

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the [C.3.b, Draft Legislative Committee Report](#) and listened to a brief presentation by Mr. Rod Moore, who attended both the Legislative Committee (LC) webinar and the LC's meeting at this Council meeting.

### **Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) Reauthorization**

Regarding the House version of the bill, HR 4742, the GAP understands it has moved out of the House and requests for changes will not be helpful at this time. The GAP notes the House bill includes several of the GAP priorities that are noted below.

However, regarding the Senate version, the GAP understands the Senate Discussion Draft will be rewritten, so we reiterate the concerns from our November 2013 GAP statement ([Agenda Item I.2.b, Supplemental GAP Report](#)), which include (in no particular order):

- Revise the rebuilding time requirements and addressing social and economic issues by changing “possible” to “practicable;”
- Stocks later determined to have never been overfished should not be held to rebuilding provisions;
- Include a carryover exception to annual catch limits (ACLs);
- Explore more flexibility for data-poor stocks;
- Streamlining the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and MSA section 204(i); and
- Provide flexibility in requirements for observers.

We hope the Senate version takes into account these concerns and *adds* one more:

- Include a viable mixed-stock exception. Though there is a vague reference to this in the National Standard 1 guidelines, the statute is not explicit in allowing an exception. The GAP suggests that if it is referenced and available to use, a clear allowance should be included in the MSA.

### **Other Legislative Issues**

The GAP in general supports the Draft Legislative Committee Report on these items and offers the following comments:

#### **S. 2094, Vessel Incidental Discharge Act**

The GAP strongly supports the LC recommendations in Section 7(a), the continued exemption of commercial fishing vessels (including recreational charter vessels) from proposed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules governing incidental vessel discharges.

S. 1275, the REFI Pacific Act

The GAP strongly supports the Legislative Committee recommendations regarding the REFI Pacific Act.

Both of the above bills are extremely important to the West Coast fishing industry.

Pacific Ocean Marine Monument

Finally, the GAP notes the LC's mention of President Obama's proposal to take executive action to expand existing Pacific Ocean Marine Monuments in the Pacific. The GAP does not support a blanket marine protected area (MPA) in the South Pacific. This is a very heavy handed approach to achieve conservation. Conservation through potential prohibition of access is not in the best interest of any fishing communities.

PFMC  
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