

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Twenty-Sixth Plenary Session
June 28-29, 1979
Homer, Alaska

The regular meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council was held at the Homer Eli's Lodge, Homer, Alaska on Thursday and Friday, June 28th and 29th. The SSC held a two-day meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday. A combined meeting of the SSC and AP was held Wednesday morning and an AP meeting was held Wednesday afternoon. A public comment session was held starting at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, and continued until 10:00 Friday morning.

The following is a summary of the meeting.

AGENDA

The Council was informed during the Executive Director's report that the Amendment #4 package for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan has been approved by the Secretary of Commerce and is expected to be implemented in mid-August. Concerning the Bering Sea/Aleutian Groundfish Fishery Management Plan, information at the present time is that the NOAA policy group will not accept the estimate of DAH that appears in the Plan.

U.S. COAST GUARD REPORT - Commander Pete Busick informed the Council there had been one report of violation and four citations since the last meeting. Discussion among Council members indicates that the Council consensus is it should feel free to make suggestions concerning penalties to be assessed in those instances where offenses are deemed to be of a significant nature.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES REPORT - Ron Naab (NMFS, Juneau) reported to the Council that foreign vessels increased from 270 in May to 430 on June 25th. Of that total, 225 are Japanese. The salmon fleet started fishing during the week of June 25th south of Attu and catches are reportedly 30% higher with fish larger than past year averages. Additional information on the seizure of the KEIYO MARU #53 shows that a precedent search was conducted of the ship after it had been seized and escorted to Kodiak. The search was made by the United States Marshall's Office and involved a crew of longshoremen, four agents, the use of trucks, cranes, forklifts and a biologist. The operation took the better part of the week. A similar type search will be conducted on the DONG WON #31, seized June 20. The cost of the searches will be approximately \$50,000 each. The value of the cargo on board the first ship is estimated to be between one-half million and \$700,000.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME REPORT - The Tanner crab catch by the American fleet shows 28 million pounds of C. opilio with the final total predicted to be around 30 million pounds. This compares with a total catch in 1978 of 1.7 million pounds. The reported U.S. catch of groundfish in the Bering Sea is 525 metric tons. The figure does not include bait landings. The Gulf of Alaska U.S. catch for 1979 is 4,000,000 metric tons which does not include joint venture catches which total 250 metric tons to date.

SCIENTIFIC & STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT - The King Crab Working Group of the SSC has called for completion of the draft fishery management plan for king crab by December 1, 1979. That schedule will see the plan implemented in September, 1981. Management options for the plan include evaluations of alternative management schemes which consider both quota and non-quota systems and the use of simulation modeling techniques. An analysis of fishery management plan regulations for the impact those regulations have on the development of the fleet will be conducted. The purpose of the analysis is to estimate the cost that the regulations will impose on the fleet.

GOA RESERVE RELEASE - The Council has recommended the release of the following reserve amounts in the Gulf of Alaska:

<u>Species</u>	<u>% of Release</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pollock	50% of the remaining reserve amount	(33,400 mt)
Flounder	90%	(4,000 mt)
*Sablefish	50%	(16,000 mt)
Atka mackerel	90%	(2,700 mt)
Squid	90%	(850 mt)
Others	90%	(2,000 mt)
Pacific Ocean perch	None	
Other rockfish	None	
Pacific cod	None	

The release is scheduled for July 2nd.

* West of 140° West Longitude only

GULF OF ALASKA DAH - Reassessment of DAH from 44,500 tons to 18,600 metric tons was made for the Gulf of Alaska. The reassessment follows the April, 1979 survey of processors by National Marine Fisheries Service. The difference of 25,900 metric tons will be assigned to TALFF.

JOINT VENTURE CLOSURES - The Council directed the Plan Drafting Team for the Gulf of Alaska FMP to develop amendment options closing some areas in the Gulf of Alaska to joint venture operations. The purpose of the amendment would be to provide protection for American processors under the provisions of the Processor Preference Amendment to the FCMA. Joint venture catches to date total some 250 metric tons. Further consideration on this subject will be given by the Council during the July meeting.

REDEFINING FISHERY MANAGEMENT UNITS - The Council's State Department representative informed the Council that there was little likelihood of the government considering changing the present base lines defining the Fishery Management Zone. The areas in conflict are those outside of three miles but inside archipelagos.

GOA FMP EXTENSION - The Council notified the Secretary of Commerce it intends to amend the Gulf of Alaska FMP for 1980 by changing some optimum yield figures, allow regulatory release of DAH to TALFF and possibly close some areas to joint venture operations. The changes will be necessary to make the plan effective for the coming regulatory year.

BS/A PROPOSED AMENDMENT - The Council took no action on the proposed amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish in the Bering Sea to close an area northwest of the Pribilof Islands to foreign trawlers to protect herring and salmon during the winter. It will continue work on a salmon closure at the July meeting deferring action on herring until the FMP for that species is completed.

LIMITED ENTRY WORKGROUP - The Limited Entry Workgroup has been increased by the addition of Jeffrey Stephan, Rick Lauber and Bob Alverson of the Advisory Panel and Dick Myhre of the IPHC.

PERMIT APPLICATION - An application from the Soviet processor/trawler PRIAMURYE has been approved to work in the joint venture with Marine Resources, Inc. During the consideration of the permit granting the PRIAMURYE was found to have five previous minor violations. Violations were not considered sufficiently serious to warrant withholding the permit.

FUR SEAL CONVENTION - Carmen Blondin, Deputy Director of the Office of International Fisheries Affairs, National Marine Fisheries Service reported to the Council on the renegotiation of the Fur Seal Convention which expires in 1980. According to the protocol established for the Convention, the United States must declare its intentions by October of 1979 to either continue, opt out, or renegotiate the Convention. Blondin, in Alaska at the time of the Council meeting for a tour of the Pribilofs during the annual Aleut Fur Seal hunt, suggested the Council make a recommendation on the EIS that will accompany the Convention. Blondin indicated that the stocks of fur seals numbered some 200,000 in 1900, presently there is a 3 million total and the stocks are considered to be of maximum capacity for the range. An estimated one-half million metric tons of fish are taken annually by fur seals.

JULY MEETING - Will be held in Anchorage at the Sheffield House on July 26th and 27th. The format of the meeting has been changed. Previous meetings have been conducted with Thursday, the first meeting day, devoted to reports from committees and public comment. Friday was then used to reexamine the subjects and make decisions. Under the new setup the agenda will be considered item-by-item and completed as each individual item is brought up. This will include reports from appropriate committees on the subject that is being discussed and public comment. The new format will probably result in a time limit for individual speakers on any subject.

SSC-AP MEETINGS - The SSC will meet July 25 only in the Council Conference Room at 333 W. Fourth Ave starting at 8:30 a.m. The AP meeting will be held July 25 at the Sheffield Hotel, 5th and G Streets starting at 8:30 a.m.

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