

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE MARCH 2003 MEETING

Salmon Management

Final Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Methodology Review Recommendations on the Chinook and Coho Fishery Regulation and Assessment Models (FRAM) for 2003 Salmon Management

The Council adopted methodological improvements in two models used to develop salmon management measures for 2003. These two models are the Chinook and Coho FRAM. The Council specifically indicated that the revised chinook FRAM be used in 2003 to model selective chinook fishery options in catch area 5 and 6 that do not exceed 3,500 fish caught or 41 days in length.

Inseason Management Recommendations for Openings Prior to May 1 North of Cape Falcon

The Council did not adopt any early openings for salmon fisheries North of Cape Falcon.

Salmon Hearings Officers

The Council appointed the following officers to the three salmon hearings on salmon season options:

March 31

The Chateau Westport - Mark Cedergreen, Rich Lincoln, and Jim Harp;
Coos Bay Red Lion Hotel - Burnie Bohn;

April 1

Eureka Red Lion Hotel - Jim Caito and Eric Larson.

Adoption of 2003 Management Options for Public Review

The Council adopted for public review three options for salmon seasons off California, Oregon, and Washington. All options meet or exceed conservation standards for salmon stocks in the Council's Pacific Coast Salmon Plan and those listed under the Endangered Species Act. The options can be viewed on the Council website www.pcouncil.org during the week of March 17, 2003.

Habitat Issues

Essential Fish Habitat Issues

The Council directed the Habitat Committee (HC) to look into the adult fish kills in Battle Creek in the Sacramento River drainage last fall and the juvenile fish kill in the American River during the past month, in the event California Department of Fish and Game provides information on the events to the HC.

Marine Reserves

Update on Marine Reserves Activities

The Council:

- Directed Council staff to invite a representative of the National Fisheries Conservation Center to make a presentation to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) at the April Council meeting regarding their proposed workshop themes;
- Directed the Ad Hoc Groundfish Habitat Technical Review Committee to consider the Richard H. Parrish paper (Exhibit D.2.a, Attachment 2) in their deliberations;
- Directed Council staff to send a letter to the National Marine Sanctuary program and the Monterey Sanctuary on three matters,
 1. asking their perspective of the process of “imposing specific fishery regulations” in sanctuary areas, as described in Exhibit D.2.a, Attachment 5,
 2. asking about their Designation Document change process, and how the Council should participate, and
 3. reaffirming that the Council wants to coordinate with any West Coast Sanctuary on proposals to change fishing regulations within Sanctuary boundaries.
- Directed staff to write a letter to the National Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee seeking their support for appropriate funding for a lead role for the Pacific Council in West Coast marine reserve implementation.

Planning for Federal Waters Portion of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS)

The Council deferred action on the process for consideration of Marine Reserves in federal waters in or near the CINMS until a proposal from the CINMS staff is received.

Pacific Halibut Management

Public Review Options for the 2003 Incidental Catch Regulations in the Salmon Troll and Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

The Council adopted public review options for the 2003 incidental halibut catch in both the salmon troll fishery and the fixed gear sablefish fishery. These options are:

Salmon Troll Fishery

- 1a Restrict to one halibut per three chinook landed, allow one additional halibut to be landed without meeting the 1:3 ratio, and limit each landing to 35 halibut.

- 1b Restrict to one halibut per three chinook landed, allow one additional halibut to be landed without meeting the 1:3 ratio, and limit each landing to 25 halibut.
- 2 Designate the “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area in the North Coast subarea (Washington Marine Area 3) as an area to be avoided for salmon troll fishing to protect yelloweye rockfish.

NOTE: Option 2 may be combined with either Option 1a or 1b.

Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery

- 1a Restrict landings to 150 pounds (dressed weight) of halibut per 1,000 pounds (dressed weight) of sablefish, and allow two additional halibut in excess of the 150 pounds per 1,000 pounds ratio per landing.
- 1b Restrict landings to 100 pounds (dressed weight) of halibut per 1,000 pounds (dressed weight) of sablefish, and allow two additional halibut in excess of the 100 pounds per 1,000 pounds ratio per landing.
- 2 Designate the “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area in the North Coast subarea (Washington Marine Area 3) as an area to be avoided for longline sablefish fishing to protect yelloweye rockfish.

NOTE: Option 2 may be combined with either Option 1a or 1b.

Highly Migratory Species Management

Status of the Pacific Council Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP)

The Council acted to delay submission of the HMS FMP. The purpose of this delay is to provide time for NMFS-Southwest Fisheries Science Center scientists to fully analyze new observer data from the high seas longline fishery to determine the level of fishery impacts on sea turtles and to provide such information to the appropriate Council advisory bodies. Based on analysis of this new information, the Council could reconsider its preferred alternative for the high seas longline fishery. Consideration of this matter was scheduled for the June 2003 Council meeting in Foster City, California.

Administrative and Other Matters

Legislative Matters

The Council adopted the report of the Legislative Committee and directed Council staff to respond to the NMFS announcement about review of National Standard-1 guidelines. Further, the Council directed staff to continue to track legislative matters and respond to congressional inquiries as appropriate.

Appointments to Advisory Bodies, Standing Committees and Other Forums

The Council approved the following appointments to its advisory bodies:

Groundfish Advisory Subpanel - 2001-2003 Term

Mr. Daniel R. Strunk - California Charter Boat Operator

Mr. Gary Richter - Fixed Gear At-Large Fisher

Groundfish Management Team - Indefinite Terms

Ms. Becky Renko - NMFS Northwest Region Representative

Dr. Xi He - NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center Position

Mr. Steven Kupillas - Oregon Department of Fish and Game Position

Because no nominations were received for the Northern Processor vacancy on the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel and for a social scientist to fill the At-Large vacancy on the Scientific and Statistical Committee, the Council will re-advertise these positions for appointment at a future meeting.

The Council also discussed the formation and potential membership of a Model Evaluation Work Group for salmon. A final determination on the composition and function of this work group is scheduled for the April Council meeting.

Finally, the Council authorized the Council chair to appoint members to the Ad Hoc Open Access Conversion Subcommittee. The subcommittee will consist of 14 members:

Members from the Ad Hoc Groundfish Strategic Plan Implementation Oversight Committee

Washington – Phil Anderson

Oregon – Burnie Bohn

California – Maria Vojkovich

NMFS – Bill Robinson

Technical/Government Advisors

NOAA General Counsel – Eileen Cooney

NMFS Permits – Kevin Ford

GMT – Jim Hastie

Tribal Seat – Steve Joner

Public Advisors

GAP – Kathy Fosmark (S. Open Access)

Pink Shrimp – Brian Petersen

Calif. Joint Target Fisheries – Mike McCorkle

Processor – Rod Moore (GAP Chair/Processor)

GAP – Kenyon Hensel (N. Open Access)

SAS – Doug Fricke

Financial Matters

The Council adopted the Budget Committee report, including the funding status for Council operations in CY2003.

April 2003 Council Agenda

The Council adopted a proposed agenda for the April 6-11 Council meeting in Vancouver, Washington. Agenda details will be posted on the Council website www.pcouncil.org early in the week of March 17, 2003.

Coastal Pelagic Species Management (CPS)

Draft Regulatory Amendment and Analysis for Changes to Sardine Allocation

The Council took preliminary action on a set of five alternatives for an interim regulatory amendment to revise the annual sardine allocation formula. These alternatives were adopted for public review. Final action to adopt a revised allocation formula is scheduled at the April 2003 meeting.

Update on CPS Stock Assessment Review Process

The Council preliminarily adopted the SSC terms of reference for a CPS stock assessment review (STAR) process. The terms of reference will be provided to the CPS Management Team and CPS Advisory Subpanel for consideration and comment at the April 2003 meeting. The Council could take final action on the CPS STAR terms of reference at the April 2003 meeting. Per the current SSC proposed schedule, the CPS STAR would occur in May 2004.