

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

January Council Meeting

The North Pacific Council will be meeting jointly with the Alaska Board of Fisheries at the Baranof Hotel in Juneau beginning January 5 for a series of staff presentations, public hearings and joint Board/Council discussions. The meeting will be largely devoted to Salmon FMP amendments for 1981. Tentatively, the schedule is as follows:

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| January 5 | Joint Meeting 9:00 a.m.
Staff Reports
Joint Public Hearing |
| January 6 | Joint Public Hearing |
| January 7 | Joint Hearing as Required
Joint Meeting
General Discussion on Direction of Salmon Regulations
for 1981 |
| January 8 | Board Council meet separately to consider proposals
(Council will be meeting in the Elks Hall) |
| January 9 | Continue consideration of proposals and meeting jointly
with the board to review results of deliberations of
the two bodies. |

The Scientific and Statistical Committee will be meeting January 5th and 6th at the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center in Seattle, Washington. It is expected that their report on the proposed salmon amendments will be given to the Council and the Board on Wednesday morning, January 7, in Juneau.

The Advisory Panel will meet in the Baranof Hotel on January 5th and 6th with some recesses in their meeting to attend the joint Council/Board meetings for staff presentations.

Bering Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan Approved

The Council approved the Bering Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan as their recommendations to the Secretary of Commerce for the management of that fishery. The plan, after slight revisions recommended by the SSC and the Council, will be forwarded with the final environmental impact statement and regulatory analysis to the Secretary to begin review. Implementation is expected sometime next fall.

The Council chose Area "C," the largest of the winter closed areas to protect herring, as their management measure and gave the Regional Director of NMFS authority to close all or part of "C" depending on where the herring stocks are located at any particular time. They also notified the Regional Director that they do not expect a surplus to be available for allocation to offshore fisheries during the November 1980 to March 1981 period.

Copies of the completed FMP will be available from the Council office around the first of the year when final revision and printing is completed.

Tanner Crab Fishery Management Plan

The Council approved amendment #7 to the Tanner crab FMP for submission to the Secretary as their recommendations for the 1981 fishery. Optimum yield for C. opilio Tanner crab was set to equal domestic annual harvest (OY=DAH) up to the limits of the allowable biological catch (ABC) which is calculated at 91 million pounds for 1981. On that basis, the total allowable level of foreign fishery (TALFF) will be zero. In other action on the plan, the Council set optimum yield for the Bering Sea for C. bairdi crab at 28-36 million pounds, for Chignik at 5 million pounds, and for the South Peninsula District at 6 million pounds.

In concurrent action, the Council recommended denial of all permit applications for Japanese ships wishing to fish Tanner crab since there will be no allocation for them to catch in 1981.

Proposed Amendment to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

The Council okayed an amendment package for public review that proposes closing or greatly reducing the foreign fishery in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska. Several options are included in that amendment package which either close the area off Southeastern Alaska and Yakutat to foreign trawling or greatly reduce it. The package, developed primarily at the request of U.S. longline fishermen in Southeast Alaska, will be available for distribution to the public around January 5. A public hearing is scheduled on the amendment in Sitka on January 31 from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Centennial Building. The comment period will remain open until February 6. The Council is expected to take final action on the amendment at its meeting on February 26 and 27 in Anchorage.

King Crab Fishery Management Plan

The Council discussed the options in the Draft King Crab FMP now undergoing public comment. That comment period will not close until December 15, but in order to discuss the options in the plan and the possibilities for future joint management of this resource with the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the Council did debate and tentatively choose preferred alternatives. Briefly, they are as follows:

1. Develop the FMP as a policy document for joint management of the resource by the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Council, with actual regulation and field management to remain with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

2. Adopted a fishery management unit (that area in which the plan would take effect) to include only the Bristol Bay, Bering Sea, Dutch Harbor, and Adak regulatory areas, eliminating Kodiak and the Peninsula from the fishery management plan.
3. Tentatively decided on option number 3 for management procedures, which basically allows a fluctuating harvest level based on population size by using varying exploitation rates on crabs 6-1/2 inches or larger and prohibiting the take of female crabs. Preferred no exclusive registration areas within the fishery management unit (FMU).
4. Asked a group of industry members and PDT members to develop a mutually acceptable proposal for gear storage regulations.
5. Provide for tank inspection prior to a season opening.
6. Deferred limited entry until, and if, further study is done on the subject.
7. Did not limit the number of pots to be used by an individual ship.

Following that discussion, the Council met with the Board of Fisheries to discuss the various points in the FMP. No decision was made on any of the issues by the two bodies. The Council asked Council members Bevan and Collinsworth to head a study group to determine where current State management philosophy and the philosophy of the proposed fishery management plan might differ and how those differences can be reconciled. That group is expected to report back to the Council at its February meeting.

Inter-Council Salmon Coordinating Committee

The Council adopted as its policy a statement of purpose and objectives developed by the Inter-Council Salmon Coordinating Committee of the North Pacific Council and the Pacific Council. The purpose of the joint effort is to "ensure and facilitate the coordinated planning, development and implementation of salmon management plans and activities of concern to both Councils and to ensure full and complete communication between the two Councils." Copies of the statement and the objectives developed by the committee are available from the Council.

Permit Applications from Foreign Ships for 1981

After reviewing the permit applications for 1981 from foreign ships which have committed serious violations since March 1977, the Council recommended that those permit applications be approved, but directed the permit review subcommittee to develop guidelines for reduction of allocation in the event of future violations, or other possible sanctions which would demonstrate to the governments responsible for those ships the seriousness of such violations.

In other permit action the Council recommended approval for applications from two Japanese trawler/processors and seven Korean ships to work with American

fishing boats in joint ventures during 1981. Also approved was a permit application from West Germany for one ship for the same purpose in the Gulf of Alaska. They also recommended that West Germany be given a very small allocation for which they could fish themselves when product was not available from American catcher boats. This will be the first time the West Germans have operated in the Gulf of Alaska.

No permit applications have been received from Soviet processors for joint ventures for 1981.

In other action, the Council endorsed a request from St. George Tanaq for an additional 9,000 ton allocation to Taiwan in the Bering Sea. The St. George Corporation is planning a cooperative operation with a Taiwanese trawler processor to determine the feasibility of the village corporation getting into the same business with an American hull two years from now.

The Council refused to endorse a request from All Marine Products, a Los Angeles-based U.S. firm, for an additional 50,000 ton allocation of pollock for Japan so that company could work with a Japanese surimi trawler. All Marine Products wanted to work with a Japanese firm to produce surimi at sea, using Japanese labor with some American trainees, for sale in Japan. Their avowed purpose was to crack the Japanese surimi market and at the same time gain expertise in that operation so that they could continue it with American-built ships in the future.

Advisory Panel Appointments 1981-1982

The Council re-appointed a number of Advisory Panel members and appointed several new members to bring the panel up to its full strength of 25 for 1981 and 1982. The Advisory Panel is reorganized every two years. They expect to hold elections of officers for the new term at the January meeting. Currently Bob Alverson is Chairman and Bud Boddy is Vice Chairman.

Robert Alverson	Weaver Ivanoff	Alan Otness
Robert Blake	Eric Jordan	Charles Parsons
A. W. Boddy	Joseph Kurtz	Jack Phillips
Al Burch	Rick Lauber	Don Rawlinson
Larry Cotter	Ray Lewis	Lewis Schnaper
Paula Easley	Rosalie Moore	Jeff Stephan
Truman Emberg	Dan O'Hara	Konrad Uri
Jessie Foster	Ken Olsen	Tony Vaska
Richard Goldsmith		

Scientific and Statistical Committee Membership and Officers

The SSC elected Don Rosenberg as Chairman and Rich Marasco as Vice-Chairman for the next two years and deferred recommendations for appointments to fill the two vacancies on the Committee created by the resignation of Dr. George Rogers and Steve Pennoyer. They are asking for applications and resumes from scientists interested in serving on the Committee for consideration at their next meeting in Seattle, January 5th and 6th.

Plan Development Team Meeting Policy

Recognizing that it is sometimes necessary for PDT's to meet in closed working session, the Council approved a plan development team (PDT) meeting policy which allows meetings of the teams to be either open or closed to the public at the discretion of the Council's Executive Director. At the same time, the Council made it clear that they wanted the public to have access to the team process through review of ongoing work and periodic open sessions. They recommended that the subgroups from the Advisory Panel, Scientific and Statistical Committee, and the Council for each FMP work more closely with the Plan Development Teams in preliminary reviews of material before it goes to the SSC and Council.

Trawl-Caught Salmon in the Bering Sea

After discussion of the incidental catch of western Alaska salmon by the foreign trawl fishery in the Bering Sea and receipt of a resolution from the Board of Fisheries asking the Council for help with this problem, the Council concluded that until the material now being analyzed by the prohibited species workgroup is available, they could take no specific action except to endorse a rapid response by National Marine Fisheries Service to the Resolution submitted by the Western Alaska native groups to the Secretary of Commerce. The Council decision on this subject is scheduled for February when they act on the Bering Sea Groundfish amendment package.

Increased U.S. Interest in the Pacific Cod Resource

Following reports from representatives of several vessel owners' associations indicating that the demand for Pacific cod by American fishermen in 1981 may be as high as 70,000 to 90,000 tons, the Council, on the recommendation of the Scientific and Statistical Committee, asked the U.S. State Department, through their representative on the Council, to hold all unallocated Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska and 50% of the unallocated Pacific cod and 10% of all other species in the Bering Sea until at least April. If it appears that the U.S. catch of Pacific cod for frozen and salted product is as large as anticipated, U.S. fishermen will need all of the fish withheld.

Limited Entry Workgroup and Halibut Limited Entry

The Council approved hiring a consultant to work with the limited entry workgroup, which has already met several times to consider limited entry for the halibut longline fishery, and requested that group to expedite its deliberations.

Council Documents Available

Two Council documents containing the results of research contracts will be available in the near future from this office.

1. "Assessment of Spawning Herring and Capelin Stocks at Selected Coastal Areas in the Eastern Bering Sea"
2. "Troll Salmon Tag Recovery Program"

Foreign Fishing Fees

The Council reviewed the proposed fees for foreigners fishing within the FCZ in 1981 and generally agreed with the level proposed. They asked National Marine Fisheries Service to indicate how the recently passed fisheries legislation would affect fees since that legislation mandates an assessment of not less than 7-1/2 percent of ex-vessel value of that catch.

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Foreign Fishing Fees

The Council reviewed the proposed fees for foreign fishing within the ROK. It is generally agreed with the level proposed. They asked various Marine Fisheries Service to indicate how the recently passed Fisheries Legislation would affect fees since that legislation mandated an assessment of not less than 1/10 percent of exvessel value of that catch.

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