

Public Testimony

Agenda C-3 - Pollock Roe-Stripping Amendment

Wally Pereyra, ProFish Int'l. Favors Alternative 5. Asked that NMFS avoid the use of product recovery rates in implementing regulations. The product recovery rates used last year were not realistic; they initially had to discard or not extract roe to keep within the guideline percentages. Recommended observers be allowed to set the PRR if they're used so that all legitimate operations can comply without discarding roe. The Council needs to clearly establish their intent so NMFS will be able to carry it out in the regulations. Seasonal apportionment can have benefits -- reduction of bycatch of halibut and crab and maximization of the groundfish harvest when stocks are offbottom. Supports the AFTA proposal for semi-annual season for pollock in both the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutians. Suggested 50% for both halves of year in the Gulf of Alaska; in the Bering Sea, 60% of the initial TAC (after reserves) should be allocated to the first half during 1/1-4/15. Any quota not taken could be allocated to the second half for continued fishing. Suggested starting second season around 7/1 or allow NMFS to look at the total amount of pollock available and expected catch rates, and then work back to start the fishery at a time to allow pollock to be harvested before the end of year.

Jerome Selby, Kodiak City Mayor. Urged adoption of Alternative 5, continue the ban on roe-stripping and the quarterly allocation. So far, it looks like this has worked under the emergency order. Suggests continuing the system for a full year to see how it works. Their continued concerns are biologic and economic.

Paul MacGregor, AFTA. Support AFTA proposal: continue a ban on pollock roe-stripping. Also, for the Bering Sea/Aleutians, split the seasons as suggested by Wally Pereyra. Do not prohibit bottom trawling for pollock which has a relatively low bycatch.

Chris Blackburn, Alaska Groundfish Data Bank/John Sevier, Alaska Pacific Seafoods. Support Alternative 5, which has worked very well in the Gulf. The quarterly allocations have allowed them to maximize production and maintain consumer acceptance based on quality and availability through the year.

Joe Plesha, Trident Seafood. Trident's Akutan plant is becoming more dependent on pollock from the Bering Sea. Supports Alternative 2, prohibition of roe-stripping. Use recovery rates or simply prohibit the discard of pollock regardless of what the recovery rates are. Realizes that a recovery rate is easier to enforce but have heard that whole cod ends have been discarded if the percentage of roe isn't high enough; this should be made illegal. If Council can't find a way an efficient way to prohibit roe-stripping, then begin starting date for pollock after the roe season.

John Dolese, Emerald Seafoods. Supports Alternative 2, and concurs with the previous comments that regulations are made to prevent flagrant roe-stripping; but previous PRRs were a problem. Quarterly allocations have been represented as a one-time deal to gather information for further management of the resource. If that is the case, then until data are gathered and analyzed, Alternatives 3, 4 and 5 are premature. Does not support any split seasons or later starting dates in the Gulf of Alaska or Bering Sea/Aleutians until data are gathered and analyzed.

Agenda C-4 - Sablefish Management

David Wallen, F/V KESIA DAWN. Support IFQs with the operator as the owner of IFQ. If something workable can be put in place for blackcod, then maybe it could be put in place for other fisheries.

Steve Fish, Port Alexander. Favors IFQs with the operator as owner of the IFQ. Permits to operators would also help keep the composition of the fishery and avoid permits from accumulating to large corporations.

John Sevier, Kodiak Borough Mayor. The Borough has passed a resolution against IFQs. Feels the Council is moving from managing fisheries to managing fishermen. IFQs will put people out of work. Their request for a community development program for all areas where fisheries occur to allow new fishermen in and young people to enter is not in this proposal. Feels IFQs will be sold outside Alaskan communities. This program would remove the incentive to be a good fisherman; fishermen need diversity and stable fisheries. If the system is going to be changed, the new one should show a clear improvement - this one does not; it seems to be a substitution of a new set of problems for the old.

Dick Thummel, F/V PROVIDER. Against IFQs; the owners will be those who have the most money and can afford to wait for long-term returns. Start-up costs for young fishermen will be prohibitive. Efficiency is required in open access, with IFQs, only money is needed. Also - owner of vessel should not have exclusive right to IFQs. The draft analysis has ignored the impact on skipper and crew of loss of access to IFQs.

Kevin O'Leary/Jack Hill, Kodiak. This system is too vague; he has seen boats go out once this year just to keep eligible. Crews will be shut out, and afraid it will spread to other fisheries; the wealth will be concentrated in a few hands. The analysis defines efficiency as the fewest amount of dollars to produce fish, but economic well-being and efficiency is in the eye of the beholder. Need to maximize resources to provide an industrial base and economic development for Alaska. An IFQ system is going to put the relationship of the fishermen and onshore processors at risk. They will not receive a large enough portion of traditional catch to make the living they have made in the past; to make up they will have to value-add at sea and cut costs. Such a radical change is unnecessary; there are other ways to address the problems in the fishery such as gear restrictions, alternating fisheries, and exclusive registration.

Lloyd Pedersen, Petersburg. Under the participation dates of 1984-89 he finds himself completely shut out. He has fished for many years, but not in the EEZ past the cut-off date. Feels it's very unfair that newer entrants have preference over older participants.

Thomas Will, Anacortes. He's been a crewman but worked up to owning a boat. There have been a lot of changes in longlining for halibut, blackcod, etc. in last 5 years. Favors IFQs because he doesn't see that anything else will work now. Maybe a limited entry program back in 1983 or 84, but not now. But thinks the Council should avoid the problems of the state system. Should implement limited access for halibut at same time - allow retention of halibut when fishing sablefish, and vice versa. Thinks professional crew members will benefit - they can go from vessel to vessel at convenient times. Thinks owner/operators should have the shares.

Dennis Hicks, Sitka. Favors IFQs and thinks all longline species should be included at same time. The proposed system is backed by a large part of industry; their association voted unanimously for it. He thinks a domestic market for sablefish could be established if the fish could be handled better.

Harry Noland, Seward. Favors open access. The IFQ system reminds him too much of what happened to the small American farmer - they don't exist any more. Farms are owned by corporations and foreigners. Small fishermen have to be efficient at what they do to survive. IFQs based on past performance isn't a good idea either; things like illness, learning curves, etc. have an impact on that.

Mark Lundsten, F/V MASONIC. Favors IFQs. The current system promotes unprofessional fishing practices and does not promote safety or conservation. IFQs can work, but there are some problems. Second and third generations of fishermen have to be considered, foreign ownership; monopolies, etc. The halibut fishery should be dealt with at the same time. The whole groundfish complex should be dealt with as a unit. IFQs should be issued to a person, not a corporation. Freezer longliner category IFQs could be issued to a corporation or company but not be interchangeable. Urged the Council to act now on sablefish and don't delay on halibut.

Jeff Stephan, UFMA. Urged the Council to reject the IFQ system because it's cumbersome, complicated and expensive. There will be a major social and economic change as a result and the current situation doesn't warrant such a major change. There will be more problems created by the system. Believes the Council should stick to conservation-oriented management using traditional management tools.

Mike Mayo, Sitka. Favors IFQs. Waste, gear loss, and poor safety are problems with the current system. Supports ALFA's position except that he favors a community development provision.

Linda Behnken, Sitka. As a deckhand she won't receive IFQs but strongly supports adoption of the system. Her concerns are waste, gear loss, and safety. IFQs will distribute effort, allow fishermen to work more slowly, and take better care of bycatch. Current corporations should be grandfathered in but not be allowed to purchase additional quota. Vessel size classes would eliminate the fears of shoreside processors. There should be a 2% cap, by area, set on the total amount of IFQs that an individual can possess.

Dan Falvey, Sitka. Supports IFQs. Current management can't handle the fishery as it is today. There are too many boats in too small an area; traditional management tools may help some, but won't keep the fishery from expanding. Supports the idea of vessel size classes; it's important to maintain the current nature of fishery as much as possible. Also suggested a 2-year moratorium on leasing. IFQs belong in the hands of the fisherman; there is a great concern about corporations accumulating a large share of IFQs. That is something that has to be avoided; current corporations could be grandfathered in; but after that only natural persons could own IFQs. Caps should be by area; supports 2%, but would like to see a poundage figure of 2% of the 1990 TAC on accumulation.

Robert Wurm, KLVOA. Against IFQ system. Thinks staff is biased. Many assumptions in analysis are inaccurate. No evidence that integrity of the fishing industry will be maintained. Economic efficiency may improve, but the economic impact on individual fishermen and their families and communities is too high a price to pay.

Nick Delaney, Kodiak. Responding to a question regarding what people can expect to pay for share quotas, he estimates that the value on a yearly quota in various fisheries, including blackcod and halibut, could be up to 10 times the value of a landing.

Jan Standaert, DSFU. There are too many general assumptions made in the analysis. There seems to be no provision made for aspiring boat owner/operators. Any final system should include some provision for them.

Michael Woodard, DSFU. IFQs don't provide anything for crew although they are responsible for catching the fish; need to guarantee them a future in the industry.

Jim Berquist, DSFU. If there are only two choices, open access or IFQ, there will be a lot more people making income under open access. If IFQs are chosen, the Council should consider allocations for up-and-coming fisherman and make shares affordable.

Brian McKenna, DSFU. Opposes IFQ proposal as it is now because there's no provision for crewmen or deckhands and he doesn't see that he and others would be able to afford to move up in the industry.

Rick Balsa, FVOA. FVOA feels that it is of the utmost importance that the Council take action to put an IFQ system in place. Ownership should go to vessel owners with a 2% limit on ownership and no restriction on the 2- year limit on transferability of IFQs. If class sizes are used, then restrictions should be placed on them; owners should be required to actively participate on the vessel.

Arne Lee, Seattle. Lost gear, loss of fish, increased effort and waste of lower-value species are all reasons to implement an IFQ system. He doesn't think current management measures will solve these problems in the long term. The system should have a mandatory review and comment period in five years.

Paul Clampitt, F/V MAJESTIC. Favors IFQs. There are too many boats involved in the fishery to make traditional management measures effective. Thinks bycatch and highgrading would not be a problem under IFQs. Safety definitely is a factor--under the olympic system, with short fishing periods fishermen are forced on the grounds in poor weather--IFQs can resolve this issue.

Brian Gregge, DSFU. Against IFQs because they put a public resource in the hands of a few people. Current program is too vague - who will own them in 5 or 10 years? Need more specifics before a decision can be made.

Kris Norosz, PVOA. Shares concerns of others about coastal communities and shoreside operations and foreign ownership of IFQs. Also sees major problems with open access as it is now--safety, bycatch, etc. After much discussion, PVOA does support IFQs, with certain conditions: IFQ owners on board; based landings between 1986-89 (prefer all 4 years counted and no consideration for not fishing during oil spill year); IFQs should be non-leasable; vessel sizes - support 3 sizes: 0-50; 50-75; 75-over to help maintain present composition of fleet; IFQs should go to the name on the fish tickets; greater weight for more recent participation; 1% cap on control of IFQs; review of system in three years; keep ability to make technical adjustments in the hands of the Council.

Jack Crowley, FVOA. In favor of IFQs; initial share to ownership of vessel; requiring owner to be on board could be a problem for multiple-person ownership. Regarding crew members - it's always been difficult to get started; the investment and responsibility lies with the owner. IFQs will help solve some of the problems of bycatch, safety, and markets.

John Crowley, FVOA. Thinks an IFQ system is needed, but also need to know more of the actual operating details of the system. Initial allocation should be issued to owner of vessel. Review in 5 years would be acceptable. Doesn't agree with having an owner/operator on vessel; actually might inhibit crew members from taking control of vessel and becoming a skipper.

Bob Brophy, Icicle Seafoods. Opposed to IFQs. Believes they are the largest purchaser of longline product in Alaska and are concerned that over a period of years IFQ ownership could be controlled by a very few. Thinks it would create unemployment in their shoreside plants and create income redistribution. They would have to redistribute fixed costs to other fisheries. Whatever the Council

does, they should preserve a strong shoreside industry. Use a moratorium as an umbrella for time to look at alternative proposals.

Cory Crowley, FVOA. As a young person he finds it difficult to anticipate a future in longlining to support a family. IFQs may be the only way to survive.

Linda Kozak, KLVOA. They believe even with all the restrictions, an IFQ system will facilitate unfavorable changes - especially corporate or foreign control of IFQs. Also think caps on ownership are unenforceable. Believe significant highgrading and bycatch will occur and the Council will be pressured to raise the TAC. Requested that the Council maintain open access and work on addressing problems in the sablefish fishery.

Vic Horgan, Ocean Beauty Seafoods. Haven't yet used the tools available under status quo - open access, area/gear restrictions, etc.

Shari Gross, HANA. Strongly opposed to IFQs for sablefish and halibut. Recognize there is an overcapitalization problem and should take steps to solve it, but not share quotas. Problems with the system include possible monopolies, highgrading, corporations or foreign interests buying up the quotas. There are too many loopholes and gray areas in the proposal which could cause irreparable damage. HANA urges the Council to address the problem, issue a strong statement against IFQs so speculation will stop, implement tools that exist under status quo (gear/depth/area restrictions, etc), and move forward with a moratorium. If traditional tools don't work, apply 1985 cut-off and use a license system.

Pete Knutsen/Dean Adams, Seattle. Strongly support IFQ with refinements suggested by FVOA: owners should be aboard boats; provisions made for freezer boats. Using area/time closures, etc. are only band-aids. Also concerned for crewmen and processors.

Mark Hall, Steve Hintz, F/V MAJOR. Oppose IFQs; won't be able to afford to buy shares to get into fishery. Concerned about foreign buying or backing owners of shares. Should re-evaluate current system and not make such a drastic change. Exclusive registration and tighter quota management would be better way to go.

Charlie Johnson, Kodiak. Against IFQs or any form of limited access. Those systems don't allow young people to enter fishery without major investment. The blackcod fishery will take care of itself; people who are not serious don't stay long. Protect the stocks; but let everything else operate as is.

Jay Stinson/John Sevier, Kodiak. Concerned for the health of the industry; economic health of communities of Alaska and the future of independent fishermen. IFQ plan does not address the dynamics of a multi-species industry. The proposed plan deals with economic efficiency; does not deal with social aspect - retraining of displaced fishermen, etc. Concerned about large corporate/foreign interests as opposed to local economies. Also concerned about putting in a program on a trial basis - once the investment is made, there is no going back. Reevaluate the impacts of an IFQ system. Status quo is not the answer, either, but maybe other options could be found.

Pete Kendrick, Kodiak. Opposes IFQs; recently spoke with a New Zealander who worked for a fishing company to acquire IFQ shares. Larger companies had the ability to lease the shares to fishermen who did not have enough for a viable operation; the fishermen were "over a barrel" and were forced to lease at high prices. The spirit of the law was not accomplished.

Matt Doherty, U.S. Marine Corporation. Against IFQs. The market is the best guide in who will survive. Displaced fishermen will jump to other fisheries and cause problems. A few will end up with a majority of quotas.

John Bruce, DSFU. Have in the past supported a limited access system. However, traditional crewmen may possibly be eliminated from ownership without a major investment. There should be some consideration for crew. In the S/W Region a provision is being used that would give credit to crewmen for years spent on deck. Hopes the Council will give crewmen and deckhands a possibility of ownership.

Neil Sandvik, DSFU. Against IFQs as they are now proposed; but with some changes they might be preferable to status quo. The Council has waited too long to act. The base year should be 1988 or earlier; there should be a cap on ownership with a pool for new entrants; no value to permit; permit should go to owner, not the vessel; no transfer of allocation; retired permits should go to the pool; and fishermen should be allowed to retain catch of one pound of halibut for every seven pounds of blackcod caught.

Steve Joner/Dave Sones, Makah Tribe. Regarding a community development program, their dependency on fisheries was documented when their treaty was signed. Because of the decline of resources since that time they have been struggling to regain their fisheries. They have recently developed a halibut fishery with special quotas. Their fisheries development program includes sablefish in Alaska; the community development concept should apply to coastal communities in Washington and Oregon as well as Alaska. Apportionment options seem prejudicial against communities outside AK. One percent of the TAC in S/E Alaska would not provide much opportunity. Community development quotas for sablefish should be fixed for a period of years. Strongly urged Council to include community development quotas as part of any quota system.

Harold Hoehm, FVOA. Believes IFQ system is a viable chance to keep fishery going; with current management tools doesn't think that will happen. Overcrowding is incredible; bycatch problem for halibut is increased because they're forced to fish in places where they are abundant. They used to be able to avoid them, but now there are just too many boats. It's time for action.

James Phillips, F/V NANCY K. Supports IFQs although he realizes it's not the total answer. Thinks it's better than what's going on today. Would prefer no value on a share.

Eric Olson, FVOA. They no longer support license limitation because won't reduce the number of vessels in the fishery. They have decided that IFQs are preferable to the status quo. The sablefish fishery is going the way of the halibut fishery which they asked for action on several years ago.

Walter Sargent, Kodiak. Opposed to IFQs; they are much too complicated and costly to implement and hard to manage. Thinks there are several options that haven't been used - trip limits, etc. Believes the resource belongs to everyone.

Agenda C-5 - Moratorium; C-6 - Inshore-Offshore

Gary Painter, Oregon. There's much confusion within industry about the moratorium as to what the parameters will be. Industry can't plan because they don't know what the rules will be.

Dennis Reynolds, Cascade Fisheries. Urged the Council to seek legal guidance regarding the appropriate control date before issuing public notice. There's enough confusion at this time as to an appropriate date and if the Council issues notice of a 1990 cut-off he thinks it would be open to legal challenge. Any action should be directed to conservation of the resource and not toward

protecting certain segments of the industry. Thinks some sort of moratorium is needed, just doesn't think the Council should act without more information and legal advice.

Jim Ellis, S/E Shipyard Assn. He has serious concerns about issuing a notice with a retroactive control date without some justification for the date chosen. The possibility of a moratorium with a retroactive date puts current projects under construction in jeopardy. The Council's contemplated action leaves everything in doubt; nobody knows what the final system will be and it leaves industry up in the air about future planning.

Paul MacGregor, AFTA. AFTA supports the implementation of a moratorium on further entry into fisheries under Council jurisdiction at the earliest possible date. Any cut-off date should be accompanied by a "drop-dead date" by which vessels must be in the fishery. Regarding the observer program, there are a lot of problems, but considering the short time since implementation, it's progressing as well as expected. Now is the time to consider expanding the program over all fisheries under Council jurisdiction, particularly crab catcher vessels. Regarding the inshore/offshore issue, AFTA submitted a letter to the Fishery Planning Committee and asked that it be entered into the record.

Ted Smits, NPFVOA. Because of the Council's piece-meal approach to limited access, they have supported a moratorium. However, their concern is that they requested that the Council issue a moratorium and not implement IFQs until further studies are done. Their association has suggested withdrawing their support for a moratorium unless there is a target date. Regarding the domestic observer program, using private contractors is not the best system. The program should be administered within NMFS which will result in better data and a more efficient program. The State-administered crab catcher/processor observer program has had a lot of problems and needs Council scrutiny.

Morris Hanson, Seattle. He has been a crab fisherman since the early 1960s, but has lost his boat. He is in a dilemma over the moratorium because he's unsure whether a new vessel could qualify. He hopes the moratorium will allow for more flexibility in the various fisheries. Also, regarding the retroactive date - many crab fishermen were fishing when it was announced and they haven't had time to comment on it.

Paul Clampitt, F/V MAJESTIC. In favor of a moratorium for the entire groundfish fishery. Doesn't think slowing down the sablefish decision and instituting a moratorium is prudent. He doesn't think the Council can cover all fisheries at this time; it's taken five years to get this far on sablefish.

Kevin O'Leary, Sunrunner Alaska Corp. They are involved in obtaining a vessel and feel they are in jeopardy under the proposed moratorium. The only effective way is to issue a date that reflects enactment of the moratorium itself.

Steve Finley, Emerald Seafoods. Supports a moratorium, but any vessel that meets the provisions of the Anti-reflagging Act should be included. They are concerned about the vessel length increase provision; they are already in process of increasing over 20% for installation of a fish meal plant. Also concerned that a retroactive date will not stand a court challenge.

Jim Wexler, Swan Fisheries. Supports a moratorium as long as vessels grandfathered by Anti-reflagging Act are included and there is a "drop dead" date. Any moratorium should apply to all fisheries under Council jurisdiction. The Council should seek legal and Secretarial advice on the potential retroactive date and clarify it for industry. Regarding the inshore-offshore issue, the Council needs to examine the problem statement, funding problems should be discussed, and the provisions of National Standard 4, (allocation among fishermen) should be carefully considered when devising any scheme.

John Dolese, Sea Catcher Fisheries. Supports a moratorium with certain caveats, including aggressive measures for gathering data. Any moratorium should also include exceptions for those in the process of converting or building as of the date the moratorium is known. He thinks the date should be moved to June 19, the date of the Fishery Planning Committee meeting. Also concerned about the limitation on vessel length; limits should be on harvests. Regarding the inshore-offshore issue, one segment of the fleet should not be given special privileges over another simply because they live in Alaska.

Doug Gordon, AHSFA. Regarding the moratorium, people already in the system should be able to move from species to species and gear to gear in a controlled manner; their position in the fishery should be preserved. Regarding the observer program, the Council should monitor fishing mortality; need to be assured that the program will account for withdrawal of species under FMPs. Duplication of effort regarding shorebased deliveries should be addressed. Horrified that vessel owners can choose their own time for coverage. Regarding inshore-offshore issue, they are upset with May 4 AFTA letter suggesting joint venture catch histories be discounted to zero.

Steve Hughes, Midwater Trawlers. Favor a moratorium, and wish the Council had acted sooner; thinks blackcod should be included and that it should be retroactive to 1987.

Matthew Doherty, U.S. Marine Corporation. Asked the Council to vote against a moratorium. If one is implemented, vessels lost at sea should be allowed to be replaced, and vessels already under construction or planned should be allowed in. A moratorium should be imposed on harvesters only; the Council's primary responsibility is preservation of the public resource and that should apply only to harvesting. They should be allowed to choose their mode of processing. All previous rights should be maintained. Regarding the inshore-offshore issue, the Council is dealing with economics, not preservation of the resource.

Bill Atkinson, Alaska Frontier Co. The aim of the inshore-offshore proposal is to avoid preempting one segment of the industry by another. This primarily applies to the Gulf of Alaska; it's not a problem in the Bering Sea/Aleutians. Suggests removing Pacific cod from the proposal for the BSAI, and fixed gear should be studied as a separate entity if this proposal goes forward.

Doug Dixon, Marco/AWSC/AWO. Read letter into the record from shipyard(s) representatives regarding the moratorium. Any moratorium will be a hardship on the shipbuilding industry. A moratorium should only be used for emergency purposes; strongly oppose a retroactive date. The Council should act immediately so industry will know how to plan. The Council has all the tools necessary to protect stocks. The worst effect of a moratorium will be the reduced infusion of new technology into the industry. Modification of vessels for meal plants, increases in size for stability, are all up in the air until the Council makes clear its intentions.

Bill Locke, F/V COMMODORE, Lloyd Johannessen, F/V VIKING, John Grouver, F/V SEA WOLF. In favor of the inshore-offshore proposal. The Council must act now to protect fisheries for the future. They need productive fishing grounds closer to inshore plants.

Bill Arterburn, Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Assn. Reiterated the request of the Pribilof Islands for a percentage of the area groundfish TAC for developing fisheries for their areas. Suggested 5% of the total TAC: 60-70% pollock, and 30% cod. They would use fishermen from the joint venture fleet initially and local fishermen would be phased in over a period of time.

Mark Snigaroff, Atka Fishermen's Association. Atka fishermen are opposed to the moratorium as drafted. Without a community development program they have no assurance they will be able to get into the fisheries. The 40 ft. length overall restriction would effectively shut them out in the Bering Sea.

Richard Thummel/Nick Delaney, Kodiak. Regarding a moratorium, they might be able to accept the principle under current fishery conditions, but they have concerns with some of the language, particularly a retroactive date. The whole issue has created an air of uncertainty for investments. They are in the process of buying a "hull" and had signed a contract before the Council announcement in May. Because of the uncertainty they have been unable to complete the contract.

John Doyle, F/V SHAMAN. Opposed to the moratorium because he believes it will lead to future steps in limited entry or a quota system. Fears this additional regulation or additional allocation system would reduce the fishing opportunities. The possibility of a moratorium will force them back into the crab fishery in 1990 to protect all future rights in that fishery. In any future efforts to limit fisheries, ask that length of service in a fishery be considered.

Groundfish Agenda Items

Dan Falvey, ALFA. Favors exempting jig and pot gear from the pending closure in the Gulf. Also favors leaving rockfish management to the State.

Frank Brown, Schoney's Inc. Concerned about availability and stability of cod resource. Their 225 franchises need a stable supply of fish. They spend approximately \$100 million annually for seafood; less than 50% is domestic, but they would prefer more. Urged the Council to try to allow full prosecution of the cod fishery this year and every year. Unexpected closures have put a stress on their product supply and cash flow.

Vern Hall, Kodiak. The cod pot fishery is a clean fishery with low bycatch; he supports its exemption for the fixed gear halibut cap. There is a lot of new effort coming and there will be a problem with preemption of grounds. Eventually there will probably be a request for pot limits; supports a regulation for biodegradable panels, but more workable than the State regulations, and mandatory halibut exclusion devices. Observer coverage is a pretty heavy expense for small operations; once a fishery establishes very low bycatch rates, perhaps observer coverage can be reduced and thus reduce costs.

Ron Cegnar, Jerico/Long John Silvers. He represents 1,600 restaurants in 37 states and Canada. They buy over 50 million pounds of finished seafood annually. Alaska cod and pollock products are an important part of their product and they will expand if product allows. The early closure of the cod fishery and possibly pollock puts them in jeopardy. Need to be able to depend on year-round availability of quality, reliable seafood sources.

Dennis Reynolds, Cascade Fisheries. A major concern is how seasonal apportionment of PSC limits will be accomplished. Regarding the "Penalty box" approach to bycatch, 100% observer coverage would be necessary in order to deal with bycatch limits and apply penalties and/or incentives. Thinks suggested suspensions are too long.

Bert Larkins/Paul MacGregor, AFTA. Written comments submitted. Regarding bycatch regulations, it is absolutely necessary that the bycatch caps be reviewed and possibly revised; possibly roll over Amendment 12a to have something in place for the beginning of the year with Amendment 16a following. Concurs with delaying the yellowfin sole and turbot fisheries until some time in the spring for the same reasons as the AP mentioned. Asked that consideration be given to giving the rocksole fishery a separate PSC and allowing it to open early. Regarding interim specifications of TAC, suggested that Alternative 2 is preferable; it would set TACS for the new season based on the September apportionment decisions. If it's necessary to adjust them as a result of information received in December, the Regional Director has ways of doing that.

David Benson, F/T Ocean Enterprise. Regarding Bering Sea bycatch, early closures are a hardship. With the right tools industry has the ability to police itself. Supports the penalty box system. The character of fisheries must be considered in setting bycatch limits; halibut are deep in winter; shallow in summer. Would prefer that any delay in opening of yellowfin sole fishery apply to JVP only. The present system of assuming 100% mortality on trawl-caught catch is unfair.

Steve Hughes, Midwater Trawlers. Regarding the revised crab & halibut measures, he prefers Alternative 3. Agrees with the 9 target species categories as proposed by the Regional Director. Favors the penalty box program as proposed by the AP. It is important to set initial bycatch rates on which vessels can be judged; that information is needed at the beginning of the year, which they didn't have this year. Provided a letter to the Executive Director for suggestions for bycatch regulations.

Gary Westman, Dakota Management, Inc.. Prefers Alternative 3 for the bycatch amendment. He's opposed to State management of demersal rockfish. Recommended delaying yellowfin sole fishery to May 1991.

Mark Chandler, F/V TOPAZ. Supports delaying yellowfin sole fishery to begin in April which will minimize bycatch and maximize harvest of the target species. Supports the AP recommendations on the penalty box system.

Mark Goddard - Representative of Canadian Fisheries. Canada is very concerned about the slow pace of action of the U.S. on the bycatch of halibut. Canadian halibut fishery depends on fish migrating through the Bering Sea. They are encouraged with the domestic observer program and some recent bycatch measures. Opposed to any addition to halibut bycatch cap for this year.

Bob Trumble, IPHC. Favors Alternative 3 of the bycatch amendment alternatives. Supports an incentive package and sanctions. These actions may improve the bycatch situation but are not long-term solutions. Need more incentives rather than penalties for the long-term. Caps should be reevaluated. For the Gulf of Alaska, they support Alternative 3, Option D, separate bycatch limits for pot and longline gears. Recommend keeping pots in the management plan, but because of low bycatch rates perhaps they could be exempted by regulatory amendment. Incentive package for the Gulf of Alaska could benefit from a penalty box approach; however, the Bering Sea has different needs. Supports biodegradable panels and halibut excluders in groundfish pots. They don't have a recommendation for the definition of midwater trawl but hope that any Council decision will maintain the lower bycatch rate that is common to that gear.

Erling Skaar, Seattle. Bycatch problems may be solved by different methods of harvest - he suggests automated jigging machines. They have experienced less than 1% halibut bycatch which could allow fishing for cod year around with little bycatch.

Doug Gordon, AHSFA. Agrees with Steve Hughes' testimony. Support Alternative #3 and the common-sense approach in Steve's letter. Supports penalty box approach; if it is not implemented, then supports splitting up the PSCs. Would support the waiver of confidentiality of administrative observer data if necessary. NMFS should set initial bycatch rates against which individual rates could be judged.

Dave Fraser, AHFSA. Regarding the bycatch model, there are problems with it that make it difficult for the public to comment on the assumptions.

Steve Joner, Dave Sones, Makah Tribe. Reiterated their concerns over halibut bycatch and support of IPHC recommendations. Recommended that bycatch be reduced dramatically in 3-5 years.

Ralph Penland, Arica Seafoods. Involved mostly in bottom trawling; closing entire Bering Sea to bottom trawling would affect his family and 32 employees. His biggest concern is the assumed high mortality rate; this year they had no notice or idea what their target would be or how they were progressing. There's no incentive to lower mortality rate. If given realistic bycatch and mortality rates, and progress reports in season, they can compare with where they are and try to improve.

John Winther, Petersburg. Recommended extension of Amendment 12a; maintain halibut caps in 12a. People in high bycatch rate fisheries can move to other areas and still catch codfish. Don't raise caps for remainder of 1991.

Ted Smits, NPFVOA. Supports Alternative 3 of the bycatch amendment; individual vessel accountability, and incentives and disincentives (penalty box). Need to start thinking about bycatch retention. Supports management of rockfish by the Council. Would like to see a well defined set of legal gear specified in the FMPs. Support the halibut excluder device, biodegradable panels for groundfish pots, and the trawl definition.

Robert Wurm, FVOA. Supports Alternative 3, and halibut management Alternatives 2 and 3.

Arni Thomson, ACC. Supports the halibut excluder device. The Council should maintain flexibility in gear types; there is a lot of gear development in progress at this time. Regarding Steve Pennoyer's letter on bycatch caps, he's attended the Ad Hoc Bycatch committee meetings and they did have a lot of discussion about caps, frameworking, summer surveys, etc.

Dayton Alverson, NRC. Reviewed a NRC report on bycatch for the Council.

Hans Hartmann, Aquatic Resources Conservation Group Regarding the overfishing definition, Alternative 6 provides the most protection. It reduces chances of stock collapse more than the other alternatives. Regarding bycatch management, supports implementation of a incentive program to reduce bycatch; however programs proposed will not achieve a long-term reduction of bycatch to a absolute minimum level.

Ken Allread, Western Alaska Fisheries. They need product year round; the quarterly allocation of pollock is one way of doing that; also developing codfish pot fisheries should be allowed to progress with a separate bycatch cap.

Chris Blackburn. Have discussed the AP penalty box program; it has flaws but for 1991 it would be acceptable. Likes the credit system in the long term. Bycatch is low in the pot fisheries but in the future the Council may have to look at a pot limits if the fishery expands. In exempting pots from the halibut bycatch cap, the Council should carefully examine the criteria that will be used for exempting that gear or area from caps. Regarding an overfishing definition, favors either of the ones with no threshold; only three fisheries out of 28 have empirical data to set thresholds.

John Dolese, Sea Catcher Fisheries. Supports Alternative 3. Does not support quarterly release of bycatch. Supports a penalty system but with extensive appeals system. Need release of information by NMFS so their boats can determine how they're doing related to the cap.

Kris Norosz, PVOA. Supports halibut exclusion device and biodegradable panels on for groundfish pots; suggested a separate cap for pot gear.

David Harville, Kodiak. Supports extension of pot and jig fisheries for the rest of year. Asked Council to develop long-term plans for the expanding pot fisheries; there is a potential crisis with grounds preemption and ghost fishing and the possibility of bycatch of crab in the pot fishery. Also,

need to have pot limits. Vessel owners should be accountable for gear, no gear should be left on the grounds, and all pots should be labelled with the name of the vessel.

Bill Orr, Golden Age Fisheries. Prefers Alternative 3. Agrees with the proposals to encourage clean fishing, but should not to tie fishermen's hands in the process. Supports the penalty box proposal and the status quo on demersal shelf rockfish management.

Jeff Stephan, Charlie Johnson, Jack Hill, Kodiak. Support omission of pot gear from bycatch framework. Support biodegradable panels and halibut exclusion devices. Pot limits may be in order. In favor of a prohibition on longline pots. Support penalty box approach and extending it to all gear. Pot fishery is a clean fishery; they are conservation minded; hope to be able to work out the grounds preemption problem within the community.

Bob Pfutzenruter, Cook Inlet Processing. Pot boats are their primary gear group. Halibut bycatch is minimal in pots - there are problems in the fishery, but industry should be given the chance to work out solutions. Urged the Council to separate pots from other gear groups and exempt them from the bycatch closure for the remainder 1990.

Bob Trumble, IPHC. Halibut Commission supports harvest of groundfish with low bycatch. Supports exemption of groundfish pots with excluder devices from the cap in the Gulf of Alaska. Would support exemptions for some experimental gears as long as they are monitored and data gathered to evaluate bycatch rates. Generally opposed to an inseason increase in halibut bycatch not based on sound conservation justifications.

Steve Hughes, MidWater Trawlers Co-op. Current figures show 7/10 of 1% bycatch in pots; joint venture operations had 1/10 of 1% in flounder. The Council should take a closer look at these figures. MTC supports the request for additional halibut bycatch and the extension of the yellowfin sole fishery.

Ken Allread, Chris Blackburn, Al Burch, Charlie Christenson, Jack Hill, Arni Thomson, Jeff Stephan. Support exemption of the pot fishery from halibut bycatch cap for the remainder of 1990. Hope to work together to resolve the preemption of grounds problem as they arise. Asked that observer information be relayed to managers as quickly as possible for purposes of management.

Doug Gordon/Dave Fraser, AHSFA. Support the request for additional halibut bycatch for the yellowfin sole fishery in concept. Regarding development of the pot fishery, they are not opposed, but have concerns. Gear accountability - marking of gear is important. There needs to be a central position where fixed gear operators can report position of their gear to avoid gear conflict and also for gear conflict resolution.

Harold Sparck, Yukon Kuskokwim Task Force. Regarding AP vote on the winter herring savings area - stocks are not rebounding; they are still in trouble, especially in the Nunivak area. Residents request that an emergency regulation be passed if there is any more bottom trawling this year in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Chris Fife - Wants to be able to harvest the entire groundfish quota; dirty fishermen should not be allowed to shut the whole fishery down. The Council has to set effective caps and have effective enforcement and accounting methods.

Matthew Doherty, U.S. Marine Corporation. Should allow pot fishing for true cod beyond the closure date. Premature closure will cause hardship on people of Kodiak. Suggested a pot limit and that all pots be labelled; however, against longline pots in the Gulf. Supports 100% observer coverage paid for by user fees/fish taxes similar to the State of Alaska's program.

Dave Harville, Kodiak. Supports AFTA's request for additional allocation of halibut for bycatch in the Bering Sea for the yellowfin sole fishery. Supports the testimony from the group from Kodiak.

Gary Westman, Mark Chandler, Kodiak. Supports the DAP request for additional halibut bycatch in the Bering Sea; a huge portion of the groundfish TAC will be left on grounds if not approved.

Paul MacGregor, Bert Larkins, AFTA. Submitted a written proposal for additional halibut bycatch for 1990 in the Bering Sea so that the yellowfin sole fishery could be continued.

Shari Gross, HANA. Opposes the request for increased halibut bycatch for 1990. There should have been more information on the proposal before the Council meeting. It might have merits for further scrutiny for future years, but not for 1990. In light of IPHC's concern that the bycatch rate was miscalculated, it would behoove the Council to look further into it. Support program for future years that will give incentive for clean fishing and lowering bycatch rates. Asked Council to recommend to RD not to grant request.

Robert Wurm/Nick Delaney, KLVOA. Supports the request for emergency action to exempt Pacific cod pot fishery from halibut PSC for remainder of 1990. It will be a good opportunity to prosecute a fishery with little or no bycatch of other species. Does not support an increase in halibut PSC as requested by AFTA. Pots should have halibut excluder device and biodegradable panels and there should be a pot limit in the Gulf of Alaska.

Ted Smits, NPFVOA. They support any group of fishermen unable to pursue their fishery because of bycatch problems. A program is needed under which these fisheries can be pursued

Bruce Robertson, Kodiak. Supports emergency action to exempt jig fishing from the halibut cap. The fishery has a minimum halibut bycatch. Supports pot limits and a size limit for jigging vessels.

Kris Norosz, John Bruce, Arni Thomson, Rick Malsed, Fisheries Conservation Action Group. Regarding the request to augment the bycatch caps in the Bering Sea, there has been no formal request or notification before the meeting, therefore it is not fair to the rest of the industry to comment at the last minute. Concerned about the possible loss to crab fisheries. The resource is the most important factor. This year's experience will serve as an incentive to clean up bycatch rates next year. Keep caps.