

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) has reviewed the briefing book materials under this agenda item and offers the following comments.

Ms. Jean Thurston, with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), made a presentation to the GAP regarding BOEM's permitting process for wind and wave energy development in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). She noted that BOEM's fisheries person, Donna Schroeder, plans to come to the November Council meeting and make a presentation to the Habitat Committee. The GAP requests she also make a presentation to the GAP on the studies and work she is doing on fisheries and habitat on the West Coast.

The GAP is concerned about the larger issue of marine spatial planning and seafood industry representation. We believe that, absent a change in the makeup of the Oregon Intergovernmental Task Force to include seafood industry representatives, Council inclusion is essential to represent fishing and seafood industry issues. Therefore, we request the Council approve a Pacific Council member to participate on the Task Force.

Ms. Thurston pointed out that BOEM does do some marine spatial planning on the East Coast, with specific areas identified for potential wind and wave energy use. However, BOEM does not do that on the West Coast because there is very little competition for space from contending renewable energy entities and the energy transmission congestion is not as great. That doesn't negate the fact that energy developers may continue to seek site permits and any new infrastructure or plans for development on the OCS will have an impact on the fishing and seafood industries. The GAP requests the Council remain engaged and actively involved in these issues.

The following recommendations were made prior to any supplemental or revised items under this agenda item, prior to any discussions with Council staff and prior to any Council floor discussion of electronic monitoring (Agenda Item J.3). The GAP was cognizant that several members had made travel arrangements and may not have been included in afternoon discussions.

Regarding J.1, Omnibus Regulation Changes, the GAP appreciates the Council's thoughtful discussion and decision of items to move forward. However, it does not appear that any of the items on the Council's priority list are ripe for comment in November.

Regarding J.3, Electronic Monitoring, the GAP supports moving forward with this issue as it is important to the fleet. It appears – prior to Council discussion – the three hours allotted for this issue on the Council floor under Agenda Item I.6.a, Att. 2, Draft Proposed PFMC Agenda for November, could be reduced.

Items that may require more time in the GAP and on the Council floor include:

- Halibut catch sharing plan; and
- Consideration of inseason adjustments.

Depending on the Council's discussion this week, the range of alternatives sent out for public review could require much more GAP time and Council floor time than is currently scheduled. The GAP also reviewed the Salmon Advisory Subpanel's (SAS) request to be included in the November Council meeting and agrees that it should be. We recommend that if the Council schedules the salmon items at the beginning of the meeting, as is on the draft agenda, that the halibut catch sharing plan also be scheduled at some point near the beginning of the agenda so both SAS and GAP members can participate in the floor discussion.

The GAP also is concerned that inseason management may require more time both in the GAP and on the Council floor, given that implementation of 2015 regulations will be delayed. GAP members want to ensure enough trawl quota and halibut bycatch quota is available to start the fishery in an efficient manner. This may require more time on the GAP agenda.

The GAP also recommends dropping the recreational policy update, D.3, from the November agenda.

Drs. Waldo Wakefield and Michele McClure mentioned during the GAP's essential fish habitat (EFH) discussion that another EFH update will be ready for the November meeting. The GAP feels an update is not necessary and can be put off until March, in preparation for the April meeting. Seafood industry and conservation groups have been working together on the EFH review and are making progress; spending time on an update in November would not provide any significant information. Time is better spent on other issues.

PFMC  
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