

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE MARCH 2005 MEETING

Coastal Pelagic Species Management

Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Amendment – Krill Management Update

The Council reviewed a progress update from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Region (SWR) on a proposed course of action for management of krill in the West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone and National Marine Sanctuaries under the auspices of the Coastal Pelagic Species FMP. The Council approved a draft outline for an alternatives analysis. The Council will provide guidance on a preferred schedule at the April meeting following a progress update from NMFS SWR on the alternatives analysis.

Groundfish Management

Inseason Management Response Policy

The Council adopted for public review a draft policy on groundfish inseason management. The draft policy states groundfish “Management measures should not be liberalized until the June Council meeting unless data errors or modeling errors warrant earlier consideration.”

Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Plan Review

The Council postponed further consideration of a modified Terms of Reference for groundfish rebuilding analyses until the April 2005 Council meeting.

Mid-Term Optimum Yield (OY) Adjustments Policy

The Council took no action regarding adoption of a policy for mid-term adjustments in OY as a result of new stock assessment information. The Council noted existing language in the FMP providing for adjustments only in the downward direction and only for overfished species. The Council intends to develop more specific rebuilding plan revision rules later this year.

Pacific Whiting Management

The Council adopted 2005 harvest specifications for the Pacific whiting fishery using the $q=1.0$ assessment model scenario and the international catch sharing agreement between the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. portion of the coastwide whiting ABC and OY decided by the Council are 269,545 mt and 269,069 mt, respectively. The Council also decided to manage the 2005 U.S. non-tribal whiting fishery with a canary rockfish total catch limit of 4.7 mt and a widow rockfish total catch limit of 200 mt. All non-tribal sectors of the whiting-directed fishery would close inseason if either of these total catch limits are attained prior to attaining whiting allocations.

Consideration of Inseason Adjustments

The Council adopted inseason adjustments to the 2005 groundfish fishery as follows:

- 1) The language and limited entry trawl trip limit table in federal regulations regarding the allowance of multiple trawl gear types on board north of 40°10' N. lat. was clarified to restore the original intent of the regulations,
- 2) A housecleaning change in federal regulations was adopted describing the limited entry/open access bocaccio allocation,
- 3) Daily bag limit regulations for the Oregon recreational fishery were adopted that are consistent with existing state regulations,
- 4) Daily bag limit regulations for greenlings and cabezon for the California recreational fishery were adopted that are consistent with state regulations, and
- 5) The sablefish tier 1 limit was reduced from 64,100 pounds to 64,000 pounds.

Marine Protected Areas

Federal Waters Portion of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (NMS)

The Council discussed possible changes to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary's (CINMS) Designation Document and developed a range of options for public review. Possible fishing regulations were not discussed, as this matter is scheduled to come before the Council at the June meeting. The options for Designation Document changes will be included in the April Briefing Book and the Council is scheduled to take final action at the April meeting.

Cordell Bank NMS

The Council discussed possible changes to the Designation Documents and draft fish regulations for Cordell Bank and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries. The Council developed a range of options for public review relative to proposed Designation Document changes and draft fishery regulations. The range of options will be included in the April Briefing Book for final Council action at the April meeting.

Monterey Bay NMS

The Council discussed possible changes to the Designation Documents and draft fishing regulations for the Monterey Bay NMS proposed expansion to include the Davidson Seamount. The range of options will be included in the April Briefing Book for final Council action at the April meeting.

Pacific Halibut Management

Groundfish Retention in the Columbia River Subarea Recreational Halibut Fishery

The Council recommended anglers be restricted from landing groundfish (except sablefish when permitted under groundfish regulations) when halibut are landed in the entire Columbia River subarea (Leadbetter Point, Washington, to Cape Falcon, Oregon).

Public Review Options for the 2005 Incidental Catch Regulations in the Salmon Troll and Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

The Council adopted public review options for the 2005 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 40 halibut.

2 Designate the “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area in the North Coast subarea (Washington Marine Area 3) as an area to be voluntarily 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

1 Restrict landing to two halibut plus an additional 100 pounds (dressed weight) of halibut per 1,000 pounds (dressed weight) of sablefish.

2 Restrict landings to 125 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.

Salmon Management

Adoption of 2005 Management Options for Public Review

Information on this agenda item will be available on our website, www.pcouncil.org, early in the week of March 14, 2005.

Salmon Hearings Officers

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

March 28

The Chateau Westport, Westport, WA – Mark Cedergreen, Phil Anderson, and Jim Harp;
Coos Bay Red Lion Hotel, Coos Bay, OR – Ralph Brown and Curt Melcher;

March 29

Fort Bragg Town Hall, Fort Bragg, CA – Roger Thomas and Eric Larson.

Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management

Council Response to Bigeye Tuna Overfishing

The Council heard a report from NMFS Southwest Region on developing a strategy to address overfishing of bigeye tuna, which will likely require an FMP amendment. The strategy will be ready for Council review by the June 2005 meeting. NMFS also briefed the Council on FMP implementation efforts they have carried out. Data collection elements, such as permits and logbooks, will come into effect on April 11, 2005. The Council asked that an item be added to the April Council meeting agenda for purposes of planning Council activities related to HMS FMP implementation.

Administrative Matters

Council Operating Procedures (COP) Document

The Council adopted updates and additions to the existing COP document. Information on this agenda item will be available on our website, www.pcouncil.org, when the changes are clerically finalized in the next few months.

Legislative Matters

The Council reviewed and commented on several legislative items including the Capitol Construction Fund Qualified Withdrawal Act of 2005, reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and a request for funding estimates for vessel monitoring systems. Please contact the Council office for more information.

Appointments to Advisory Bodies, Standing Committees, and Other Forums

The Council approved the following appointments to its advisory bodies:

Highly Migratory Species Management Team - Indefinite Term

Ms. Elizabeth Petras - NMFS Southwest Region Representative.

Groundfish Management Team - Indefinite Terms

Ms. Gway Rogers-Kirchner - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Representative,

Ms. Carrie Nordeen – NMFS Northwest Region Representative,

Dr. John Field - NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center Representative.

April 2005 Council Meeting Agenda

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