REPORT OF THE AD HOC OPEN ACCESS PERMITTING SUBCOMMITTEE

The Open Access Permitting Committee, a subcommittee of the groundfish Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC), met January 30-31, 2002 and on March 26, 2002.

The near-term objective for the committee has been to lay the groundwork for an fishery management plan amendment to limit entry to the open access segment of the groundfish fishery. Formal work on this amendment is not expected to commence until some other Council high priority issues have been addressed.

The state of California has a mandate to move forward with nearshore management of rockfish species. At some point the state’s need to move forward will have to be reconciled with the Council’s schedule for consideration of limited entry for the open access fishery and a possible plan amendment to transfer nearshore management authority to the state.

In previous reports to the Council, the committee has provided a problem statement and a qualitative historic description of the development of the open access fishery. At its January and March 2002 meetings, the committee developed goals and objectives and a data request pertaining to the open access fishery. At this Council meeting, the committee would like to solicit comments on the following.

1. The draft goals and objectives for limiting entry to the directed open access groundfish fishery.
2. The specifics of the request for data describing the directed and incidental segments of the open access fishery.

The purpose of the data request is not to begin to develop qualifying criteria but rather to help everyone gain a better understanding of the structure of the open access fishery and changes that have occurred over the last dozen years.

Goals and Objectives

Attachment 1 provides a first draft of goals and objectives for a license limitation program covering the directed segment of the open access groundfish fishery. The committee will be evaluating and adjusting these goals and objectives as it proceeds with its work. The goals and objectives were taken directly from the Amendment 6 license limitation program and modified as indicated (underlined text indicates an insertion). It is likely that significantly different goals and objectives will be required for a program to limit capacity for the incidental groundfish fishery.

One of the most significant adjustments recommended is to change the primary objective from “limit or reduce harvest capacity in the West Coast groundfish fishery” to “match harvest capacity to harvest available for the open access groundfish fishery.” This adjustment better aligns the objectives with objectives identified in the strategic plan.

Data Request

Attachment 2 provides the committee’s request for descriptive data on the open access fishery and Attachment 3 provides an index of the table series that thus far have been generated in response (along with example tables). The request entails separate summarization of data for the incidental and directed open access harvest and further subdivisions of that harvest. The committee has not structured the data request to reflect time periods, divisions of the fleet, or species groups that would necessarily be used in establishing qualification requirements for the open access fishery. With respect to this data request:

- A qualitative description needs to be developed to complement the quantitative description. The NMFS NWR staff has made substantial progress in this area.
- Descriptive information on the fishery should be developed in coordination with analyses being developed for the programmatic groundfish EIS, rebuilding plans, and the environmental assessment for the annual harvest regulations.
- If direct and incidental landings are to be distinguished on the basis of proportion of gross revenue from groundfish, quality of the gross revenue data needs to be evaluated.

**Incorporation of the Open Access Fishery into the Limited Entry Program**

The committee identified two ways in which a limited entry system for the directed open access fishery might be coordinated with the current groundfish limited entry program.

1. **Maintain a separate allocation and permit status for directed open access vessels qualifying for the new licenses.**
2. **Bring open access vessels into the current limited entry system and increase the limited entry allocation by the amount of catch history associated with the qualifying vessels.**

**Soliciting Public Comment**

With the development of state interest in managing the nearshore groundfish fisheries, and implementing limited entry programs for those fisheries, it is understood that confusion may arise between the state and federal actions. Close coordination will be required and frequent public comment should be solicited as a means of detected and reducing confusion.

When an open access permitting program is ready to be reviewed by the public, state help should be requested in contacting participants in fisheries not normally involved with the Council groundfish process.
Limited Entry Goals and Objectives for the Groundfish Directed Segment of the Open Access Fishery

The following are the initial goals and objectives the Open Access Subcommittee is working with in developing a license limitation program for the directed open access groundfish fishery. The goals and objectives were taken directly from the Amendment 6 license limitation program and modified as indicated (underlined text indicates an insertion).

**Goals.** The goals for the West Coast groundfish fishery limited entry program are to improve stability and economic viability of the industry while recognizing historic participation, meet groundfish management objectives and provide for enforceable laws.

**Primary Objective.** The primary objective of the limited entry program will be to match harvest capacity to harvest available for the open access groundfish fishery limit or reduce harvest capacity in the West Coast groundfish fishery.

**Secondary Objectives.** In pursuit of the primary objective, the following secondary objectives will be addressed:

**Economic**
- Promote long-term economic stability.
- Increase net returns from the fishery.
- Allow flexibility for combination vessels.

**Management**
- Stabilize management regimes by reducing need for frequent inseason changes.
- Reduce the cost of management.
- Reduce by-catch and waste.
- Encourage effort in underutilized species fisheries.
- Integrate and coordinate this program with state limited access programs for the nearshore fishery.

**Enforcement**
- Promote cost-effective enforcement by reducing need for frequent changes and tight trip limits.
- Promote cost-effective and logistically viable enforcement by minimizing need to use regulations such as trip limits or subarea closures which are more difficult to enforce.

**Social**
- Recognize and accommodate historical participation of those investing their life and resources in the fishery.
- Maintain a mechanism for fishery entrance/exit and flexibility for change in the fleet.
- Reduce conflicts between user groups by limiting or reducing effort competition for the same resource.
- Provide a stable supply of groundfish to the public at a reasonable price.
Open Access Fishery Descriptive Data Request

Overall request: coordinate development of direct and indirect open access fishery categories with the effort being undertaken for the programmatic groundfish EIS.

Groundfish Species Categories

Provide catch and bycatch information on the following groundfish categories.

- Sablefish
- Lingcod
- Cabezon
- Kelp Greenling
- Other Roundfish
- Dover
- Other Flatfish
- Thornyheads
- Widow Rockfish
- Yellowtail Rockfish
- Chilepepper Rockfish
- Canary Rockfish (there will be bad resolution prior to 1994 or 1995)
- Bocaccio
- Black Rockfish
- Blue Rockfish
- Other Rockfish (Split between live and dead using a price criteria. Explore $2.50/lb. Adjust by time and area)
- Dogfish
- Other Groundfish

Geographic Splits

Use port of landing as a proxy for catch area. The catch area field is not very reliable and is often filled out based on port of landing.

Areas

- Washington
- Oregon
  - Northern  - north of Coos Bay
  - Southern - Coos Bay south
- California
  - Northern  - north of Cape Mendocino
  - Central  - Cape Mendocino to Point Conception
  - South    - south of Point Conception

Time Periods


Directed Open Access Groundfish Fisheries

Provide data on the following directed groundfish gears.
Deadfish

Other Hook and Line Gears
   Vertical Hook and Line
   Jig
   Rod and Reel
Longline
Troll/Dinglebar
Pot

Livefish

Stick
Rod and Reel
Pot

Incidental Harvest Fisheries

For the incidental harvest fisheries, provide additional information from the perspective of the nongroundfish target fishery. For example, for the halibut fishery provide

- total number of halibut vessels and number with groundfish bycatch,
- total pounds of halibut caught by all vessels,
- halibut taken in landings with groundfish incidental bycatch
- amount of groundfish bycatch
- amount of halibut as bycatch in the groundfish fishery.

In order to identify the universe of vessels for nongroundfish target fisheries, it may be useful to know which incidental fisheries are already under limited entry programs and to acquire permit lists for those fisheries.

Provide information on the following open access incidental fisheries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Gear</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink Shrimp</td>
<td>Trawl</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spot Prawn</td>
<td>Trawl, Pot</td>
<td>Give particular attention to sculpin incidental</td>
<td>No GF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>catch in the trawl fishery.</td>
<td>No GF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Halibut</td>
<td>Trawl, Hook &amp; Line</td>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Halibut</td>
<td>Longline</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dungeness Crab</td>
<td>Pot</td>
<td></td>
<td>No GF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>Troll</td>
<td>Split out Trips with - Halibut bycatch - Gf bycatch</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Gear</td>
<td>Other Notes</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Cucumber</td>
<td>Trawl</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPS Squid</td>
<td>Round Hall Setnet</td>
<td>No GF</td>
<td>No GF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPS Finfish</td>
<td>Round Hall Setnet</td>
<td>No GF</td>
<td>No GF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheephead</td>
<td>Traps</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMS</td>
<td>Troll Longline Pole &amp; Line Driftnet Purse Seine Harpoon</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillnet Complex (California Halibut, White Sea Bass, Sharks, White Croaker)</td>
<td>Drift Gillnet</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: "No gf" means groundfish may not be legally retained in this fishery.