

SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES PROCESS FOR 2019-2020 FISHERIES

The Council is scheduled to adopt a detailed process and schedule governing the development of harvest specifications and related management measures for 2019-2020 groundfish fisheries (Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1). The process accommodates several important sequential decision-making steps, including scientific peer review of data and analyses used for management decision-making; preparation of an appropriate analytical document as required by applicable law, including the National Environmental Policy Act; the opportunity for constituent meetings sponsored by state agencies to solicit public input on preferred management alternatives; and full notice and comment rulemaking to implement new biennial regulations. All of these steps need to be timed so that the new regulations can be implemented on January 1, 2019.

Harvest Specifications Considerations

Amendment 24 established default harvest control rules (HCRs) that are applied to the best available scientific information to determine the 2019-2020 overfishing limits, acceptable biological catches (ABCs), and annual catch limits (ACLs). No action is needed if the Council intends to implement the harvest specifications based on the default HCRs. In the event the Council would like to change the default HCR, the Council should adopt a range of ABCs based on their P* choice in September 2017 and any additional ACL HCRs in November 2017. Final preferred harvest specifications are scheduled to be adopted in April 2018.

National Standard 1 Guidelines (74FR3178) reference an approach whereby management performance and the need to adjust management measures would be evaluated by comparing the multi-year average catch against an average ACL. The Council is scheduled to scope this approach under Agenda Item F.5. Additionally, the Council is scheduled to take final action on the mid-biennium ACL adjustments in September 2017. The Council is also tentatively scheduled to scope new carry-over provisions in September 2017 with a range of alternatives scheduled for adoption in March 2018. The Council should consider the associated workload and schedule, and provide guidance on whether these topics should be included as part of the 2019-2020 analysis and rulemaking. When deciding which harvest specification measures to include in the biennial analysis, the Council should consider whether the measures need to be implemented on January 1, 2019.

The SSC will report on their plans to determine new sigma values and any data requests, such as new catch-only updates, to inform 2019 and 2020 OFLs. In their report under this agenda item, the SSC will also articulate their schedule for reviewing any new information and outstanding methodology review issues.

Management Measures Considerations

In April 2017, the Council's Groundfish Endangered Species Act (ESA) Workgroup (ESWG) provided updated estimates of the incidental take of ESA-listed non-salmonid species. The ESWG workgroup did not recommend any particular management measures be developed in the

2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures process. However, the ESWG recommended and the Council scheduled a presentation on the new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seabird biological opinion at the September 2017 Council meeting. The Council noted the potential to allow development of additional seabird mitigation measures, as appropriate, through the 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures process. Additionally, the Council recommended developing and considering a range of management measures to address the bycatch of Chinook salmon in groundfish fisheries. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1 proposes that any new management measures be identified in September 2017, with a range of alternatives adopted in November 2017, and selection of preliminary preferred alternative in April 2018 and final preferred alternative in June 2018. When deciding which new management measures to include in the biennial analysis, the Council should consider whether the measures need to be implemented on January 1, 2019.

Three Council Operating Procedures (COPs) guide the schedule for developing 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures. COP 9 details the overarching milestones by month (Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 2, **Electronic Only**) and COP 25 details the procedures for the review and Council approval of groundfish impact analyses and methodologies that inform stock assessments (Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 3, **Electronic Only**). Finally, COP 19 details the process and schedule for exempted fishing permits (Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 4, **Electronic Only**). The Council should consider the overarching processes outlined in the COPs and anticipated workload when adopting the detailed schedule provided in Attachment 1.

Council Action:

- 1. Consider and adopt data requests recommended by the SSC.**
- 2. Conduct preliminary scoping of items previously proposed to be include in the 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures process.**
- 3. Adopt a schedule governing the development of 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1: Proposed Schedule for Developing the 2019-2020 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures.
2. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 2: Council Operating Procedure 9 Management and Activity Cycles (**Electronic Only**).
3. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 3: Council Operating Procedure 25 Groundfish Methodology Reviews (**Electronic Only**).
4. Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 4: Council Operating Procedure 19 Protocol for Consideration of Exempted Fishing Permits for Groundfish Fisheries (**Electronic Only**).

Agenda Order:

- F.7 Specifications and Management Measures Process for
2019-2020 Fisheries Kelly Ames, John DeVore
a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities

- b. Public Comment
- c. **Council Action:** Initial Scoping of Issues and Adoption of a Process for Specifications and Management Measures for 2019-2020 Fisheries

PFMC
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