

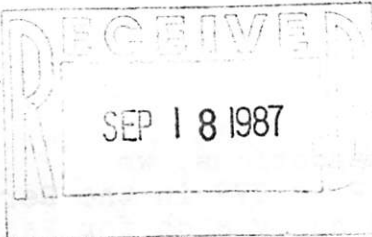
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Recent and reasonably frequent Council mailings have kept you abreast of what's been going on this summer. Though there has not been a formal Council meeting for three months there have been many committee, workgroup and plan team meetings. You've all been involved in one or more of them. Work is progressing satisfactorily on the 601-603 Guidelines for Council Operation and Plan Development. Even though NOAA Administrator Calio has resigned there is still enough momentum, in my opinion, to carry that particular activity to a conclusion. The latest draft, developed by three different workgroups, was sent to you last week. It will be Agenda Item C-2.

The Bycatch Committee, Policy and Planning Committee, Crab Plan Steering Committee and Plan Team, the Observer Committee and others have all been hard at work. Of the 20 working days in September prior to this week meetings were held on 18; both groundfish plan teams, the Crab Management Committee, the Bycatch Committee, the Halibut Management Team, and the Halibut Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group contributed to that total. Council staff, of course, are involved in all of these groups.

We have had a call for programmatic funding requests from NMFS. We've asked the SSC to give us some recommendations and those will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and brought to you for action.

September is when we issue a call for candidates for Advisory Panel appointments. Those are reviewed by the Advisory Panel Nominating Committee who will make their recommendations to you for the 1988 Advisory Panel at the December meeting.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 1668  
Juneau, Alaska 99802

AGENDA B-1  
SUPPLEMENTAL

September 17, 1987

Jim H. Branson, Executive Director  
North Pacific Fishery Management  
Council  
P.O. Box 103136  
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Jim,

The following comments summarize certain management actions we have taken since the September 1-2 meeting of the Council's Policy and Planning Committee. The items are keyed to the presentations in your September 4 letter to me.

#### Sablefish Hook and Line Fishery

As recommended, we reopened the Southeast Outside/East Yakutat and West Yakutat regulatory districts in the Gulf of Alaska, effective noon September 21, for two days and four days respectively. There are 791 mt of sablefish remaining for the hook and line fishery in the first area and 1,090 mt in the latter. Area registration is not required for this opening.

#### Changes in Specifications and Apportionments of Groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutians

We reexamined all information that provided a basis for projecting utilization of DAP pollock in the Western/Central Area of the Gulf of Alaska. Our conclusion was that our projection of 58,083 mt was weighted in favor of DAP and we therefore had little choice but to recommend to our headquarters office that we release 16,800 mt of pollock from reserve to JVP. The annual DAP of 67,200 mt is 57,182 mt more than was harvested in 1986 and represents the amount that could well be harvested by the growing domestic industry, and thus conforms to the requirements of the FMP. It also seemed clear to us that based on the current administrative record the Secretary of Commerce would be vulnerable in any lawsuit that might be brought against him for not releasing the reserve to JVP. We have made the apportionment of 16,800 mt (including 300 mt for bycatch) of pollock to JVP in the final 1987 Initial Specifications for the Gulf of Alaska. The fishery will open in the Western/Central areas effective with the filing at the Office of Federal Register (OFR), expected to occur during the week of September 28.



Consistent with the Council's recommendations, we reapportioned 4,000 mt of pollock from DAP to JVP in the Bering Sea (about 2,000 mt of which was reserved as bycatch for Pacific cod). This action will be accomplished with the filing of the final 1987 Initial Specifications for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Areas (BSAI) with OFR next week. Fishing for the remaining 37,000 mt of JVP pollock in the Bering Sea was reopened September 8 and is expected to be closed some time next week.

Included in the BSAI specifications notice was the reapportionment of 50,000 mt of pollock from DAP surplus to JVP in the Aleutian Islands area as the Council had recommended.

Several reapportionments to TALFF in the BSAI areas for Japan were recommended to our headquarters Allocations Board. As you know, the Board will make the formal NMFS recommendations to the Department of State. Our recommendations did incorporate our careful consideration of the concerns expressed by the Council, particularly with regard to pollock, Pacific cod, and Greenland turbot. It is uncertain when a decision will be announced on this action.

Our final specifications notice for the Gulf of Alaska included the recommendations of the Council (Alternative 3) on the reapportionment of 4,500 mt of flounder in the Central Area to JVP, and increased the retainable bycatch of Pacific cod and pollock by 675 mt and 900 mt respectively. This alternative also provided for increases in prohibited species catches of halibut to 183 mt (+136 mt), sablefish to 169 mt (+121 mt), Pacific ocean perch to 388 mt (+277 mt) and other rockfish to 68 mt (+48 mt).

#### Observer Coverage

We have negotiated an agreement through the Alaska Factory Trawlers Association that provides for 40 percent coverage by NMFS approved observers on AFTA vessels fishing for the remaining 1,600 mt of Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Area of the Gulf of Alaska. The fishery will open when we are assured the observers will be on board, probably September 21. In order for us to conclude arrangements and ensure payment for the observers, we proceeded on the basis that the AFTA vessels participating in the fishery (five, we understand) would share the costs for the observers and that there would be no cost to the Federal government for the voluntary program. The confidentiality of data provisions of the NMFS observer program apply. However, I concur with AFTA that our agreement does not preclude revisiting this item with the Council if the Council wishes to participate.

Sincerely,



Robert W. McVey  
Director, Alaska Region