

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver *Chris*
Executive Director

DATE: November 30, 2010

SUBJECT: GOA Chinook salmon bycatch

ESTIMATED TIME 4 HOURS

ACTION REQUIRED

Review updated discussion paper on GOA Chinook salmon bycatch

BACKGROUND

An updated discussion paper on Chinook salmon bycatch in the GOA groundfish fisheries occurring in the central and western GOA was mailed to the Council in mid-November, and is attached as **Item C-5(1)**. The paper was last reviewed in April 2010, and has been updated to address the Council's main requests: information on Chinook salmon bycatch levels and rates in the groundfish fisheries through November 2010, disaggregated spatial mapping of Chinook bycatch by year, and a discussion of what would be entailed in requiring full retention of salmon in the GOA groundfish fisheries.

The Council also requested that to the extent possible, additional background should be provided on GOA Chinook salmon abundance, fisheries, and factors affecting the stocks. The items requested for additional background have not yet been addressed in the discussion paper, but will be updated for a future draft. The paper also includes other elements from previous iterations of the discussion paper, including a discussion of management measures and strawman closures, but these have not been updated since October 2009 (developed in December 2008).

The level of GOA Chinook salmon bycatch in 2010 has exceeded the incidental take amount authorized in the Biological Opinion for endangered Chinook salmon stocks, and consequently consultation has been reinitiated between NMFS Alaska Region and the Northwest Region office. A letter reporting on information about the Chinook salmon incidental catch in 2010 has been sent by NMFS to the Northwest Region, and is attached as **Item C-5(2)**.

In April 2010, the Council wrote a letter to NMFS to request that the agency accelerate the establishment of protocols to identify stock of origin of GOA Chinook salmon bycatch, including analysis of existing GOA Chinook salmon bycatch samples. The agency has responded to the Council's letter concerning development of a sampling protocol, and the response is attached as **Item C-5(3)**.

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to review the discussion paper, and take action as necessary.