

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

James O. Campbell, Chairman  
Jim H. Branson, Executive Director

605 West 4th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510



Mailing Address: P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Telephone: (907) 274-4563  
FTS 271-4064

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## NEWSLETTER

### Juneau Meetings Focus on Salmon and Groundfish

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met the week of January 30 in Juneau with the Alaska Board of Fisheries to discuss salmon management off Alaska for 1984. The Council and Board met jointly for a day and a half and then the Council met alone to consider management of other fisheries off Alaska. With the Board, the Council heard staff reports on the condition of the chinook salmon resource, a technical report on the ongoing U.S.-Canada treaty negotiations, and public testimony on regulatory proposals for 1984.

Meeting alone, the Council focused on groundfish management issues in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands areas. These included sablefish by-catch restrictions on U.S. joint ventures, restrictions on foreign bottom trawling, and the Council's proposed Fishery Development Zone north of Unimak Pass.

These and other Council actions are described below in this newsletter.

### Council Will Discuss Crab Management

#### With Board of Fisheries in March

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet with the Board of Fisheries again March 28-29, 1984 at the Old Federal Building in Anchorage. The main topic of discussion will be king and Tanner crab management for the 1984-85 seasons. The two bodies will jointly hear public testimony and staff reports on the conditions of the fishery. They will then consider regulatory proposals submitted to the Board of Fisheries and Council and determine what management actions should be taken. After these discussions, the Council may consider sending out amendments to its Tanner crab regulations for public review.

The Council will meet alone on March 30 to take up other agenda items such as groundfish and herring. There may also be several foreign fishing and joint venture permits to be reviewed.

The meeting agenda should be available about March 15. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will meet at the Old Federal Building in Anchorage on March 26-27 and the Advisory Panel will meet the same days in the Windsor Room of the Sheffield House Hotel.

### Public Hearing on Crab Management Set for Seattle

The Board of Fisheries and North Pacific Fishery Management Council will conduct a public hearing on proposed Alaska king and Tanner crab regulations in Seattle on March 9, 1984. The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the NMFS Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center, 2725 Montlake Blvd. East.

This hearing is provided for in the Joint Statement of Principles on Domestic King Crab Management agreed to by the Board and Council in October 1981. It allows the opportunity for fishermen and industry representatives from the Pacific Northwest to testify on crab issues without having to be in Anchorage when the Board and Council meet in March to discuss proposed shellfish regulations for the fisheries off Alaska.

### RADM Knapp Leaves Coast Guard and Council

RADM Richard Knapp, a Council member since 1981, recently announced his retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard. After March 1, the Admiral will take on new duties as the State's Commissioner of Transportation.

At their meeting on Friday, Council members expressed appreciation for the Admiral's participation on the Council and its Permit Review and Finance Committees. Admiral Knapp expressed regret that he will be leaving the Council but said he is delighted to remain in Alaska.

The new Coast Guard representative on the Council will be RADM Robert Lucas who is being transferred from the Coast Guard's Office of Engineering in Baltimore, Maryland, where he has served as Chief since May 1981. RADM Lucas previously served in Alaska as Chief of Operations and Chief of Staff at the Seventeenth Coast Guard District in Juneau from 1976 to 1979.

### John Lecture Named to Council Advisory Panel

Council Chairman Jim Campbell announced the appointment of John G. Lecture of Bellingham, Washington to the Council's Advisory Panel. Lecture will fill the seat vacated by Greg Baker who was recently appointed Director of Commercial Fisheries Development for the State of Alaska.

Lecture, who is General Manager for Seafood Producers Cooperative, brings to the Council extensive business experience in the seafood industry. Seafood Producers Cooperative represents over 400 vessel owners from the troll and gillnet salmon fisheries as well as the halibut, herring and sablefish fisheries and maintains a fish processing plant in Sitka.

Public Hearing on Crab Harvesting and Management

The Board of Fisheries and Game Management will conduct a public hearing on proposed Alaska King Crab Harvesting and Management Regulations in 1982. The hearing will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the M.I.T. Fisheries and Wildlife Research Center, 100 Building, Fairbanks, Alaska.

This hearing is intended to provide an opportunity for interested parties to present their views on the proposed regulations. The Board of Fisheries and Game Management will consider all comments received and will make a final decision on the regulations. The hearing will be held in the Auditorium of the M.I.T. Fisheries and Wildlife Research Center, 100 Building, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Public Hearing on the Proposed Management Plan for the Yukon River Salmon Fishery

The Board of Fisheries and Game Management will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Management Plan for the Yukon River Salmon Fishery in 1982. The hearing will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the M.I.T. Fisheries and Wildlife Research Center, 100 Building, Fairbanks, Alaska.

This hearing is intended to provide an opportunity for interested parties to present their views on the proposed Management Plan. The Board of Fisheries and Game Management will consider all comments received and will make a final decision on the Management Plan. The hearing will be held in the Auditorium of the M.I.T. Fisheries and Wildlife Research Center, 100 Building, Fairbanks, Alaska.

The new Board of Fisheries and Game Management will be established in 1982. The Board will be responsible for the management of the State's fisheries and game resources. The Board will be composed of representatives from the fishing industry, the State, and the public. The Board will meet in Fairbanks, Alaska, on May 15, 1982.

John Peterson Nominated to Council Advisory Panel

John Peterson has been nominated to the Council Advisory Panel on the Management of the State's Fisheries. The Council is a body established by the State to advise the Board of Fisheries and Game Management on the management of the State's fisheries. Peterson is a former member of the Board of Fisheries and Game Management.

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### Review of 1983 Commercial Salmon Troll Season

In 1983, commercial trollers harvested approximately 270,000 chinooks, 1.3 million cohos, 510,000 pinks, 21,000 chums and 8,000 sockeye salmon, with a combined value of approximately \$15 million to the fishermen. The 1983 chinook harvest was 14% below the 1971-82 average. The reduction over the last several years resulted primarily from shortened seasons. The summer season lasted 60 days, the shortest in the history of the fishery. About 1,900 permit holders participated in the fishery (including about 900 power troll and 1,000 hand-troll permits). Hand-trollers accounted for approximately 14% of the chinook and 21% of the coho troll catch. About 20,000 additional chinooks were taken in the inside net fisheries.

The Alaska winter troll fishery harvested approximately 30,000 chinook from October 1 through April 14. This represents a 138% increase over the 1981-82 winter season, primarily a result of increased effort combined with exceptionally mild weather conditions. This trend of increased effort and catch has continued into the current winter fishery and a harvest of approximately 36,000 chinooks is anticipated.

### Board and Council Agree on 1984 Chinook Salmon Management

Members of the Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Council indicated their preference to manage in the spirit of a coastwide chinook agreement and set the commercial harvest of adult chinook salmon in the range of 243,000 to 272,000 fish for the 1984 season. The Council intends to manage for the low end of the range if Canada matches this action in managing their fishery in northern and central British Columbia, including outside Vancouver Island. Participants in the recent negotiations for a U.S.-Canada salmon interception treaty reported that these figures were positively received at the negotiations, but no official agreement was made.

The Board of Fisheries voted to re-establish the chinook season opening date at the traditional date of April 15; however, there will be an immediate closure through June 4 for conservation reasons and in order to minimize conflict with the halibut season which opens on May 21. Chinook fishing will begin on June 5 and end on September 20. The management agency will carefully monitor the catch to minimize the chances of a single-species season.

The Council advised the Regional Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service to open outside waters on June 5. When the chinook harvest goal is reached, the Council recommended that federal waters not be closed automatically except for chinook salmon. Instead, the Regional Director should allow directed fishing for all species except chinooks in certain areas where the incidental catch of chinooks would be minimal.

The Board declined from limiting the winter fishery to 15% of the total annual harvest. The Council concurred with this action.

Review of 1961 Commercial Fishery Data

In 1961, commercial fishery harvests approximately 2.5,000 Atlantic tons of fish, valued at \$10,000,000. This is a decrease from the 1960 harvest of approximately 3.5 million tons, valued at \$15,000,000. The 1961 harvest was 72 percent of the 1960 harvest. The reduction in harvest was due to a combination of factors, including a decrease in the number of boats, a decrease in the number of days at sea, and a decrease in the catch per unit effort. The total catch of fish in 1961 was 2.5 million tons, valued at \$10,000,000. This is a decrease from the 1960 catch of 3.5 million tons, valued at \$15,000,000. The 1961 catch was 72 percent of the 1960 catch. The reduction in catch was due to a combination of factors, including a decrease in the number of boats, a decrease in the number of days at sea, and a decrease in the catch per unit effort.

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Board and Council Agree on 1962 Fishery Management

The Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Council have agreed on a management plan for the 1962 fishery. The plan calls for a reduction in the number of boats and a reduction in the number of days at sea. This is a continuation of the policy adopted in 1961. The Board and Council have also agreed on a plan to increase the catch per unit effort. This will be done by increasing the size of the boats and by increasing the number of days at sea. The plan also calls for a reduction in the number of days at sea. This is a continuation of the policy adopted in 1961.

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Council Workgroup Considers Net-Scarred Salmon Problem

Council and Board members unanimously approved recommendations of a Council workgroup on net-scarred salmon to improve information on the frequency, location and cause of gear-caused scars on salmon.

The Workgroup recommended that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game provide a written report on 1983 fishing gear mark sampling, continue gear mark sampling through the 1984 season, and develop a study for assessing the age of individual marks and injuries.

The Workgroup also recommended that Canada be invited to participate in Workgroup deliberations to exchange information and plans. A major portion of the group's report recommended improvement and expansion of photographic and other records of gear marking of salmon and the development of a regional clearing-house for information, reports, photographs, and samples of gear. It was also suggested that a regional staff position be developed to serve as an expert on identification of lost gear. Improvement of information from foreign net fisheries through the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission was also stressed.

John Harville, Chairman of the Workgroup, told Council and Board members that these recommended tasks could, in most instances, be included in ongoing projects and studies and that additional costs would be minimal.

Industry Hammers Out Voluntary Restraints  
on Foreign Groundfish Fishing in the Bering Sea

The Council approved a proposal agreed upon by representatives of the domestic and foreign groundfish fleets for the triangular 2,342-square mile area north of Unimak Pass which was proposed originally by the Council as a U.S. Fishery Development Zone with no foreign fishing allowed. The area is extremely rich in groundfish resources, particularly pollock and cod, and is close to shore-based processors.

The industry proposal requires foreign vessels to refrain from directed trawling in the area from June 1 through September 15 and from foreign directed longlining from March 15 through September 15. Current regulations now close the area to foreign trawls from December 1 through May 31.

In approving this voluntary industry arrangement, the Council tabled for the time being any further action on its proposed Fishery Development Zone amendment to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. The Council first approved the zone in September 1982, but the amendment was turned down by NMFS Central Office for procedural reasons. By tabling action, the Council retained the option of resubmitting the amendment after the results of the industry agreement are evaluated early next year.

### Council Takes Up Groundfish Issues in Gulf

In December 1983, the Council was asked to raise the sablefish by-catch limit on joint venture permits from 1.5% to 5% in the Gulf of Alaska. Action on the request was scheduled for this meeting to allow time for public comment. Existing information on the incidental catch rates of sablefish taken in 1983 joint venture trawl fisheries was reviewed and public testimony was heard on both sides of the issue. Without further analysis of the full ramifications of such an increased by-catch limit on the industry and the stocks, the Council decided to defer action on the request. A more complete analysis will probably not be available until at least May. The Council also deferred action on a request to set a minimum size limit on sablefish until more analysis could be done.

In another matter, the Council recommended sending Amendment 13 to the Gulf of Alaska Fishery Management Plan to Secretarial Review after severing a provision which would have restricted the use of foreign bottom trawls when the foreign catch reached 100,000 mt of pollock. This provision was originally intended to minimize the by-catch of halibut by the foreign fleets. However, the mandatory switch to pelagic trawls would have increased the by-catch of salmon bound for Alaska streams and elsewhere. To find a better solution, the Council decided to hold these incidental catch provisions in abeyance while a Council workgroup completes its ongoing study on the overall prohibited species problem in the Gulf of Alaska. Amendment 13, as it now stands, will combine the pollock OY for the Western and Central Areas of the Gulf of Alaska and set the combined optimum yield at 400,000 mt.

Finally, the Council voted for an emergency closure of sablefish fishing in the federal waters that extend into inside waters in Southeast Alaska. Southeast inside waters are now closed to sablefish fishing but federal waters are open. The differing regulations have caused confusion among fishermen and impeded law enforcement of the state sablefish closure which lasts until March. The Council's original intent in setting up the inside and outside districts for sablefish management was to include the federal "cul-de-sacs" with inside waters. By its vote, the Council reaffirmed this intent and will proceed with amending not only its Gulf groundfish plan, but also its Tanner crab and salmon plans to manage inside and outside fisheries separately, with federal cul-de-sacs specified as inside.

### Council Recommends Changes in West German Groundfish Permits

A representative of Nordstern, a West German fishing company, testified that his country's groundfish allocation off Alaska was insufficient to allow full participation in U.S. joint ventures planned for 1984. In December the Council had recommended that West Germany purchase 3,000 mt before June 30 and 3,000 mt after June 30 from U.S. joint venture vessels, in trade for a directed groundfish allocation of 14,000 mt. In addition, 50% of the directed allocation was to be withheld until the first joint venture purchase was completed. All permits were granted only for the Bering Sea/Aleutians area.

Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry

In December 1982, the Council was asked to review and submit a report on the Alaska Sealife Industry. The Council's first report, dated February 1983, was titled "Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry" and recommended that a joint venture be established to manage the sealife resource. This report was based on a study of the sealife industry in Alaska and the United States. The Council also recommended that the industry be organized into a joint venture which would be controlled by the State of Alaska. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's second report, dated June 1983, was titled "Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry: A Report on the Progress of the Joint Venture" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's third report, dated October 1983, was titled "Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry: A Report on the Progress of the Joint Venture" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska.

In another matter, the Council recommended funding for the Alaska Sealife Industry. The Council recommended that the State of Alaska should establish a fund to provide for the joint venture. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's fourth report, dated December 1983, was titled "Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry: A Report on the Progress of the Joint Venture" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's fifth report, dated February 1984, was titled "Joint Venture of the Alaska Sealife Industry: A Report on the Progress of the Joint Venture" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska.

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Joint Venture Changes in Sealife Industry

A proposal was submitted in February, 1984, for the joint venture to be reorganized. The proposal recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation and be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's ninth report, dated April 1984, was titled "Joint Venture Changes in Sealife Industry" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska. The Council's tenth report, dated June 1984, was titled "Joint Venture Changes in Sealife Industry" and recommended that the joint venture be established as a corporation. The Council also recommended that the joint venture be given a monopoly on the sealife resource in Alaska.



At last week's Council meeting, the Nordstern representative stated that to fulfill the joint venture commitment, he would need a joint venture permit to operate in the Gulf of Alaska and an increased directed fishing allocation to make the whole operation feasible.

The Council, on the recommendation of the Permit Review Committee, voted to allow West Germany a joint venture permit for the Gulf of Alaska and to increase their direct allocation to 25,000 mt, provided West Germany increase its joint venture purchase to 8,000 mt. In addition, the first joint venture must start no later than March 1, and no more direct allocation would be made until at least 3,000 of the 8,000 mt joint venture has been purchased.

#### Halibut Commission Increases Quota to 43.0 Million Pounds in 1984

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), which manages the Pacific halibut fishery on behalf of Canada and the United States, met in Anchorage the week of January 23 to set halibut regulations for 1984. The Commission will recommend to the governments of Canada and the United States catch limits for 1984 totaling 43.0 million pounds, 12.4 million pounds more than in 1983. The Commission's staff reported that the halibut resource is rebuilding throughout its range, particularly in the Gulf of Alaska, and the abundance of young halibut entering the fishery also is increasing.

The Commission received regulatory proposals from its scientific staff, from Canadian and United States fishermen and processors, and from other fishery agencies, and will recommend to the governments the following catch limits: Area 2A (all waters south of British Columbia) - 0.3 million pounds; Area 2B (the waters off British Columbia) - 9.0 million pounds; Area 2C (the waters off southeastern Alaska) - 5.7 million pounds; Area 3A (Cape Spencer to Cape Trinity) - 18.0 million pounds; Area 3B (Cape Trinity to Unimak Island) - 7.0 million pounds; Area 4A (Unimak Island to 170°W and South of 56°20'N, exclusive of the Bering Sea closed area) - 1.2 million pounds; Area 4B (Aleutian Chain West of 172°W and South of 56°20'N) - 1.0 million pounds; Area 4C (the Bering Sea flats North and West of the closed area) - 0.4 million pounds; and Area 4D (Bering Sea edge North of 56°20'N) - 0.4 million pounds, and Area 4E (Bering Sea flats East of 168°W exclusive of the closed area) - 50,000 pounds.

During 1984, the Commission will manage Area 2 on the basis of the 60%-40% division of catch between Canadian and United States zones. The Commission will manage on a biological basis for 1985.

All last week's Council meeting, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an...

The Council, on the recommendation of the Joint... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an...

Joint Fisheries Commission Progress Report to 1984

The International North Atlantic Fisheries Commission (INFC) was established... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an...

The Commission received proposals from the... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an...

The Commission will continue to... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an... will be held in Ottawa and an...

The Commission is recommending commercial fishing seasons consisting of the following succession of open and closed periods, until the respective catch limits are taken:

AREA	OPENINGS
2A	May 21-June 2; June 21-July 3; July 22-Aug. 2; Aug. 21-Sept. 1; Sept. 19-30
2B	April 24-June 6; May 23-June 3; July 11-22, Aug. 7-19
2C	May 22-25, Aug. 20-25; Sept. 18-Oct. 31
3A, 3B*	May 21-25; Aug. 20-25; Sept. 18-Oct. 31
4A, 4B	May 21-25; June 18-21; Aug. 2-10; Sept. 18-Oct. 31
4C	May 21-Aug 2 (every other day); Aug. 2-10; Aug. 11-Oct. 31 (every other day)
4D	May 21-25; June 18-28; Aug. 2-10; Sept. 18-Oct. 31
4E	May 21-Aug. 2 (2 days open, 1 day closed); Aug. 2-10; Aug. 11-Oct. 31 (2 days open, 1 day closed)

\*Area 3B will close with Area 3A when the 3A quota is taken and reopen on the next scheduled opening.

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Fishery officers will inspect the holds of halibut vessels clearing into and out of Area 4 at Dutch Harbor.

The Commission is recommending that all vessels that land halibut, including sport charter boats, be licensed annually to provide more accurate, complete and timely information for management of the halibut fishery. License application forms will be distributed shortly. Completed license applications must be mailed to IPHC and halibut licenses will be returned to applicants by mail.

The Commission recommends that the sport fishery for halibut in 1984 open on March 1 and close on October 31, as in 1983, and that the daily sport catch limit and possession limit be two halibut of any size, the same as last year. The Commission is also recommending that all charter vessels that participate in the sport fishery be licensed by IPHC to provide more complete information on the sport fishery for halibut.

The recommended regulations for the 1984 halibut fishery will become official as soon as they are approved by the Canadian and United States governments. The Commission will publish and distribute regulation pamphlets after the regulations are approved.

The Commission is recommending that the following members of the Commission be re-elected for the following periods and the respective dates of their expiration:

MEMBER	PERIOD
Mr. J. H. ...	July 11-1984 to July 11-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 18-1984 to Aug. 18-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 20-1984 to Aug. 20-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 22-1984 to Aug. 22-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 24-1984 to Aug. 24-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 26-1984 to Aug. 26-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 28-1984 to Aug. 28-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 30-1984 to Aug. 30-1987
Mr. ...	Aug. 31-1984 to Aug. 31-1987

\*Area 2B will close with Area 2A when the 2A quota is taken and proper in the next scheduled opening.

Members of the Commission will receive the ballot for the 1984 election on or about August 1, 1984.

The Commission is recommending that all members of the Commission, including special interest groups, be required annually to provide more complete and timely information for management of the national fisheries. Licenses and permits will be distributed through the Commission's information system. All members must be notified of the Commission's activities and be required to participate in the Commission's activities.

The Commission recommends that the quota for the 1984 election be 1000 and that the quota for the 1985 election be 1000. The Commission also recommends that the quota for the 1986 election be 1000. The Commission is also recommending that the quota for the 1987 election be 1000. The Commission is also recommending that the quota for the 1988 election be 1000.

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### Crab Observer Report Available

The Council approved a final report on the crab observer program supported from Council programmatic funds and conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The study's objective was to gather in-season catch data on species and sex composition, size frequency, fecundity, and discards. The program took place in the Bristol Bay area of the Bering Sea beginning shortly after the opening of the Bristol Bay king crab season on September 10, 1982 and continued through the king crab closure in October. The program was again initiated during March and April of the 1983 Tanner crab season.

The report will be printed as a Council document and should be available soon. Please direct any inquiries to Judy Willoughby on the Council staff.

### Research Proposals Requested

Each July the Council submits a package of research proposals for programmatic funding for the next year. In order to adequately process these proposals, the Council is requesting that proposed research be submitted prior to their next meeting scheduled for the week of March 26. At that time the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will screen the proposals for agency review using three guidelines:

1. research must pertain to a Council FMP;
2. research must be short-termed (2 years or less); and
3. funding for the project must not be obtainable elsewhere.

The proposal must have the following sections: Short Title, Relevant Fishery Management Plan(s), Objectives and Need, Expected Benefits, Work to be Performed, Urgency and Duration, Budget Estimates, and Data and Originator of Proposal.

Please contact Clarence Pautzke on the Council staff for further information.