

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Clement V. Tillion, Chairman
Jim H. Branson, Executive Director

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3136DT
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Suite 32, 333 West 4th Avenue
Post Office Mall Building



Telephone: (907) 274-4563
FTS 271-4064

Certified by: *Donald A. Mackey*
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NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE
MINUTES: September 3-4, 1980
Seattle, Washington

The Scientific and Statistical Committee of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in Seattle on September 3rd and 4th, 1980. The Programmatic Budget subgroup met on September 2nd preceding the full committee meeting. All members were present except for John Burns. The meeting was chaired by Steve Pennoyer.

Programmatic Budget-Research Priorities

The Committee received a report from its subgroup regarding actions taken at the last Council meeting by the Council Finance Committee on the FY 81 Programmatic Funds. Action had already been taken on these items in terms of including them or not including them in the Council budget to be sent back to Washington, D.C. The Council had, however, also asked the SSC as a whole to look at the proposals and see if it had any problems or disagreement with the decisions. In general, the Committee agreed with the positive and negative recommendations from the Council. Comments regarding each proposal are given in Attachment A.

Bering Sea Groundfish FMP

The Committee was given a paper from the Groundfish Plan Development Team entitled "Controlling Incidental Catch of Prohibited Species." Committee members read the paper but did not formally comment on it at this meeting although it served as a background paper for the discussion on salmon and herring incidental catch. The Committee received a presentation from Richard Majors and Dr. Loh Lee Low of the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center regarding incidental catch of salmon in the Bering Sea trawl fishery. Several letters and tables of background information were presented and reviewed. Public testimony on the content of various proposed plan amendments and the time table for discussions of these issues were also received.

The Committee was initially unclear as to its responsibility at this point. The Herring Fisheries Management Plan had not been given to the SSC for this meeting, although the SSC understood that there are options in front of the Council regarding different time/area closures in the trawl fishery which need to be discussed at Sitka prior to sending the plan back to the Secretary of Commerce. The SSC also understood that there were salmon trawl closure amendments proposed by the Bering Sea Groundfish Fishery Management Plan, now under public review, and which would be back in front of the SSC with public comment at the December meeting. Additionally, an amendment had been submitted to the

Bering Sea Groundfish PMP regarding closure of Areas 1 and 2 to trawl fishing during certain months to reduce the incidental catch of chinook salmon. This issue had been in front of the Committee in the past and the Council has asked the SSC to deal with it. It seemed therefore appropriate that some specific action be taken regarding salmon and herring savings/area options and other options that might be applied to reducing the catch of these species.

The result of the SSC deliberations was a memorandum dated September 5th from the Committee to the Bering Sea Groundfish Plan Development Team and the Chukchi Sea Herring Plan Development Team posing certain questions that needed to be answered prior to any recommendations being made on different areas proposed as closures to reduce the catch of prohibited species. The time frame was very short, but various agency people present indicated they would try to provide this type of information by the Sitka meeting.

Since time/area closures by themselves may not be the best option for reducing the catch of salmon and herring in the trawl fisheries, the Team was asked to look at the other options contained in the prohibited species paper, and in particular the economic disincentive option, as they would apply to salmon and herring.

Contracts

ADF&G Data System Contract 78-4

The SSC discussed the final report on this contract with the contract monitoring committee. The SSC concurs with the committee's recommendation and recommends final approval of the contract. The SSC noted that it no longer was represented on the contract monitoring committee and therefore recommended that Rich Marasco be so appointed.

Ocean Salmon Tag Recovery Contract 79-3

The SSC subgroup still has some problems with certain analyses in this report. The subgroup will discuss these problems with the contractor and will be prepared to make a recommendation at the Sitka meeting of the SSC.

Halibut Fish Ticket Data Analysis Contract 80-2

The SSC received the final report on this contract found that the contractor met the terms of the contract, and recommended final approval.

Tanner Crab FMP

Time did not permit review of the Tanner crab NMFS survey data from 1980. The data had not been finalized but would be available at the Sitka meeting.

Salmon FMP

A contractor's report on the Salmon FMP was not available. The contractor did, however, make a presentation so the Committee as a whole was aware generally of the direction being taken and the schedule for review.

SSC Membership

The SSC met in executive session to review the status of membership of the SSC and to review the nomination for replacement for Mr. Bert Larkins. The SSC reviewed the nomination of Dr. Bill Aron as a replacement for Mr. Larkins. The SSC unanimously supports this nomination.

The SSC also reviewed the status of membership and status of its officer. There is concern regarding the actual term of members. Members were requested to indicate their willingness to continue to serve. Dr. Rogers stated that he has to decline continuing participation. The SSC noted that the reason is financial and hopes that something can be done in the future to resolve this problem.

The SSC asked its members to be prepared to discuss committee composition, the charter, and nominations for replacement of officers or members as needed at the Sitka meeting.

SSC/Council Operations

The Committee reviewed a report of the Council Subcommittee on Policy and Plan which met in Anchorage on August 27th. The Committee also reviewed a report of its subgroup (Pennoyer, Larkins, Millikan) on Council operations which had never been formally reviewed by the Committee as a whole. It approved the subgroup report with certain changes and this has been forwarded to the Council under separate cover. In particular, the Committee revised the policy on plan development and plan maintenance contained in the report and would suggest the content of the report and policy as its answer to several of the issues raised at the August Council Planning Committee meeting. Again, the time required in the Federal regulatory process, the inability of the present review process to match events occurring in the fishery, the lack of a clear cut annual schedule whereby Council advisory bodies and agencies can plan their activities for the year, and the concept of a framework vs. regulatory plans emerged as the major problem areas.

King Crab FMP

The draft FMP was unavailable for subgroup or Committee review and was delayed to the Sitka meeting.

Other Business

The SSC formally nominated John Burns to its subgroup on Groundfish Plan Development.