

TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2005-2006 FISHERIES

Situation: Management measures adopted during the Council process are designed to implement new and existing rebuilding programs, achieve bycatch reduction mandates, keep total catch within the proposed harvest levels, and achieve optimum benefits to the various user groups and fishing communities.

In the last five years, the Council has implemented a substantial restructuring of the groundfish fishery that includes gear restrictions, seasons, dramatically lower harvest levels consistent with previously-approved rebuilding programs for overfished species, and depth-based restrictions that shift the fishery out of the areas where the most depleted groundfish species reside. The management implications of new groundfish stock assessments and rebuilding analyses, as well as the overharvest of some species in recent years may require consideration of different management measures than implemented in 2004.

The Council adopted a range of specific management options in April to help focus public attention on the extent of changes that may be necessary and to provide the basis for adopting final 2005-2006 management measures at this meeting. A preliminary draft 2005-2006 Management Specifications Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared by the GMT and Council staff with analysis of effects of the alternative management measures adopted in April (Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 1). The appendices to the preliminary draft EIS are available as electronic copies on CD-ROM and include Appendix A, Affected Environment (Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 2); Appendix B, Proposed Arrowtooth Flounder - Rockfish Conservation Area (AT-RCA) Trawl Fishing Program Scoping Document (Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 3); Appendix C, Widow Area Management (Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 4); and Appendix D, Council Fisheries Income Impact Modeling (Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 5). (It is noted that the appendices to the preliminary draft EIS are incorrectly referenced in some parts of the document.) Additionally, the Ad Hoc Allocation Committee is scheduled to meet on May 27 to refine recommended management and allocation alternatives for 2005 and 2006. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT), Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP), and interested public are expected to provide recommendations, additional analyses, and perspectives on 2005-2006 management issues at the June Council meeting.

The Council is scheduled to deliberate 2005-2006 management measure alternatives in three steps this week. Initial refinement of management measure alternatives occurs under this agenda, followed by a GMT and GAP check-in on Thursday under agenda C.8, and a final decision on 2005-2006 management measures on Friday under agenda C.10. Further, optimum yield levels for other flatfish and canary rockfish are scheduled for final decision-making during agendas C.6 and C.10, respectively.

Council Action:

Adopt tentative management measures for 2005-2006 Fisheries for GMT analysis (including proposed EFP set-asides) and adopt final acceptable biological catches and optimum yields for other flatfish.

References:

1. Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 1: Proposed Acceptable Biological Catch and Optimum Yield Specifications and Management Measures for the 2005 and 2006 Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
2. Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 2: Appendix A, Affected Environment (electronic copy on CD-ROM).
3. Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 3: Appendix B, Proposed Arrowtooth Flounder - Rockfish Conservation Area (AT-RCA) Trawl Fishing Program Scoping Document (electronic copy on CD-ROM).
4. Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 4: Appendix C, Widow Rockfish Area Management (electronic copy on CD-ROM).
5. Exhibit C.6.a, Attachment 5: Appendix D, Council Fisheries Income Impact Modeling (electronic copy on CD-ROM).
6. Exhibit C.6.a, WDFW Report: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Summary of Groundfish Public Meetings.
7. Exhibit C.6.e, Written Public Comments.
8. Exhibit C.6.b, Supplemental Attachment 1: Ad Hoc Allocation Committee Report.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview
- b. Ad Hoc Allocation Committee Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- e. Public Comment
- f. **Council Action:** Adopt Tentative Management Measures for 2005-2006 Fisheries for GMT Analysis (Including Proposed EFP Set-Asides) and Adopt Final Acceptable Biological Catches and Optimum Yields for Other Flatfish

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Committee Members

PFMC
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