

SCIENTIFIC & STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

September 27-28, 1978

Sitka, Alaska

APPENDIX E

The Scientific and Statistical Committee met in the afternoon of September 27 and again in the morning of September 28. Seven members or their alternates were present.

Tanner Crab

SSC reviewed amendments proposed to the Tanner Crab FMP for 1979 season. No FMP is actually in place and therefore we are still not in a position of updating an adopted plan. Our views have not changed that the existing draft needed to be minimally changed and in place for the 1978-79 season. We have been presented with further changes at this meeting for the 1979 plan version.

Some items of suggested change had to do with modification of the Japanese fishing area in the Bering Sea. No data was presented to the SSC on this summer's fisheries, catch and effort distribution, size and species composition of the catch or new assessment survey information for these specific areas. The SSC has requested this information and understands the information will not be available until the January meeting. We cannot make any recommendations on these proposals at this time.

Item 5 - Kodiak harvest levels: data will not be available on this recommendation until the next meeting.

The SSC notes that it has not been given any real data on other specific changes at this meeting. Alternative three simply says what type of changes are anticipated but presents no numbers or analysis of the effect such changes could have on management strategy.

Membership (Charter Modification)

Two persons with marine mammal backgrounds are being considered for the SSC:

Mike Tillman, Dep. Dir. NMFS, Marine Mammals

John Burns, ADF&G, Fairbanks

Resumes on both these individuals will be circulated for SSC review prior to the next meeting.

We recommend Jack Robinson as Vice-Chairman and request the Council consider increasing the size of the SSC to 11. We would hold one seat for an economist, probably whoever is hired to replace Don Collinsworth by ADF&G.

Troll Plan

SSC is planning its meeting on October 25-26 in Seattle at NWAFC in advance of the November 2-3 Council meeting. We will review public comment on the troll plan and any other material in support of that and the halibut FMP and make recommendations on these plans to the Council at their next meeting.

Due to meeting conflicts several SSC members are not available November 2 and 3 and we would not plan on holding a formal meeting at that time, although members would be present to give our report. We request Council staff to provide us with necessary information and reports to support our October 25-26 meeting.

King Crab Modeling

A proposal by Phil Katz of the University of Illinois was reviewed. ADF&G has provided some funding support and additional support is being sought from National Sea Grant. The Department and Dr. Katz are seeking SSC and Council endorsement of this project. Based on verbal review of Department regulations and the experience of some Committee members with this proposal we anticipate a favorable recommendation to the Council, but since copies of the proposal were not made available to members ahead of time we have deferred final decision to our October 25-26 meeting.

Pandalid Shrimp Workshop

The Steering Committee appointed at the last meeting has not officially met but has corresponded, had telephone conversations and one informal meeting. The workshop is scheduled mid to late January or early February in Kodiak. The dates have not been firmed up as we are still resolving conflicts and arranging facilities. A tentative list of topics and potential speakers have been identified. This list of topics will be reviewed by the Committee preceding the next SSC meeting and a

tentative agenda and list of invited speakers should be available by the next Council meeting. A preliminary budget has been developed and is available for Council review. The budget identifies a total cost of \$14,000. The only source of funding to date is \$4,000 from the Alaska Sea Grant Program.

Quarterly Report - Investigation on the Continent of Origin of Sockeye and Coho Salmon in the Area of the Japanese Landbased Fishery

The SSC reviewed the Quarterly Report on the Investigation on the Continent of Origin of Sockeye and Coho Salmon in the Area of the Japanese Landbased Fishery. NMFS informed us that with regard to contract support they are planning on providing funds one way or the other and continued Council funding will not be an issue. We note that Council may wish to comment further if this program is not funded or if other programs are changed to fund it. The final report is due in a month or so and the SSC will review.

Incidental Species Committee

Dr. Bevan represented the SSC at this Committee meeting. A series of suggested modifications/concerns regarding a NMFS report on the subject were surfaced. These were briefly discussed and will be circulated for final comment October 25-26.

Presentation by Carl Mundt

A presentation was given to the SSC by Carl Mundt representing the Japanese Long-liners. Request for Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan relax 500 m isobath to 400 m. One month more data on NMFS observer and U.S./Japan research cruise.

Interim Report - Study to Determine the Effects of Hydraulic Clam Harvesting in the Eastern Bering Sea

The Committee noted that due to several factors the contractor was not able to positively identify dredge tracks during the survey. Since identification of dredge tracks is critical to the success of this study, we urge Tetra Tech, Inc., to use every analytical technique available of in-track samples. If available, a member of the SSC will attend the October 17 meeting of survey participants (industry, NMFS, Tetra Tech) to express the views of the Committee.

Final Report - Investigation of Joint U.S./Foreign Ventures in the Developing Commercial Fishery off Alaska

The Scientific and Statistical Committee has had its socio-economic subcommittee studying this report by the University of Alaska. While none of the members of this subcommittee were present at the full committee meeting we did receive a written report from them and Dr. Bevan had discussed the report with them. Dr. Gorham was present to answer questions.

The SSC recommends that the report be accepted and that the Council authorize final payment under the terms of the contract.

The SSC concurs with the major recommendation in the report and recommends that the Council adopt a policy which calls for a phase out of joint ventures. We believe that this can be adopted as a temporary policy pending data on joint venture operations. The key question is can we require only domestic processing without adverse impact upon the domestic harvesting sector? This cannot be measured until we have some observations on the operation of joint ventures and domestic groundfish processing.

We noted that the options presented were not recommendations but rather alternate views on what might occur under various possible circumstances. Without actual experience with joint venture operations it is not possible to evaluate the effects of such operations on the domestic harvesters or processors. The picture is changing rapidly and the present report is already out of data.

There are some recommendations made in the report for further research required. The SSC has had a study group which reported on socio-economic data needs. Other agencies have also wrestled with this problem. To the best of our knowledge we are not close to a solution. The SSC will pursue the question of research needs.

Dames & Moore Report on the Socio-Economic Impacts of Commercial Herring Fishery in the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Area

The Committee reviewed the final report and concluded that it conformed to the requirements of the contract and we recommend that it be accepted by the Council.

The report was well written and provides information not previously compiled regarding the utilization of herring for subsistence in the study area. A subcommittee of Steve Pennoyer, George Rogers and Ed Miles was appointed to evaluate the management alternatives and recommendations of the report as they relate to the Bering Sea Herring Management Plan. They will report to the Committee at the next meeting.

Report of the Halibut Working Group

The SSC reviewed the recommendations of the halibut working group regarding methods of preserving the IPHC research and management program for Pacific Halibut. We concur that continued research and strong management of the resource is imperative if the halibut stocks are to survive and recover. We believe the proposal provides a logical course of action and endorse the concepts of the working group report regarding continuation of these activities. We urge the Council to take immediate steps to support legislation which would provide for continuation of IPHC functions under the NMFS and the transfer of the highly qualified scientists and support staff of the IPHC.

The outline appeared to be out of order in terms of timing of events that must occur. For example, we would presume that the legislation required to transfer these functions to NMFS should be pursued immediately. We also note that recommendations based on nature and degree of "transboundary" stock movements will be difficult until the term is more adequately defined.