



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:Cons 14-006

Agenda Date2/3/2014

Agenda Number:D-2

Eric Olson, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan - Discussion Paper

ESTIMATED TIME:
2 hours (all D items)

ACTION REQUIRED:
Review the discussion paper on a potential BS Fishery Ecosystem Plan, and take action as appropriate.

BACKGROUND:

In June 2013, the Council tasked staff with a discussion paper on the development of a Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). The motion was put forward in the context of an agenda item relating to the Bering Sea canyons, and a Council request to better understand the importance of these canyons, especially Pribilof and Zhemchug canyons, as part of a highly productive shelf break zone providing coral and sponge habitats for fish and crab species. In recognition of the Council's immediate focus on the Bering Sea slope, the Council's Ecosystem Committee originally recommended that the Council consider development of an FEP specifically for the slope area, however the Council ultimately broadened the scope of the discussion paper so as to allow the discussion to dictate the appropriate geographic scale for a potential FEP.

This discussion paper provides some background on the development of the Council's existing FEP, for the Aleutian Islands ecosystem area, as well as the availability of information about the Bering Sea ecosystem. The paper also identifies that if the Council chooses to proceed, a key consideration will be to define a management objective for a potential Bering Sea FEP, in addition to considering geographical scope of and logistical issues with such a project.