Description of Decision Process For the North Pacific Council Essential Fish Habitat
Environmental Impact Statement

The following passage describes the selection of preliminary preferred alternatives by the North Pacific Council for inclusion in their Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

At its October 2003 meeting, the [North Pacific] Council selected preliminary preferred alternatives for each of the three actions in the EIS. The preliminary preferred alternatives are those alternatives currently favored by the [North Pacific] Council based on the information available. Such selection allows members of the public to tailor their comments on the draft EIS accordingly. Based on public comments and any new information that becomes available, in the final EIS, the [North Pacific] Council and NMFS may reaffirm these alternatives as the preferred alternatives, or may select different preferred alternatives. (Page 2-58)

Source

A note on this approach
It is important to note that any selection or confirmation of a preferred alternative after the public comment period could only concern the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS that was distributed. New alternatives, not previously analyzed in the DEIS, could not be introduced during this period without a strong expectation of recirculating the DEIS (40 CFR 1502.9).

PFMC
10/19/04