

Agenda G-1
Appendix B
Number 1

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT TO THE COUNCIL
ON THE PROPOSED
1981 GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH AMENDMENTS

On Tuesday, May 13, a subcommittee of the Advisory Panel met in Seattle with the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Management Plan Drafting Team to discuss the proposed 1981 amendments. Representing the Advisory Panel were: Bob Alverson, Chairman, Al Burch and Jeff Stephans. Present for the Management Plan Drafting Team were chairman Jim Balsinger, Steve Hoag, Phil Rigby, Berry Bracken.

The meeting had its origin in a telephone survey conducted earlier in May in which the Advisory Panel were advised that a separate Advisory Panel meeting in Kodiak was probably not necessary. The Advisory Panel were told that the only action item would be the Gulf of Alaska Proposed 1981 amendments. As an alternative to a full Advisory Panel meeting, a subcommittee meeting was proposed in Seattle in which members of the APs Groundfish subcommittee (Alverson, Burch, Stephans) and any other AP that wish to come were invited.

All of Tuesday morning and most of the afternoon were spent jointly with an SSC subgroup and the Management Plan Drafting Team. All eleven parts of the Amendment package were reviewed and discussed. Later, Tuesday afternoon, the AP subgroup met separately and formulated the following recommendations on the Amendment package on behalf of the Advisory Panel.

PROPOSED 1981 AMENDMENT

PART I

Establish total allowable catch amounts for the incidental catches of prohibited species and impose a mitigation fee.

1. The Advisory Panel endorses both concepts. However, in support of the unanswered questions raised by the SSC and the Management Plan Drafting Team the AP recommends this proposed be reserved and that the Management Plan Drafting Team evaluate other alternative methods to accomplish this control. Hopefully this could be released for public comment simultaneous with the proposed Bering Sea Amendments in June and July. The Panel believed that the proposal should be reviewed with a similar Bering Sea proposal and that simultaneous actions should result in compatible and similar regulations.

Part II

Change the plan year and eliminate any expiration date

The Advisory Panel favors this proposed change.

Part III

Distribute the optimum yield gulfwide for squid, other species, rattails, Atka Mackerel, and other rockfish.

The Advisory Panel concurred with a recommendation of the SSC that a gulfwide OY for squid, other species and other rockfish be approved. Furthermore, that rattails be placed in a non-specified species category with no quota and the gulfwide OY for other rock fish be for one year only for research and experimental purposes.

PART IV

Establish four species categories for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery.

The Advisory Panel concurred with the proposal and also with the placement of rattails in the fourth category: i.e., non-specified species. The panel agreed this fourth category should be for species with no present commercial value, does not appear to have depleted and the OY could be safely set at whatever levels that are required to maintain the directed species fisheries.

PART V

Divide the eastern regulatory area of the Gulf of Alaska into four parts to allocate sablefish OY.

The Advisory Panel concurred with the recommendation of the Scientific and Statistical Committee and the Management Plan Drafting Team to establish the following regulatory areas for the allocation of the sablefish OY.

Western Area
Central Area
Yakutat Area
Southeast Outside
Southeast Inside

The panel further felt that if it became necessary in the future to reallocate unused reserve or DAH to TALFF in that portion of the Yakutat district west of 140° West longitude that the following OY guidelines be used: that no more than 58% of the OY allocated to the Yakutat area be allocated west of 140° West longitude.

PART VI

Specify (a) the authority of the regional director to issue field orders for time and or area restrictions on foreign vessels to prevent gear conflicts and or grounds preemption problems and (b) specify foreign trawl closures during crab seasons in the Kodiak district.

The Advisory Panel agreed the authority of the regional director should be expanded to include these proposed actions. The panel, however, believed a sixth criteria to aid the regional director should be as follows:

(6) Or other factors as necessary to promote the full utilization of a domestic fishery quota and or other factors necessary to insure the full participation of the U.S Fishery in the harvest of the resource.

The Advisory Panel agrees with the concept of a trawl closure around Kodiak to protect the U.S. crab fishing industry. The Panel, however, approved a compromise proposal suggested by Jack Lechner as follows:

From September 15 to February 15 (or during the Kodiak king crab season) the landward area encompassed by connecting straight lines from the most external points of the six Kodiak areas to be closed to foreign trawling.

PART VII

Set a schedule for the release of reserves.

The AP agrees with the proposal.

PART VIII

Prohibit foreign trawling in the eastern regulatory area.

The Advisory Panel agreed with the concept of promoting the fastest possible rebuilding of POP stocks off Southeast Alaska. To that end, the Advisory Panel recommends that POP (the target of this proposal) be prohibited as a directed fishery and only be allowed as an incidental catch. The attached document represents information presented the Advisory Panel and rational for the statement.

PART IX

Prohibit foreign longlining east of 150° West longitude.

The Advisory Panel subgroup generally favored the proposal to prohibit longlining east of 150° East longitude. It was difficult, however, for the subgroup to totally support the proposal. On one hand, the Advisory Panel subgroup believed that everything that could be done should be done to enhance the expansion of the domestic blackcod longline fishery including the creation of another area of foreign competition. On the other hand, however, the subgroup did not believe the U.S. industry would expand west into that area in 1981 because of the dramatic reduction in the price paid for black cod and other industry indicators. In summary, the subgroup, while generally agreeing with the concept, could not recommend one way or the other on the proposal: although it might be appropriate to consider for the 1982 fishery.

PART X

Require biodegradable escape panels on sablefish pots fished in the Gulf of Alaska.

The Advisory Panel endorsed this proposal.

PART XI

Proposed joint venture policy statement.

The Advisory Panel -- as evidenced by it's past support for the proposed time and area closure around Akutan and Akan Islands and as a result of the subgroup meeting -- endorses the concept of this proposal. The panel however believed that the criteria to be used by the regional director to specify a time and area closure should be specified. For that reason, the subgroup recommends this part of the amendment package be reserved and subjected to another public hearing and public comment, with proposed criteria for such action. It is proposed this part be included with the Bering Sea Aleutian Island proposed 1981 amendments for simultaneous consideration with a similiar proposal in that package.

(WORK SHEET)

Points of Interest

Proposed Amendment: No Foreign Trawling - Eastern Regulatory Area

Gulf POP stocks are considered to be at less than 20% of virgin biomass.

Foreign trawl fleets are responsible for drastic decline in POP abundance.

CPUE continues to decline within foreign fleets.

Present abundance is greatly below level needed to economically support a domestic fishery. Four U.S. vessels during last four years have attempted to target on POP in the Southeastern-Yakutat area with no success. (Competent skippers and crews on adequately rigged vessels).

F/V <u>Ocean Leader</u>	1976	120 fm, 350 lbs in 36 drags (C. Ommaney-Icy Ba
F/V <u>California Horizon</u>	1979	Not enough for delivery (C. Scott - C. St. Eli
F/V <u>Lone Star</u>	1979	No POP (C. Spencer-Icy Bay)
F/V <u>Irish Rover</u>	1979	111 fm, 3 wks, lost 4 nets, (C. Ommaney-C.Clea largest trip 12,000 lbs, lost \$62,000 for seas

NMFS 1978 and 79 rockfish surveys also found no commercial quantities. Some pre-recruits (<25 cm) found in Southeastern, none in Yakutat.

Foreign fleets can afford continued exploitation because vessels are paid for low overhead. Even this effort is seasonal and sporadic.

Within Central and Western Gulf other species (pollock, cod) have replaced POP, not so in Eastern Gulf.

If restricted from Eastern Gulf, foreign fleets would lose approximately 50,000 r of catch. This is not significant compared with surpluses now available in the Bering Sea.

They are slow growing and of low fecundity ∴ very susceptible to overharvest.

Southern Southeastern Alaska was once the area of greatest abundance for POP in the North Pacific.

Phil Rigby
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