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Highlights  
Eighth Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
June 23-24, 1977

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Advisory Panel (AP) met concurrently on June 23rd and 24th, 1977 at the Hill Building, 632 Sixth Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska. The SSC and the AP also met separately one day earlier and at other announced times during the Council meeting. The Council conducted a public comment period on the first day and also held a closed session to discuss confidential matters concerning the renegotiation of the INPFC and the U.S./Canadian talks.

The Council approved for printing two management plans; the groundfish fishery in the Gulf of Alaska (1978) and Alaska tanner crab fishery (1978). The two plans had been internally reviewed by the AP, the SSC and the Council. Their comments will be appended to the plans when printed.

The Council announced it would hold joint public hearings simultaneously on the two management plans and on the joint ventures' public hearings proposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The dates and locations are as follows:

August 3rd, Petersburg, Alaska  
August 5th & 6th, Seattle, Washington  
August 22nd, Anchorage, Alaska  
August 23rd, Sand Point Alaska  
August 24th, Kodiak, Alaska

The public will be invited to submit written and/or oral testimony at any of the above locations or to the Council at any time before August 30th, 1977.

The Council, SSC and ad hoc finance committee reviewed several research proposals and recommended the following three projects for Council funding.

(1) The Development and Enhancement of a Fisheries Information System, for \$124K by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,



(2) Investigations on continental origin of Sockeye and Coho Salmon in the area of the Japanese land based fishery for \$ 44.5K, by the Fisheries Research Institute, University of Washington, and

(3) An Observer Program for the Gulf of Alaska Domestic Groundfishery for \$60K, by NMFS/NWAFC.

The projects were judged on their (a) ability to support direct Council needs, (b) timeliness, (c) importance in the development of management plans, and (d) short-term only funding.

In addition, the Council requested the staff prepare request for proposals (RFP) for research projects dealing with (a) various types of joint ventures in developing fisheries and (b) the impact of a commercial herring fishery on the economy and villages of the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskowim area.

The domestic tanner crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea harvested slightly over 50 million pounds of tanner crab, primarily Chionoecetes bairdi, according to the ADF&G. The harvest more than doubled last year's catch by U.S. fishermen in that area.

The ADF&G reported that approximately 3,000 tons of herring had been caught in a new domestic fishery in the eastern Bering Sea/Bristol Bay area. This amount was in excess of the 1,000 tons originally expected to be harvested in that area by the native subsistence fishery as shown in the preliminary management plan. The Council recommended that the 1977-78 winter season, foreign allocation of herring in the Bering Sea be reduced in the 1978 PMP by the amount taken in the domestic fishery this spring and that expected to be taken in 1978.

The following foreign permit applications were reviewed and acted on:

- o The French registry vessel, M/S SOUGUETA, requested by Poland to act as a support ship for their Pacific fleet, was recommended for disapproval because France has no allocation in the Pacific, possible legal conflict with 50 CFR 611, and not enough information on the application.
- o The ISE MARU #8, an independent snailpot boat (previously approved at the May meeting) was again recommended for approval.
- o The KOTOKU MARU, a Japanese refrigerator/transport vessel was recommended approved by the Council with the stipulation it be allowed to receive raw fishery products only from other Japanese vessels.

(2) Investigations in commercial catches of sockeye and  
Coho salmon in the area of the Japanese land based  
fishery for 2-4-5, by the Fisheries Research Institute,  
University of Washington, and

(3) An Observer Program for the Gulf of Alaska Domestic  
Groundfishery for 2-4-5, by the University of Washington.

The projects were judged on their (a) ability to support  
fishery council needs, (b) timeliness, (c) importance in the  
development of management plans, and (d) short-term only  
nature.

In addition, the Council requested the staff prepare request  
for proposals (RFP) for research projects dealing with (a)  
various types of joint ventures in developing fisheries and  
(b) the impact of a commercial netting fishery on the economy  
and villages of the Kushik/Viktor/Kawakawa area.

The domestic Tanner crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea  
harvested slightly over 30 million pounds of Tanner crab  
primarily Chionoecetes bairdi, according to the ADP. The  
harvest more than doubled last year's catch by U.S. fishermen  
in that area.

The ADP reported that approximately 3,000 tons of netting  
had been caught in a new domestic fishery in the eastern  
Bering Sea/Viktor Bay area. This amount was an excess of  
the 1,000 tons originally expected to be harvested in that  
area by the native subsistence fishery as shown in the  
preliminary management plan. The Council recommended that  
the 1977-78 winter season, for netting allocation of netting in  
the Bering Sea be reduced in the 1978 RFP by the amount  
taken in the domestic fishery this spring and was expected  
to be taken in 1978.

The following foreign permit applications were reviewed and  
acted on:

- o The French netting vessel, MS SOUBRETTA, requested by  
France to act as a support ship for their Pacific  
fishery, was recommended for disapproval because France  
has no allocation in the Pacific. Possible legal conflicts  
with US CFR 611, and not enough information on the  
application.
- o The ISM MARU #3, an independent netting boat (previously  
approved at the May meeting) was again recommended for  
approval.
- o The KOTOKU MARU, a Japanese netting vessel, requested by  
Japan, was recommended approved by the Council with the  
condition it be allowed to receive raw fishery  
products only from other Japanese vessels.

- o The KOHOKU MARU #7, a Japanese snailpot vessel was recommended for approval.
- o A Polish refrigerator vessel, the M/S HALNIAK was recommended for disapproval based on an incomplete application and because the request was for the NE Pacific and should therefore be properly considered by the Pacific Council.

The number of foreign fishing vessels (639) operating off Alaska represents an increase of 302 from last month and a decrease of 120 vessels over the same period in 1976. The increase was due to the arrival of the Japanese high seas salmon gillnet fleet.

- o The Soviet fishing effort was reduced to only 20 vessels fishing off Alaska this month; 68 less than the same period last year.
- o The Japanese tanner crab fleet was reported in Area B (south of the Pribilofs) in the Bering Sea as the Area A quota of 2,500 metric tons had been filled and closed on June 14th. Area B will likely be closed around June 29th. The remaining quota should be harvested by July 29th as the independent crab fleet, fishing the triangle area, has taken 1,000 of their 2,700 metric ton quota. Six NMFS observers were reported monitoring the catches of these eleven independent crab boats.
- o The Japanese have taken over 2/3 of their sablefish quota off southeast Alaska, about 1/3 of the total foreign quota of 10,150 metric tons for the rest of the Gulf of Alaska has been caught.

The U.S. Coast Guard reported no significant violations had occurred off Alaska. The report did indicate that an inordinate amount of time had been spent patrolling specialized fisheries; i.e., the herring fishery in Bristol Bay, which has diluted general Coast Guard patrol and surveillance activities. The Coast Guard also presented an indepth information letter that had been prepared in conjunction with NMFS to outline, in detail, joint ventures so they might be more clearly understood.

The Council unanimously endorsed a proposal to recommend additional funding for the Pacific Marine Fishery Commission for their support of the North Pacific and Pacific Councils' extended jurisdiction activities. The funding will come directly from NMFS.

The WARD #17, a Japanese fishing vessel was recommended for approval.

A Polish refrigerator vessel, the N/S KASIMIR was recommended for disapproval based on an incomplete application and because the request was for the NW Pacific and should therefore be properly considered by the Pacific Council.

The number of foreign fishing vessels (833) operating off Alaska represents an increase of 302 from last month and a decrease of 130 vessels over the same period in 1976. The increase was due to the arrival of the Japanese high seas salmon gillnet fleet.

The Soviet fishing effort was reduced to only 30 vessels fishing off Alaska this month, 28 less than the same period last year.

The Japanese banner trap fleet was reported in Area 2 (south of the Pribilof) in the Bering Sea as the first of 2,500 metric tons had been filled and closed on June 14th. Area 2 will likely be closed around June 22nd. The remaining quota should be harvested by July 22nd as the independent trap fleet fishing the Pribilof area, has taken 1,000 of their 2,700 metric ton quota. Six NMFS observers were reported monitoring the catches of these eleven independent trap boats.

The Japanese have taken over 1/3 of their annual quota off southeast Alaska, about 1/3 of the total foreign quota of 10,150 metric tons for the rest of the Gulf of Alaska has been caught.

The U.S. Coast Guard reported no significant violations had occurred off Alaska. The report did indicate that an inordinate amount of time had been spent patrolling specialized fisheries, i.e., the herring fishery in Bristol Bay, which has drawn general Coast Guard patrol and surveillance activities. The Coast Guard also presented an independent information letter that had been prepared in conjunction with WPS to outline, in detail, joint ventures so they might be more clearly understood.

The Council unanimously endorsed a proposal to recommend additional funding for the Pacific Marine Mammal Commission for their support of the North Pacific and Pacific Council's expanded jurisdiction activities. The funding will come directly from WPS.

The Council considered the Draft Foreign Fee Schedule for 1978 and concluded (a) it should be calculated on current ex-vessel prices and (b) the schedule had not available long enough for sufficient study and meaningful recommendations by the Council.

The Council compared the NMFS schedule for management plan development with its' own management plan schedule. They agreed that portions of the NMFS schedule were unnecessary but dealt with the more serious problem of the impossibilities of "real time management" in developing a management plan in 1977, for 1978 with 1976 data.

During the meeting, the Council received a request from NMFS for comment and recommendations on 1978 OY and foreign allocation figures. The matter was deferred for study and recommendation at a later date.

The Council received a document concerning possible options in the renegotiation of the INPFC from a Council ad hoc study group. The report will serve as one of the Council's reference papers in the upcoming INPFC renegotiation.

The Executive Director's Report contained the following:

- o Receipt of a letter of credit for \$305,400 for Council administration and operations. The total management plan expenditures (to date) were reported at slightly over \$6,000.
- o The Council's procurement standards were found to be not acceptable to the NOAA grant officer without a 'conflict of interest' section. The Council subsequently adopted a section used by the Pacific Council.
- o The Council unanimously approved a resolution placing staff on a State benefits program and also paying the retroactive enrollment in the State's retirement program.
- o The second Council newsletter was mailed in June and a copy of the June, Sea Grant-Alaska Seas and Coast Supplement on the North Pacific Council was presented.

The Council heard considerable public testimony relating to (1) foreign ownership and foreign crews on U.S. fishing vessels, (2) the KMIDC/Davenny joint pollock venture, (3) the herring fishery in the eastern Bering Sea and its effect on the native Alaskans in the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskowim area, (4) the impact of the INPFC negotiations and Japanese high seas salmon fishing on western Alaskan Natives.





Ms. Carlene Welfelt was introduced as the newly appointed Advisory Panel member replacing Ms. Judith Ayres.

James Brooks, Councilman and Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced his retirement as Commissioner and told of his new job with NMFS coordinating management and enforcement activities for the Alaska Region of NMFS.

The July Council meeting was cancelled, the next meeting will be in Kodiak on August 25th and 26th.

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Advisory Panel member replacing Mr. David Ayres.

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