



Agenda Topics

Virtual Council meeting, February 5th, 8th-12th 2021

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Council Chair will then welcome everyone to the meeting and Council members will approve the agenda.

B. REPORTS— *David Witherell*

In this section of the meeting, each agency represented on the Council provides a written management report. After all the reports, the public has a chance to provide comment, and the Council will discuss action they need to take, either at this point or at the end of the meeting.

C. MAJOR ISSUES/FINAL ACTION ITEMS

C1 BSAI Pacific Cod Pot Catcher Processor LLP License Endorsements - *Sam Cunningham*

The Council will consider reducing the number of LLP licenses, from 8 to either 4 or 5, that can fish for BSAI Pacific cod as a CP using pot gear. The purpose is to provide stability for a fishery confronting reduced harvest opportunity and shortened seasons, weighed against the loss of future access for some license holders.

C2 Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology - *Sara Cleaver*

The Council will review a proposed action to amend the BSAI Crab, Scallop, and Salmon Fishery Management Plans to ensure they are consistent with federal requirements for bycatch reporting. The action outlines current bycatch reporting methodologies and additional clarifications within the FMPs that may be needed to ensure consistency with federal requirements.

C3 Small Sablefish Release – Initial Review -*Jim Armstrong*

Commercial fishermen have been catching lots of sablefish that are much smaller than what they usually catch. Fishermen would like to throw these fish back, but regulations say they have to keep any sablefish they catch. The Council is thinking about changing the rules and will review an analysis that looks at what could happen if they allow fishermen to throw small sablefish back.

C4 Crab PSC Limit Reductions – Preliminary/Initial Review – *Sarah Marrinan*

The Council is considering action that would set crab bycatch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands groundfish trawl fisheries to the lowest limits when the same crab fishery is closed. This is an effort to make an obvious link between the crab fishery and bycatch in the groundfish fisheries.

C5 BSAI Crab - Norton Sound Red King Crab Specifications – Jim Armstrong

A team of technical experts (the Crab Plan Team) met in January to discuss the status and appropriate harvest level for Norton Sound red king crab as well as to review scientific information on Alaska crab stocks. The Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee and the Council will review the report and recommendations of the Plan Team and will set harvest limits based on that information.

D. OTHER ISSUES

D1 Community Engagement Committee Final Recommendations – Steve MacLean

The Community Engagement Committee final report contains recommendations from the committee to improve the Council’s engagement with rural and Alaska Native communities. The Council will review the report and may decide to enact some of the recommendations.

D2 EFP Application and Report – Anna Henry

An exempted fishing permit (EFP) allows fishing activities that would otherwise be prohibited, to occur for limited experimental purposes that could benefit fisheries and the environment. The SSC will hear a report on an EFP in the AI pollock fishery that was completed last year, and the SSC, AP and Council will hear an application for an EFP that would test improved designs in gear to minimize halibut bycatch in the Bering Sea flatfish trawl fishery.

D3 Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan – Diana Evans/Diana Stram/Kate Haapala

The Council will receive an update on ongoing work under the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) including progress updates from the FEP’s Climate Change and the Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Taskforces.

D4 Groundfish and Crab Economic SAFE Reports – Jon McCracken

The SSC will review economic status reports for the groundfish fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska, and the crab fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.

D5 Marine Mammals Status – Steve MacLean

Scientists from the Marine Mammal Laboratory at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center will inform the SSC of any conservation concerns or unexpected research results for marine mammals in Alaska.

D6 SSC Workshop - Groundfish Specifications Risk Table - Diana Evans

The SSC will hold a workshop on how to improve a tool (the risk table) that is used in the fall to evaluate risks associated with setting harvest limits for groundfish species.

E. STAFF TASKING – Diana Evans, David Witherell

The Council will listen to public testimony about existing and new management measures that the public may be interested in and will provide feedback to staff and the Council Chair about how to prioritize staff work on existing and new projects. The Council will specifically discuss the agenda for the April Council meeting.

The Council will also review its committee membership and identify agendas for any upcoming committee meetings.