

AMENDMENT 20: TRAWL RATIONALIZATION ALTERNATIVES

The Council has considered groundfish trawl fishery rationalization at sixteen Council meetings over the last five years. At its June 2008 meeting, the Council selected a preliminary preferred alternative. A draft decision document was finalized over the summer and released for public review October 3. This document includes a preliminary draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). Hearings were held at the end of October (Attachment F.3.g, Hearing Schedule). The Council is scheduled to take final action at this meeting. In January 2009, the Council is required to provide to Congress “a proposal for the appropriate rationalization program for the Pacific trawl groundfish and whiting fisheries,” including “fully analyze[d] alternative program designs.” (Section 302(f), Magnuson-Stevens Act [MSA]). Following Council final action NMFS will begin drafting proposed regulations. During the development of those regulations in the first half of 2009, it is expected that the Council will schedule floor time to clarify intent, further identify mechanism details, and confirm that the draft proposed regulations properly reflect the final Council action (Agenda Item F.3.a, 2009 Schedule). The draft proposed regulations will then accompany the finalized DEIS when it is submitted to NMFS in 2009 for final approval under the MSA.

In preparation for this Council meeting, the Groundfish Allocation Committee (GAC) met to develop recommendations on choices that were left unresolved in the preliminary preferred alternative. The GAC recommendations are contained in Agenda Item F.3.e, GAC Report. During that meeting, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) presented an elaboration on the adaptive management program (Agenda Item F.3.f, CDFG Report) and after the meeting Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) submitted comments (Agenda Item F.3.f, WDFW Report).

This agenda item will begin with a general overview of the alternatives, identification of preliminary decisions made in June and those choices for which no preliminary decision was made. Key decisions are highlighted in Agenda Item F.3.b, Key Decisions. Following that, highlights from the analysis will be reviewed (Agenda Item F.3.c, Attachments 1, 2, and 3) and there will be a presentation of analysis developed in response to GAC meeting discussions (Agenda Item F.3.c, Additional Analysis). Portions of the decision document which are **not** included in Agenda Item F.3.c, Attachments 1, 2, and 3 can be found on the briefing book CD.

As part of its final action, the Council should adopt both policy recommendations on the trawl rationalization alternatives and specific changes to the fishery management plan (FMP) language. With respect to the FMP, some suggested language for Council consideration is provided on page 97 of Chapter 2.

Council Action:

Adopt Final Preferred Alternative for Draft Environmental Impact Statement Including:

- a. The trawl rationalization provisions for groundfish and Pacific halibut bycatch.**
- b. Language for amending the plan.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.3.a, 2009 Schedule: Generalized Schedule of Trawl Rationalization Activities for 2009.
2. Agenda Item F.3.b, Key Decisions.
3. Agenda Item F.3.c, Additional Analysis: Additional Analysis on Trawl Rationalization.
4. Agenda Item F.3.c, Attachment 1: Executive Summary and Chapters 1 and 2, Excerpted from “Rationalization of the Pacific Coast Groundfish Limited Entry Trawl Fishery, Decision Document for the November 2008 Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting.”
5. Agenda Item F.3.c, Attachment 2: Appendix A Analysis of Components, Elements and Options for the IFQ Alternative.
6. Agenda Item F.3.c, Attachment 3: Appendix B Analysis of Components, Elements and Options for the Harvest Cooperative Alternative.
7. Agenda Item F.3.e, GAC Report: Groundfish Allocation Committee Report on Trawl Rationalization.
8. Agenda Item F.3.f, CDFG Report: California Department of Fish and Game Report on Adaptive Management.
9. Agenda Item F.3.f, WDFW Report: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Comments on the Groundfish Allocation Committee Report and on the California Department of Fish and Game Adaptive Management Proposal Clarification.
10. Agenda Item F.3.g, Hearing Schedule: Schedule of Trawl Rationalization Amendment Hearings, Pacific Fishery Management Council, October 27-29, 2008.
11. Agenda Item, F.3.h, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Jim Seger
- b. Review of Alternatives and Options Jim Seger
- c. Review of Analysis Merrick Burden, Heather Brandon, Steve Freese, Jim Seger
- d. NOAA General Counsel Comments Eileen Cooney
- e. Recommendations of the Groundfish Allocation Committee Don Hansen
- f. Reports and Comments of Agencies and Advisory Bodies
- g. Hearings Summaries Hearings Officers
- h. Public Comment
- i. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Preferred Alternative for Draft Environmental Impact Statement – *To be continued on Wednesday and completed on Friday*

PFMC
10/20/08