

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

April 1, 1981

Council Plans Administrative Work Session in April

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet in Anchorage on April 23 and 24, 1981 at 9 a.m. in its Conference Room at the Post Office Mall. The meeting will be largely devoted to action on revisions to the Council's Standard Operating Practices and Procedures, plan development team meeting policy, and proposed amendments to the MFCMA.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel will not meet in April.

Council Takes Final Action on Troll Salmon Amendments for 1981

In joint session with the Alaska Board of Fisheries March 25 - 27, the Council took final action on the 1981 amendments to the Troll Salmon FMP. The revised management objectives which resulted from the January Council/Board meeting were unanimously adopted by the Council. The Council maintained its stand to reduce the OY for chinook salmon to a maximum harvest of 272,000 fish. This represents a reduction of 15% from last season's optimum yield. The Washington Department of Fisheries proposed a 29% reduction to help rebuild their upper Columbia River bright stocks, but the Council felt that any reduction greater than 15% would impose severe economic hardship on the Alaskan fishing community.

The chinook season will run from May 15 through September 20 this year, rather than April 15 through October 31 in 1980. The later opening date will benefit primarily Southeastern Alaska stocks. The coho season will remain the same as last year, June 15 through September 20. The entire FCZ east of Cape Suckling remains open to salmon fishing. Power trollers will again be allowed six lines north of Cape Spencer and four lines south of Cape Spencer; hand trollers will be limited to two gurdies or four sport lines. All fishermen will be required to submit fish tickets or equivalent documents before leaving Alaskan waters with salmon on board, and heads must be retained only on fin-clipped fish. The Council agreed to ban treble hooks to conform with State regulations.

The final amendment package, Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, and Regulatory Impact Analysis will be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce on April 3 as the Council's recommendation for management of the 1981 troll fishery. Emergency regulations to open the fishery will be filed on May 15.

Joint Statement of Principles and Draft Framework
for King Crab Management Referred to Board

A revised Joint Statement of Principles between the Council and Board of Fisheries for Management of Domestic King Crab Fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutians and Draft Alaska Board of Fisheries Bering Sea/Aleutian Island King Crab Management Framework were accepted by the Council and referred to the Board and public for review. The Council urged the Board to formally adopt the documents and develop their regulations for the fishery. Final Council review and acceptance of the documents are scheduled for the May Council meeting.

The Joint Statement and Draft Framework will be sent to the public as soon as State regulations are finalized by the Board. Written comments will be accepted for 45 days and oral comments will be accepted at the May Council meeting.

Japanese and Western Alaskans Negotiate Agreement
to Limit Chinook Interceptions

The Council was pleased to accept a negotiated agreement between the natives of western Alaska and the Hokuten and Japan Deep Sea Trawlers Associations which will limit chinook interceptions in the Bering Sea foreign trawl fishery. Terms of the agreement call for an amendment to the Bering Sea Preliminary Management Plan to impose on the 1981 foreign trawl fishery an interception limit of 65,000 chinook salmon (60,000 of western Alaska origin). Limits imposed on foreign nations with groundfish allocations for the Bering Sea will be proportionate to each nation's percentage of the total Bering Sea groundfish TALFF. If any nation's incidental trawl catch of chinook salmon reaches its national limit, all of that nation's trawl vessels will be prohibited from trawling in INPFC Area II and two sub-areas of INPFC Area I for the remainder of that fishing year.

This agreement represents a giant step toward solving the incidental catch problem. Amendment #3 to the Council's Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP, currently under public review, addresses long term solutions to the incidental catch of all prohibited species in the groundfish fishery.

Board/Council/Alaska Legislature Resolution Stresses
Need to Reduce Offshore Chinook Interceptions

The Alaska Board of Fisheries, North Pacific Council, and Alaska State Legislature joined together in a resolution urging the Council, State of Alaska, and INPFC to take appropriate measures to reduce Alaskan chinook salmon interceptions by all foreign offshore fisheries. The Japanese government and fishing industry will be asked to develop methods and apply appropriate modifications to their high seas salmon fishing operations which will help reduce their trawl interceptions. The Council was urged to support research to determine continent of origin of chinooks taken in the Japanese landbased drift net fishery, Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea foreign trawl fisheries, and the Japanese high seas mothership fishery.

Joint Statement of the Board of Directors and the Management of the Company

The Board of Directors and the Management of the Company have reviewed the financial statements of the Company for the year ended December 31, 1967, and have approved them for inclusion in the annual report to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Board of Directors also has approved the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1967, and the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1968.

The Board of Directors and the Management of the Company have also reviewed the financial statements of the Company for the year ended December 31, 1968, and have approved them for inclusion in the annual report to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Board of Directors also has approved the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1968, and the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1969.

Statement of the Board of Directors and the Management of the Company

The Board of Directors and the Management of the Company have reviewed the financial statements of the Company for the year ended December 31, 1969, and have approved them for inclusion in the annual report to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Board of Directors also has approved the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1969, and the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1970.

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The Board of Directors and the Management of the Company have reviewed the financial statements of the Company for the year ended December 31, 1971, and have approved them for inclusion in the annual report to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Board of Directors also has approved the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1971, and the dividend of \$0.10 per share for the year ended December 31, 1972.

Target for FCZ Salmon Limited Entry is 1982

The Council has instructed the staff to draft a limited entry proposal for both hand and power trollers based on past history of participation in the FCZ. The system would become effective for the 1982 fishing year and provide for both transferable and non-transferable permits. Transferable permits are to be based on two or more landings, documented by fish tickets, for any two years during the period 1975 through 1978, and two or more documented landings during either 1979 or 1980. Non-transferable permits shall be based on two or more documented landings during either 1979 or 1980.

Figures provided by the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission indicate that as many as 156 hand trollers and 471 power trollers may qualify for permanent permits under this system. The Council will review the draft proposal at its May meeting.

Public Hearings Scheduled for Amendment #3 to the Bering Sea Groundfish FMP

Public hearings will be held in Seattle on April 18 and in Anchorage on April 22 on proposed Amendment #3 to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP. The Seattle hearing will begin at 9 a.m. at the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center Auditorium. The Anchorage hearing will begin at 1 p.m. in the Council headquarters Conference Room. Written comments on the proposed amendment will be accepted until 5 p.m., May 1, 1981.

Tanner Crab Quibbles

The Council and Board of Fisheries discussed minor inconsistencies between current state and federal Tanner crab fishery regulations. Current state regs provide for a fixed season closure date, while federal regs allow the Tanner crab season to continue until closed by Regional Director field order when OY is reached. The Council favors field order closure, particularly this year because TALFF has been eliminated. The Board is currently reviewing this and other facets of the state's Tanner crab regulations for the 1981 season.

Herring FMP Update

After clarification of the formula for calculating Allowable Incidental Catch (AIC) and minor editorial changes, the Herring FMP, Final Environmental Impact Statement, and Draft Regulatory Impact Review will go the Secretary of Commerce as the Council's recommendation for management of the herring fishery.

The AIC and Herring Savings Area portions of the FMP directly affect the Bering Sea groundfish fishery. Upon recommendation of NOAA general counsel the Council agreed to include these as a de facto amendment to the Bering Sea Groundfish FMP.

Public Health and Safety Commission

The Commission has been established to study and report on the health and safety of the public. It will be composed of representatives from various government departments and the private sector. The Commission will be chaired by a member of the public. Its terms of reference are set out in the Schedule to the Commission's Charter. The Commission will report to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security. It will also be required to report to the House of Commons. The Commission will be required to report to the House of Commons on its progress and findings. It will also be required to report to the House of Commons on its recommendations. The Commission will be required to report to the House of Commons on its findings and recommendations. It will also be required to report to the House of Commons on its progress and findings. It will also be required to report to the House of Commons on its recommendations.

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Latest on the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

Amendment #10 to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP, which will close the Eastern Regulatory Area to all foreign fishing east of 140°W, impose year-round pelagic gear restrictions on foreign trawlers between 140°W and 147°W, and reduce OY for Pacific Ocean perch to 875 mt, was sent to the NMFS Regional Office on March 20 and will be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce by April 15. Implementation is expected on October 1, 1981.

Domestic Fisheries

Preliminary figures from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game show the 1980 domestic groundfish catch was 46,188 mt. Pacific cod and pollock each comprised 32% of the total; flounders, 27%; sablefish, 4%; and all others, 5%.

The total domestic groundfish catch through February, 1981 was 4,306 mt -- 74% pollock -- primarily from the Gulf of Alaska.

Foreign Fisheries

As of February 28 less than 18% of the 207,284 mt TALFF had been taken from the Gulf of Alaska. Poland has taken 63% of its 34,003 mt allocation, Japan has taken 12% of its 128,748 mt allocation, and Korea has not begun fishing.

Less than 10% of the 1.2 million mt Bering Sea TALFF was taken as of the end of February, with only Korea and the Federal Republic of Germany showing measurable effort. Foreign effort off Alaska decreased from 192 vessels at the end of February to 142 vessels on March 18.

The Coast Guard is Watching ...

Since the February Council meeting the Coast Guard has issued two reports of violation and five citations for FCMA infractions. Three of the citations were issued to the Polish stern trawler MARLIN for catch log and vessel identifier violations. The Polish stern trawler OTOL received one citation for failure to maintain its daily cumulative catch log. West Germany's FRIEDRICH BUSSE received two reports of violation for failure to notify the Coast Guard of an area shift and failure to return eight Pacific halibut to the sea. Representatives of Nordstern A.G., operators of the BUSSE, explained that a crew member incorrectly identified the small halibut as flounders and ran them through the fish meal processor. One citation was also issued to the BUSSE for a catch log infraction.

Logbook Program Funded and Ready to Go

Because of its importance to the developing domestic groundfish fishery, the Domestic Groundfish Logbook Program will be funded by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The program will provide a mechanism to collect catch information which would otherwise be unavailable while providing fishermen with a standardized record of groundfish catches. The Department hopes to begin the program in early June.

Impact on the Gulf of Alaska Fisheries

Amendment 8 to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish TFC, which will close the Eastern Bering Sea to all foreign fishing east of 140°W, closes year-round foreign fishing on the Eastern Bering Sea east of 140°W and west of 147°W, and west of the Pacific coast of Alaska east of the 140°W meridian. It will be necessary to the Secretary of Commerce by April 15, 1982. Implementation is expected on October 1, 1982.

Domestic Fisheries

Implementation of Amendment 8 to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish TFC will close the Eastern Bering Sea to all foreign fishing east of 140°W, and west of 147°W, and west of the Pacific coast of Alaska east of the 140°W meridian. It will be necessary to the Secretary of Commerce by April 15, 1982. Implementation is expected on October 1, 1982.

The total amount of groundfish taken through Amendment 8 is expected to be 100,000 metric tons, or 10% of the total catch of groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska.

Foreign Fisheries

As of January 1, 1982, 18% of the 1981 catch of groundfish in the Eastern Bering Sea was taken by foreign vessels. The total catch of groundfish in the Eastern Bering Sea was 1,000,000 metric tons, and 180,000 metric tons were taken by foreign vessels.

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The Eastern Bering Sea Fisheries

The Eastern Bering Sea Fisheries is the largest and most important of the fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska. It is a multi-species fishery, with the most important species being pollock, herring, and salmon. The fishery is managed by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, and the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Fisheries. The fishery is a major source of income for the State of Alaska and the United States. The fishery is also a major source of employment for the State of Alaska and the United States.

Foreign Fisheries Impact on the Eastern Bering Sea

The impact of the Eastern Bering Sea Fisheries on the State of Alaska and the United States is significant. The fishery is a major source of income for the State of Alaska and the United States. The fishery is also a major source of employment for the State of Alaska and the United States. The fishery is a major source of food for the State of Alaska and the United States.

St. George Tanaq/Taiwanese Joint Venture

The Council endorsed the request of St. George Tanaq for an additional 1000 mt allocation of Pacific cod to Taiwan for their joint venture with Highly Enterprises. The venture will provide fishing experience and training for as many as ten members of the St. George community.

Salmon Research Request for Proposals

The Council approved a request for proposals for a study to determine stock origins of chinook salmon incidentally caught in foreign trawls in the eastern Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska FCZ. The RFP will complement other research efforts currently under consideration or underway by Sea Grant and the University of Washington and will provide improved data upon which to base future regulatory decisions. The RFP will be released for bid shortly.

Joint Ventures Gear Up

Universal Seafoods' catcher vessels AMERICAN NO. 1 and MUIR MILACH will support the Japanese mothership KONGO MARU when the Universal/Nippon Suisan joint venture begins on June 1 in the Gulf of Alaska. Operations are expected to continue through mid-July and the partners expect to take 6,000 mt of pollock and 1,000 mt of other groundfish to be processed into surimi.

The Simonson-Stewart Fisheries/Taiyo Fishery venture will begin around April 10 and cover parts of the Bering Sea, Aleutians, and Gulf of Alaska. This venture also hopes to take 6,000 mt of pollock and 1,000 mt of other groundfish.

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