

**Decision Summary Document
Pacific Fishery Management Council**

April 6-11, 2013

Council Meeting Decision Summary Documents are highlights of decisions made at Council meetings. For a more detailed account of Council meeting discussions, see the [Council meeting minutes and voting logs](#) or the [Council newsletter](#).

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Formalization of Council Decisions at the March Council Meeting

The Council formally confirmed Council decisions made as preliminary selections at the March 2013 Council meeting.

Expansion of Gulf of Farallones and Cordell Banks National Marine Sanctuaries

The Council directed staff to send a letter that summarizes the suite of concerns discussed by the Council.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

The Council made the following advisory body appointments:

1. The nomination of Dr. Tim Sippel to one of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Fisheries Science Center seats on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team, replacing Dr. Suzanne Kohin.
2. The Nomination of Dr. Ian Taylor to the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center seat on the Groundfish Management Team, replacing Dr. Jason Cope.

The Council confirmed Dr. Bob Emmett as Chair and Ms. Lorna Wargo as Vice-Chair of the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team; Mr. Joel Kawahara and Ms. Fran Recht as Co-Chairs of the Habitat Committee; and Mr. David Crabbe as Vice-Chair of the Legislative Committee.

Legislative Matters

The Council identified numerous recommendations for the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act to be discussed at the Managing Our Nation's Fisheries 3 Conference, held May 7-9, 2013 in Washington DC, based on advisory body statements, and accepted the report of the Legislative Committee.

Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for June 2013 in Garden Grove, California. A single page proposed agenda summary is scheduled to be available on the Council website during May 2013 and a draft detailed proposed agenda to be by early June.

Open Comment Period

The Council directed the Executive Director to send a letter to NMFS strongly recommending maintaining the exceptionally well functioning organizational structure of the NMFS Northwest Region Salmon Management Program if or when merger of the Northwest and Southwest regions is pursued.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

Stock Complex Assemblages

The Council decided to move forward with considerations for restructuring stock complex assemblages. They adopted the range of alternatives provided in [Agenda Item D.3.a, Attachment 1](#) as well as an alternative recommended by the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel for detailed analysis. They scheduled adoption of preliminary preferred alternatives in June, when they will also consider a more detailed schedule to conclude decisions on this initiative. Further guidance on the analysis and a higher priority for restructuring the Other Fish and Slope Rockfish complexes was also provided.

Implementation of the 2013 Pacific Whiting Fishery under the U.S.-Canada Pacific Whiting Agreement

The Council received a briefing on the international process for deciding 2013 harvest specifications for Pacific whiting and adopted a set-aside of 2,500 metric ton of Pacific whiting to accommodate research catch and bycatch in pink shrimp fisheries.

Consider Barotrauma Device Mortality Rates

The Council adopted depth-based mortality rates for cowcod, canary, and yelloweye rockfish associated with the use of descending devices as recommended by the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) with some minor changes. The Council tasked the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and GMT to do further work refining these mortality rates for further consideration at a future Council meeting.

Groundfish Essential Fish Habitat Synthesis Report and Request for Proposals

The Council requested that NMFS Science Center finish the synthesis report, taking into account the recommendations by the Essential Fish Habitat Review Committee (EFHRC) and the SSC. The Council also approved the request for proposals, and directed staff to issue the request for proposals by May 1, 2013, with proposals due no later than July 31, 2013. The Synthesis Report and appendices, the Phase 1 EFHRC Report, and other relevant information and data will be made publicly available by the time the request for proposals is issued.

Trawl Rationalization Trailing Actions - Electronic Monitoring Regulatory Process

The Council indicated their desire to move ahead with consideration of electronic monitoring (EM) by stating that compliance monitoring, rather than the collection of biological data, would be the primary focus for EM in the trawl catch share program and adopting the objectives identified by the February workshop [Agenda Item D.7.b, Electronic Monitoring Workshop Report](#). The Council also accepted the offer of agency staff to develop a white paper on monitoring performance standards,

provided comments to Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission on the electronic monitoring field study, and directed an analysis of the cost implications of alternative formulations of an advisory body on EM issues. Contingent on dedicated funding, the Council set a schedule for a full regulatory process that begins with a formal scoping session in September 2013. The Council also requested that NMFS explore the workload and priority implications of developing experimental fishing permits to allow the use of EM without observers, prior to completion of a regulatory amendment.

Consideration of Inseason Adjustments

The Council adopted the recreational measures contained in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) report for Marine Area 4 relative to cabezon and lingcod length limits and cabezon bag limits, [Agenda Item D.8.b, Supplemental WDFW Report](#). Further, the Council adopted the trawl Rockfish Conservation Area adjustments for 2013 and 2014 as noted in the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel report [Agenda Item D.8.b, Supplemental GAP Report](#).

SALMON MANAGEMENT

Salmon Amendment 18 - Essential Fish Habitat Revisions

The Council adopted an amended suite of Alternatives that includes considerations of amending Pacific salmon essential fish habitat in areas where reintroductions are being considered under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. The Council will consider a draft environmental assessment, including analysis of alternatives, at the September 2013 Council meeting.

Final Action on 2013 Salmon Management Measures

The Council adopted a set of ocean salmon seasons that provides both recreational and commercial opportunities coastwide. Please see the detailed salmon recommendations for 2013 on our website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/2013/04/25020/council-adopted-draft-salmon-mgmt-measures-april13/>.

HABITAT

Current Habitat Issues

The Council directed staff to send the Habitat Committee (HC) letter on Klamath water, [Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 1](#) with some minor edits. In addition, the Council directed the HC to prepare a draft letter to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, on its Fish and Wildlife Program, for consideration at the June 2013 meeting.

PACIFIC HALIBUT MANAGEMENT

Final Incidental Catch Recommendations for Salmon Troll and Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

The Council adopted limits for incidental Pacific halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery of no more than one halibut per three Chinook, except one halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement and no more than 15 halibut may be landed per trip starting May 1, 2013 thru April 30, 2014.

The Council adopted limits for incidental Pacific halibut catch for the primary fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington beginning May 1, 2013 of 75 lb of halibut for every 1,000 lb of sablefish landed and up to two additional halibut may be possessed or landed in excess of the 75 lb per 1,000 lb ratio per landing. In 2014, if the Pacific halibut total allowable catch is sufficient to provide an allocation, limits would be established at the March 2014 Council meeting and retention allowed starting April 1, 2014.

ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT

Final Fishery Ecosystem Plan

The Council adopted the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) and the Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix and provided guidance for implementations. The Council modified the FEP schedule so that the Annual State of the Ecosystem Report will be presented each March and the review of ecosystem initiatives will next occur in 2015 and each odd year thereafter. Further decision making on the ecosystem initiative related to forage fish management is anticipated to begin at the June 2013 meeting where the Council will review the list of authorized West Coast fisheries and consider assignments for a specialized committee to work on the matter.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Sardine Harvest Parameters Workshop Report

The Council considered a report and initial analyses that were an outcome of the February 2013 workshop on Pacific sardine harvest parameters. The Council scheduled a decision on the use of a new temperature-recruitment index for the June 2013 Council meeting and asked the report analysts to consider suggestions by Council advisory bodies towards the possibility of a revised set of simulations and associated fishery performance measures.

Changing the Pacific Sardine Fishery Start Date

The Council was supportive of the concept of changing the start date of the Pacific sardine fishery from January 1 to July 1, based on advisory body statements and public input, and scheduled a possible final decision for the June 2013 Council meeting.

ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Regulations for Vessel Monitoring System Declarations

The Council decided that the issue of vessels using the vessel monitoring system (VMS) registered with the Office of Law Enforcement and not having a declaration could be rectified through a regulatory amendment under the groundfish fishery management plan. Consideration of a VMS requirement for tuna vessels longer than 24 meters will be considered as a highly migratory species plan regulatory amendment. Both of these issues will be taken up at the June Council meeting.

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