



MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 21, 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: September 2014 Council Meeting

The September Council meeting takes place September 10-17 at the Doubletree by Hilton in Spokane, Washington. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) will meet Friday and Saturday, September 12-13 in Salon II, beginning at 8:00 a.m. each day. The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Thursday through Saturday in Salon III, likewise beginning at 8:00 a.m. each day. Four HMS topics are on the Council agenda. There are also four topics not directly related to HMS that the HMSAS and HMSMT may wish to comment on. Summaries of all these topics follow.

G.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Regional (WCR) Office will provide an update on domestic regulatory activities under this item. Bear in mind that this is only an informational briefing and no Council action is scheduled.

G.2 Update on International Activities

NMFS WCR will report on the outcomes of the 87th Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Meeting, July 14-18, 2014, and the Tenth Meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee (NC), September 1-4, 2014. The IATTC has scheduled an extraordinary meeting in October to reach consensus on pressing issues not finalized at the June meeting. Of particular interest to the Council, the IATTC will try to adopt a resolution with conservation measures for Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) for 2015. It is expected that the NC will also develop a proposed conservation and management measure (CMM) for PBF, which would be up for adoption at the Eleventh Commission Meeting, December 1-5, 2014. The Council will have the opportunity to provide comments to U.S. delegations to these upcoming meetings. The Southwest Fisheries Science Center will report on international science activities conducted by staff.

G.3 Preliminary Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Approval

On July 2nd a [notice](#) soliciting EFP proposals for consideration at the September Council meeting was posted on the Council's website. One proposal, from the Alliance for Sustainable Fishing Communities, was submitted by the briefing book deadline. According to Council Operating Procedure 20, at the September meeting the HMSAS and HMMST will review the proposal and provide recommendations on whether it should be considered further by the Council. If the Council decides to do so, they would make a recommendation to NMFS for EFP issuance at the November meeting. The solicitation notice emphasizes that the Council is looking for EFP proposals to test alternative gears and methods for the California large mesh drift gillnet (DGN) fishery.

G.4 New or Routine Management Measures Range of Alternatives

At the June meeting, the Council adopted seven potential management changes to consider during the current biennial cycle. This is a three Council meeting process. In September the Council will adopt ranges of alternatives for public review. At the November meeting, the Council will take final action. NMFS would then implement the Council-adopted measures in regulations by April 1, 2015. In June the HMSMT reported to the Council that it would be difficult for it to develop alternatives and a preliminary analysis for all of the management measures. In response, the Council directed the HMSMT to focus on reducing recreational catch of PBF and developing protected species take caps (hard caps) for the DGN fishery. The HMSMT submitted three reports covering the management measures. Report 1 provides an overview of the measures the Council did not prioritize. Report 2 addresses PBF recreational management. Report 3 addresses DGN hard caps. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has also submitted three reports with information on the recreational and commercial fisheries for PBF. As discussed in the Situation Summary, the Council has the option to recommend inseason or emergency action to reduce recreational catch this year.

H.1 Unmanaged Forage Fish Protection Initiative Preliminary Preferred Alternative

At its April 2014 meeting, the Council chose a preliminary preferred alternative to amend all four of the Council's FMPs to bring unfished and unmanaged forage fish species into the FMPs as ecosystem component species. The *ad hoc* Ecosystem Workgroup has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment that updates the list of forage fish species, revises the alternatives to address incidental take, provides draft FMP amendment language for each of the Council's four FMPs (including the HMS FMP), and proposes a new Council Operating Procedure regarding exempted fishing permits for forage fish species. At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to affirm a preliminary preferred alternative, adopt public review draft amendment language, and consider a new Council Operating Procedure. The Council is scheduled to take final action and adopt a final preferred alternative for this initiative at its March 2015 meeting.

I.1 and I.2 Legislative Matters and Comments on Executive Actions

The Council's Legislative Committee will review the current status of Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) reauthorization and report to the Council. Under Agenda Item I.2, the Council will provide comments on recent Executive Orders. The possible expansion of the protections of the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument in the south-central Pacific Ocean may be of

particular interest. The White House is seeking input from fishermen, scientists, conservation experts, elected officials, and other stakeholders before deciding the geographic scope and details of the marine protections.

Informational Report 1: Regional Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan for Marine Fisheries in the West Coast Region

Council staff is seeking input on this draft plan. The Council will take this up formally at the November meeting. Advisory bodies are encouraged to provide comments to staff.

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: Our Council meeting location was originally incorporated as the city of Spokane Falls but dropped “Falls” from the name in 1891. Spokane Falls, in the center of the city, is one of the largest urban waterfalls in the United States. Make sure to take the time to see the Falls, they are spectacular!

KRD:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item G.1: NMFS Report
3. Agenda Item G.2: Update on International Activities
4. Agenda Item G.3: Preliminary EFP Approval
5. Agenda Item G.4: New or Routine Management Measures Range of Alternatives
6. Agenda Item H.1: Unmanaged Forage Fish Protection Initiative Preliminary Preferred Alternative
7. Agenda Item I.1: Legislative Matters
8. Agenda Item I.2: Comments on Executive Actions
9. Agenda Item I.6 Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
10. Informational Report 1: Regional Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan for Marine Fisheries in the West Coast Region
11. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
12. Hotel-related Information
13. Council Roster