LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Legislative Committee (Committee) is scheduled to meet Monday, November 13 at 7:00 p.m. with a primary objective to review federal legislative issues regarding reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA).

The Committee last met at the June 12-16, 2006 Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and reviewed Federal legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate regarding the MSA reauthorization. The Council adopted the Committee’s recommendation that Council comments regarding H.R. 5018, the American Fisheries Management and Marine Life Enhancement Act be reiterated to appropriate Congressional contacts. On August 16, 2006, Council Executive Director, Dr. Don McIsaac sent letters to U.S. Senator Ted Stevens and U.S. Congressman Richard Pombo emphasizing key omissions in H.R. 5018 and S. 2012, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2005 (Agenda Item B.3.a, Attachment 1 and Attachment 2). Regarding H.R. 5018, the Council was disappointed with the removal of language addressing the competing statutes of the MSA and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and remains supportive of the position of the Regional Fishery Management Council Chairs in this matter. Regarding S. 2012, the Council noted the omission of clarification on fishery management authority in national marine sanctuaries, reiterated its opposition to the bill’s arbitrary ten-year rebuilding time frame for overfished species as well as the bill’s catch overage provision.

To provide detailed comments to Congress regarding catch overage provisions, Council staff developed a position paper entitled “A Catch Overage Deduction Mechanism As a Legislative Fix to Correct of Overfishing: A Pacific Council staff Perspective on Accounting Quandaries and Science-related Issues” (Agenda Item B.3.a, Attachment 3). This paper was widely distributed to Congressional contacts, the Council family, and the public.

In June of 2006, it was anticipated that MSA reauthorization would move through a Conference Committee of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives and become law in the fall of 2006. The Council Chairman and Executive Director were directed to convey Council positions should such activity occur between meetings of the Committee or the Council. Such Congressional activity has not occurred; proposed Federal legislation has yet to be passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and therefore a Conference Committee has not yet been established.

The Council is tasked with considering its Legislative Committee recommendations on these and other legislative matters and responding, as appropriate.

Council Action:

Consider recommendations of the Legislative Committee.
Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item B.3.a, Attachment 1: August 16, 2006 Letter Regarding MSA Reauthorization from Dr. McIsaac to the Honorable Ted Stevens, U.S. Senate.
3. Agenda Item B.3.a, Attachment 3: *A Catch Overage Deduction Mechanism As a Legislative Fix to Correct of Overfishing: A Pacific Council staff Perspective on Accounting Quandaries and Science-related Issues.*

Agenda Order:

a. Agenda Item Overview
b. Legislative Committee Report
c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
d. Public Comment
e. **Council Action:** Consider Recommendations of the Legislative Committee

PFMC
10/25/06