

PROPOSED NEW AD HOC COMMITTEES

Council Operating Procedure 8 establishes procedures for creating, operating, and terminating ad hoc committees. Ad hoc committees are created to address specific (or short-term) issues and are intended to be in place for a limited duration. Ad hoc committees are created and terminated by vote of the Council and their objectives, duties, and expected duration are specified at the time the committee is created. Committee members are appointed by the Council Chair based on the advice of Council members and advisory committees.

Council staff proposes two new ad hoc committees for Council consideration.

The first proposed ad hoc committee could be called the Groundfish Regulatory Workgroup (or something similar). Proposed regulations to implement Groundfish Amendments 20 (Catch Shares) and 21 (Trawl Allocation) have been before the Council since March 2010 and the deeming of these regulations is scheduled to be completed at the June 2010 Council meeting. Because of the voluminous and complex nature of these implementing regulations, an ad hoc committee with special expertise in regulatory issues associated with the groundfish trawl Catch Shares program could be of great assistance to expediting the Council’s deeming process and ensuring a timely and successful implementation of the Catch Shares Program.

The second proposed ad hoc committee could be called the Tule Chinook Abundance-Based Management Workgroup (or something similar). Its purpose would be to take the lead in a focused effort to explore abundance-based approaches to setting allowable fishing rates in the long-term to protect Lower Columbia River tule Chinook. Its recommendations would be reported to the Council which could adopt specific recommendations to provide National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for their consideration in the development of future biological opinions.

Criteria for the committees are described below.

Ad Hoc Groundfish Regulatory Workgroup (GRW)

Objective:	Assist the Council and NMFS in the process of reviewing and deeming regulations implementing Groundfish Amendment 20 (Catch Shares) and, if necessary, Amendment 21 (Trawl Allocation).
Duties and Process:	Develop recommendations to the Council on the consistency of proposed regulations implementing Amendment 20 (and, if necessary, Amendment 21) with the Council’s final action. Specifically, the committee would review Agenda Item I.1.b, Supplemental NMFS Report 7, April 2010; and any other pertinent documents to identify consistency or implementation issues. The committee would provide a statement for the June Council meeting advance Briefing Book, due May 26, 2010. The Committee might also meet at the June Council meeting if new or revised regulatory language materials are made available by NMFS.
Members:	Ten or so members representing a cross-section of expertise and experience in the Council action and regulatory issues for the fisheries that would be managed under Amendments 20 and 21.
Duration:	Terminate when the Council submits a letter to NMFS deeming a set of regulations as accurate and consistent with the Council’s final action.

Ad Hoc Tule Chinook Abundance-Based Management Workgroup (TCAMW)

Objective:	Assist the Council in exploring the development of abundance-based management approaches to allow fishing on abundant salmon stocks while protecting the recovery of Lower Columbia River tule Chinook (LCRT).
Duties and Process:	Examine various models currently in use for abundance-based management approaches with the charge to develop a usable approach, if possible, for LCRT. Committee work would be integrated with the Council’s annual salmon methodology review process that produces recommendations in November of each year. Any fishing mortality rate ceilings developed and approved by the Council would be submitted to NMFS for possible use in the next LCRT biological opinion for ocean salmon seasons in 2012 and beyond. The process would include establishing the committee in the near term, a review of intermediate results via a progress report in the fall of 2010, and final recommendations to be made in the fall of 2011 through the salmon methodology review process. In the event a usable approach emerges from this process, the Council might consider a possible FMP amendment process beginning after November 2011.
Members:	Approximately a dozen members with technical expertise in salmon harvest modeling and management representing those entities involved with management of Columbia River salmon stocks. Expertise could include members of the salmon Model Evaluation Workgroup.
Duration:	Meet in the near term and as necessary to complete the work and final recommendations to the Council by no later than the November 2011 Council meeting. Terminate the committee no later than April 30, 2012.

PFMC
04/14/10