
DECISIONS OF THE
PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
JUNE 8-13, 2011

SALMON MANAGEMENT

Fishery Management Plan Amendment 16, Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures

The Council took final action on Amendment 16 revamping the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) in many areas. Changes include:

- 1) For Klamath River fall Chinook, changing the conservation goal to the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) level of 40,700 adult spawners, replacing the previous goal that often included a 35,000 value, and reducing the existing *de minimis* fishing rates for situations when the new goal cannot be attained;
- 2) For Sacramento River fall Chinook, establishing 122,000 as the MSY conservation goal, and establishing new *de minimis* fishing rate provisions comparable to those newly adopted for Klamath River fall Chinook ;
- 3) Establishing new criteria to determine when overfishing and overfished status is designated for all relevant stocks in the FMP;
- 4) Changing many aspects of the FMP to comply with new requirements from the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act, such as
 - a. establishing a framework for application of new reference points for an Overfishing Limit, Acceptable Biological Catch, and Annual Catch Limit;
 - b. determining appropriate Accountability Measures necessary to prevent an Annual Catch Limits from being exceeded, and to mitigate any overages that may occur;
 - c. formation of a number of stock complexes with indicator stocks for setting Annual Catch Limits;
 - d. classifying all stocks in the FMP as in the fishery, out of the fishery, or ecosystem component stocks; and
 - e. applying an international exception to specifying Acceptable Biological Catch, Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures for stocks managed under the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

A detailed summary of the adopted alternatives will be available on the Council web site (<http://www.pcouncil.org/>) in the near future.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Recommendations to International Fisheries Organizations

The Council made a variety of specific recommendations to U.S. delegations to the 82nd Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission meeting (July 4-8) and the 7th Western and Central Pacific Fish Commission Northern Committee meeting (September 6-9) relative to potential conservation measures for North Pacific albacore, Pacific bluefin tuna, tropical tunas (bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack), and other monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) measures. For use at some point after the remaining regional fishery management organizations (RFMO) meetings in 2011, the Council tasked the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Team and HMS Advisory Subpanel with beginning development of a proactive management framework for North Pacific albacore, towards a purpose of being proposed at the international level through U.S. delegations. This effort will begin after the 2011 albacore stock assessment is formally released later this year.

A detailed summary of Council positions for upcoming RFMO meetings will be available on the Council website in the near future.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

Stock Assessments for 2013-2014 Groundfish Fisheries

The Council adopted new stock assessment updates for canary and yelloweye rockfish, a cowcod status report, and the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Groundfish Management Team recommendations regarding the use of data-limited methods for determining groundfish harvest specifications for unassessed stocks. The Council recommended the bocaccio and darkblotched rockfish assessments be forwarded to the late September “mop-up” stock assessment review panel subsequent to further review of relevant information and preparation of limited additional analyses by the stock assessment authors.

Groundfish Amendment 16-5 and 2012 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

The Council decided to request the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to conduct a Secretarial amendment process for implementing Amendment 16-5 and 2012 regulations under Magnusen-Stevens Action section 304(c) authority, as the most efficient way of implementing new rebuilding plans and management measures by January 1, 2012. The detail of a proposed Secretarial amendment will be provided by NMFS at the September Council meeting.

Schedule and Process for Completing the 2013-2014 Specifications and Management Measures and Consideration for Solving Biennial Cycle Process Issues

The Council announced the intent to reduce the scope and complexity of harvest specifications and management considerations for the 2013-14 biennium to be close to those in place in 2012, to not exceed the range of alternatives analyzed for the 2011-12 cycle, and to otherwise simplify and manage the process so as to ensure a January 1 fishery start date. Towards this goal, the Council adopted a frontloaded schedule and process for Council activities (see non-italicized font in Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 1), but did not adopt a schedule and process for the NMFS review and implementation process (see italicized font items in Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 1). The Council also adopted an amended Council Operating Procedure 19 for exempted fishing permits (EFPs), moving from annual consideration of EFP applications to consideration every two years, aligned with the biennial decision-making process starting at the November 2011 meeting (Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 2). Lastly, the Council concluded there is a need for long term solutions for biennial cycle process issues and anticipates an initial discussion of the issue at the November 2011 Council meeting.

Consideration of Inseason Adjustments

The Council adopted the following inseason adjustments to (1) move the seaward boundary of the trawl rockfish conservation area from 200 fathoms (fm) to 150 fm for the area Cape Falcon to Cape Alava starting September 1 through the end of the year; (2) increase various rockfish trip limits in limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries in various locations beginning July 1; and (3) reducing sablefish trip limits north of 36° N. latitude in limited entry and fixed gear open access fisheries beginning July 1.

Detailed information on these inseason adjustments will be available on the Council website in the near future.

Trawl Rationalization and Associated General Groundfish Fishery Issues Slated for Final Action, Including those in the Program Improvements and Enhancement Rule

The Council took final action on trailing actions:

1. confirming that the Amendment 21 trawl-nontrawl allocation will supersede the Amendment 6 limited entry-open access allocations;
2. recommending flexibility for the inseason management of set-asides;
3. making permanent the use of expansion factors for the trawl bycatch mortality allocation of Pacific halibut;
4. recommending that mothership catch history/endorsements be severable from permits;
5. extending through 2014 the adaptive management program pass-through set to expire in 2012;

6. establishing a grandfather provision for vessels processing shoreside allocation at-sea prior to July 20, 2010; and
7. supporting most of the NMFS recommended regulation language for finer level program improvements and enhancement (PIE) rule provisions to be implemented in 2012.

The set-aside provision will require some additional rules to establish a process for inseason action and it was noted the adaptive management program pass-through could expire early if the Council implements an alternative distribution formula before then. The severability provision and grandfather provision for processing will not be fully implemented until part way into 2012.

Priority Trailing Actions Under Trawl Rationalization and Intersector Allocation Slated for Preliminary Action

With respect to safe harbors from control limits for community fishing associations (CFA), the Council forwarded all alternatives for consideration in the final action scheduled in September, noting that the level of the control limit exception provided for CFAs could vary by species and run from no exception to the maximum exceptions provided in Options 1b and 1c of Alternative 1. With respect to safe harbors from control limits for risk pools, the Council narrowed options and provided direction largely based on the report of the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel. With respect to identifying a cost recovery program, the Council narrowed the options for the structure of various cost recovery provisions and authorized establishment of a Cost Recovery Committee to identify new incremental costs associated with the trawl rationalization program, by sector, and discuss long-term efficiencies.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Pacific Mackerel Management for 2011-2012

The Council approved the Pacific mackerel stock assessment and adopted management measures for the upcoming fishing year, including an Annual Catch Target of 30,336 metric tons (mt), and incidental set-aside of 10,128 mt. The Council also adopted a provision to consider in April 2012 the possibility of re-allocating the incidental set-aside to the directed fishery.

ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT

Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan

The Council approved the draft purpose and need statement as proposed by the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) and moved to develop an ecosystem plan that is primarily advisory in nature with the potential for expanding the plan to include regulatory authority in the future. The Council recommended continued management of stocks and fisheries through existing Council-adopted fishery management plans (FMP), including potential additional management measures for forage fish species as the Council deems appropriate. The Council

also tasked the EPDT with developing a list of species in the West Coast exclusive economic zone not included in an FMP, not managed under State authority and not listed under the ESA; additionally, the task included identifying the subset of this species list that could be subject to future target fishing.

HABITAT

Current Habitat Issues

The Council directed the Habitat Committee to send a letter on levee vegetation policies ([Agenda Item I.1.a., Attachment 1](#)) to the Army Corps of Engineers.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Legislative Matters

The Council moved to approve the Legislative Committee's comments on H.R. 946, the Endangered Salmon Predation Prevention Act that focused on maintaining existing coordination and streamlining of the permit process regarding marine mammal and salmon interactions. The Council directed the Council Executive Director to send a letter responding to a request from Congressman Hastings and staff of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources that conveys the comments on H.R. 946 by June 24, 2011. The Legislative Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet again at the September Council meeting.

Fiscal Matters

The Council adopted the recommendation by the Budget Committee (BC) for an initial CY 2011 operational budget of \$4,748,877.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

For the August 11, 2011 through August 10, 2012 term, the Council elected Mr. Dan Wolford (California) as Council Chair and Mrs. Dorothy Lowman (Oregon) as the Vice Chair. The Council chose to forego election of a second vice chair for the coming term and modified its procedures to make election of a second vice chair optional.

The Council made the following appointments to fill advisory body vacancies:

Dr. David Sampson to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife position on the Scientific and Statistical Committee.

Mr. Kirt Hughes to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife position on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT).

Mr. Ricardo Belmontes to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission position on the HMSMT.

Ms. Jennifer Simon to the California Department of Fish and Game positions on the Salmon Technical Team and Model Evaluation Workgroup.

Ms. Susan Chambers to the processor at-large position on the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP).

Mr. Jeff Miles to the north of Cape Mendocino open access position on the GAP.

Mr. Mark Cedergreen to the Washington charter boat operator position on the GAP.

To fill recently occurring vacancies due to the resignation of Mr. Merrick Burden, Council staff will solicit nominations to be considered for a Washington position on the Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel and the conservation position on the Groundfish Allocation Committee.

The Council Chair appointed Mr. Rod Moore as a processor at-large member of the Trawl Rationalization Regulatory Evaluation Committee.

To fill vacancies created by the departures of Council members Mr. Mark Cedergreen, Mr. Jerry Mallet, and Mr. Rod Moore, the Council Chair appointed Mr. Dale Myer, Ms. Dorothy Lowman, and Mr. Dave Ortmann to the Budget Committee. The Council Chair named Mr. Ortmann as the Budget Committee Chairman. The Council Chair will appoint a member to fill a remaining vacancy on the Legislative Committee in the near future.

The Council established a new ad hoc committee, the Cost Recovery Committee (CRC), to help guide the cost recovery implementation portion of the trawl rationalization program. Members are expected to be appointed by August 1.

Future Council Meeting Agenda Workload Planning

The proposed agenda for the September 2011 Council meeting will be available on www.pcouncil.org in August 2011.

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