

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Legislative Committee will meet Monday, March 7 to review federal legislative issues.

The 109th Congress is currently in session. It is anticipated that reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) will be addressed in this Congress in 2005. Reauthorization of the MSA will likely be discussed at two important fisheries management forums; *Managing Our Nations Fisheries II, Focus on the Future* in Washington D.C., March 24-25, 2005 and the *2005 Council Chairs' and Executive Directors' Meeting* in Dana Point, California, April 25-29, 2005. The Council and its Legislative Committee will review the current status of MSA reauthorization and discuss Council participation this important process. Key issues of interest to the Council that were addressed in previous versions of draft reauthorization legislation include individual quota programs, ecosystem based management approaches, species rebuilding schedules, and overfishing. Several bills in recent years have addressed MSA reauthorization in full or by specific issue. Agenda Item B.4.a, Attachment 1, is a discussion draft of a bill in the House of Representatives by United States Representative Wayne T. Gilchrest (R-Maryland-1st) and provides comprehensive legislative language from which 2005 congressional activity relative to MSA reauthorization may develop.

The agreement between the United States and Canada on Pacific whiting is awaiting congressional approval. Agenda Item B.4.a, Attachment 2 is a letter from U.S. Senator Gordon Smith to U.S. Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, requesting expedited attention to this matter to allow Congress time to consider legislation necessary to enact the agreement prior to the start of the 2006 fishery.

The Legislative Committee will provide a summary report to the Council.

Council Action:

Consider Recommendations of the Legislative Committee.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item B.4.a, Attachment 1: Discussion draft of an MSA reauthorization bill in the House of Representatives by United States Representative Wayne T. Gilchrest.
2. Agenda Item B.4.a, Attachment 2: February 16, 2005 letter from United States Senator Gordon H. Smith to United States Senator Richard G. Lugar regarding the Pacific whiting agreement between the United States and Canada.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Legislative Committee Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Consider Recommendations of the Legislative Committee

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PFMC
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