



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Dorothy M. Lowman, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Acting Executive Director

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 1, 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: June Council Meeting

The Council meets June 23-28, 2016, at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma, Washington. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Tuesday through Friday, June 21-24. The HMSAS will be in the Venice 4 Room and the HMSMT will be in the Lido Boardroom. The meetings begin at 8 a.m. each day. Five HMS topics are on the Council agenda. I have also included the briefing materials for Agenda Item F.2, Comments on Western Region Climate Change Action Plan and F.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning. Summaries of these topics follow.

#### D.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). This includes reports on activities under ongoing exempted fishing permits (EFPs). Drs. Cisco Werner and Gerard DiNardo will update the Council on Southwest Fisheries Science Center HMS-related activities.

#### D.2 International Issues Including Eastern Pacific Ocean Swordfish Status, Report of the North Pacific Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop, and Recommendations for the 12th Northern Committee Meeting

The International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) held a workshop May 24-25 to solicit input from managers and stakeholders in member countries of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Northern Committee (NC) on management objectives for North Pacific albacore. These objectives will be used in the planned management strategy evaluation (MSE) for North Pacific albacore that the ISC is planning to conduct. On behalf of the Council, Ms. Cyreis Schmitt, HMSMT member, and Dr. Kit Dahl,

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Council staff, attended. Representatives for the West Coast albacore troll and pole-and-line fisheries were also on hand. Ms. Schmitt and Dr. Dahl will report on the meeting.

The Council could provide recommendations to the NC on further development of the North Pacific albacore MSE. The NC is also likely to discuss changes to the current rebuilding plan for Pacific bluefin tuna, because a new ISC assessment of the stock has been conducted.

The 90th Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) occurs June 27-July 1. Since these dates conflict with the June Council meeting, it would not be possible to submit formal recommendations in writing to the U.S. delegation, but the Council could discuss recommendations with NMFS representatives who will attend the IATTC meeting. Important issues include new resolutions for Pacific bluefin tuna and tropical tunas. Several longline vessels licensed by the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council are now operating out of Southern California and targeting bigeye tuna. For this reason, the Pacific Council may have an interest in the tropical tuna measure.

In July 2015, the Council was notified that the Eastern Pacific Ocean stock of swordfish is subject to overfishing. This notification triggers the requirements in section 304(i) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The Council must “develop recommendations for domestic regulations to address the relative impact of fishing vessels of the United States” and “develop and submit recommendations to the Secretary of State, and to the Congress, for international actions that will end overfishing in the fishery and rebuild the affected stocks, taking into account the relative impact of vessels of other nations and vessels of the United States.” Since these recommendations must be submitted within one year of the notification, the Council has to take action at this meeting.

#### D.3 Preliminary Approval of New Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)

According to Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20, the schedule for Council review of EFPs occurs annually at the June and September Council meetings. The Council received an EFP application from Mr. David Stephens to test deep-set buoy gear. According to COP 20, the HMSMT and HMSAS will review EFP proposals in June and make recommendations to the Council for action. COP 20 contains a list of considerations for reviewing EFP applications.

#### D.4 Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications Including Management Reference Points and Management Measures

The Council considers new management measures or adjustments to existing measures in even-numbered years at the June, September, and November meetings. According to the HMS FMP, at the June meeting the HMSMT provides an update to the Council on the status of HMS fisheries and, as appropriate, proposes adjustments to the numerical estimates of maximum sustainable yield, optimum yield, and status determination criteria in a report. If necessary, Council directs HMSMT to prepare a draft regulatory analysis to implement revised estimates of reference point values, ACLs, or other harvest objectives and/or management measures.

#### D.5 Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permit Update

In March, the Council provided guidance on the development of alternatives for authorizing a deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) fishery. The HMSMT requested a “check-in” in June to obtain further guidance based on preliminary information about a range of alternatives.

The Council may also wish to consider a limited entry permit program for DSBG. In 2014, the Council also expressed its intent to develop a Federal permit for the California large mesh drift gillnet (DGN) fishery for sharks and swordfish. In the meantime, SB 1114 has been introduced in the California Senate. The Council discussed this bill at its April meeting. SB 1114 would phase out the DGN fishery and create a state permit for a federally-authorized DSBG fishery. These permitting issues will also be discussed under this agenda item.

## F.2 Western Region Climate Change Action Plan

In April 2016, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released a draft Western Regional Action Plan (WRAP), which outlines efforts underway to increase the production, delivery, and use of the climate-related information required to fulfill the agency's mission. The WRAP conforms to the nationally consistent framework of the NMFS Climate Science Strategy (NCSS). The HMSAS and HMSMT may wish to comment on HMS-related activities in the draft WRAP. To help you keep abreast of topics on future Council meetings I am also including the materials for Agenda Item F.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning.

I have included time on your agendas to discuss and develop recommendations for ecosystem indicators to be provided to the Council as part of the Annual State of the California Current Report. This report is delivered to the Council in March and helps inform the Council about trends in ecosystem processes and status. The Council will be making recommendations on the indicators in the report at the September meeting.

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: Irvine Robbins, co-founder of the Baskin-Robbins chain of ice cream stores, got his start in Tacoma in 1927, selling ice cream and cottage cheese produced from his father's cows' surplus milk.

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 D.1: National Marine Fisheries Report
3. Agenda Item D.2: International Issues Including Eastern Pacific Ocean Swordfish Status, Report of the North Pacific Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop, and Recommendations for the 12th Northern Committee Meeting
4. Agenda Item D.3: Preliminary Approval of New Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)
5. Agenda Item D.4: Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications Including Management Reference Points and Management Measures
6. Agenda Item D.5: Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permit Update
7. Agenda Item F.2: Western Region Climate Change Action Plan

8. Agenda Item F.6: Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
9. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
10. Hotel-related Information
11. Council Roster
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