

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 22 – OPEN ACCESS LICENSE
LIMITATION

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a presentation from Mr. LB Boydston regarding open access license limitation. Deliberations then took place regarding the various issues using all of the available Council documentation.

The GAP chose the preferred alternative A-6 as its choice for the final preferred alternative with the following criteria:

1. Qualifying criteria for sablefish and lingcod endorsements to be set at ≥ 100 lbs each.

The 100 lb qualifier was selected due to the fact that it would include most of the vessels currently in the fishery. The 500 lb limit would offer very little reduction in vessel numbers beyond the 100 lb limit. After deliberating the control date, the GAP settled on the preferred option decided by the Council. Much discussion was centered on the pros and cons of linking the lingcod and sablefish endorsement to the “B” permit. The GAP recommends keeping the lingcod and sablefish endorsements linked to the “B” permit.

The GAP discussed other issues involving this agenda item and wishes to add the following comments:

C Permit

The GAP supports the GAC recommendation to eliminate the “C” permit. It is believed that the “C” permit will add unnecessary complexity resulting in little gain.

Vessel ownership exchange after the control date

The GAP discussed the problem of qualifying criteria for permits based on vessel catch history rather than the catch history of individual fishermen. Many vessels with catch history during the qualifying window were bought and sold after the control date. The catch history remaining with the vessel presents a problem for those fishermen who originally qualified for a permit with their catch history and then sold their vessel after the control date, thereby losing their catch history associated with that vessel. The GAP urges the Council to address this issue by allowing fishermen with personal catch history prior to the control date and who sold their vessels after the control date to have the opportunity to qualify for a limited entry “B” permit. Further, those fishermen who bought a vessel after the control date who had no personal catch history prior to the control date should not qualify for a permit based solely on vessel catch history. The GAP acknowledges that fleet size may increase if personal catch history and vessel catch history are used in qualifying for a permit and therefore requests further analysis of this issue before qualifying criteria are decided.

Appeals process for license holders

The GAP requests NMFS set up an appeals process for the benefit of license holders and potential applicants so that some of the above and other issues can be resolved. An example might be the use of an outside legal agreement to transfer catch history to another vessel.

The GAP urges the Council to move this item forward in a timely manner so that the fishery can achieve stability sooner by avoiding a lengthy process.

PFMC

03/11/09