



Decision Summary Document Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting June 21-26, 2012

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](#).

OPEN COMMENTS

The Council was advised of the proposed rule for confidentiality of information (FR 77, No. 100, May 23, 2012, 30486-30496) and reviewed concerns of the Groundfish Management Team with the proposed rule. Given the concerns and timing, the Council directed staff to request an extension of the comment deadline to allow a more deliberate review by the full Council process and the states' legal staffs. If the request is unsuccessful, staff will forward a short letter reflecting the Council's stated intent and attach advisory body statements to meet the current deadline.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

Barotrauma Workshop Report and Potential Use of Recompression Catch-and-Release Survival Estimates

The Council decided to pursue providing catch mortality credits for the release of rockfish suffering from barotrauma using descending devices in recreational fisheries. The Council tasked the Groundfish Management Team with developing a report for the November 2012 meeting on how to integrate the use of descending devices in our current management system for cowcod and yelloweye rockfish. The Council's goal is to have appropriate credits for these species in place in 2013, and planned to further consider this initiative at the March 2013 Council meeting.

Stock Assessment Planning

The Council adopted a preliminary list of stocks for assessment in 2013, three terms of reference, and a proposed stock assessment review (STAR) panel schedule for public review prior to a final decision at the September Council meeting. Darkblotched rockfish, petrale sole, shortspine thornyhead, longspine thornyhead, cowcod, aurora rockfish, and Pacific sanddabs are proposed for full assessment. With four full STAR panels planned and two assessments to be reviewed at each panel, there is room for one more full assessment. The Council recommended either roughey rockfish or yellowtail rockfish as a candidate for the last full assessment slot. Bocaccio was adopted for update assessment. Sablefish is a candidate for an update assessment or will not be done at all next cycle. Pacific ocean perch, canary rockfish, and yelloweye rockfish were adopted for data reports.

Exempted Fishing Permits for 2013-2014 Fisheries

The three exempted fish permits (EFP) considered for final adoption for 2013-2014 fisheries were recommended to National Marine Fisheries Service for implementation with some changes to bycatch caps for canary and yelloweye rockfish. Other elements of the EFPs were modified as well; details will be described in the upcoming Pacific Council Newsletter. Once issued, these EFPs will be in place for the next two years.

Trawl Rationalization Trailing Actions

The Council is considering widow rockfish quota share (QS) reallocation in response to the stock's recent recovery to rebuilt status. The Council decided to extend the moratorium on widow QS trading through the completion of consideration and implementation of widow QS reallocation or December 31, 2014, whichever comes first. The Council discussed developing a schedule for considering a regulatory shift from the 100 percent human observer monitoring requirement to an electronic monitoring system option for at least some fishery sectors; further discussion of this matter was scheduled for the November 2012 Council meeting.

Reconsideration of Initial Catch Share Allocations in the Mothership and Shoreside Pacific Whiting Fisheries

The Council decided not to adopt a preliminary preferred alternative at this time but plans to proceed on schedule with the selection of a final preferred alternative in September 2012. The Council modified Alternative 3 (a 1998-2010 allocation period for processors), changing the recent participation period for processors under that option from 2004-2010 to 2004-2007. The Council also tentatively decided that the qualification and allocation periods for the mothership sector endorsement and catch history allocations should match with the allocation period used for the shoreside quota share allocation. Finally, the Council concurred with the provisions of the first proposed Reconsideration of Allocation of Whiting Rule ([Agenda Item D.7, Situation Summary](#)) and provided additional guidance on the analysis for the environmental assessment.

Consideration of Inseason Adjustments

The Council considered recent information on ongoing fisheries and recommended reductions to the limited entry sablefish trip limits in the north and increases to limited entry fixed gear trip limits for shelf and bocaccio rockfish south of 34° 27' N. latitude. For more information, please see the Council blog at <http://www.pccouncil.org/2012/06/21505/21505/>

Final 2013-2014 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

The Council adopted final preferred harvest specifications for 2013-2014 as detailed in [Agenda Item D.5.a, Attachment 2, Table 1](#). New management measures were adopted that are predicted to stay within the adopted annual catch limits. The upcoming summer Pacific Council Newsletter will contain details on values and management measures.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Management Reference Points and Measures for 2013-2014 Fisheries

No proposals were forwarded for changes to highly migratory species management measures for 2013-2014. The Council also decided not to reevaluate or revise current management reference point estimates at this time. Thus, the three-Council-meeting process for this biennial management cycle was concluded at this meeting and is not included in the planned agendas for the September and November 2012 Council meetings.

International Management Activities and Recommendations

The Council made recommendations to the US delegation to the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Commission Northern Committee (NC) on the adoption of biological reference points under the proposed management framework for North Pacific albacore tuna as described in [Agenda Item E.2.b, HMSMT Report](#). The Council recommended the US delegation request the NC conduct a management strategy evaluation to support development of the management framework.

The Council affirmed its position against a fishing regime for reciprocal access pursuant to the US-Canada albacore treaty for 2012, but tasked the Executive Director with sending a letter advocating negotiation of a new reciprocal fishing regime for the 2013 fishing season. The Council requested National Marine Fisheries Service to complete assemblage of the fishery and socioeconomic information to support such an agreement and strongly recommended the Department of State to schedule negotiation sessions for such an agreement in the very near future.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Pacific Mackerel Management for 2012-2013

The Council adopted management measures and harvest specifications for the upcoming fishing year, including an Annual Catch Limit of 40,514 metric tons (mt), an Annual Catch Target of 30,386 mt, and incidental set-aside of 10,128 mt. The Council also adopted a provision to consider in April 2013 the possibility of re-allocating the incidental set-aside to the directed fishery. These measures were based on the 2011 Pacific mackerel stock assessment, which was approved at the June 2011 Council meeting.

ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT

Council Fishery Ecosystem Plan Development

The Council approved work done in development of the fishery ecosystem plan (FEP) and directed the Ecosystem Plan Development Team to incorporate the comments of the Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS), Habit Committee, and Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel into the next draft of the document that is scheduled for review in November 2012. The Council also adopted the EAS recommendation to add assessment of optimum yield and connection to international ecosystem-based management endeavors to the FEP objectives. Regarding the Annual State of the Ecosystem Report, the Council approved the proposed approach and asked National Marine Fisheries Service to report at the November 2012 Council meeting on a workshop on bringing ecosystem science into the Council process.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Consideration of Further Protection of Currently Unmanaged Forage Species

The Council approved an objectives and intent statement that recognizes the importance of forage fish to the California Current ecosystem including the goal of prohibiting development of new directed fisheries on forage species that are not currently managed by the Pacific Council or West Coast States. The Council adopted two mechanisms to address unmanaged forage species protections; 1) update and revise the Federal List of Fisheries and Gear for the West Coast and include in the Fishery Ecosystem Plan a description of the standards which would be used in assessing whether a proposed new fishery could compromise West Coast conservation and management measures, and 2) incorporate any needed protections through amendment of existing Council fishery management plans (FMP). In an effort to avoid delays in completion of the Council Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), the Council recommended that work on any FMP amendments and the List of Fisheries and Gear occur after initial completion of the FEP, which is scheduled for March 2013.

Legislative Matters

The Council approved the Legislative Committee's comments on S. 2184, the Fisheries Investment and Regulatory Relief Act of 2012, including a strong recommendation that total funding provided to Regional Fishery Management Councils be held harmless from any reallocation consequences and a general endorsement of comments submitted by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. Although no formal Congressional request for Council comment has been received at this meeting, the Council directed Executive Director Mclsaac to convey June 2012 Council comments on S.2184 as well as previous Council positions on vessel discharge matters if a formal request is received before the September Council meeting, as appropriate. The Legislative Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet again at the September 2012 Council meeting in Boise, Idaho.

Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for National Standard 1 Guidelines

Following a discussion and review of issues concerning implementation of National Standard 1 Guidelines, the Council approved forwarding comments which capture the essence of the Council discussion and advisory body comments in a timely response to the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

Fiscal Matters

The Council approved a contract year 2012 budget which should maintain near status quo operations for the year.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

Council members reappointed Mr. Dan Wolford and Ms. Dorothy Lowman to Council Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for the 2012-2013 term.

The following advisory body vacancies were filled:

- Mr. Michael Hendrick in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Region position on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team.
- Dr. Correigh Greene in the NMFS Fisheries Science Center position on the Habitat Committee.
- LCDR Brad Soule in the U.S. Coast Guard District 11 position on the Enforcement Consultants.

The Council adopted the charge and membership composition proposed for the ad hoc South of Humbug Pacific Halibut Policy Committee as provided in [Agenda Item G.6.a, Supplemental Attachment 1](#). The following members were appointed: Ms. Michele Culver (ODFW), Mr. Steve Williams (ODFW), Ms. Marci Yaremko (CDFG), Ms. Sarah Williams (NMFS), and Mr. Greg Williams (IPHC, acceptance pending).

In response to a request by the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), the Council appointed Ms. Dorothy Lowman as the Pacific Council representative on the Council Coordinating Committee Video and Electronic Monitoring Subcommittee. Per a request by co-chairs of the National Ocean Council, the Council appointed Ms. Michele Culver as the representative on the Regional Planning Body for the West Coast Region and Ms. Gway Kirchner as her alternate.

As provided in Council Operating Procedures 2 and 3, Chairman Wolford confirmed the following officers chosen by the Council’s advisory bodies for the current year:

	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Vice Chairman</u>
CPSAS	Mike Okoniewski	Diane Pleshner-Steele
CPSMT	Robert Emmett	Briana Brady
EPDT	Yvonne deReynier	John Field

Future Council Meeting Agenda Workload Planning

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for September 13-18, 2012 and the agenda will be available on our website www.pcouncil.org in early August.

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