

ADVISORY PANEL Motions and Rationale

December 3-7, 2019 - Anchorage, AK

C6 SMBKC Rebuild

AP Motion

The Advisory Panel recommends the Council select Alternative 2/Option 2 as the preliminary preferred alternative to move forward for public review and final action. The summary of the alternatives and options are listed below with the preliminary preferred alternative indicated in bold.

Alternative 1: No Action

Alternative 2: Set target rebuilding time frame (TTARGET) for the number of years necessary to rebuild the stock to the BMSY level at a probability $\geq 50\%$. The stock will be considered “rebuilt” once it reaches BMSY. No additional restrictions on bycatch of SMBKC in other fisheries.

Option 1: No directed fishing until the stock is rebuilt.

Option 2: Allow the directed fishery to open based on the state harvest strategy while the stock is rebuilding.

Motion passed 19-0

Rationale:

- *SMBKC was declared overfished in 2018, triggering the federal requirement under the Magnuson-Stevens Act for a rebuilding plan to recover the stock back to more sustainable levels (i.e., B_{MSY}).*
- *Ironically, SMBKC did not become overfished from directed fishing which has been closed since 2016 (closed 8 out of 14 years since rationalization) but is most likely due to environmental conditions.*
- *Also unusual in this case is that the stock in 2019 (1 year later) is above levels that would have triggered an “overfished” designation.*
- *Regardless, the federal requirement stands and a rebuilding plan must be developed.*
- *Of the Alternatives developed, Alternative 1 (no action) is not a legal option and is used solely as a hypothetical scenario for comparison to Alternative 2. Alternative 1 (no action) is used to estimate rebuilding times if fishing mortality fully achieved ABC calculations in each rebuilding year.*
- *Alternative 2 would establish a rebuilding plan that would have greater than a 50% probability of rebuilding the SMBKC stock to B_{MSY} within a timeframe based on MSA’s NS1 Guidelines. Under the*

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Guidelines, rebuilding should be achieved in less than 10 years. If, however, the “biology of the stock, other environmental conditions, or management measures under an international agreement to which the U.S. participates, dictate otherwise” rebuilding can take more than 10 years.

- *Alternative 2 would not impose additional restrictions on bycatch of SMBKC in other fisheries. The analyses indicated that rebuilding time is insensitive to average recent bycatch and only minimally affected by bycatch mortality at maximum historical levels.*
- *Alternative 2 does include options for the directed fishery to either prohibit directed fishery harvest throughout rebuilding (Alternative 2 / Option 1) or allow direct harvest during rebuilding under conditions consistent with the State of Alaska’s harvest strategy as currently described in State regulations (Alternative 2 / Option 2).*
- *The projected time to rebuild SMBKC is between 14.5 and 28.5 years with Alt 2/Opt 1 estimated at 14.5 and Alt 2/Opt 2 at 25.5 years.*
- *Alt 2/Opt 2 was selected because it rebuilds within the required time frame and would allow limited directed fishing if the state of Alaska’s harvest strategy (itself a conservative, conservation-based management approach) indicates the stock is at levels to support sustainable directed harvest.*
- *Responsive to public testimony.*