



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Dorothy M. Lowman, Chair | Donald O. McIsaac, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2014

TO: Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel, Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer for Highly Migratory Species

SUBJECT: June 2014 Council Meeting

The June Council meeting takes place June 18-25 at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove, California. The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) will meet Thursday through Saturday, June 19-21, beginning at 8:00 a.m. each day. Four HMS topics are on the Council agenda. There are also a couple of topics not directly related to HMS that the HMSAS requested be on its agenda. Summaries of all these topics follow.

E.1 Update on Regulatory Matters and International Activities

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Regional (WCR) Office will provide an update on regulatory and international activities. The Council has the opportunity to provide recommendations for upcoming international HMS meetings, particularly the annual meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and the Tenth Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Northern Committee. Both these meetings occur between the June and September Council meetings and cover topics relevant to west coast HMS fisheries.

E.2 Drift Gillnet Fishery Transition Issues

At the March 2014 meeting the Council discussed a number of ideas for transitioning the California drift gillnet fishery to a different management approach. These ideas include converting the current state limited entry permit program to a Federal limited entry permit, finding ways for participants to use gear types other than drift gillnet, and eventually phase out of the fishery entirely. The current agenda item is intended to allow the Council to begin developing a long-term strategy for managing the fishery.

E.3 Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Process

Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20 describes how the Council reviews proposals for exempted fishing permits and makes recommendation on their issuance. The COP describes a June-September process for this review and recommendation process. However, in March the Council discussed the need for additional review criteria specific to testing the feasibility of alternative gear types for the California drift gillnet fishery. In April, when planning the June agenda, the Council noted this and asked that the HMSMT provide information and recommendations on these additional criteria. Therefore, at the June meeting the Council will adopt these additional criteria and an alternative schedule for reviewing EFP proposals.

E.4 Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications and Management Measures

The HMS FMP describes the biennial process for establishing harvest specifications and management measures for HMS fisheries. Measures are developed by the Council over three meetings—June, September, and November—for the next two-year period, in this case starting on April 1, 2015. Three issues have thus far been brought up for consideration as part of this cycle. First, in response to the notification that Pacific bluefin tuna are overfished, in June 2013 the Council said it would consider setting or modifying recreational fishery bag limits for this species as part of the biennial process. Second, requirements for vessel monitoring system (VMS) units on certain HMS vessels have raised the question of whether transmission (“ping”) rates should be increased. NOAA OLE recommended a change for vessels harvesting groundfish that are currently required to use VMS. Finally, Mr. Pete Dupuy submitted a letter requesting the Council issue him a permit to allow him to target swordfish with pelagic longline gear both inside and outside the Exclusive Economic Zone. This activity is currently prohibited and would require both regulatory and Fishery Management PlanMP changes to allow.

The HMSAS will be briefed on, and has the opportunity to comment on, two non-HMS agenda topics. The first is Agenda Item C.2, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Boundary Expansion, which the Council takes up on Tuesday, June 24. Mr. Kerry Griffin will brief HMSAS on this issue. The second is Agenda Item C.3, Legislative Matters, which the Council will take up on Wednesday, June 25. Ms. Jennifer Gilden, who staffs the Legislative Committee, will brief the HMSAS on the Committee’s deliberations, which occur on the morning of June 19.

Paper copies of referenced briefing materials are enclosed. In addition, you may also obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/council-operations/briefing-books/>. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website, as they become available after distribution of the advanced briefing book.

Fun fact: The comedian Steve Martin was a cheerleader at Garden Grove High School.

KRD:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4: Council Meeting Agenda

2. Agenda Item B.1: Comments on Non-Agenda Items
3. Agenda Item C.2: Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Boundary Expansion
4. C.3: Legislative Matters
5. C.5: Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures
6. C.6: Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
7. E.1: Update on Regulatory Matters and International Activities
8. E.2: Drift Gillnet Fishery Transition Issues
9. E.3: Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Process
10. E.4: Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications and Management Measures
11. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
12. Informational Report 1
13. Hotel-related Information
14. Council Roster

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