

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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MINUTES
Thirty-first Plenary Session
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
March 26-28, 1980
Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel
Anchorage, Alaska

The monthly meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council was held in Anchorage, Alaska, March 26-28, 1980, in the Alaska Room of the Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel. The Council met Wednesday, March 26, from 8:30am to 5:00pm in the Alaska Room. The Council met with the Alaska Board of Fisheries in the Commodore Room of the Hilton on Thursday, March 27, from 8:30am to noon and in the Alaska Room from 1:45pm to 5:30pm and held an evening session without the Board from 7:30pm to 9:30pm in the Alaska Room. The Council met in the Alaska Room with the Board on Friday, March 28, from 8:30am to noon and without the Board from 1:30pm to 2:30pm.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) met at the Council headquarters Monday, March 24, 1980, from 1:30pm to 5:30pm and held an evening session from 7:30pm to 10:00pm. The SSC reconvened March 25, Tuesday at 8:30am and adjourned at 5:30pm with Chairman Steve Pennoyer presiding.

The Advisory Panel (AP) met at the Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel Alaska Room March 25, 1980, at 9:30am and adjourned at 6:00pm with Chairman Robert D. Alverson presiding.

Council members, Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel members, Alaska Board of Fisheries members, and the general public in attendance are listed in APPENDIX A.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Harold E. Lokken presided on Wednesday, March 26, 1980, and Chairman Clement V. Tillion presided on Thursday and Friday, March 27, and 28, 1980.

B. AGENDA

The Council approved the agenda with the addition of a presentation by Leroy Sowl, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, on predation by seabirds on capelin and Dr. Bevan's request to discuss king crab. The meeting was conducted in the order as listed in the agenda.

C. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 1979/JANUARY 1980 and FEBRUARY 1980 MINUTES

Mr. Mace requested separate attendance records for the December and January portion of the December meeting noting the absence of the representative from Oregon at the January portion. With that change, both meetings minutes were approved.

D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Branson reported on travel by the staff to plan development team meetings in Juneau and Seattle, and his attendance at the Pacific Council's February meeting.

A staff economist, Mr. Jim Richardson, has been hired and he expected to be on duty in June. He is presently in graduate school at Oregon State University.

The new office space has been completed with the exception of phones and some furniture, and is in use.

Six bids were received on the Halibut Limited Entry Background RFP and the contract award could be made at the April meeting after review by the Council's screening and monitoring committee.

The Herring Symposium held February 19-21, 1980, at the Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska, was a success Mr. Branson reported to the Council; scientists came from Canada, United States (Alaska, Washington, Massachusetts, and Maine), Norway, and Germany. The Proceedings are being published by the Alaska Sea Grant Program and should be available soon.

Douglas Eaton would not be attending this Council meeting; bad weather in the Bering Sea was keeping him on aboard his fishing vessel.

Chairman Tillion planned to arrive Wednesday evening; he was performing his role as president of the Alaska Senate.

Mr. Campbell reported there would not be a Finance Committee meeting during this session.

E. SPECIAL REPORTS

E-1. Alaska Department of Fish & Game Report on Domestic Fisheries

Mr. Fred Gaffney, ADF&G, told the Council about a million pounds of pollock had been delivered by one vessel in Southeast Alaska. An attempt to fish sablefish in January did not prove successful, catches were poor and many pots lost because of strong currents. Longliners delivered 62,500 pounds in February. In 1979, 5.1 million pounds of sablefish were delivered, the projection for 1980 is 7-1/2 to 8 million pounds dressed weight from the Southeastern and Yakutat areas.

The U.S. shore based operator in Akutan had suspended operations last week after receiving from six boats.

The bait fishery in Kodiak, involving six or seven vessels, has been landing 700,000 lbs. per month, mostly cod. They have been working on a recently discovered ground about 40 miles east of Kodiak.

A salt-cod operation is planned for the Bering Sea soon by a catcher/processor.

In the Tanner crab fishery, 1.1 million lbs. has been landed in Southeastern, 1.7 million lbs. in Yakutat; 1.5 million lbs. in Prince William Sound; and 1.7 million lbs. in Cook Inlet. 16.8 million lbs. have been landed in Kodiak and Emergency Field Orders have closed some areas to distribute the effort. Sand Point has landed 4 million lbs. to date and Chignik a million and a half lbs.

Ice in the Bering Sea caused a problem this winter, with about 12,000 units of gear lost said Mr. Gaffney. The ice is now retreating north which will allow better fishing and perhaps some retrieval of gear. The price for Tanner crab began at 52¢ for C. bairdi and 20¢ for C. opilio. The CPUE is 30 per pot for bairdi and 49 for opilio, which is lower than 1979. About half of the guideline harvest of 22 to 33 million pounds of bairdi has been taken and about 3.5 million pounds of opilio.

E-2. National Marine Fisheries Service Report on Foreign Fishing, including Joint Ventures

Ron Naab, NMFS, told the Council 193 foreign vessels fished off Alaska during February by the usual countries, excluding Mexico. This is 20 vessels less than in 1979, which probably represents the Soviet vessels withdrawn on the loss of their Bering Sea allocations.

As of March 20, 142 vessels were fishing, with Japanese longliners and 20 sterntrawlers presently unloading their catches in Japan.

In the Gulf of Alaska Japan had 5 longliners fishing for Pacific cod, 22 stern trawlers fishing for Greenland turbot and arrowtooth flounder; in the Aleutians, one support vessel and 3 longliners fishing for cod and large flounders. In the Bering Sea Japan had 16 stern trawlers, one longliner, and one support vessel fishing primarily yellowfin sole; and 45 stern trawlers fishing for pollock. The Japanese crab fleet of one factoryship and 4 catcher vessels is presently operating northwest of the Pribilofs, along with 4 independent pot vessels. NMFS has observers on the factoryship fleet and the independent pot boats said Mr. Naab.

Four Soviet stern trawlers are fishing in the Shumagin area for pollock and rockfish, and in the Bering Sea involved in the joint venture are 2 stern trawlers and 4 BMRT stern trawlers working with 3 U.S. catcher boats.

South Korea had 12 stern trawlers and 3 support ships fishing pollock in the Bering Sea; 2 stern trawlers fishing rockfish and flounders off the western Aleutians. The KMIDC joint venture has not yet started.

Poland achieved their pollock quota in the Gulf of Alaska and moved the 10 stern trawler fleet to the Bering Sea, again concentrating on pollock.

Taiwan has 2 stern trawlers operating west of the Pribilofs concentrating on pollock.

Mr. Chitwood, NMFS, reported on percentages of allocations taken by foreign vessels as follows: USSR has taken 9.3% of 73,000 tons, mostly pollock and Atka mackerel. South Korea has taken 7.8% of 35,480 tons, mostly pollock, flounder and cod in the Gulf of Alaska; and in the Bering Sea has taken 25% of 110,000, 95% pollock, 2% cod, and 3% other species. Poland has taken all the Gulf of Alaska allocation and has taken 19.8% of 39,278 tons of pollock in the Bering Sea. Taiwan has taken 22.8% of the 6,646 ton allocation in the Bering Sea, mostly pollock and cod. Japan has taken 69% of the 105,000 mt allocation in the Gulf of Alaska, mostly cod, pollock, flounder, and other species; in the Bering Sea 9.5% of 1,045,725 tons, mostly pollock, flatfish, yellowfin sole, flounders, and turbot. Mexico has not fished off Alaska this season.

The Japanese crab fleet is on the grounds with one factoryship and 4 catcher vessels. Four independent pot vessels are also fishing said Mr. Chitwood. All are concentrating on C. opilio Tanner crab which is about 83% of the catch to date. Secondary species is C. bairdi with an equal percentage of hybrids.

Mr. Chitwood introduced Mr. Dick Marshall, newest member of NMFS management staff. Mr. Marshall will provide liaison with NMFS to the Council and Council staff; he will be stationed in Anchorage.

Dr. Bevan asked for joint venture catch figures. Mr. Chitwood said the confidentiality of statistics regulations prevented him from giving that information. He did say there was a 9,000 ton allocation of pollock for

the JVP in the Bering Sea and excellent progress has been made. If catches continue at the same level a release of reserves may be made to allow fishing to continue. Catches are about 80% pollock with cod about one-sixth.

Dr. Bevan asked to have the minutes reflect the Council's problems with the confidentiality of statistics regulations. Information can be obtained from many sources except the agency actually possessing the data he said. He feels it is a severe problem which should be alleviated as the Council cannot make fair decisions without all the available data.

E-3. U.S. Coast Guard Report of Enforcement and Surveillance

Commander Pete Busick told the Council four vessels had been seized since the February meeting: GOLDEN DRAGON No. 1 of Taiwan, KOLIAS of Poland, ZELENOGARD of USSR, all for gross underlogging. The KUMANO MARU No. 15 of Japan was overlogging some species to hide underlogging of more valuable species. Nine violations resulting in civil penalties were also issued to five Polish vessels: WALEN, PERSEUS, VEGA, MARLIN and HAJDUK; one Taiwanese, HIGHLY No. 302; and three Japanese, AKEBONO MARU No. 12, EIKYU MARU No. 86, AKEBONO MARU No. 31.

Mr. Arnaudo, U.S. State Department, said the Polish vessel has posted bond and if guilty will pay a fine equal to the value of the vessel. Mr. Campbell said continual underlogging of catches by countries leads him to doubt the credibility of their submitted catch figures.

The full Coast Guard Report is attached as APPENDIX B.

E-4. Special SSC and AP Reports on Matters not on the Agenda

Mr. H.A. Larkins reported for the SSC on items not on the agenda. He said the SSC briefly reviewed the document, "Petition of the Environmental Defense Fund for the Amendment of the Guidelines for Development of Fishery Management Plans" and the NMFS request for comments on the petition published in the Federal Register of February 8, 1980. The comment period has been extended to May 15, 1980. The SSC appointed John Burns, H.A. Larkins, and Edward L. Miles to draft comments for consideration at the next SSC meeting, and will provide them to the Council in April.

The SSC requested that Dr. John Clark be named as an alternate to Steve Pennoyer. Mr. Campbell said the Council sets the guidelines for alternates for the SSC. Dr. Bevan stated some SSC members were not allowed alternates because the person was chosen for their particular expertise. The SSC will offer their comments to the Council at the next meeting on a policy for SSC membership.

The SSC reviewed the report by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Socioeconomic Data Needs and concurred with this report. Implementation of the recommendations in the report will be discussed by a SSC subcommittee on research priorities meeting next month. This committee will provide the SSC and the Council with recommendations on research priorities for the 1981 programmatic budget by the May meeting. Subcommittee members are Don Rosenberg, chairman, Steve Pennoyer, and George Rogers.

The SSC reviewed the membership of the Incidental Species Policy Group and found that the SSC no longer has any representatives on the Committee. They recommended Mr. Bert Larkins be made a member of this Council committee.

The SSC reviewed a report by Jay Hastings regarding the problem of the high incidental catch of Pacific cod in the Bering Sea which will result in premature closure of the fishery. Mr. Hastings requested that the SSC review the biological aspects of increasing the OY of the species.

The SSC reviewed the biological data provided to them with the proposed amendments to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP and concluded that based upon these data the abundance of Pacific cod has greatly increased. Using the procedure provided in the draft amendments, the 1980 ABC would be 111,000 mt. This will allow an increase of the current ABC by 52,000 mt without any harmful effect on the biology of the resource.

The SSC expressed concern to the Council on how the allocation of this additional resource was to be made. For example, the effect of this large allocation on the Japanese ex-vessel price of Pacific cod is unknown. The SSC suggested that caution be exercised in granting this request, since Japan is a likely market for Pacific cod caught by U.S. fishermen.

The SSC reviewed a report presented by the SSC King Crab Subgroup at an SSC/PDT meeting to review the Reeves and Marasco "Bering Sea King Crab Fishery Management Options" paper. The report discussed the results of a bioeconomic model which investigated the management options of: 1) relaxed quotas; 2) lowered size limits; and 3) extended seasons when compared with multiple age group management currently employed to reduce dependency on a stock dominated by new recruits. The management options were compared to the actual management policy by modeling the major features of the southeastern Bering Sea fishery for the 1970-79 period.

Given parameters used in the model and the assumption that price is not related to the size of crabs in the catch, the results of the analysis indicated that annual returns to the fleet were increased most by the doubling of effort with a 5.25 inch minimum size limit. When the price/size independence assumption was relaxed, the extended season option produced the largest annual returns. It is necessary to note that recruitment was high during the period of time selected for the analysis.

When compared to actual management policy, none of the options examined impaired the reproductive capacity of the simulated stocks. Actual stock levels have been high in recent years, and the available research survey data indicate that strong recruitment may result even from relatively low stock levels. Reeves and Marasco now plan to use the model to examine alternative management strategies in years of low recruitment.

The SSC did not attempt to review in any depth the assumptions underlying the model but agreed the model was useful in comparing the results of various management options. Discussion pointed out that there were potential risks of adopting one option over another depending on stock trends.

The Subcommittee suggested the PDT consider the results of the model in the next draft of the King Crab FMP. The next draft of the plan should be ready for SSC review prior to the May Council meeting.

Also discussed was a proposal by Dr. Donald Bevan to split the King Crab FMP into two portions, the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska. The SSC decided not to endorse the concept because: 1) the next draft is largely complete and changes at this point would further delay the plan, 2) the two areas are closely tied and separating them at this time is not practical; 3) the next draft will incorporate options for alternative management strategies; and 4) the next draft of the plan is primarily written for the Bering Sea fishery and the Gulf fisheries are secondary (Southeastern, Prince William Sound, and Cook Inlet were eliminated from the plan because no king crab are taken in FCZ waters in these areas).

Advisory Panel Non-Agenda Items

Mr. A.W. Boddy reported to the Council that the AP discussed the anticipated salmon surplus in the Bristol Bay area and requested the Council to consider the development of a Fishery Management Plan for the salmon net fisheries off Alaska which would provide for joint ventures to allow complete harvest in years when U.S. processors are not able to handle all of the catch.

Public comment was received from Truman Emberg of Dillingham, who pointed out the harvest of surplus salmon is a recurring problem for the Bristol Bay area and a Task Force was set up to study it. Their options are: 1. Let the situation remain as is; 2. Bring foreign bottom tenders into the area and allow U.S. fishermen to sell directly to the tenders on the high seas; 3. Find a loophole in the Jones Act to allow foreign bottoms to catch the surplus. 4. Allow foreign processing in Territorial waters by joint venture. 5. Begin a study on prices, inventories, and a long term view of this problem.

Mr. Emberg said the processors are prepared to fly the surplus fish to other areas for processing.

He told the Council this subject will also be brought to the attention of the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

F. OLD BUSINESS

F-1. Appointment of New Advisory Panel Members

Since Chairman Meacham of the Advisory Panel Nomination Committee was absent as was member Bart Eaton, Chairman Tillion suggested the Committee postpone its meeting till April to fill the two vacancies on the Panel.

F-2. West German Allocation Request

Mr. Branson informed the Council that the Federal Republic of Germany has asked for the Council's response to their request for a 1980 allocation of 10,000 mt of pollock, 3,000 mt. of cod, and 3,000 mt. of other groundfish.

The AP made the following recommendations for Council consideration on this subject.

1. Whether or not the benefits to be accrued from any reciprocal market offer will be realized by joint venture programs or from shore based processors.
2. That the agreed amounts of reciprocally purchased products from the U.S. processor or fishermen is from the same geographic area as the original TALFF.
3. Regarding this specific request by the Federal Republic of Germany, they should indicate specifically what fisheries product they are referring to (groundfish, salmon, crab) when they speak of buying fisheries products in trade for an allocation in the FCZ.
4. That the specific reciprocal proposal be directed to U.S. private industry by the Federal Republic of Germany with respect to prices and other considerations as mentioned above.

Mr. Arnaudo told the Council the State Department has not released the fish withheld from the USSR, however NOAA Administrator Frank and Assistant Administrator Leitzell are currently on a trade mission to Europe and Japan investigating market conditions and the possibility of reciprocal trade/allocation arrangements with several countries.

In public testimony, Jim Strickartz, Counsel for the 13th Regional Alaska Native Corporation testifying with Mr. Frank Price, director of this fisheries operation, told the Council they were working closely with a West German firm but were not at liberty to present details of their operation as yet. Mr. Arnaudo informed them that allocations are made to countries and not companies, and they assured him they were aware of this procedure. Mr. Lokken asked the Council's viewpoint on allowing new foreign countries into the FCZ to fish. Mr. Campbell stated the Council could allow new countries in the FCZ who promise to obey the rules and regulations and eliminate or reduce the allocations

for countries who continually violate U.S. regulations. Admiral Duin reminded the Council they had recommended against allowing the Poles and Mexicans to fish off Alaska because they were new entrants.

Mr. Skoog declared sanctions should be issued against countries who continually violate the rules. Mr. Arnaudo stated the State Department criteria in making allocations are based on the following: historical participation in the fishery, research on the resource, enforcement cooperation, and other considerations. He said the State Department has made their views known regarding continual violations to Japan and are considering a Note indicating such violations are considered a very serious matter.

Admiral Duin felt the State Department, Coast Guard, and National Marine Fisheries Service together could establish fines to be levied against continual violators if the Note is not successful in curbing the law breaking. He stated a point system has been established by the New England Fishery Council for fines levied against repeated violators.

Mr. Arnaudo felt he knew the Council's feelings in this matter and would relay this information to the State Department regarding the allocation request by West Germany.

Council consensus was they have no serious objection to allowing a new country to fish in the FCZ but will consider the applications on a case by case basis.

F-3. Restriction on Foreign Processing Within 12 Miles of Akun and Akutan Islands

Mr. Branson told the Council that NMFS was currently accepting comments on the Council's proposed permit restrictions prohibiting foreign processing within 12 miles of Akutan and Akun Islands. NMFS had rejected the proposal to hold the joint venture catch of herring in the Bering Sea to 5,000 mt. That restriction was unnecessary at this time in any case since recent Federal Court action had prohibited the retention of herring in the Bering Sea by any foreign ship, including joint venture processors.

Mr. Larkins told the Council that the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish plan development team could not establish a biological reason for the closure. Patrick Travers, NOAA General Counsel, said that a closure could be established based on harm to the resource and that NMFS considered both biological and economic reasons to establish closures and that social and economic factors can be the primary reason for closures but that resource reasons must also be present to establish a restriction under the law. Dr. Bevan asked the SSC review the FMP and the Council's proposal for permit restrictions to determine if they could see any biological reasons to effect a closure.

In public testimony, Mr. Gene Ruthford, Senior Vice President for Icicle Seafoods, Inc., thanked the Council for their efforts to establish a permit restriction and reported on Icicle's groundfish operation in the Akutan area. He said that even though the company had lost money on that operation this winter they planned to continue operations again next fall after herring and salmon seasons. Mr. Ruthford's presentation is attached as APPENDIX C.

Mr. John Enge, of Icicle Seafoods, told the Council he had fished around the Akutan area and terminated his operation March 25 because the codfish had softened and were not suitable for freezing and shipping; the barge was committed to the Togiak herring fishery and the Bristol Bay salmon fishery, and he had problems shipping the product to Scotland and Sweden. They operated six 65- to 95-foot vessels from the Puget Sound area but the vessels proved to be not satisfactory for this fishery. However, they plan to use these same vessels in the fall after the salmon fishery. He told the Council they shipped 1.4 million pounds of cod, 2,000 pounds of pollock, and 5% of the cod was roe. They also froze cod livers but the flatfish were frozen in the round. Two vans of samples containing headed and gutted pollock were shipped to Sweden. They plan to inundate Europe with such samples. He said the company was losing 7¢ a pound on the product but it was a learning process for Icicle and the fishermen and they plan to continue. He reported the codfish were of good size and color and were without parasites.

F-4. Report of Limited Entry Workgroup Meeting, March 13-14, 1980

Mr. Branson reported on the Limited Entry Workgroup's meeting on March 13 and 14 and their progress on a limited entry study for halibut. The Workgroup recommended a moratorium on entry to the halibut fishery as soon as possible and had developed goals and tentative criteria for eligibility for the fishery.

The Advisory Panel nominated Jeffrey Stephan, Alan Otness, and Robert Alverson to participate in the review of proposals for the halibut limited entry study.

The SSC appointed Richard Marasco and Edward Miles to work with the Council staff to review responses to the Limited Entry RFP.

The report of the LEWG is attached as APPENDIX D.

G. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

G-1. Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

The AP suggested deleting Amendment No. 7 because it was inappropriate while there was still foreign participation in the sablefish fishery and

proposed amendment established sablefish as a directed longline species. Instead they suggested prohibiting foreign trawling in the Southeast and Yakutat Districts. They recommended that Amendment No. 8 should be changed to prohibit foreign longlining east of 150° W. longitude for sablefish.

The AP requested an amendment to require biodegradable panels on sablefish pots fished in the Gulf of Alaska.

Mr. Boddy said the AP suggested the public hearings be held at a time when most fishermen would be able to attend, with one in Seattle and one in Anchorage. They had heard testimony from the public on the release of reserves and recommended no release of reserves be made now and the subject reviewed again at the next release date on May 2, 1980.

Mr. Larkins said the SSC had reviewed the seven proposed amendments and the SSC subgroup for this plan will review them with the PDT for technical merit. He also recommended the king and Tanner crab PDT's evaluate the current closures to foreign trawling around the Kodiak area and recommend needed changes to the Council. The SSC is also planning to review the AP request to prohibit all foreign longlining east of 150°W. Mr. Larkins said the SSC concurs that an observer coverage study needs to be initiated, particularly in light of the proposed prohibited species amendment. Apparently such a study is being worked on by NMFS and the SSC encourages them to continue.

Ed Naughton, testifying as a consultant to KMIDC, said the Korean joint venture expects to have six U.S. vessels fishing off Albatross Bank and delivering to the processor BOOK NEUNG by this weekend. By April 15, the SOO GONG is expected to be in the Bering Sea with six U.S. trawlers.

Mr. Hong An, of Armstrong Byrd & Associates, Inc., stated the Korean Government intends to continue the Joint Venture operation. His written report is attached as APPENDIX E.

Mr. Larkin, as the former leader of the PDT, reviewed each proposed amendment to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP for the Council. NOAA Counsel Travers told the Council the regulations now define 'other rockfish' and the appropriate change should be made in all FMP's by amendment process so they conform. Mr. McVey requested a requirement for a biodegradable panel in sablefish pots be added to the amendment package and Patrick Travers requested the FMP be amended to lump the four species of red rockfish with Pacific ocean perch, as is now done by regulation.

After a short discussion on location and dates for the public hearings for the FMP amendments, Chairman Tillion declared one would be held on April 23, 1980, in Anchorage. No objections were raised by the Council.

No action was taken by the Council on release of reserves, thereby allowing the Regional Director to use his discretion on making a release.

G-2. Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP

Mr. Branson reviewed the agenda material for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish plan and told the Council they needed to review the proposed Amendment list, consider the public hearing schedule, and comment on the release of Reserves.

Mr. Bert Larkins reported the Scientific and Statistical Committee had reviewed the agenda material and had also heard an excellent report from Dr. Loh-Lee Low on the proposed amendments to the plan. Larkins went on to say the SSC had requested a clarification of the adjustment section within the multiple-species/multiple-year OY concept as an amendment and had approved the amendment package for public review. The SSC subgroup for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish plan is also prepared to review the proposed amendments and comment in full to the SSC at the April meeting.

Mr. Bud Boddy, Vice Chairman of the Advisory Panel, told the Council the AP had reviewed the agenda material and listened to an excellent presentation by Dr. Loh-Lee Low on the multiple-year/ multiple-species approach to fishery management plans. The AP recommended adopting the proposed amendment list for public hearings with no additional comments.

Mr. Boddy went on to say the AP believed the public hearing schedule proposed was adequate and that both groundfish plan amendment packages should be considered at the same time. Mr. Boddy concluded the AP report by telling the Council they had unanimously agreed to recommend no release of reserves to either TALFF or DAH for the April 2 scheduled release in the Bering Sea. He said the recommendation was based on review of the status of the joint venture fisheries and the domestic fishery in that area as well as the proposed KMIDC joint venture projections, which indicated an additional five vessels would be operating in the Bering Sea shortly.

Dr. Loh-Lee Low representing the plan development team reviewed the proposed amendments and highlighted the multiple-species/multiple-year proposal for 1981. Dr. Low's report touched on five main points: 1. An Optimum Yield concept for groundfish for the groundfish complex; 2. A Reserve concept; 3. The Initial total allowable catch (TAC) concept; 4. The Final TAC provisions; and 5. The Incidental catch of fully utilized and prohibited species. The OY concepts, are based on the groundfish complex as a distinct management and biological unit with MSY, ABC, and OY based on catch histories, observer reported relationships between those catches, population trends and some ecosystem modeling. The total allowable catch (TAC) concept provided maximum flexibility to adjust the catch between species based on the status of the stocks and on socioeconomic considerations. The full report is APPENDIX F.

Dr. Bevan summarized the Council discussion of this concept by highlighting the flexible nature of the controlled reallocation of species based on inseason stock assessments and fishery considerations, the consideration

of OY as an average biomass group estimate and then cautiously addressed the question of the retention and/or mitigation for prohibited species. The Council unanimously endorsed the concept presented for multiple-species/multiple-year approach as a proposed amendment to be released for public comment. The Council also discussed the other proposed amendments and clarified their intent to propose a joint venture closure around Akutan and Akun Islands as a specific example of a broad joint venture policy proposed for a plan amendment. The attachment (APPENDIX F) contains the list of proposed amendments to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP to be submitted for public review.

Concerning a proposed public hearing on the 1981 amendments to both the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP's, Mr. Campbell moved that the public hearing be held in Anchorage on April 23rd, and subsequently proclaimed that the mover of a motion establishing a public hearing be directed to attend and chair that public hearing. The Council concurred with the motion and the recommendation.

The Council considered the report from the Advisory Panel concerning a reserve release and also listened to a presentation by Ed Naughton outlining KMIDC's Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands joint venture plan. After reviewing the catch statistics, joint venture operations, the foreign fishery catch to date, and public testimony, the Council unanimously approved a recommendation to postpone any further release of reserves until June 2, 1980.

Bert Larkins also told the Council the SSC had reviewed a report by Jay Hastings regarding the problem of the high incidental catch of Pacific cod in the Bering Sea which would result in the premature closure of the Japanese pollock fishery. The report recommended that the 1980 Pacific cod ABC in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands area be increased. Larkins told the Council the SSC had reviewed the biological data provided and had concluded that the abundance of Pacific cod had greatly increased: the ABC could be set at 111,000 mt without any harmful effect on the biology of the resource.

The SSC does have concern on how the allocation of this additional resource is made; i.e., what effect would a large allocation to Japan have on the Japanese ex-vessel price of Pacific cod and the ensuing consequences in the Japanese market for U.S. caught Pacific cod.

Chief among the concerns of the Council was this potential impact from dramatic increases in the Pacific cod OY and the marketability of U.S. caught Pacific cod. Because of this concern, Dr. Bevan suggested the Council should convey to Terry Leitzell this problem to see if we could get some assurance that the market price would not be affected if the Pacific cod OY were increased. Bob McVey (Deputy Director, NMFS, Alaska Region) indicated he would convey the Council's concern to Terry Leitzell and report back at the April meeting.

The Council unanimously agreed that the proposal to increase the Pacific cod ABC to 111,000 mt in the 1980 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Groundfish Plan be advertised and considered by the Council at the April meeting.

G-3. Tanner Crab FMP

The Advisory Panel recommended the closing date for the Tanner crab fishery be by Field Announcement.

The SSC could find no biological reason for early closure of the Tanner crab season and did not receive any data indicating pot storage on the grounds created extensive mortality. They did receive data on the cost of various options of pot storage and believe those estimates are based on reasonable assumptions. They were unable to quantify the dollar value incurred with the dead loss associated with an equitable start to the fishery and therefore were unable to provide the Council with a method of comparing dead loss costs with the cost associated with pot storage options.

After the joint meeting with Alaska Board of Fisheries and receiving public testimony, the AP report and SSC report, it was the consensus of the Council that the Executive Director write a letter to the Regional Director and Terry Leitzell requesting the Tanner crab season in the Bering Sea be closed by Field Announcement as authorized in the FMP and supporting regulations. Closure by Field Announcement rather than using the specific date as stated in the FMP will permit closer coordination with State regulations and adjustment to suit natural conditions and the progress of the fishery.

G-4 Troll Salmon Fishery Management Plan

Mr. Larkins told the Council the SSC had reviewed the NMFS proposals for the conservation of chinook salmon and the March 18 letter to Tillion from Leitzell which implies that the 1980 amendments of the Troll salmon FMP are insufficient to control the take of chinook salmon in the Alaska FCZ and made the following recommendations. The SSC finds it is in no position to recommend a specific 1980 reduction in catch or effort on chinook in the FCZ. These decisions involve the very significant and unresolved matters of interceptions of stocks by Alaskan and other fisheries and decisions regarding allocation among fisheries along the coast. Table 1 (in APPENDIX G.) indicates the relative proportions of harvests taken by fisheries along the coast north of California to Cape Suckling, Alaska. The Alaska harvest is a minor part of the total. Further, the catch in the FCZ off Alaska has been a small percentage of the total Alaska catch. Any action taken only in the FCZ off Alaska would have small impact on a coastwide basis.

The SSC notes the following actions taken in recent years by the State of Alaska and the Secretary of Commerce to protect salmon (Table 2). The SSC also notes the programs listed in Attachment #1 (APPENDIX G) have been funded thru the North Pacific Fishery Council to assist in resolving critical informational needs on the Alaska troll fishery.

For the longer term solution to this problem, the SSC recommends that the Salmon PDT's of the Pacific and North Pacific Councils meet in joint session as soon as possible to evaluate the available data and attempt to seek agreements on analysis and interpretation of these data. The SSC also recommends that the joint meeting be chaired by an individual who is not a member of either team. They recommend Dr. Donald Bevan due to his extensive knowledge of the fishery and his relationship to the two Councils.

The SSC endorsed the report of the combined SSC's of the Pacific and North Pacific Councils (APPENDIX H). They urge the recommendations therein be implemented as rapidly as possible in order to provide the basis for decision making regarding regulation of the chinook troll fisheries of Alaska and the adjoining FCZ.

The SSC also reviewed with the PDT the Amendments to the Troll FMP, particularly the heads on issue. The regulation requiring that all chinook and coho salmon be landed with heads on is a modification of the regulation requiring that all adipose-clipped salmon be landed with heads on. The new regulations evolved out of the stated need to improve coded wire tag recovery rates from freezer boats which traditionally remove the heads of all troll-caught salmon at sea.

In perspective, the estimated landings of these boats in Washington and Alaska in 1979 represented approximately 3.6% and 3.3% of the total troll landings of chinook and coho respectively, from waters off Alaska. If the fish in the freezer boats could be sampled at the same rate as those in the remainder of the fleet, then 3-4% of the total potential tag recoveries would be lost because of the removal of heads aboard the freezer boats. Although these boats tend to fish offshore areas that are not fished by day and trip trollers, the precision of the tag recovery information would be considerably less because of the greater difficulty of determining the area of origin of tagged fish in a boatload of frozen fish.

If this additional tagging information is to be obtained, additional port sampling effort may have to be arranged in Washington and Oregon. Furthermore, according to the January 21 letter, Reinhardt to Branson, there are additional costs and possible loss of quality in landing and marketing of freezer boat salmon with heads on. A second option is to retain and enforce the regulation that only adipose-clipped chinook and coho be landed with heads on, and to set up a sampling program that assures these fish are sampled. A third option is to not require head retention on freezer boats and utilize information from day and trip boat recoveries only. If the Council would like the SSC to consider

this further, the SSC will need additional information on the costs of the first two alternatives that would be incurred by the freezer boat sector.

Mr. Boddy said the Advisory Panel reviewed the 1980 Troll salmon FMP and the status of the Council's proposed amendments for 1980 and comments received on them, the important chinook conservation and allocation issues, the handtroll issue and possible courses of action. The Panel has a deep concern for conservation and allocation issues regarding chinook salmon of Alaska and non-Alaska origin. The AP feels the best available information has been used to outline the 1980 amendment and that the Council is actively collecting more information to be used for the 1981 fishery. The AP moved "That the Council express to the Secretary of Commerce that it has used the best available information in preparing the troll salmon management plan for 1980. Further, that it is the feeling of the Council that it has been responsive to problems in the fishery concerning chinook salmon and that it has taken positive steps to conserve and perpetuate those salmon stocks. Evidence of Council intent in this area lies in initiation of a legal minimum length, closed season and areas, line limits, limited entry and fisheries enhancement programs. Further, that the Council prefers not to accept a reduced quota for chinook salmon in the Southeast Alaska troll fishery, until documented new data in the fishery is made available to the Plan Development Team and the Council for consideration. In addition, the Council is urged to stand on its position favoring the ban of handtrolling in the FCZ."

Public testimony received from Scott Stafne and Ed Linkous is found in the Special Agenda section of this report.

After listening to the SSC and AP reports, and public testimony, Mr. Lokken suggested three proposals for the Troll salmon FMP as follows:

1. Set up a liaison on the Council level with the Pacific Fishery Council.
2. Address a proposal for the 1980 Troll fishery season.
3. Establish limited entry to the fishery in the future.

(1) He suggested the Chairman appoint a Subcommittee of three Council members to coordinate to the extent possible the regulations of the North Pacific Council with those of the Pacific Council concerning the rational conservation of stocks of chinook salmon which migrate between areas under the jurisdiction of the two Councils. This effort would attempt to comply with the provisions of National Standard 3, which mandates that an individual stock of fish be managed as a unit throughout its range. The intent of this proposal is to seek a unified position between the two Councils which would serve as a base for negotiations with Canada during the Canada/U.S. talks scheduled for May 1980, during which the Canadians would be asked to coordinate their troll regulations

with those of the United States to the end that no areas through which chinook stocks migrate would harvest an unreasonable share of the stocks. It would be my hope, said Mr. Lokken, that of the three NPFMC members, two would be from Alaska and one from either Washington or Oregon, and I suggest Chuck Meacham should serve as he is a member of both Councils.

Such a Subcommittee should be able to call on the SSC and AP and other agencies interested in the problem for such assistance as it deems appropriate. Further, the Alaska Board of Fisheries should be contacted for the purpose of developing coordination between management of chinook stocks which are found in both State and FCZ waters.

I am going to ask the Pacific Council to appoint members to serve from their standpoint and presumably that will be done today at their meeting in Portland. The Secretary of Commerce has been unhappy with our recommendations for the 1980 season and my suggestion is the NPFMC recommend the 1980 catch of chinook salmon in the FCZ be held within a range of (blank) to (blank) (these blanks to be filled in by the scientists) during the 1980 fishing season.

(2) Inseason assessments shall be made by the NMFS Regional Director in Juneau after consultation with the Commissioner of ADF&G to determine what measures if any, are necessary to keep the harvest within the designated guidelines.

In making these assessments, the Regional Director shall take into consideration such factors as the availability of fish, the size of fish being taken, the areas where they are being taken, the effects of any proposed action on the harvest of other species of salmon, the extent to which any proposed action provides necessary coordination with regulations affecting fishing throughout the range of the species and any other factors that the Regional Director deems appropriate.

The Regional Director shall be authorized to impose regulations including time and area closures sufficient to maintain the chinook harvest within the recommended guidelines for the 1980 season.

It seems to me, said Mr. Lokken, we have to convince the people interested in the resource that we are doing something to prevent an increase in the catch, and at the same time protect the resource for those now fishing upon it. This action might satisfy the SOC. We need biological information which covers the resource throughout its entire range. The chinook exist in such a complex fashion that we should not go off in any direction without first knowing where that direction leads. The liaison and coordination with the Pacific Council and with Canada during the May meeting hopefully will lead to a solution for the conservation of the resource on an industry-wide basis.

Mr. Lokken said the limited entry suggestion was offered because of the problem created by the Secretary's refusal to accept the Council's view on limited entry in the troll salmon fishery. He suggested that in

order to avoid proliferation of effort in the troll salmon fleet, a limited entry system be recommended to begin in 1981 or whatever time is appropriate. The Council's intent was to not allow any new vessels in the fishery that weren't there already as evidenced by permits from the Alaska system.

(3) No vessel shall be permitted to fish in the FCZ without having a license issued by the Regional Director of NMFS, Juneau, under the following conditions:

- A. The license shall be issued annually.
- B. A moderate charge shall be made for the license, sufficient to offset the bookkeeping costs of issuance.
- C. The licenses shall be nontransferable.
- D. There shall be no difference between hand and power trollers.
- E. Licenses will only be issued to those who can show proof of having fished in the Alaska FCZ during two of the past three years. (Mr. Lokken felt this requirement was negotiable.)

Proof shall be determined but may include records of landing in Alaska coastal ports.

- F. Where boats are owned by more than one individual, the license shall be issued to the individuals jointly.
- G. The licenses shall specify the size and equipment of the vessel to be used with the object of avoiding the use of the license on a vessel capable of increased effort. (This will control the effort and prevent upgrading)
- H. A prioritized waiting list of those originally ineligible for licenses shall be maintained for use when it is deemed advisable to increase effort in the FCZ.
- I. The Council shall contract with the Alaska Limited Entry Commission for the bookkeeping of the license system.

The license system shall be under the supervision of the Council and all issues concerning operation of the system shall be approved by the Secretary of Commerce upon recommendation of the Council.

Mr. Lokken said he felt the last item should be included because the U.S. government isn't going to turn over either to a Council or a State some of the prerogatives it insists upon retaining.

He said his suggestions were offered for debate on how to limit fishing in the FCZ to the number of vessels that profitably can fish there and

still remain within the conservation needs of the resource. Under the present system, 950 power trollers can move into the FCZ and the Council has no way of stopping them. He felt his system would keep hand and power trollers on the same level of advantage.

Mr. Beaton of the Board asked about the possibility of using an affidavit to qualify instead of the fish ticket. Chairman Tillion replied, "If you don't have a fish ticket, you don't fish." He explained further by saying if for any reason a fisherman fished the area but put another area on the fish ticket, that person was out of luck. The fact is he said any system you use is going to be exceedingly brutal or it's not going to work.

Chairman Tillion then suggested a letter be sent to the Secretary of Commerce telling him there has been a large increase in the fishery, and recommending that the Secretary of Commerce, through consultation with the State of Alaska, set up a system of inseason management by field announcement that would keep the catch within the OY. This would allow flexibility of action so fishing on all stocks and species could be more easily controlled.

Mr. Skoog, commenting for the record, noted that the Alaska chinook catch is a relatively minor part of the entire chinook harvest for the whole coast; therefore, restraints placed upon the Alaska fishery are not apt to be very significant in terms of overall chinook management. Secondly, most of the chinook and coho fishery in Southeast Alaska actually occurs within the Territorial waters of the State of Alaska. The relatively small portion of this fishery occurring in the FCZ further diminishes the effects of restrictions imposed in the FCZ, depending on complementary action by the State. It has been amply demonstrated in these proceedings that there is a lack of good hard data with regard to this fishery and resource. The limited information we have, however, suggests that all of the major wild stocks of chinook along the coast are below historical levels and many of them are certainly in a depressed situation and need attention. However, there is insufficient data to identify just what the contribution of these individual stocks is to the ocean mixed stock fishery in Alaska. I think the main objective of the plan has to be to stabilize the troll fishing harvest from the ocean side, and it's logical, we feel, to use as a baseline level the harvests during the period 1971 to 1977, and try to hold future harvests within this range. We acknowledge, of course, that 1978 and 1979 harvests were larger than any harvest during this base period and they did exceed the upper range of the OY in the Council's FMP. There's every indication that in 1980 there will be increased effort in this fishery and there will be more difficulty in holding it within the range of the OY in the plan. Nevertheless, we're recommending that we hold to the present OY range in the FMP. The State intends to monitor the harvest more closely this year, including an expanded port sampling program. We recommend that we use, as assessment of the fishery progresses during the season, time and area restrictions in conjunction with NMFS. Mr. Lokken's recommendation for the Regional Director to impose restrictions is really an Alaska Board of Fisheries

prerogative since most of the fishery occurs within State waters.

Mr. Lokken replied that his statement had to be in that form but the intent was to rely primarily on the State. "The SOC is not going to accept the jurisdiction of the State without some overview. I agree with you that most of the problem is in the State, but to avoid this State/Federal problem the statement had to read in the manner presented."

Mr. Skoog commented he thought Mr. Leitzell and his Washington crew were far off base and needed to be told so.

Mr. DiDonato was in favor of sending a letter to the Secretary and said there were some problems with northwest chinook stocks mixing with the Alaska stocks and he recognizes curtailments are being made in Southeast Alaska. He felt the acknowledgement of the present chinook situation and the stated intent by agencies to keep the harvest levels within the OY range should satisfy his constituents.

Mr. Mace identified two problems, one the catch level and the second, the issue of hand versus power troll. He felt the letter to the Secretary should emphasize that the Council will stand with its proposal to ban hand trolling and if the Secretary again rejects it, we expect the State to control the situation with its landing law. He requested that Council members be kept informed by phone of the status of the stock during the season and what actions are being taken to control the harvest.

Chairman Tillion noted the Council's proposal offered protection of the Canadian stocks of chinook as well as those of Alaska, Washington, and Oregon. Dr. Bevan pointed out a limited entry system could not be implemented for the coming season because of the lack of time and suggested that subject be held in abeyance. He felt the Secretary should be notified of the planned meeting of North Pacific and Pacific Councils to discuss and perhaps resolve the chinook problems.

NOAA General Counsel Patrick Travers felt optimistic that the Secretary would be satisfied that serious attention was being given this problem. He suggested the letter include the Council's dedication to a conservative management approach holding the harvest within the OY range, which should also be stated in the letter. Chairman Tillion felt specific details need not be included in the letter as long as the points were made about depressed stocks, that a conservative approach to management is needed, and the Council is working closely with the State to stay within the range of the OY in the FMP.

Mr. Mace moved the chairman be delegated the responsibility of appointing three Council members, two from Alaska and one from Washington or Oregon to work with the Pacific Council on the problem and to notify the Pacific Council of our intent. His motion also included the coordinator be appointed from the North Pacific Council.

With no debate, or objections offered, Chairman Tillion so ordered, and appointed Ron Skoog Gordon Jensen, and Donald Bevan to work with the Pacific Fishery Council.

Mr. Mace moved that the letter drafted by the Council staff be sent to the Secretary of Commerce, the motion passed unanimously. The letter is APPENDIX I.

G-5. Herring draft FMP

Executive Director Branson reported public hearings had all finally been held in the Westward except for Togiak and Tooksook Bay. After three tries for each, all stopped because of poor flying weather, the comment period (after three extensions) had closed on March 15. The plan development team was now preparing responses to all comments received and would have them ready for the April meeting so the Council could choose options and direct a final rewrite of the plan. The final FMP should be ready for final Council approval at the May meeting.

The SSC had received a report from its herring subgroup and had recommended four major items for work by the team:

- 1) All public responses be categorized into issues. Written responses should be prepared for each issue.
- 2) NMFS Central Office has promised written comments by the end of March. These comments should be addressed and issues resolved before the Council makes final decisions on the plan.
- 3) The draft ADF&G herring contract report should be finalized and submitted to the Council as soon as possible. The final biomass numbers in the plan are drawn directly from the contract report and methodology is discussed in the report but not the plan. Since both methodology and estimates are a major issue of public concern a final approved contract report must be available before the management plan can be approved. The Subgroup also urged the PDT to include the entire range of biomass estimates in the plan. These estimates are very controversial and public comment ranged from "far too high" to "far too conservative." If the range of estimates are included in the plan, the Council will have direct access to them and can include public comments, team recommendations and the estimates in OY deliberations.
- 4) The Subgroup asked the PDT to review the procedures in the plan to determine the final TALFF. It was noted that the illustration on page 113 did not meet the criteria established on page 112.

The SSC will be prepared to undertake the critical review of the contract report, the draft plan, and the public comments at its next meeting.

SPECIAL AGENDA ITEM

Joint Meeting with Alaska Board of Fisheries and North Pacific Fishery Council, March 27, and 28, 1980.

The joint meeting of Alaska Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Fishery Council opened in the Commodore Room of the Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel at 8:30 a.m., March 27, with Board Chairman Nick Szabo presiding.

After introductions of the Council and Board members two films were shown, "Where the Winds are Born" and "Alaska Challenge: Chase of the King." Mr. Szabo announced the Alaska Sea Food Products Promotion Assoc. organizational meeting would be held at the Captain Cook Hotel, March 29, 1980, at 1:00pm and all were invited. He also announced a Workshop on alternative crab management strategies on Saturday and encouraged all Council members attend.

Reports were heard from ADF&G staff members Ken Griffin, Guy Powell and NMFS crab scientist Bob Otto on king crab in the Bering Sea. A discussion followed on the life of self-destruct panels in crab pots. The consensus was that panels last about one year and the rest of the pot lasts an undeterminate period longer. Storage locations for crab pots and reasons for dead loss was discussed. Alaska Enforcement Officer Lt. Frank Sharp reported that all the gear checked by F&WS protection personnel prior to the 1979 king crab season was found to be illegal for one reason or another. Civil penalties had been filed against three crab boats for fines ranging from \$100 to \$150 thousand dollars. He pointed out that stored pots also catch species other than crabs.

Mr. Lokken asked why the CPUE had dropped and was told the abundance of C. bairdi crab was apparently down and that ice conditions forced the fleet to fish much further south than in 1978.

Following the morning session the Council hosted the Board in the Alaska Room commencing at 1:45 p.m. with Chairman Tillion presiding. The afternoon was devoted to public testimony on crab, salmon, and groundfish and Council/Board discussion of issues in those fisheries.

Testimony was received from Sig Jaeger and Sam Hjelle, representing the Northwest Pacific Vessel Owners Association, who gave their opinions on the Board's proposed regulations on king and Tanner crabs. They oppose Proposal 49 which would change the Adak and/or Bering Sea areas to exclusive registration areas, prohibit vessels registered for the Kodiak area from fishing any other registration areas and/or prohibit vessels registered for the Adak and/or Bering Sea areas from fishing in the Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula and/or Dutch Harbor areas. Proposals 54 and 58 propose changing the opening dates of the crab fishing season, and Jaeger and Hjelle would like a simultaneous opening date for both Dutch Harbor and the Bering Sea areas. Proposal 60 increases red and brown king crab size limits to 7 inches, and both gentlemen oppose the increase as they believe there is a heavy natural mortality of crab upon reaching 6 1/2 and 7 inches. Proposal 64 increases the guideline harvest range for red and brown king crab in the Southeastern district of the Bering Sea and Proposal 65 establishes guideline harvest levels for the Bering Sea king crab fisheries. Jaeger and Hjelle suggested a 130 mt guideline harvest level.

They proposed allowing pot storage anywhere in the Bering Sea east of 164° W. longitude. They attribute deadloss to the following major factors, in order of importance:

1. Overloading of tanks.
2. Crab condition
 - a. skip molt
 - b. soft shell
3. Surface water temperatures
4. Harbor water BOD (pollution)
5. Salinity of harbor water
6. Holding time in tanks
7. Bad weather
8. Handling of crab on deck.

They recommend gear be stored in lines N.E./S.W. (east of 165° W. longitude) to enable transiting vessels to more easily avoid it.

Proposal 71 changes the closing date for the Bering Sea district C. opilio season and Jaeger and Hjelle believe the opilio season should be fitted around the C. bairdi fishery. Mr. Jaeger said he would not like to reaffirm 130 million mt would be caught as he predicted last fall.

Proposal 74 establishes a district registration system in statistical area J, and both Jaeger and Hjelle believe district registration should be held off until fishing patterns emerge.

Mr. Jaeger said if it was clear there would be no fishing near the end of the season, a set date for closure would be acceptable, but if fishing was still going on a Field Order closure would be better. He also favored tank inspection prior to fishing rather than a set opening date for baiting because it was more enforceable.

Royal DeVaney, of Pacific Pearl Seafoods, was not in favor of making Adak an exclusive registration area. He favored the proposed October 1 opening date for the crab season and said it would provide a better quality of crab. He felt the November 1 opening date for Tanner crab had been adequate for the last two years.

Mr. Frank Keltz, of the Dutch Harbor Advisory Committee, would like Dutch Harbor an exclusive registration area, similar to the Kodiak area, as it would allow smaller vessels a better opportunity to fish and he feels this measure would provide better quality crab. He would support the prohibition of king crab vessels fishing statistical area M from fishing any other area if exclusive registration is established for the Dutch Harbor area. Mr. Keltz was in favor of having three-pot shrimp fishing season for Kachemak Bay. He approved of a November 1 opening date for Tanner crab if an exclusive registration area is instituted for the Bering Sea, as it provides better quality crab. Mr. Keltz said his Committee opposed allowing random pot storage in the Bering Sea area because water storage of pots caused damage to the resource, it was

difficult to enforce, was adverse to other fisheries, and lost pots were a hazard to navigation. He was in favor of changing the Tanner crab season to a later opening date for all districts of statistical area J and allowing a fishery for Korean hair crab. Mr. Keltz approved of the proposal to require floating processors to report their intended processing location to the local ADF&G biologist within the area of intended operation.

Mr. Garret Akun, representing the Kawerak Bering Straits Native Association, presented the Council with their Resolution 80-5 requesting the Bering Sea/Norton Sound Section of the State regulations include all waters north of Cape Romanzof and south of 66° N. latitude and east of the International Dateline, further that all summer commercial crabbing cease until ADF&G studies the effect of commercial crabbing on subsistence crabbing. The Resolution is in APPENDIX J-1.

Mr. Howard Farley from the Norton Sound ADF&G Advisory Board testified there was a shortage of crab in the Nome area and suggested a study on those stocks and a reduction of the 'big' boat fishery in the area.

Mr. Alvin Burch, Manager of Alaska Draggers Association (formerly the Alaska Shrimp Trawlers) said his group was not in favor of allowing random storage of king and Tanner crab pots in the Bering Sea area. He agreed with Sig Jaeger's testimony and recommended elimination of the current pot storage area in the Bering Sea since it is ice covered for much of the winter. Pot storage in 25 fathoms of water or less should be continued.

Mr. Frank Price, Executive Vice President of 13th Regional Native Corporation, described the resources of the Fishing Division of the corporation and its activities in Alaska. His group agrees with the closure to foreign processing in Akun/Akutan area. He believes boats should be held to a limited number of pots and that each pot be licensed. His report is APPENDIX J-2.

Mr. John Hall, crab fisherman, said he is not in favor of establishing exclusive registration areas for crab and that crab shouldn't be fished until they are of excellent quality. He feels there should be large amounts of oxygen in crab holding and storage tanks to sustain life. He suggested the opening date depend on water temperatures. He does not want the commercial king crab size increased to 7 inches, but left at 6-1/2 inches. He sees no reason for a closed season on C. opilio crab except to check gear, as he feels the industry regulates the acceptable size and quality of crabs.

Chairman Tillion stated as long as the State of Alaska enforces its regulations, the Council will go along with State regulations, but as soon as it stops enforcing them the Council will write its own regulations and the Federal government will enforce them. He feels the State should never give up its authority over the State registered vessels no matter where they fish.

Captain Frank Sharp, of Alaska Fish & Wildlife Protection Division, testified they do not enforced regulations beyond three miles if an FMP is in place. They are not presently enforcing Tanner crab regulations beyond three miles. His Division recognizes it has authority over Alaska Registered vessels beyond the three mile limit. He said the Division will enforce the king crab regulations but not the Tanner crab regulations beyond the three mile limit next summer. That policy comes from higher than his Division but he was unable to give the exact source.

Mr. Jay Hastings, representing the Japanese Tanner Crab Association, distributed a report to the Council covering the 1980 Japanese crab fishery to date. The report is APPENDIX J-3.

The Friday session with the Alaska Board of Fisheries opened at 8:45am with Chairman Tillion presiding in the Alaska Room. Further testimony was received on Council/Board agenda items.

Mr. Jack Savage, Fish & Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon, reviewed the status of Columbia River salmon stocks for the Council. His material is attached as APPENDIX J-4.

Chairman Tillion asked Mr. Don Martens, from the Canadian Consulate in Seattle, to brief the Council on the status of Canadian salmon fisheries. Mr. Martens said the scientists of both countries were working together to solve problems of mutual concern.

Written testimony was presented by Mike Fredinburg, Washington Department of Fisheries, of Fisheries, on the 1980 Columbia River salmon and Southeastern Alaska Troll Fishery. His report is APPENDIX J-5.

Mr. Dale Samuelson, owner of two combination shrimp and crab boats in the Dutch Harbor area, told the Council he was in favor of enforcing the 25 fathom rule for pot storage but would like pots stored out of bays where shrimp trawling occurred. Pots stored where pack ice occurred could be moved many miles and most fishermen recovered less than 40% of their pots caught by ice.

Messrs. Scott Stafne and Ed Linkous, of the Alaska Trollers Association, told the Council they supported the statements by John Savage calling for a coastwide data system. Mr. Stafne said he does not believe the Boldt Decision applies to Alaska. Mr. Linkous said the Troll Salmon FMP was written with the 'best available data,' it met with approval by all user groups, and that it was very undemocratic and disgraceful for the Secretary of Commerce to reject the FMP. He is very concerned, he said, that if the Council continues to go by the rules and the Secretary blocks the Council's FMP's, the fishermen will no longer support the Council and there will be much dissension.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H-1. April Council Meeting.

The April meeting was set for the 24th and 25th, with the public hearing on both Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Chukchi Seas groundfish FMP Amendments to be on April 23rd, Wednesday, all in the Anchorage/Westward/Hilton Hotel.

H-2. May Council Meeting.

The May Council meeting arrangements have been completed for the 22nd and 23rd at the Elks Club in Kodiak. Rear Admiral Duin invited Council members to join a regular patrol flight in a HC-130 Wednesday, May 21st. It would be an excellent opportunity to see the fishery in the western Gulf and the eastern Bering Sea.

I. REPORTS, CONTRACTS, AND PROPOSALS

- I-1. Announce signing of two Contracts: "The Development and Enhancement of a Computerized Fisheries Information System" and "The Bristol Bay Marine Mammal Study"

Mr. Branson announced both contracts had been signed.

- I-2. A Draft Solicitation for Proposal for Work Associated with the Troll Salmon FMP.

Mr. Branson requested the Council to review the proposal to insure it complied with their directions given at the February meeting. The request asks for proposals to coordinate the activity of the salmon plan development team, organize the available data on salmon, particularly those chinook stocks involved in the troll salmon fishery off Southeastern Alaska, and to present the Council with alternatives for management. This study and the document they produce should serve as a basis for the 1981 salmon plan and also as the initial building block for a comprehensive salmon plan for the entire west coast.

Chairman Tillion asked and received unanimous consent for the RFP to go forward.

Dr. Bevan asked how much contract money the Council had with the State of Alaska and Mr. Hutton replied about \$1,000,000.

J. FINANCE REPORT

There was no Finance Committee Meeting. Current financial status report was in the Agenda book.

K. GENERAL COMMENTS

Hank Ostrosky offered comments on the possible joint venture to harvest the excess Bristol Bay salmon this summer.

L. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING COMMENTS

No comments were made.

M. ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned at 2:30 p.m., Friday, March 28, 1980.