

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## NEWSLETTER Twenty-Third Plenary Session NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Council met on Thursday and Friday, February 22nd and 23rd, at the Sheffield House in Anchorage, Alaska. The Advisory Panel met on Wednesday the 21st and Thursday the 22nd, as did the Scientific and Statistical Committee.

### JAPANESE SEIZURES

Two Japanese trawlers fishing in the Bering Sea have been seized by the United States Coast Guard for allegedly underlogging the amount of fish actually onboard. The Council has recommended maximum penalties for these types of violations including the possibility of revoking permits to fish in the FCZ of the United States. These kinds of violations the Council feels could have the worst possible effect on the resource and on proper scientific management.

### HALIBUT AGREEMENT

Reports from the latest U.S.-Canada halibut negotiations would allow Canadian fishermen in U.S. waters a two million pound quota in 1979, a one million pound quota in 1980 and none thereafter. The following dates have been proposed for the 1979 season: May 17th to June 2nd, June 26th to July 12th, July 28th to August 13th, August 29th to September 14th for all Pacific areas with the Bering Sea season set for April 10th to November 15th in the western district and April 10th to April 30th in the eastern district, the boundary at 173° W.

The Council approved the agreement in concept but disagreed with the dates and has recommended changes that would open seasons on small tides, allowing the inshore fishermen to fish throughout an open period.

### ADVISORY PANEL APPOINTMENTS

The Council filled the two remaining vacancies on the Advisory Panel by appointing Jeffrey Stephen, Manager of the United Fishermen's Marketing Association in Kodiak and Jessie Foster from Quinhagak in western Alaska, to the Panel.

## JOINT VENTURES

The Council approved two joint venture applications by the U.S.S.R. to receive fish from American fishermen in a joint venture with Marine Resources, Inc., of Bellingham, Washington. They expect to take 6,000 tons of pollock, Pacific ocean perch, Pacific cod, sablefish and others in the Gulf of Alaska. The recommended restrictions and conditions allow the foreign processor to receive these fish seaward of three miles with no incidental or by-catch restrictions...only a warning to minimize the incidental catch of sablefish.

## RELEASE OF RESERVES

The Council recommended releasing not more than one-half of the 25% reserve amount available in the Gulf of Alaska for release to TALFF. The recommendation was for approximately 16,000 tons pollock, 1,300 tons of Pacific cod, 1,200 tons flounder, 1,000 tons POP, 1,000 tons sablefish and 700 tons Atka mackerel to be released for foreign fishing. The Council will consider releasing the other half at the March Council meeting.

## ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

The Council adopted an Alaska Board of Fisheries proposed amendment to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish FMP establishing a herring-saving, time-and-area-closure for the foreign trawl fisheries from November through March in the area from 57° to 59°30' N latitude between 171° and 175° W longitude as well as the elimination of any directed foreign fishing for herring in the eastern Bering Sea.

The Council requested further study of another Board of Fisheries recommendation closing the Fishery Conservation Zone to all domestic trawling for herring north of 56° N longitude.

## GULF OF ALASKA (GOA) GROUND FISH AMENDMENTS

The Council will amend the GOA Groundfish FMP to increase the Atka mackerel OY by 2,000 metric tons to be allocated to Southeastern and Yakutat regulatory areas. Secondly, a longline fishery for Pacific cod landward of the appropriate 400/500 meter isobath between 140° and 157° W longitude was authorized as the only directed fishery allowed for cod. In a third action the Council rejected a request from the Japanese to allow foreign longlining on the Davidson Bank area. That brings to 10 the number of amendments approved over the last 9 months which are now being readied to forward to the Secretary of Commerce.

### SOCIOECONOMIC FMP DATA WORKING GROUP

The Council authorized a working group consisting of Ed Miles, George Rogers, Jim Crutchfield, Hart, Richard Marasco, Jim Martin and Bob Stokes to evaluate fishery management plans prepared to date in terms of socioeconomic data needs. There will be additional representatives from the Advisory Panel as well as Bruce Reddig and Jim Bray from the Pacific Fishery Management Council. The group will meet and report back to the SSC and Council by June, 1979.

### WORKING GROUP STUDYING DAH

The Council authorized another working group to study DAH as required in the "Processor Preference" Amendment. The group consists of George Rogers and James Crutchfield from the SSC; Keith Specking, Shari Gross, Sig Jaeger, Al Otness and Rick Lauber from the Advisory Panel and Phil Chitwood from the National Marine Fisheries Service.

### BERING SEA KING AND TANNER CRAB

The Council listened to an excellent presentation from Dr. Dayton L. Alverson, Director of the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center, concerning abundance trends and management of eastern Bering Sea King and Tanner crabs. The presentation helped to clarify data collection and analysis procedures. Declines in Tanner crab are still expected through 1982 but king crab should increase slightly through 1981.

### CONTRACTS

The Council recommended the use of a consultant to assist in the evaluation of changes proposed in the Council's contract (78-4; EWR) with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game dealing with the development and enhancement of a computerized fisheries information system.

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be in Juneau on March 22nd and 23rd at McPhetres Hall with the Advisory Panel meeting one day earlier, March 21st, and the Scientific and Statistical Committee for two days, March 20th and 21st, both at the Baranof Hotel.

FIRST CLASS

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