

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

NMFS. 2004. *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Essential Fish Habitat Identification and Conservation in Alaska (Amendment 78 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Area, Amendment 73 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska, Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs, Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Scallop Fishery off Alaska, Amendment 7 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Salmon Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone off the Coast of Alaska)*. Juneau: NMFS Alaska Region. January 2004. (Available at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/habitat/seis/efheis.htm>)

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
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