action
2. at least one landing of groundfish from 2000-2005  
Suboption: at least one landing of groundfish from 1995-2005
3. at least two landings of groundfish from 2000-2005  
Suboption: at least two landings of groundfish from 1995-2005

Option 2: Trawl LLPS (BSAI CV and GOA CV and CP) –groundfish landing requirement (except sablefish)

1. No action
2. at least one landing of groundfish from 2000-2005  
Suboption: at least one landing of groundfish from 1995-2005
3. at least two landings of groundfish from 2000-2005  
Suboption: at least two landings of groundfish from 1995-2005

*Motion carries 14/0*

Catch history of a vessel accumulated while licenses are stacked on the vessel will be:

1. Fully credited to all stacked licenses (with qualifying endorsements and designations)
2. Apportioned equally among all stacked licenses (with qualifying endorsements and designations)
3. Apportioned as agreed by the holders of those licenses (with qualifying endorsements and designations), unless no such agreement exists, in which case the history would be apportioned equally.

*Motion carries 14/0*

The AP requests the Council have staff provide the number of stacked licenses with identical endorsements within the trawl sector and to provide the number of <60 ft licenses that would be eliminated under component 1 and 2. *Motion passed 15/0*

The AP requests staff provide information describing the parallel fishery pod harvest in the AI by CV trawlers who hold valid trawl llps but do not have AI area endorsements. *Motion passed 15/0*

#### **C-4 Halibut Charter Program**

The AP recommends that the Council fast-track analysis of a halibut charter boat permanent solution instead of the moratorium. The analysis should incorporate the elements and options recommended by the stakeholder committee and staff's recommendations concerning community provisions (Attachment 5 on page 4 of the May 23, 2006 discussion paper excluding the last paragraph on that page).

The AP further recommends that the staff (including State of Alaska) work with KACO to further develop their proposal.

In the Stakeholder Committee report:

##### **Issue 1. Allocation.**

- ~~i. Total Constant Exploitation Yield and~~
- ~~ii. Combined commercial/charter Fishery Constant Exploitation Yield.~~

*Motion carried 15/1*

The AP has heard the community of Kodiak charter halibut fleet in their desire to allocate the GHs between sub-areas and the development of local area and sub-area management plans and recommends inclusion of these concepts in the analysis. Area registration should be considered as part of the local area management plans. *Motion carried 16/0*

Should the Council decide the go ahead with an interim moratorium, the AP recommends the following modifications to the Council's April 2006 moratorium alternative.

##### Issue 1. Areas

Option 1. ~~2C&3A~~

Option 2. For Areas 2C and 3A communities previously identified under Amendment 66.

Suboption a. ~~Exclude the following communities from the moratorium~~

Suboption b. ~~Provide community eligibility through CQE to purchase moratorium licenses between 3-25 per community.~~

Qualify community CQE's as eligible to purchase moratorium permits.

Area 2C- 5 permit limit

Area3A - 10 permit limit

Suboption c. ~~Provide the qualifying CQE an option to request, on behalf of community residents, additional charter halibut moratorium permits from NMFS for use by residents in the community.~~

~~Between 5-25 permits per community~~

~~Permits requested would have limited duration for any one individual from 5-15 years.~~

The CQE in CQE qualified Communities that have less than 10 active charter business (with 20 or more charter trips per year) with their primary place of business in the community can request, on behalf of a community resident (as defined in amendment 66), a limited entry permit.

1. Area 2C – up to 3 permits per qualified community
2. Area 3-A - up to 5 permits per qualified community option

Issue 6:

Eliminate option 1 *Motion carried 14/1*

The AP further recommends the Council work with the State of Alaska to establish authority for the State to support management of halibut charter harvests within established allocation and conservation guidelines.

*Motion carried 14/0/1*

**C-5 Observer Program**

The AP recommends the Council adopt Alternative 2. *Motion carried 15/0*

**Video Monitoring**

The AP appreciates the efforts of the agency to date and looks forward to updates on the use of video monitoring in the rockfish pilot program. The AP recommends that the Council encourage the agency to continue development of video monitoring. *Motion carried 15/0*

**C-6 IFQ Omnibus V proposed amendments**

The AP recommends the following preferred alternatives:

Action 1. Use of catcher vessel QS

Alternative 2. Allow processing of non-IFQ species on a vessel that is otherwise authorized to process non-IFQ species when any amount of IFQ halibut resulting from quota share assigned to vessel categories B, C, or D are held by fishermen on board a vessel in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands. *Motion passed 15/0*

Action 2. Sablefish pots

Alternative 2 Allow use of longline pot gear in the Bering Sea IFQ and CDQ sablefish fisheries during June *Motion passed 15/0*

Action 3. Inactive IFQ permits

Alternative 1. No action *Motion passed 12/3*

*Minority Report*

*We, the undersigned, support Alternative 3, QS lottery program, which provides a means for redistributing unused halibut quota shares to qualified recipients. Signed, Julianne Curry, Michelle Ridgway, and John Moller*

Action 4. Military exemption for mobilized reservists and guardsmen

Alternative 2. Allow mobilized reservists and guardsmen to temporarily transfer IFQs for the duration of their deployment. *Motion passed 15/0*

The AP discussed that future gear conflicts may occur under Action#2, and notes for the Council the possibility of future requests to address such conflicts should they occur.

*Motion passed 14/1*

**D-2 EFH BSAI habitat conservation**

The AP recommends the Council accept the following alternatives and options for analysis:

Alternative 1, status quo

Alternative 2, Open area approach utilizing fishing data through 2005 to define area

Option 1: Include the areas north of Bogoslof, south of Nunivak Island in the open area, and the 10 minute strip in the Red King Crab Savings Area.

Alternative 3, Require gear modifications on all bottom flatfish trawl gear to reduce seafloor contact and/or increase clearance between the gear and substrate.

Alternative 4. Open area approach utilizing fishing data through 2005 to define area, plus require gear modifications on all bottom flatfish trawl gear to reduce seafloor contact and/or increase clearance between the gear and substrate.

Option 1: include the areas north of Bogoslof and south of Nunivak Island in the open area, and the 10 minute strip in the Red King Crab Savings Area.

There was a motion to strike "bottom trawl gear" and replace with "trawl gear fished on bottom". *Motion failed 12/3/1*

*Motion passed 10/5/1*

#### **D-4 AI Ecosystem Plan**

The AP recommends that the Council endorse the Ecosystem Committee's recommendations regarding initiating development of an Aleutian Islands Fisheries Ecosystem Plan and forming an AI ecosystem team.

*Motion passed 15/0/1*

#### **D-5 Staff Tasking**

The AP recommends that seabird avoidance requirements be eliminated for longline vessels fishing in the inside waters of Prince William Sound (NMFS Area 649), Southeast Alaska (NMFS Area 659), and state waters of Cook Inlet. Avoidance requirements in southern Chatham Straight and Dixon Entrance of the SEAK region should remain in place due to increased risk to seabirds in those areas. *Motion carried 14/0*

The AP strongly supports efforts to institutionalize the collection and management of seabird observation data from fish stock assessment surveys from NMFS and IPHC. We also strongly support making the data available through the North Pacific Palearctic Seabird Database. *Motion carried 14/0*

The AP requests the Council encourage further research regarding seabird avoidance measures for small vessels which do not have poles, mast and rigging (PMR). *Motion passed 16/0*

The data collection plan for the BSAI crab rationalization program and the anticipated data collection plan for the Amendment 80 groundfish fishery provide important information for program evaluation and review. The AP notes that parallel data collection protocols are not in place for the AFA and IFQ rationalization programs. Therefore, the AP recommends the Council direct staff to develop data collection programs that are appropriate for and applicable to the AFA and IFQ rationalization programs and will provide programmatic evaluation information that is parallel to the information obtained through the BSAI crab and Amendment 80 programs. *Motion passed 16/0*

The AP recommends that the Council request staff to develop a discussion paper addressing the following SSC recommendations on Bering Sea Essential Fish Habitat:

2. expansion of closed areas surrounding St. Matthew Island beyond the 3 nm closure in state waters to protect blue king crab and their habitat,
3. additional closures of shelf break waters to conserve habitat in canyons (Middle, Zemchug, and Pribilof Canyons) and known skate nurseries;
4. additional closures corresponding to special areas that may emerge from the analysis of crab life history stages;

*Motion passed 15/1*

**D-1**

The AP recommends the Council Issue an Exempted Fishing Permit to Test a Trawl Gear Modification to Reduce Bycatch Rates for Pacific Halibut in the Central Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Trawl Fishery. *Motion passed 16/0.*