

List of Council Decisions at the September 2000 Meeting

Subject: Marine Reserves Phase I Considerations Report

Action: The Council voted unanimously to conclude the first phase of considering the future use of marine reserves by finding that marine reserves should be included as a management tool for the West Coast groundfish fishery. The Council did not specify where, how, or when marine reserves would be implemented, but rather deferred that to item B.2 on the agenda.

Subject: Marine Reserves Phase II Considerations

Action: The Council considered the complexities in establishing and implementing marine reserves, including both biological issues such as which species should be protected and how fisheries outside the reserve would occur, and administrative issues such as jurisdictional coordination responsibilities, lead roles, and funding the site selection and management specification process. The Council made committee assignments for reports back to the Council at the November meeting with recommendations on how to proceed with establishing groundfish marine reserves in West Coast areas.

Subject: Report of the Habitat Steering Group (HSG)

Action: The Council approved a letter expressing Council support for continued research on Heceta Bank, Oregon, conducted under the auspices of the National Undersea Research Program.

Subject: Changes to the Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations

Action: The Council did not adopt any significant changes in the catch sharing plan for Pacific halibut. The Council adopted, for public review, relatively minor changes in the regulatory language for commercial and recreational halibut fisheries off Washington, including several date changes and one elimination of a closed area.

Subject: Groundfish Strategic Plan

Action: The Council adopted the *Draft Groundfish Strategic Plan* as a final policy document. While some language additions and edits to the draft were approved, all primary policy concepts were retained. One particularly important addition was the heavy reliance on fishing industry and related stakeholder representation on the implementation sub-committees.

Subject: Rebuilding Programs for Canary Rockfish and Cowcod

Action: In response to stock status classified as over-fished, the Council adopted tentative guidelines for the development of draft rebuilding plans for canary rockfish and cowcod. To protect cowcod, found almost exclusively in waters off southern and central California, large area closures in the best cowcod areas may be closed to all groundfish fishing, and retention of cowcod restricted in all fisheries in open areas. For canary rockfish, the tentative guidelines include substantially reduced take limits that would be in place for several decades or until the populations are rebuilt.

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Subject: New Stock Assessments for Lingcod and Pacific Ocean Perch

Action: The Council did not initiate revisions to the current rebuilding plans for lingcod or Pacific ocean perch at this time. New stock assessment information indicates that the status of these species may have improved, particularly for Pacific ocean perch. It appears that harvest levels can be increased slightly and still allow both stocks to rebuild within ten years. However, the Council elected to not alter the rebuilding program catch levels at this time.

Subject: Preliminary Harvest Levels and Other Specifications for 2001

Action: The Council adopted preliminary catch levels for 35 groundfish species or species aggregations. Preliminary tribal allocations were also adopted. Detailed species-by-species catch levels are available from the Council office and will be displayed in the Council newsletter and on the Council website.

Subject: Sablefish Permit Stacking Concept

Action: The Council approved the release of a draft analysis of various options for allowing the stacking of permits in the limited entry fixed gear sablefish fishery. Numerous alterations to the initial options were approved by the Council. A copy of the public review draft analyzing the new options complex is expected to be available at the Council office by mid-October.

Subject: Proposed Management Measures for 2001

Action: To protect overfished and depleted groundfish stocks, the Council adopted several options for managing commercial and sport groundfish fisheries in 2001. The Council requests public review and comment prior to its final decision at the upcoming November meeting in Vancouver, Washington. Some of the more notable options for recreational fisheries include: for California - 13 new measures ranging from large area closures to non-retention provisions for some species; in Oregon and Washington – changes in the lingcod size and bag limits; for limited entry commercial fisheries, options range from a nearly status quo approach with smaller trip limits to a system where vessels would be allowed to choose to fish only 4 or 5 of the first eleven months of the year, with no groundfish landings allowed during the other months. Open access commercial fisheries may have a substantially shorter season.

Subject: Permit Transfer Regulations

Action: The Council recommended NMFS prepare a regulatory amendment allowing limited entry permits to be transferred once per calendar year.

Subject: Status of Fisheries and Inseason Adjustments

Action: The Council approved fishery specific increases in the cumulative limits for certain rockfish and sablefish in the limited entry trawl fishery, the limited entry fixed-gear fishery, and the open-access fixed gear

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fisheries. No changes in recreational fisheries were approved at this time but further restrictions or closure may be imposed for the California sport groundfish fishery later this year. Detail of changes by species and gear type can be obtained by calling the Council office and will be placed in the upcoming newsletter and on the Council website.

Subject: Coastal Pelagic Species FMP Amendment 9

Action: The Council approved bycatch monitoring provisions and Tribal Treaty fishing rights language in the draft *Amendment 9 to the Coastal Pelagic Species FMP* and that, absent the section on squid maximum sustainable yield, the Amendment proceed to the NMFS approval process. The Council deferred approving a definition of maximum sustainable yield for squid at this time pending ongoing research on squid life history and stock status.

Subject: Change in Terms for Council Advisory Body Members

Action: The Council approved several changes in the operating procedures for members of Council advisory bodies. Two highlights included changing the terms of office from two years to three years and providing travel allowances to alternate designees.

Subject: Appointments to Advisory Groups

Action: The Council reviewed the number and composition of Council advisory bodies and approved solicitation of appointments to advisory bodies for the term beginning January 1, 2001. The Council: 1) eliminated two committees that have been inactive in recent years (the Halibut Advisory Subpanel and the Legal Gear Review Group); 2) altered the status of the Northern and Southern Panels of the Habitat Steering Group from active committees to recipients of relevant Council mailings; and 3) provided notice of intent to abolish the Permit Review Board. In initiating the appointment solicitation process that will designate appointments at the November meeting, the Council made several changes in the advisory body seats: two seats were added to the Groundfish Advisory Panel (one representing open access fishing interests, and one seat for a tribal fisher), an at-large recreational fishery seat was added to the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel, and an at-large commercial fishery seat was removed from the same panel.

Subject: Report of the Budget Committee

Action: The Council approved the Budget Committee report, which described the status of the CY2000 budget and directed staff to complete a proposed CY2001 budget.

Subject: Draft Agenda for November 2000

Action: The Council approved a tentative agenda for the upcoming November meeting in Vancouver, Washington. A detailed agenda can be found on the Council Website in the near future.

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