

DECISION SUMMARY DOCUMENT  
PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 1-6, 2013

**SALMON MANAGEMENT**

**Salmon Methodology Review**

The Council approved methodology changes beginning in 2014 as described by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) ([Agenda Item C.2.b, Supplemental SSC Report](#)) on the following topics: technical revision to the Oregon coastal natural (OCN) coho work group harvest matrix; incorporation of estimate legal and sublegal Chinook encounters into the fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM); modifications to FRAM algorithms on sublegal and legal encounters and minimum size limits; and alternative forecast methodologies for the Sacramento River Fall Chinook Index. Regarding the lower Columbia natural (LCN) coho matrix harvest control rule, the Council directed Council staff to convene a limited work group that includes a representative of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Tribal governments to work with the Salmon Advisory Subpanel to build on the existing risk assessment towards development of an alternative harvest matrix for Council consideration in November 2014; this process would be aligned with the 2014 salmon methodology review. The Council discussed the importance of other topics identified for this year's review, particularly conservation objectives for southern Oregon coastal Chinook and Willapa Bay coho, and recommends that these topics be included on the preliminary list of topics for next year's methodology review.

**Preseason Salmon Management Schedule for 2014**

The Council approved the 2014 salmon management schedule ([Agenda Item C.3.a, Attachment 1](#)) with the following modifications; the February meeting of the Salmon Technical Team will occur February 18-21 and the March 25 salmon hearing will be in Santa Rosa, California rather than Eureka, California.

**HABITAT**

**Current Habitat Issues**

The Council directed the Habitat Committee to draft three letters for the March Council Meeting advance briefing book. The first letter follows up on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC) Fish and Wildlife Program plan; the second letter, to the California Coastal Commission, will express Council concerns regarding the KZO Sea Farms aquaculture project off Long Beach, California; and the third letter addresses habitat concerns related to the Oregon State University offshore wind energy test site near Seal Rock, Oregon. In addition, the Council will forward an August 7, 2013 letter on Federal Columbia River Power System operations that it sent to the NPCC, to NMFS West Coast Region Deputy Administrator Barry Thom to emphasize relevant points.

## **COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT**

### **2014 Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Notice of Intent**

The Council considered a letter of intent from the Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey, LLC to conduct survey research during summer 2014. The Council adopted the request for public review and is scheduled to consider a final determination, including the final tonnage amount, at the April 2014 Council meeting.

### **Establish Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) Reference Point for Northern Anchovy**

The Council established a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) reference point for the northern subpopulation of northern anchovy. Based on information that northern anchovy are subject to large population fluctuations and have relatively high productivity, the Council selected annual fishing rate:  $F_{msy} = 0.3$  as the appropriate MSY reference point.

### **Methodology Preliminary Topic Selection and Review Process**

The Council endorsed methodology reviews of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife/California Wetfish Producers Association aerial survey methodology for the Southern California Bight, of the Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey, and the NMFS acoustic sardine survey. The methodology review is to be coordinated with the Southwest Fisheries Science Center to optimize logistical and financial contingencies. The Council also tasked the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Management Team and CPS Advisory Subpanel with reviewing the draft Council Operating Procedure for a CPS methodology review process and with providing their recommendations at a future Council meeting.

### **2014 Pacific Sardine Stock Assessment and Management, Including Tribal Set-Aside**

The Council adopted Pacific sardine management measures for the six-month period January 1-June 30, 2014. This includes approving a biomass estimate of 378,120 metric tons (mt) and an Overfishing Limit of 59,214 mt. Based on a  $P^*$  choice of 0.4, the Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limit were set at 54,052 mt. The annual Harvest Guideline was set at 29,770 mt, with an Annual Catch Target set at 19,846 mt. Accounting for a 1,000 mt Tribal allocation and a 500 mt incidental set-aside, the January 1-June 30 allocation will be 5,446 mt.

Other management measures will be consistent with the 2012 fishery, with the exception of (1) the incidental landing allowance that will be set at 45 percent for mixed loads, after the directed fishery closes, and (2) there will be no rollover of uncaught fish from the first six-month period into the following fishing period.

The Council will consider a full stock assessment at its April 2014 meeting, and at that point will set a full year of Pacific sardine management measures for July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

## **ENFORCEMENT ISSUES**

### **Federal Enforcement Priorities and Other Enforcement Issues**

The Council tasked the Executive Director with sending a letter to National Marine Fisheries Service on enforcement priorities, using the December 2011 letter as a template and revising the letter to incorporate comments from the Enforcement Consultants.

## **PACIFIC HALIBUT MANAGEMENT**

### **2014 Pacific Halibut Regulations**

The Council adopted final changes to the 2014 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) and Pacific halibut regulations, including modifications to recreational fishery management measures in Washington, Oregon, and California. Changes include dividing the South of Humbug Mountain subarea into two new subareas by establishing a new management line at the Oregon/California border, creating separate Oregon and California subareas with their own CSP allocation. The 2014 season dates in the California subarea will be May 1 through July 31 and September 1 through October 31. The new Southern Oregon Subarea, between Humbug Mountain and the Oregon/California border, will receive a small allocation from the Oregon Central Coast Subarea. Days of the week that are open in the Columbia River Subarea and Central Coast Subarea nearshore fisheries were modified. Further, a new nearshore fishery was created in the Columbia River Subarea. Additional details on all changes will be reported in the next Council newsletter.

## **GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT**

### **Seabird Avoidance Regulations**

The Council reviewed the draft Environmental Assessment (<http://tinyurl.com/ml7av63>), considered the input from Advisory Bodies and the public, and adopted a modified version of Alternative 4. The preferred alternative requires that streamer lines be deployed during setting operations on commercial fixed gear vessels 55 feet or greater in length with a safety exception in the event of rough weather, which would be triggered by a National Weather Service forecast of a gale force wind warning.

### **Exempted Fishing Permit**

The Council considered three exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications and adopted one EFP, sponsored by the San Francisco Community Fishing Association for 2015 and 2016 ([Agenda Item H.2.a, Attachment 4](#)), for public review. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT)-recommended set-asides for this EFP ([Table 1 of Agenda Item H.2.b, Supplemental GMT Report](#)) were adopted with the following modifications: 1.0 mt of canary rockfish and 0.03 mt of yelloweye rockfish. The Council will consider final adoption of this EFP at its June 2014 meeting.

### **Sablefish Permit Stacking Program Review**

The Council decided to move ahead with a formal program review that will focus on whether the original objectives have been achieved, using the prioritized indicators recommended by the

SSC ([Agenda Item H.3.a, Attachment 3](#)). At the same time, a regulatory revision process will be conducted on two priority matters: (1) consideration of a modification to the rules by which the three permit control limit is evaluated; and (2) development of requirements that limited entry fixed gear permit numbers be recorded on fish tickets (with the possibility of requiring electronic tickets for all West Coast nontrawl sablefish deliveries, both limited entry fixed gear and open access). The specific alternatives to be considered for these two matters are those identified in the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel report, [Agenda Item H.3.b, Supplemental GAP Report](#) and the bolded items in the Groundfish Management Team report, [Agenda Item H.3.b, Supplemental GMT Report](#). The Council will determine whether other changes to the program should be considered at the conclusion of the review of meeting original program objectives, scheduled for the June 2014 Council meeting.

### **Stock Complex Restructuring**

The Council adopted a final preferred alternative for restructuring stock complexes as follows:

- Remove spiny dogfish from the Other fish complex and manage with stock-specific specifications;
- Designate the following species as Ecosystem Component Species: finescale codling (aka Pacific flatnose), soupfin shark, spotted rattfish, all endemic skates except longnose skate, and all endemic grenadiers.

The Council assigned further analysis of alternatives for managing the stocks in the slope rockfish complexes, as well as kelp greenling and the Washington stock of cabezon. A final decision on managing these stocks is scheduled to be made at the April 2014 Council meeting.

### **Stock Assessments and Rebuilding Analyses**

The Council adopted the new data-moderate assessments for brown, China, and copper rockfish, as well as the draft rebuilding analysis for cowcod ([Agenda Item H.5.a, Supplemental Attachment 2](#)) endorsed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) in [Agenda Item H.5.b, Supplemental SSC Report](#). The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee will review a final draft of the new cowcod rebuilding analysis on a teleconference to be scheduled in December.

### **Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for 2015-2016 Groundfish**

#### **Fisheries**

The Council adopted final overfishing limits and stock category designations recommended by the SSC in [Agenda Item H.6.b, Supplemental SSC Report](#). The Council also adopted final acceptable biological catches for all stocks except cowcod, as well as a range of annual catch limits (ACLs)--including preliminary preferred ACLs--for detailed analysis. The Council adopted several management measures for analysis. For more detailed information on these decisions, please see the forthcoming Council newsletter this winter.

A review of the selected results from preliminary draft Environmental Impact Statement will occur at the March 2014 meeting. At the April 2014 Council meeting, the Council is scheduled to adopt final preferred harvest specifications and a preliminary preferred suite of 2015-2016

management measures. After a public review period, the Council will take final action at the June 2014 Council meeting.

### **Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Review Phase 2 Report and Proposals to Modify EFH**

The Council agreed that there was sufficient new information to move into Phase 3 of the EFH review process. The Council directed Council staff to work with the EFH Review Committee to complete the draft Phase 2 report in a streamlined manner, for inclusion in the March 2014 Briefing Book. Towards the goal of adopting a process and schedule for the Phase 3 effort, the Council requested the Southwest Fisheries Science Center and Northwest Fisheries Science Center review the discussion and materials from this Council meeting and provide evaluation criteria and methods that can be used to answer the general question “is the current EFH designation working?”. These evaluation methods are scheduled for inclusion in the advance Briefing Book for the March Council meeting, to facilitate discussion of (1) conducting the evaluation of existing EFH areas, and (2) a schedule to formally scope issues for a fishery management plan amendment.

### **Electronic Monitoring Alternatives**

The Council adopted for further analysis the range of alternatives contained in the Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Policy Advisory Committee report ([Agenda Item H.8.b, Supplemental GEMPAC Report](#)), with the modifications recommended in the Enforcement Consultants report ([Agenda Item H.8.b, Supplemental EC Report](#)).

Additionally, the Council scheduled consideration of special, out-of-cycle exempted fishing permit proposals for electronic monitoring (EM), with maximized retention requirements, at the April 2014 Council meeting.

### **Consideration of Inseason Adjustments**

The Council considered information on the status of 2013 groundfish fisheries and adopted modifications to the 2014 sablefish trip limits for the limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries north and south of 36° N. latitude. For more information, see the Council blog at <http://www.pcouncil.org/2013/11/28044/gf-ins-nov2013/>.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### **Regional Operating Agreement**

The Council approved completion of a Regional Operation Agreement among the Pacific Fishery Management Council; NOAA Fisheries Service West Coast Regional Office; NOAA Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center; NOAA Fisheries Service Southwest Fisheries Science Center; NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement, Northwest; NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement, Southwest; NOAA General Counsel, Northwest Section; and NOAA General Counsel, Southwest Section as describe in [Agenda item I.1.a, Supplemental Attachment 2](#), with one change associated with the working relationship between the Council and NOAA General Counsel during litigation. The agreement documents current roles and responsibilities of NMFS and the Council, communication protocols, and

process for working together during the development of fishery management plans, amendments, and regulations, including discussion of how roles, responsibilities, and milestones are set and communicated for specific actions.

### **Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) Reauthorization Priorities and Other Legislative Matters**

The Council directed staff to send a letter forwarding Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization priorities to the Congressional principals considering drafting a bill in the near future. In addition, the Council directed staff to continue to develop fact sheets that explain the context, history, and background behind the Council's highest priorities listed in [Agenda Item I.2.b, Supplemental Legislative Committee Report](#). Based on input from Tribal representatives testifying at the Council and the recommendations of the Council's Tribal representative, the Council chose not to take action on the nomination requirement and term limits for the Tribal seat at this time.

### **Fiscal Matters**

The Council approved the Budget Committee Report and adopted its recommendations for a provisional operating budget for 2014, along with contingencies in the event that the actual funding differs significantly from that which has been assumed.

### **Advisory Body Position Appointments and Council Operating Procedures**

The Council appointed Mr. Bob Turner, NMFS WCR to the Budget Committee, replacing Mr. Frank Lockhart and Mr. Mark Helvey as the NMFS representative. In response to the resignation of Mr. Aaron Newman, the Council appointed Mr. David Bitts to the California troll seat on the Salmon Advisory Sub-panel on an interim basis.

The Council established a tribal government seat on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and will solicit for candidates to be considered to fill the seat at its March, 2014 Council meeting.

The Council updated Council Operating Procedure (COP) 9 to reflect the groundfish management cycle changes discussed under Agenda Item H.6. The Council also confirmed changes to the management schedule for Pacific mackerel and Pacific Sardine in COP 9, which were adopted in June, 2013. Finally, the Council adopted several other housekeeping changes for COP 9 and COP 10, which deals with the Preseason Salmon Management Process.

### **Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning**

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for March 8-13, 2014. Tentative proposed agendas for both the March and April Council meetings can be found on the Council website. A draft detailed March meeting agenda is expected to be available in February 2014.

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