

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke   
Executive Director

DATE: November 22, 1991

SUBJECT: Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish Specifications for 1992

**ACTION REQUIRED**

Review request for a season delay for the 1992 pollock non-roe fishery.

**BACKGROUND**

The Council received two petitions under Item D-2(d)(1) requesting a change to the June 1st starting date for the 1992 pollock non-roe season. One petition requests a September 1 starting date. Such a change would require a regulatory amendment and the staff would need to be tasked with the analysis after considering other workloads already tasked. The Council may want to publish some form of advanced notice of proposed rulemaking to scope out the issues involved with delaying the non-roe season, review the comments in January and then determine how quickly to move ahead given the magnitude of the concerns raised.

ASSEN NICOLOV

Chairman and President

November 5, 1991

Mr. Richard Lauber  
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Lauber:

I am writing to request the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council to consider and act on an issue of importance to Oceantrawl Inc. We would ask the Council to set the starting date for the 1992 Alaska Pollock B Season in the Eastern Bering Sea at the December Council Meeting.

As I am sure you can appreciate, it requires a minimum of six months in order to make sound business planning decisions for our fleet. Knowing the starting date of Season B by the end of December will enable us to adequately schedule the activities of our vessels and prepare our crews. Not knowing what the date is will leave us in limbo without the ability to make any proper plans at all.

As a corollary to the necessity for a firm opening date with adequate lead time, we would ask that the date for the 1992 Pollock B Season begin September 1st.

Our request is based on the following rationale:

1. We have witnessed that the pollock recovery rates when producing pollock surimi and fillets during the latter part of the year are substantially higher than the recovery rates in June, July and, to a certain extent, in August. As you know, the pollock in June is still very watery and without too much flesh as a result of the tremendous physical effort the fish has to undergo during the spawning season. Thus, from the same metric ton of pollock we catch from September through November, we can produce much more surimi and fillets than we can produce from the pollock we catch from June through August.

It seems to us that the pollock management effort should try to maximize the return to the industry from this precious resource. There is no better way to maximize returns than to allow the pollock fishery to take place when the recovery rates are the highest. In addition, the quality of the surimi and fillets produced from pollock in the months of September through November are substantially better than the quality of the surimi and fillets produced from pollock caught in June through August. By producing high quality product, we can obtain higher revenues for this product. A higher quality additionally increases the overall return that the industry can generate from this precious resource.

# Oceanrawl

Mr. Richard Lauber  
November 5, 1991  
Page Two

2. Scheduling September 1, 1992 as the starting date for the B Season will allow us to participate in the 1992 salmon fisheries, particularly the pink salmon in the Gulf of Alaska. In order to participate in the 1992 pink salmon fisheries, we need to have the B Season begin at the earliest on September 1, 1992.

As we all know, 1991 was a very difficult year for the salmon fishermen. The salmon industry is clearly in a difficult situation which can only be solved if new salmon markets and new salmon products are developed. Postponing the beginning of the B Season to September 1, 1992 will allow us to enter the salmon fisheries. This will result in not only providing the salmon fishermen with additional processing capacity but will also result in the development of new salmon products and the creation of new markets for salmon by the factory trawlers.

In fact, the factory trawler fleet has access to completely different markets and processes completely different products for these markets than the established salmon processors. Thus, by simply changing the starting date, you will open the door for the expansion of the salmon markets and will create substantial opportunities for new markets and products which will be available to the salmon fishermen of Alaska.

3. By allowing the factory trawlers to have access to the salmon fisheries, you will extend the utilization time of the factory trawler fleet and, therefore, help us to work two additional months of the year. This will benefit not only the factory trawler operators but will provide two additional months of work to our crew employees which, as you know, number in the thousands. In addition, we will also continue to supply our vessels with fuel, parts, groceries and other consumables which support indirectly thousands of jobs in those industries which support the factory trawler fleet.

It appears that there should be a better system than having the pollock and salmon seasons running concurrently for three months while the factory trawlers tie up at the dock for the remaining three months of the year, and at the same time, there is much more salmon available during the salmon season than can be handled by the present markets.

4. The best time to sell surimi to our major market, Japan, is during the months of October, November and, particularly, December. If the surimi is processed from June through August, it has to be held in cold storage for at least two to three months prior to consumption. This not only decreases the quality of the surimi but also adds to its cost which is ultimately borne by the surimi producers.

# Oceantrawl

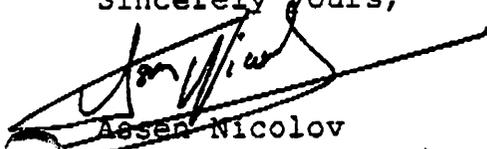
Mr. Richard Lauber  
November 5, 1991  
Page Three

Thus, by allowing the production of surimi at the time when the demand in Japan is at the peak, you will automatically eliminate two to three months worth of cold storage holding costs and increase the returns we can generate from the sale of surimi to Japan. In addition, you will enable the kamaboko producers to use a fresher surimi and therefore, produce better quality kamaboko. In our opinion, ultimately, the Japanese kamaboko manufacturers will be willing to pay a higher price for better, fresher surimi which will further increase the returns to the industry from the pollock resource.

5. Finally, we might note for your information that during the past few years pollock catch rates in the months of September through November are almost equally as good as those of June through August.

Thank you very much for considering our request. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Assen Nicolov

AN:ld

# ProFish International, Inc.

---

**PROFISH**

November 12, 1991

Dr. Clarence G. Pautzke, Executive Director  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
605 West Fourth Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Re: Starting date of "B" season

Dear Clarence:

At the September Council meeting we took emergency action to move the starting date for the "A" season for pollock back to 20 January to address certain bycatch concerns. I recall that the issue of the starting date for the "B" season in 1992 was also raised, but we decided to take up this matter at a later meeting.

In the past several weeks I have been queried by a number of people regarding their concern about the need to delay the starting date of the "B" season. They have cited bycatch concerns, lower product yields and discards (full utilization), and interest by salmon fishermen for alternative markets. In addition I am concerned regarding the need to synchronize the opening of the Bering Sea summer seasons with those we have established for the Gulf of Alaska to minimize adverse management impacts.

In light of the above concerns I am requesting that the issue of delaying the opening of the "B" season for pollock in the Bering Sea be placed on our agenda for consideration at the December meeting.

Sincerely,

  
Walter T. Pereyra  
Chairman

cc: Bob Alverson  
Joe Blum  
Rick Lauber, Chairman  
Bob Mace

November 26, 1991

via fax: 907 271-2817

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Attn: Richard Lauber

Re: Delay of June 1 Pollock Fishery opening

26

Dear Mr. Lauber:

It has been brought to our attention that there is a proposal to delay the June 1 pollock fishery until Sept. 1. We would like to go on record as opposing that delay. By delaying the fishery, factory trawlers would most likely then enter salmon processing, an industry that is already suffering. Factory trawlers would not create new markets for the salmon, but only continue to flood the existing markets, which is the reason for the depressed industry already.

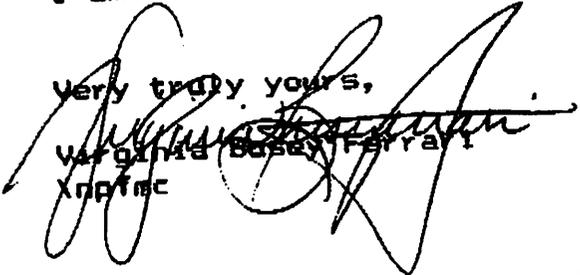
It is understood there is significant pressure because of the situation in Prince William Sound last season. Had the fishery been opened on a regular schedule, there most likely would have been sufficient capacity to handle the run. We in fact waited almost 20 days to receive fish on our processor. If the factory trawl fleets enter the Bristol Bay market or the pink salmon market, as I stated earlier, the products will go to the same markets. In addition, we now have the Russian products flooding the traditional salmon markets, and most likely will also begin dumping other products on our markets.

I understand that the factory trawlers must operate as long as possible for a continuous cash flow, but processors of salmon are faced with a 3 week run that accounts for almost 100% of our operation. The shore side processors of salmon cannot pick up and move, and the floating processors are not designed or equipped to compete with the factory trawlers for bottomfish.

If the pollock season is delayed and the factory trawlers enter the salmon fishery, you will most certainly see many in the industry suffer irreparable hardship.

I am available to further discuss the issues at any time.

Very truly yours,

  
Virginia Busey Ferranti  
Xnpfmc



PROFISH SEATTLE

---

PHOENIX PROCESSOR LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

---

November 27, 1991

Mr. Richard Lauber, Chairman  
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Lauber:

On behalf of the S.S. Ocean Phoenix, I would like to submit testimony regarding the start date for the 1992 Alaska Pollock "B" Season.

As you are probably aware, the Ocean Phoenix is a large mothership operation which works with a fleet of 7 to 8 small catcher vessels. These vessels include: the Oceanic, Margaret Lynn, Vesteraalen, Mark 1, MarGun, Pacific Fury and Nordic Fury.

We believe that the "B" season start date should be July 15, 1992. This start date will accomplish several of the goals which are in the best interest of the industry and the resource including:

1. Minimize bycatch of herring

This past 1991 "B" season, during the month of June, the problem of herring bycatch peaked. A July 15 start date should minimize or eliminate this bycatch problem and open up the high incident areas around Unimak Pass to trawling.

2. Maximize production yields

By early July the physical condition of the pollock resource has improved to the point where our operation can consistently maximize both the quality and the recovery yield of the product we are producing. During the July and August months in 1991 we achieved recovery rates for surimi production in excess of 20 percent.

Page 2

### 3. Market Conditions

If one presumes that maximizing the value of the fishery products produced from the fishery resources of the U.S. is in the national interest, then one should consider the dynamics of the world marketplace as it pertains to maximizing the value of U.S. fishery products. In 1991, by conservative estimates, over 60 percent of the EEZ pollock that was produced into surimi was exported to the Japanese market. The Japanese market is similar to the U.S. market in that demand often coincides with certain pre-eminent national holidays. For example, in the U.S. the consumption of turkey coincides with Thanksgiving, hot dogs with Independence Day, and fish and seafood during Lent. One of the main national holidays in Japan is New Years. It is a five day celebration marked with much gift giving and consumption of traditional foods. Members of the Council are no doubt familiar with the herring roe business and how it relates to New Years. Similarly, surimi is a product utilized in many traditional kamaboko (fish cake) items that undergo a marked increase in consumption and price throughout the New Year's celebration. In order to meet this demand U.S. surimi must be in Japan by October at the latest for secondary processors of kamaboko products to manufacture their finished products and get them to market in time for New Year's sales. In order to ship surimi to Japan by October it must be harvested and processed prior to late September in the EEZ. An opening of "B" season later than July 1 for pollock would limit the amount of U.S. surimi that could reach the Japanese market in time to capitalize on this increased value. For example, if the "B" season was to start as late as September 1, it would mean that approximately 30 percent of the product would reach the market place in time for reprocessing for the Japanese holidays. The product value for the remaining 70 percent of the "B" season quota would have a diminished value. This value need not be lost if the fishery were to be prosecuted at an earlier time. A July, August and September fishery would maximize the product value of the pollock resource as it relates to the Japanese market.

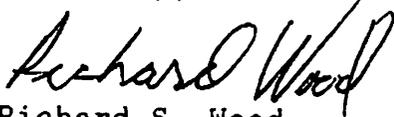
Page 3

4. Vessel safety

Typically, the weather in the Eastern Bering Sea is the best during the late Summer. With the Fall Equinox (September 21), the weather patterns generally turn for the worst as the Winter low pressure systems begin to move through the area. We are always concerned about vessel safety on both the small catcher vessels and even on the larger ships and factory trawlers. Starting the fishery on July 15 would promote a safe environment by allowing the fishery to be conducted during the best weather time of year. This would also promote efficiency in harvesting the resource during what is generally one of the better fishing periods.

For the above reasons we believe that the council should take action to set the start date of the 1992 Alaska pollock "B" season to July 15. Thank you very much for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Richard S. Wood  
Vessel Manager  
S.S. Ocean Phoenix

RSW/dmf

Transcription of Council Discussion of Pollock Non-Roe Fishery

Agenda D-2(d)

Tape: Side 74

12/07/91

9:04 - 9:35 a.m.

---

Pollock B Season

Brent Paine: Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned yesterday, the Council did receive two petitions to delay the June 1st starting date for the pollock non-roe season. One petition is referenced to a specific date, September 1st, and the other petition has no date. You have had public testimony on this issue yesterday. I provided to you a timetable of what it would take to implement this petition. At this meeting you would need to recommend to the staff to begin analysis of a regulatory amendment. In addition, the Council may want to publish some form of advance notice of proposed rulemaking to scope the issues involved with delaying the non-roe season and review those comments of that advance notice in the January meeting. And then determine how quickly you would like to move ahead depending on the magnitude of the issues involved.

Richard Lauber: Any questions?

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Cotter.

Larry Cotter: Council may want to publish some form of advance notice of proposed rulemaking to scope out the issues involved. What does that mean? It seems to me that if we are going to do this we are going to have to take emergency action. Right? And we would need to take that action in either in January or in April. I guess what I'm focusing on is the phrase "to scope out the actions," because that requires staff time, or seems to suggest staff time, is that necessary if we are going to do an ER in April, or consider doing an ER in April, and we have other items that may demand staff time in the interim. Do you understand my question Clarence?

Clarence Pautzke: I think what we're saying here is that the final action by the Council has to come in April for the wheels to grind through the Secretary to have something in place by June 1st to delay the season to whenever, July or September. We need to back off from April. I'm not sure how much work can be done between now and the end of the year because of all the specifications process and everything, so what I think the NMFS has suggested was using some kind of an advanced notice proposed rulemaking and I imagine then we would try to initiate the full development of the regulatory amendment and have it out for public review before we get to the April meeting. We've done that in the past. This isn't a plan amendment because the dates are not in the plan. I'd like to hear from the NMFS on that course of action if the Council prefers it.

Richard Lauber: Ron would you collaborate on this?

Ron Berg: Thank you Mr. Chairman. What we had considered back in Juneau on the timing of the subject was that we might have the option, given staff loads, workloads, and so forth, of pursuing a regulatory amendment, therefore, not having to get into an emergency rule mode at all. Given the workloads we were considering that perhaps a draft environmental assessment for this season change, given particular alternatives the Council might wish to recommend even at this meeting would cause us then to develop a regulatory amendment as a draft probably providing it to Council staff, probably during the month of February. If Council wish to review that action would probably require a telephone

conference call on that draft, so we would be able to submit that document to Washington D.C. for propose rulemaking.

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman, would you lay out the timetable, Ron, when that would have to go back to D.C. to be in place by June 1st?

Ron Berg: Well, we would like to get it back to Washington D.C. in the month of March. We would give it our best shot to get that into proposed rulemaking sometime during April, request a comment period of perhaps 30 days which would probably consume April. The Council itself meeting in April might be able to comment on the regulations that were proposed. Following that April meeting, we would take final comments or prepare a final rule submitted with the goal of submitting a document to Washington D.C. in May, and possibly remove the 30-day cooling off effectiveness period so that the document would be in place on June 1. That's the target, of course.

Clarence Pautzke: We would need to have a proposed rule on the streets and published by the time we met in April so we could comment on the proposed rule and then the final rule would be in place by June 1st.

Ron Berg: That's correct. And so you would want to consider the draft EA that we would prepare for this, EA/RIR, and the only mechanism we saw for you to do that possibly would be a telephone conference call that would be scheduled.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Cotter.

Larry Cotter: I would assume that the EA would need to be fairly comprehensive, would it not? The issues involved there you've got people talking about July 1, July 15, September 1, September 15, we have bycatch considerations in July and in August, and then Chinook bycatch considerations in November and December. You have salmon economic considerations. You have Gulf of Alaska considerations. You have small boat safety related considerations. Sounds like a big job. Do you have the time to do that type of a job?

Ron Berg: Mr. Chairman, of course that is correct. It would be a fairly rigorous analysis to do a good job on this. It would probably require an Economist from the Center, probably one person from the Council staff, as well as one person from the Juneau staff to be developing this. At least we know where the databases are and we know the issues that would be involved, and would be relying on existing data to carry out the analysis. But I agree it is not a trivial analysis when we do it.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman, is the staff available to do that?

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman, I guess it sort of depends on where we end up at this meeting. We haven't dealt with staff tasking overall. I see something coming down on quarterly cod allocations and other questions, I'm not sure we can answer that.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Pautzke.

Clarence Pautzke: I don't think there is anybody available between now and the end of December. I think that's why we were thinking in the form of possibly in the Council newsletter, possibly in the Federal Register through some other notification process, to identify the issues out there, to have the

public speak to us between now and the next meeting and say these are the issues you need to look at. Then we would have to see what is the magnitude of the analysis that would have to be done considering the issues that were identified. I can't see with the specifications process, and all the bycatch things that are going to have to be done between now and the end of the year for 19/14 to tidy that up and get it off, that there's anybody to really much on this.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Cotter.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman, I think that there's merit to the idea of modifying the B season and I think generally we've heard from the public that there's merit. Maybe differences into how to do it, but there's merit. I think we've also concluded that there's merit to making a modification to the A season start up date, we've done that by emergency rule this year. It kind of sounds to me as if the analytical process is probably going to be one that doesn't allow us to do this as easily as we think and we probably are going to end up looking at emergency action in April to implement it even if we move ahead with the analytical package. Maybe what we ought to do is kind of follow Mr. Pautzke's idea and get comment from the public and move ahead with looking at making a decision on this April. But in the interim perhaps look at pursuing the analytical approach through regulatory amendment to deal with 1993 and address both the A season and the B season, and perhaps take a look at overall at how we're dealing with pollock. Just an idea.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Dyson.

Oscar Dyson: When you look at the effects it has on all the fisheries, such as the small boats put them into a fall fishery, and what it does to the bycatch of the other species, such as salmon and crab, and then what it does to the Gulf, I would hope that we could let it go for another year and then take the action. I think what happened in the Gulf, as far as inshore/offshore, has a big bearing on it and all those things I'd like to see it go status quo. Then do all your work and study and make your decision later on.

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Pennoyer.

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman, I was going to also mention the other shoe dropping, and that is the question of the Gulf and what you could do in the Gulf if in fact you proceeded on this course. The course laid out looks like it might even work and get in place by June 1st. As a corollary if you want to do something different in the Gulf, that would require another whole set of regulatory actions and I'm not clear on how we would propose doing that. There are a number of things you could do in the Gulf but none of them look real easy, including emergency rule delay of seasons, depending upon what you picked. If you picked July 15th for example, you might delay seasons until July 15th. That might fit under our current sea lion protection measure amendment anyhow. If you did something more dramatic it might take something like a registration area which might or might not be feasible by rather exhaustive process of either plan amendment and/or emergency rule. It gets complicated. It's not just looking at what you might do in the Bering Sea.

Mark Peterson: Mr. Chairman? Is there a motion on the floor? The testimony that I heard on this issue was very mixed. It seems to me that the issue was brought up initially because some floating processors were interested in exploring the opportunities in relation to new salmon products, etc. But as I mentioned, the testimony was very mixed from several different parties here. The main problem as I see it is keeping the B season in sync with the Gulf of Alaska. Some of the companies, even this year under status quo, explored the salmon processing issue so the status quo isn't a total barrier for the exploration of this. We

delayed the B season originally to June 1st from April 1st to allow for better fish quality; granted the fish quality gets better as the year goes on. I also looked at the B season starts on the 15th of July, that this would allow the Bering Sea trawlers into the Gulf on June 1st and also on July 1st, there's certainly a lot of heartburn from some segments of the industry with that. The start of the B season on June 1st, which is status quo, favors the weather issue that I've heard quite a bit. But it also hurts the product yield issue. Because of all these things I move that the status quo be maintained.

Oscar Dyson: Second.

Richard Lauber: Discussion?

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman?

Larry Cotter: I'd like to yield to Mr. Pereyra.

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman, as far as the issue of impact on the Gulf is concerned, it is my understanding that we've already taken care of that through our inshore/offshore decision. That was the main impetus behind that decision. It was a problem that developed in the Gulf about preemption, so I don't see where that is an issue right now. That's already been done and the Secretary of Commerce is moving down the line to approve that. It seems, at any rate, if in fact that is a continuing problem then I think maybe we made the wrong decision - inshore/offshore.

Richard Lauber: Can I ask a question of the maker of the motion? Was it your idea as to what we would do as far as working towards doing something in 1993 would then be left open, your motion is that we would make no effort to take action that would be effective during 1992, but your motion did not address whether we do or don't decide to attempt to do something by plan amendment, and so forth, for 1993.

Mark Peterson: My motion was limited just to 1992, but I would encourage something to be started now in terms of a plan amendment or whatever if you want to make a change.

Richard Lauber: I just want to make it clear that you weren't foreclosing the possibility of doing something at a later time.

Mark Peterson: That is correct.

Richard Lauber: Excuse me for interrupting but I wanted to make that clear. Mr. Cotter.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if this is in conflict with the motion or not, I think that if some of these major items, for instance the inshore/offshore issue, if that is resolved by April and we have some sense of what's going to happen and if there is the industry may be coming forward with new information, or what have you. Perhaps a consensus recommendation as to how we might deal with 1992, does your motion allow for us to move ahead with consideration of taking emergency action at the April 1992 Council meeting to possibly deal with recommendation to delay the start of the B season in 1992? I don't want to preclude that opportunity if the stars align themselves in such a way that this becomes possible.

Richard Lauber: Excuse me for jumping in here, but I believe that what it would take would be a rescission of our action. It obviously can be done, but since the motion affects the 1992 you would have to rescind your action and then you could take action. But with the motion you couldn't. Is there any further discussion?

Henry Mitchell: Mr. Chairman, I move as a substitute motion that the Council move forward with the regulatory amendment setting the B season date for August 20, 1992.

Wally Pereyra: I'll second it for discussion purposes.

Henry Mitchell: Mr. Chairman, this is doable. I think that its a very likelihood that the concerns about preemption in the Gulf are going to be resolved by the situation with the inshore/offshore amendment. I think there is a crying need for allowing for the ability of certain segments of the industry to participate in the salmon processing and its going to help a significant number of Alaskans who are very hard placed for substantial increase in market development. I think the issues of safety in some cases are being over blown. I think starting the season on August 20th will give significant numbers of small boat fleet enough time to participate in those harvest of groundfish resources. And I think the economic benefits to the whole nation are going to be improved substantially by allowing people to engage in what has been non-traditional fishery processing. Benefits to the state of Alaska will be enormous. Those benefits do not just stay here, they accrue to the whole nation.

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Pereyra.

Wally Pereyra: I'd like to amend the motion to amend the date to July 15.

Richard Lauber: Is there a second.

Larry Cotter: Second for discussion.

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman, I share Mr. Mitchell's interest in moving forward with some sort of amendment. Moving forward with some sort of regulatory action here, I think is appropriate there's been enough interest shown. The one issue though that concerns me most about moving all the way to August 15, besides the market concerns which was expressed here the fact that we would not be getting the product in the market in the proper time, is the issue of safety. There are a number of smaller boats that are operating in this fishery in a mothership mode. With the inshore/offshore decision we made we established an inshore zone. My feeling is that that zone is going to force the offshore mothership fleet outside into the offshore waters in the latter part of the year if Mr. Mitchell's original motion were to go forward. That is going to mean that these boats are going to have to operate in the fall of the year and we know that that's the time of the year when the storms are more severe. Its also going to force the fishery into an area where we can expect it, we are going to be getting some Chinook salmon I believe, and so I don't think that is a good thing to do. If in fact we did go with a regulatory motion that put the fishery into the latter part of the year, with the safety issue, that inshore zone might possibly be called the zone of death because by keeping those boats out there and causing these kinds of safety problems I don't think we want to be responsible for that sort of an action. I think if we are going to do this that a July 15 date is a more reasonable compromise to be looking at.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Alverson.

Robert Alverson: I have two questions: What date did we establish for the rockfish fishery in the Gulf of Alaska, and second is it possible to allow the release of the second quarter quotas in the Gulf to be released on July 15th?

Brent Paine: For 19/24 the Gulf of Alaska rockfish was the 1st of July.

Robert Alverson: And the second question?

Brent Paine: I can't answer your second question. I think NMFS' staff can do that.

Ron Berg: Mr. Chairman, Bob would you repeat that last question with respect to the release of.... were you looking at the halibut PSC limits?

Robert Alverson: No. The pollock quota. If we were to release the second quarter pollock quota on the 15th of July.

Ron Berg: Those apportionments are locked into the FMP as quarterly apportionments and so it would require an emergency rule to change that because those are not only in the regs but they are also in the FMP.

Robert Alverson: I thought it was per fishery. For instance on hook and line we established trimester and by choice the trawl industry wanted quarterly. Could we have a little bit more latitude than that?

Ron Berg: That PSC...

Steve Pennoyer: I think the plan, Mr. Chairman, on pollock locks the allocation of pollack into a quarterly allocation. Additionally, the plan says that you can't roll over more than half. So if you take the second quarter and put it into the third quarter, in effect, you lose half the harvest the second quarter.

Robert Alverson: Mr. Chairman, my thinking was to try to get a maximum distribution of the fleets by this thinking, and I don't think we can take any date and not be aware of the other implications that it may have.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Mace did you...

Robert Mace: I'm concerned about both the amendment and the amendment to the amendment as to doability. We had some reports on the fact that the staff was going to be tied up at least through the year and I'm just wondering just what type of priority we want to set on this and how long it's going to take and what it's going to take away from other things that we are doing, as opposed to the status quo.

Clarence Pautzke: And I think that what we are doing is scoping the issues that are with either one of these dates. Whether it be August 20th or July 15th. We are scoping out that information from industry between now and January meeting and if the staff is available then, based on how big the issues are that are identified then we can go one of two ways. One would be the one that Ron Berg brought up where you would try and have some kind of a teleconference in February, or you would try and have action in April, and then followed by emergency action. But I think we need to know how big a problem it is to analyze first. I doubt much would get done between now and the end of the year other than scoping out those issues.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Cotter.

Transcription of Council Discussion of Pollock Non-Roe Fishery

Agenda D-2(d)

Tape: Side 75

12/07/91

9:33 - 10:21 a.m.

---

Larry Cotter: The motion as I understood it, or the substitute motion, wasn't to do scoping, it was to proceed with development of the regulatory amendment. And, Mr. Chairman, this is an important issue to a lot of folks in Alaska and a lot of folks outside of course, both salmon fishermen and others, but I'm going to have to vote against the motion. And again it's not because I don't think that the concept of the delay in the season has merit, in fact I think it makes a great deal of sense. The only issue is which starting date makes the most sense. If we have extra staff that can do this analysis I'd like to see us take a look at a reduction in the halibut cap, or quarterly apportionments of P. cod. And I think that we can always take care of this through some type of emergency action later in the year and deal with 1993 through the apportionment process. But also, under Mr. Mitchell's main motion, an August 20 date, that takes care of Bristol Bay and their needs, but doesn't really help out Prince William Sound all that much because they have a late hatchery run and those vessels don't just shift from pink salmon to pollock. There is a transition time. I think that if we are going to take salmon into account we need to make sure that everybody who have salmon fisheries that are in need are given due consideration. So I am going to vote against both of these.

Richard Lauber: Any further discussion?

?: Call for the question.

Richard Lauber: The question is on Mr. Pereyra's amendment which would be the July 15 amendment. Call the roll.

Clarence Pautzke: Peterson, yes; Mr. Cotter, no; Mr. Dyson, no; Mr. Hegge, no; Mr. Mace, no; Mr. Mitchell, no; Mr. Pennoyer, no; Pereyra, yes; Mr. Tillion, no; Mr. Alverson, no; Mr. Lauber, no. Failed.

Richard Lauber: Now we have before us Mr. Mitchell's August the 20th date. Is there any discussion. Call the roll.

Henry Mitchell: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Yes, Mr. Mitchell.

Henry Mitchell: My understanding was that the bulk of the Prince William Sound salmon fishery, at least in regards to pinks, is over by that date in most years.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman?

Henry Mitchell: Well, the staff from Fish & Game is here. They are well aware of when the magnitude of that fishery takes place. Don't we have a representative from the state that knows something about salmon?

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Yes, Mr. Pereyra.

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman, the other thing that has always bothered me with this whole debate is when you look at the magnitude of the pink salmon running into Prince William Sound, it seems large relative to other salmon runs, but when you look at it in terms of tonnage, compared to types of tonnage, that this offshore fleet is involved in it's not very much. We've got a fleet that's got thousands and thousands of tons of processing capacity per day. And you may be involving a few vessels in that type of fishery, but you're making a decision here potentially its going to be affecting an entire fleet. So I think you are going to have to look at it in a larger context. So I'm going to vote against it. I think Larry's discussion was right on that we really need a scoping process before we get involved in making any kind of a final decision on this particular issue.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Tillion.

Clem Tillion: Mr. Chairman, it might be small. We lost about ten million salmon in Prince William Sound. The size was small, they were only a 2 1/2 pounds. You can figure the tonnage out real quick on that. But when you figure the dollar value that this would have been worth if it could have been utilized then it starts comparing very well with what you are saying. As far as we would have needed about a September 1 date to have saved those ten million fish. And even then there were some other things involved in that. It's a major problem for the state and our nation to let that much value not be harvested but I don't have solutions either, Mr. Pereyra. I am not interested in picking a date for the Bering Sea that can't work in the Gulf of Alaska. I don't know how to get there from here.

Richard Lauber: Any further discussion? Call the roll.

Clarence Pautzke: Is this on the substitute motion?

Richard Lauber: This is on the August 20th date, the substitute motion, yes.

Clarence Pautzke: Mr. Cotter, no; Mr. Dyson, no; Mr. Hegge, no; Mr. Mace, no; Mr. Mitchell, yes; Mr. Pennoyer, no; Mr. Pereyra, no; Mr. Tillion, no; Mr. Alverson, no; Mr. Peterson, no; Mr. Lauber, no. Fails

Richard Lauber: All we have is Mr. Peterson's motion that there be no change in the B season. Any further discussion?

Wally Pereyra: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Mr. Pereyra.

Wally Pereyra: Yes, I would like to offer an amendment that goes something like this: that in the interim we would initiate a scoping process to look at this particular issue.

Richard Lauber: Is there a second?

?: Second.

?: I'll second.

Richard Lauber: Is there any objection to the...

Larry Cotter: Just a point of clarification.

Robert Alverson: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Okay, Mr. Cotter, and then Mr. Alverson.

Larry Cotter: Objection. Really, I'm just wondering if this is going to come back to us in January and then and so staff will just flush this out a little more?

Clarence Pautzke: We'll have it all laid for you and the implications.

Clem Tillion: Yes, what the options are. It certainly would be nice to utilize the United State's equipment for a little more of the year to more fully utilize species. But it's just not easy.

Richard Lauber: Would you mind if Mr. Pautzke goes and then we'll...

Clarence Pautzke: I was just wondering in the scoping do you want us to put out some example dates such as July 15th, August 20th, September 1st, draw comment on it?

: Yes, that would be reasonable.

Clem Tillion: We want to look at solutions such as an exclusive registration area for the Gulf so that you could open the Gulf and the Bering Sea at different times.

Robert Mace: ... not part of it.

Wally Pereyra: That's a little bit beyond the scope of the scope.

Richard Lauber: Mr. Hegge.

Ron Hegge: I just wonder if this is going on for action that would apply in 1992 or a specified time, or what the object is of this scoping.

Richard Lauber: The motion still says that there would be no action, but it would provide the Council with some information. I'm not suggesting anything but if one did wish to make a motion to rescind our action there would be something upon which to base it or discuss it, or something of that nature. Rather than just....

Ron Hegge: I just feel that significant concerns have been raised....

Richard Lauber: It sounds like I'm debating the motion.

Ron Hegge: It seems that significant concerns have been involved. Very valid ones about the taking of small fish, the taking of herring, and a lot of conservation issues, and yet there is other concerns about the Gulf saying action we took might not be all bad.

Richard Lauber: My understanding is, and the maker of the amendment can correct me, but he's not suggesting that we come up in the January meeting with a full blown Environmental Assessment or Impact or RIR, or anything of that nature.

: No.

: Light haze.

Richard Lauber: Any further discussion on the amendment. Is there any objection to Mr. Pereyra's amendment to the main motion? Alright, call the roll. This is on Mr. Pereyra's amendment regarding scoping, if you like.

Clarence Pautzke: Mr. Hegge, yes; Mr. Mace, yes; Mr. Mitchell, no; Mr. Pennoyer, yes; Mr. Pereyra, yes; Mr. Tillion, yes; Mr. Alverson, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Mr. Cotter, yes; Mr. Dyson, yes; Mr. Lauber, yes. Pass.

Richard Lauber: Now you have the amended main motion before you which is no action but the scoping, which will be presumably given to us, at least something in... is there any further discussion? Yes, Mr. Mitchell.

Henry Mitchell: Mr. Chairman, so if this motion passes then there is no possibility of action on this in 1992?

Richard Lauber: Unless you rescind your action. That is correct.

Henry Mitchell: I can't vote for that. I think it is irresponsible.

Richard Lauber: Alright. Call the roll.

Larry Cotter: Mr. Chairman, I might just point out real quick that we can very well when we receive this document in January and information from the public, we could possibly rescind the action and reschedule some type of action at that time. It's not impossible.

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question to the maker of the motion?

Richard Lauber: Yes, Mr. Pennoyer.

Steve Pennoyer: I think Mr. Cotter asked before, you supported the scoping process. Are you prejudging by the way your motion is stated that we still shouldn't take any action in '92 regardless of what it shows? I'm confused. We could rescind it, but I'm confused as to what the intent of the motion is.

Mark Peterson: My intent of the motion was to maintain status quo until we straighten out what we want to do. Actually we don't need a motion to keep the status quo.

Clem Tillion: If we just decided not to act it would be the same as your motion, with the exception of Mr. Pereyra's scoping group. I think we could just have that alone. Couldn't we? And then you won't put some of us in the embarrassing position of saying no to these people who need a marker.

Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: I don't these people... they have been sitting long enough to know what we are doing and if by realizing that we take no action, we're taking action. Yes, Mr...

Steve Pennoyer: Mr. Chairman, I guess what my concern is that still by taking the action that is proposed we're sending a message out that we are not going to do anything in '92, even if we rescind it later. On the other hand, we have done the scoping process to find out maybe we should do something. It seems

to me the motion should be to go forward with the scoping process and not have the first part of the first part of the motion involved.

Henry Mitchell: You are very bright.

Mark Peterson: Mr. Chairman?

Richard Lauber: Is there..yes, Mr....

Mark Peterson: I would like to either withdraw or amend my motion to accomplish just that. Because I don't want to have us locked in as Mr. Pennoyer says that the message could be interpreted that way.

Steve Pennoyer: The motion then becomes something to go forward with the scoping process and make a decision in January as to whether we were going to take further action.

Mark Peterson: That's...

Henry Mitchell:second.

Richard Lauber: Without objection we will allow it as a substitution motion. Does everyone understand the motion?

Clarence Pautzke: Maintain the status quo until we get done with scoping.

Richard Lauber: No. We don't talk about the status quo. We just talk about, do a scoping on the issue. If this comes back to us in January and we have again not bit the bullet. Alright. Is there any objection to the motion? Hearing none it passes. That completes that agenda item. We'll take a little break.

NOV 29 1991

22 Nov 1991

NPFMC  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage AK 99510

I am a Bristol Bay Fisherman and I am concerned with the problems in marketing our industry is facing.

One remedy is to delay the opening of ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> Bering Sea pollock fishery until the Bristol Bay salmon season is over with. This would allow the factory processor ships to come to the Bay and process salmon, opening new market opportunities for both the processing fleet and the salmon fleet.

Please delay the Bering Sea pollock fishery until the Bristol Bay salmon fishery is over.

Sincerely,



David Harris  
Box 20467  
Juneau AK 99802



## CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED

P.O. Box 939

Cordova, Alaska 99574

(907) 424-3447

November 25, 1991

Mr. Richard Lauber, Chairman  
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Lauber:

I want to ask you to move the second groundfish opening to September 15th. I think this would be advantageous to most the salmon fishermen in Alaska and the factory trawler fleet for a number of reasons.

First, the factory trawler operators that I have talked with have said they feel the pollock are of a better quality in the fall than in the summer. I don't think I can emphasize to the council how important it is to manage for quality. The seafood markets of the 90's are very competitive. It is of the utmost importance that all fisheries be managed to achieve the highest possible quality product. Producing anything less than the best quality is detrimental to the whole industry.

Another issue of concern to the factory trawlers is extending the number of days that they can operate each year. By delaying the second Bering Sea groundfish opening until mid-September the factory trawler fleet will be able to process salmon and thereby add to the number of days that their ships will be operating.

From the standpoint of salmon fishermen in Prince William Sound (PWS), we are desperately in need of additional processing capacity. This past summer (1991) roughly 10 million pounds of product was wasted, roughly 40 seiners out of a fleet of 278 had no market at the peak of the season and almost all the seine fishermen in PWS were on catch limits. We have lost a number of processing companies for various reasons over the last years.

Some of the processors have indicated to me that they would like to trim their fleets. Also, the fact that the major processors had their fishermen on limits suggests that the processors have more fishermen than they can comfortably handle.

It has also become very obvious that the canned salmon industry is groaning under the weight of its inventory. The last three years has seen record numbers of

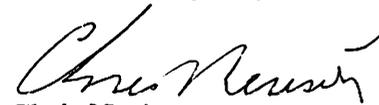
Page Two  
November 25, 1991

salmon return to Alaskan waters and the canned and frozen headed and gutted markets are saturated and depressed to an unprecedented extent.

The factory trawl fleet could provide the salmon industry with the technology and resources to develop new salmon product forms. This would help to relieve the pressure on the traditional markets.

Sincerely,

CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED



Chris Nerison  
Chairman, Seine Division