



## DECISIONS AT THE JUNE 2006 MEETING

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### ***Coastal Pelagic Species Management***

#### **Pacific Mackerel Harvest Guideline for 2006-2007 Season**

The Council adopted the new assessment model and the following management measures for the July 2006-June 2007 Pacific mackerel fishery:

- Total fishery harvest guideline of 19,845 metric tons (mt),
- Directed fishery guideline of 13,845 mt;
- Set-aside for incidental catches of 6,000 mt and an incidental catch rate limit of 40% when mackerel are landed with other coastal pelagic species (CPS), except that up to one mt of Pacific mackerel can be landed without landing any other CPS.

The Council asked National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to track utilization of the directed fishery guideline and advise the Council at the March 2007 meeting if release of the incidental set-aside is warranted.

### ***Groundfish Management***

#### **Adoption of 2007-2008 Groundfish Fishery Specifications/Management Measures and Amendment 16-4**

The Council adopted the following optimum yields (OYs) for overfished species in 2007-2008: bocaccio rockfish 218 mt; canary rockfish 44 mt; cowcod 4 mt; darkblotched rockfish 290 mt for 2007 and 330 mt for 2008; Pacific ocean perch 150 mt; widow rockfish 368 mt; and a harvest rate ramp-down strategy for yelloweye rockfish with a 23 mt OY in 2007 and a 20 mt OY in 2008.

The Council also adopted 2007-2008 management measures very close to Alternative 3 in the preliminary draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for limited entry trawl, and Washington, Oregon and California recreational fisheries; status quo (2006) management measures for limited entry fixed gear and open access fisheries; Alternative 2 Cowcod Conservation Area boundaries; new Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) in waters off Washington and Oregon; and two new Darkblotched Rockfish Conservation Areas in waters off California.

The Council also adopted Amendment 16-4 rebuilding plans and fishery management plan language, consisting of updates reflecting actions taken this week and a few minor modifications from the language decided in April 2006.

The DEIS analyzing these actions will be posted in the Federal Register and on the Council's website in mid-July.

### **Consideration of Inseason Adjustments**

The Council adopted the following inseason adjustments to ongoing 2006 fisheries. These and other changes will be detailed in the next Council newsletter.

- A 25 mt darkblotched rockfish cap was specified for the directed whiting fishery.
- Move the seaward boundary of the trawl RCA north of 40°10' N latitude to 250 fm beginning July 1 through the end of the year to reduce darkblotched rockfish impacts.
- Move the seaward boundary of the trawl RCA between 38° N latitude and 40°10' N latitude to 200 fm beginning July 1 through the end of August and then out to 250 fm beginning September 1 through the end of the year to reduce darkblotched rockfish impacts.

- Target species trip limits were changed.
- Allowance to exceed the originally adopted commercial lingcod harvest guideline since combined projected harvest will be well under the OY.
- Implement a canary rockfish trigger as follows: if the canary rockfish catch in the limited entry bottom trawl fishery north of 40°10' N latitude is projected to reach 7.75 mt by the end of any month prior to September, the Council recommends NMFS move the shoreward boundary of the trawl RCA to the shore at the end of that particular month. This mechanism reduces the risk of over-attainment of the canary rockfish OY between Council meetings this summer.
- If the catch of petrale sole in the limited entry bottom trawl sector is projected to reach 2,000 mt (72% of the OY) by August 31, NMFS will reduce cumulative limits for petrale sole for Period 5. Petrale sole limits for each type of bottom trawl and each area will be reduced by 8,000 lbs/2 months coastwide, and limits of Other Flatfish and arrowtooth will also be reduced to four times the petrale sole limit if those limits are more than four times the petrale sole limit.
- Increase the two-month cumulative limit for deeper nearshore rockfish between 34°27' N latitude and 40°10' N latitude to 500 lbs during Period 5.
- By region, liberalize the areas and times open to the California recreational groundfish fishery beginning July 1 as follows: open inside 30 fm through the end of the year in the North Region; open inside 30 fm through the end of the year in the North Central Region; open inside 30 fm through the end of the year in the South Central, Monterey Region; open inside 40 fm through October in the South Central, Morro Bay Region; open inside 60 fm through the end of the year in the South Region.
- Tribal adjustments: for both Dover sole and arrowtooth flounder, the Makah trawl fleet would have a combined harvest target equivalent to the limited entry cumulative limits for Periods 4, 5, and 6 in place at the beginning of the year multiplied by the

number of vessels (10) in the fleet. This represents a total fleet target of 1,050,000 lbs (476.3 mt) for Dover sole and 3,000,000 lbs (1360.8 mt) for arrowtooth flounder. These combined limits would allow them the flexibility to conduct evaluation fisheries to test different gear configurations in combination with area management to reduce impacts to depleted rockfish as well as Pacific halibut.

### **Trawl Individual Quotas**

The Council considered the analysis proposed in the Stage 1 document, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) statement, and public comment, but scheduled confirmation of the analysis methods for the September Council meeting. The Council modified the alternatives to be analyzed as follows: (1) a “non-whiting endorsement” minimum landing qualification requirement was added to the permit stacking alternative and an option was included to provide less than full cumulative limits for stacked permits; (2) the options that would modify catch control measures under “low OY conditions” were dropped; and (3) the IFQ program initial allocation option providing processors 10% of the quota shares for all IFQ species and the option providing processors 50% of the whiting quota shares and 0% of the nonwhiting quota shares were eliminated from direct analysis. For each of these options, the remainder of the initial quota share allocations would have gone to permit holders. The Council decision to eliminate these allocation options from direct analysis left IFQ program alternatives containing the following permit/processor splits of the initial allocation: 100/0, 75/25 and 50/50.

The Council adopted the TIQC report with the following changes:

- Modify Section a. of the definition of “shoreside processing” such that any of the following would qualify:
  - Cutting groundfish into smaller portions; OR

- Freezing, cooking, smoking, drying groundfish; OR
- Packaging groundfish into 100 pound or smaller units for sale and distribution into the wholesale or retail market.
- Modify Section b. such that live fish distributed into a wholesale or retail market would qualify as “shoreside processing.”

The Council scheduled a confirmation of these decisions at the September Council meeting. For a future meeting, the Council requested a presentation on the pros and cons of allocating individual fishing quotas to processors and harvesters.

## ***Habitat***

### **Current Habitat Issues**

The Council considered the Habitat Committee (HC) recommendation to engage in three elements to advance further consideration of ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM) in the context of a similar proposal from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The Council directed both advisory bodies to pursue elements of EBFM background work, and directed the Chair of the HC to coordinate with the Chair of the SSC Ecosystem Management Subcommittee to accomplish various tasks, avoid duplication in their efforts, and report back to the Council in November. The Council directed the HC to describe actions the Council has already taken that address an EBFM approach and to review other Regional Councils’ current ecosystem management plans or planning efforts. The Council directed the SSC to review the current scientific literature on EBFM and consider what scientific underpinnings should be considered as components to any potential EBFM plan.

The Council also approved a letter to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) with comments on certain non-fishing actions being considered in the CINMS

Draft Sanctuary Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement. These actions include such matters as oil and gas exploration and seabed mining. Fishery-related matters in the CINMS, such as no-take marine reserves and limited-take marine protected areas, are the subjects of a yet-to-be released separate draft environmental impact statement.

<b><i>Highly Migratory Species Management</i></b>
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**Changes to Routine Management Measures for 2007-2008 Season**

The Council approved the development of alternatives for the following biennial management measures by the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) for presentation at the September meeting:

- Vessel marking;
- Modification of the northern boundary of the drift gillnet leatherback sea turtle conservation area; and
- Recreational bag limits for North Pacific albacore and bluefin tuna.

**Exempted Fishing Permits for 2007-2008 Season**

The Council approved the following schedule for review of 2007-2008 exempted fishing permits (EFPs) presented by the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT), summarized as follows:

COUNCIL MEETING	DRIFT GILLNET EFP	LONGLINE EFP
November 2006	The Council receives a report on 2006 drift gillnet EFP initial results and considers whether to proceed with EFP in 2007.	HMSMT presents alternatives; Council considers whether to proceed with EFP in 2007 and, if so, approves alternatives for public review and tasks HMSMT to prepare environmental assessment (EA).
March 2007	The Council takes the final report on 2006 drift gillnet EFP and considers	The Council considers the draft EA and considers final action on a

approval of 2007 EFP alternatives for recommendation to NMFS.  
public review.

April 2007 The Council considers the analysis of  
2007 EFP and considers final action  
on a recommendation to NMFS.

## **Albacore Management**

The Council deferred developing recommendations for renegotiation of the U.S. Canada albacore treaty. With respect to U.S. compliance with the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) resolutions on albacore, they directed the HMSMT and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) to continue developing the information necessary to characterize current effort in the U.S. North Pacific albacore fishery. The Council will consider results of the upcoming IATTC and WCPFC meetings at the September 10-15, 2006 Council meeting.

## ***Salmon Management***

### **Fishery Regulation Assessment Model**

The Council recommended approval of an updated Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM) Overview document, and directed the SSC and Salmon Technical Team to review a suite of detailed documentation products during the fall 2006 Salmon Methodology Review Process. The detailed documents included FRAM technical documentation, Chinook FRAM Base Period documentation, Coho FRAM Base Period documentation, and a FRAM Users Manual. The Council also directed the Model Evaluation Workgroup to develop a programmers' guide for the FRAM.

### **Fishery Management Plan Amendment 15**

The Council adopted a range of alternatives to amend the Salmon Fishery Management

Plan (FMP) to provide *de minimis* fishing opportunity during periods when the status of Klamath River fall Chinook is such that no fishing opportunities would be allowed under the current FMP. The alternatives include:

- 1) Status quo or no fishing;
- 2) A sliding scale allowing lower stock impacts as stock abundance decreased;
- 3) Less than or equal to a 5% age-four ocean impact rate;
- 4) Less than or equal to a 16% age-four ocean impact rate.

The Council also directed analysis of two features in concert with the above alternatives: (1) a rebuilding feature which would limit *de minimis* fisheries to no more than three consecutive years, with a minimum of three consecutive years with escapement above the 35,000 natural spawner floor before additional *de minimis* fisheries; and (2) the disallowance of any fall fisheries when *de minimis* fisheries take place.

A preliminary environmental assessment draft of this potential FMP amendment is scheduled to be available for the advance Briefing Book for the September Council meeting.

The Council is scheduled to adopt a preferred alternative for public review at its September 2006 meeting, and take final action at its November 2006 meeting.

### **California State-Waters Fishery Request**

The Council tasked staff with writing a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission asking the Commission to examine the possibility of a proposed state-waters fishery in the Point Reyes to Point San Pedro area during June and July, 2006. During the Council process to establish 2006 ocean salmon seasons, specific language

was included in the regulations permitting the State of California to establish salmon fisheries in selected state waters, consistent with Council management objectives.

## ***Administrative Matters***

### **Legislative Matters**

The Council reviewed and approved Legislative Committee (LC) recommendations regarding U.S. House and U.S. Senate bills to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The Council revised LC recommendations regarding U.S. representation to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention to only a request for a Pacific Fishery Management Council seat, eliminating a previous recommendation for removal of a proposed Western Pacific Fishery Management Council seat should a Pacific Council seat not be established. Additionally, the Council directed staff to draft a letter to key Congressional representatives reiterating previous positions adopted by the Council in 2006, with particular emphasis on the Council's recommendation to include language in any MSA reauthorization bill that clarifies fishery management authority within National Marine Sanctuaries be solely under the jurisdiction of the MSA.

### **Fiscal Matters**

The Council approved the 2006 operational budget and reserve funds as recommended by the Budget Committee.

### **Appointments to Advisory Bodies, Standing Committees, and Other Forums Including any Necessary Changes to Council Operating Procedures**

#### Model Evaluation Workgroup

- The Council appointed Mr. Ethan Clemons to replace Mr. Curt Melcher as the ODFW representative.

#### Groundfish Advisory Panel

- The Council appointed Mr. Gordon Zumach to the Sport Fisher at-large seat vacated by Mr. Jim Lone, for the remainder of the 2004-2006 term.

### Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel

- The Council appointed Mr. Michael Brown to the vacant Northern Processor seat for the remainder of the 2004-2006 term.

### Salmon Advisory Subpanel

The Council appointed Mr. Jeff Feldner to the Oregon Troll seat vacated by Mr. Don Stevens, for the remainder of the 2004-2006 term.

### **Council Three-Meeting Outlook, Draft September 2006 Council Meeting Agenda, and Workload Priorities**

The Council provided guidance for the Council's three-meeting agenda outlook and the draft agenda for the September 2006 Council meeting to be held September 10-15, 2006 in Foster City, California. The draft agenda will be available on the Council website [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org) in late July 2006.

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