



## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 10, 2016

TO: Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel, Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer for Highly Migratory Species

SUBJECT: March Council Meeting

The Council meets March 9-14, 2016, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Sacramento, California. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Thursday through Saturday, March 10-12. The HMSAS will be in the Rubicon River Room and the HMSMT will be in the Feather River Room. The meetings begin at 8 a.m. each day. Four HMS topics are on the Council agenda. Briefing materials for Agenda Item F.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning, are also attached. Summaries of the four HMS topics follow.

### F.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

Ms. Heidi Taylor will provide an update on recent regulatory activities related to the Council's Fishery Management Plan for West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS FMP). Drs. Cisco Werner and Gerard DiNardo will update the Council on Southwest Fisheries Science Center HMS-related activities. This is expected to include an update on the preparation of a new stock assessment for Pacific bluefin tuna.

### F.2 Report on Ongoing Exempted Fishing Permits

National Marine Fisheries Service will report on the status of exempted fishing permits (EFPs) that the Council recommended be issued in March and June 2015. EFPs to test deep-set buoy gear have been issued, while those for pelagic longline and large mesh drift gillnet are under review.

### F.3 Deep-Set Buoy Gear Amendment Scoping

The Council and members of the public have expressed interest with moving forward to make deep-set buoy gear an authorized gear under the HMS FMP. To do so, the FMP would need to be amended and pursuant regulations implemented. The FMP and regulations would contain a definition of the gear and related management measures. The Council may also wish to consider a limited entry permit program for this gear. A report by the HMSMT summarizing issues the Council should consider as part of scoping is included in your advanced briefing materials.

F.4 Recommendations for International Management Activities Including U.S.-Canada  
Albacore Treaty Area Fishery Update

The International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) is sponsoring a workshop in May to solicit input from managers and stakeholders in member countries of the WCPFC Northern Committee (NC) on management objectives for North Pacific albacore. The Council could provide recommendations on management objectives that should be put forward at this workshop. The next Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) meeting conflicts with the June Council meeting, so the Council needs to develop any recommendations at the March Council meeting. The current three-year fishing regime under the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty expires at the end of 2016. The Council may discuss the current status and future prospects for the West Coast fishery.

To help you keep abreast of topics on future Council meetings I am also including the materials for Agenda Item I.3, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning.

Paper copies of referenced briefing materials are enclosed. You may obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/council-operations/briefing-books/>. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website as they become available after distribution of the advanced briefing book.

Fun fact: Sacramento was the birthplace of the Pony Express. The 1,980-mile mail delivery service began in 1860, and traveled from Sacramento to St. Joseph, Missouri.

As always, thank you for your service to the Council process.

KRD:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item F.1: National Marine Fisheries Report
3. Agenda Item F.2: Report on Ongoing Exempted Fishing Permits
4. Agenda Item F.3: Deep Set Buoy Gear Amendment Scoping
5. Agenda Item F.4: Recommendations for International Management Activities Including U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty Area Fishery Update
6. Agenda Item I.3: Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
7. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
8. Hotel-related Information
9. Council Roster

PFMC

02/10/16