

MID-BIENNIUM HARVEST SPECIFICATION ADJUSTMENT POLICIES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) is considering a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) amendment to allow an increase in groundfish harvest specifications (i.e., overfishing limits (OFLs), acceptable biological catches (ABCs), annual catch limits (ACLs), and optimum yields (OYs)) in the second year of a biennial management cycle when a new assessment indicates a substantial increase in the available harvest of a stock. This framework initiative, colloquially termed the “green light” policy, was initially considered under Amendment 17, which implemented the biennial groundfish management cycle, but was not adopted at that time. The Council reinitiated consideration of a green light policy under their Omnibus Groundfish Workload Planning agenda item in June 2016 and began initial scoping of this FMP amendment at their September 2016 meeting.

In September 2016, the Council tasked staff to develop a range of strawman alternatives in consideration of this proposed FMP amendment with additional guidance on limits to the proposed green light policy initiative. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1 provides a range of strawman alternatives with additional observations and considerations to inform this action. The Council is scheduled to adopt a range of alternatives and a preliminary preferred alternative for the green light policy initiative under this agenda item. Final Council action is scheduled for the April 2017 meeting.

Council Action:

Adopt a Range of Alternatives and, if Appropriate, a Preliminary Preferred Policy Alternative for Mid-Biennium Harvest Specification Adjustments and Provide Further Direction as Necessary

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1: Strawman Alternatives in Consideration of Establishing a Fishery Management Plan Framework to Allow a Mid-Biennium Increase in Harvest Specifications.

Agenda Order:

- F.7 Mid-Biennium Harvest Specification Adjustment Policies John DeVore
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Range of Alternatives and, if Appropriate, a Preliminary Preferred Policy Alternative for Mid-Biennium Harvest Specification Adjustments and Provide Further Direction as Necessary