



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Herbert A. Pollard II, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 25, 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: November Council Meeting

The Council meets November 16-21, 2016, at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove, California. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Friday through Sunday, November 18-20. The HMSAS will be in the Terrace ABC (South Tower) and the HMSMT will be in the Terrace DEF (South Tower). 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 C.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning. Summaries of these topics follow.

I.1 National Marine Fisheries Report

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Region will report on domestic regulatory activities. The Southwest Fisheries Science Center will report on HMS-related research activities. This is a briefing and no Council action will occur under this agenda item.

I.2 International Issues

At its October meeting, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) adopted a replacement resolution for Pacific bluefin tuna, based on a proposal submitted by the U.S. It essentially rolls over the U.S. domestic measures in place for 2015-2016 for another two years. NMFS will develop implementing regulations for the commercial fishery and is soliciting comment from the Council. Pacific bluefin tuna rebuilding also will be discussed at the upcoming 13th Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC13) scheduled for December 5-9, 2016, along with other topics that may be of interest to the Council. The Council may make recommendations to the U.S. delegation to this meeting on positions the U.S. should take in discussions. In September, the Council deferred its final response to the Center for Biological Diversity's petition for rulemaking on Pacific bluefin tuna until the November

meeting, to allow consideration of the results of the IATTC meeting. The Council has the option to discuss and formally respond to the requests made in this petition.

I.3 U.S.-Canada Albacore Tuna Treaty

The current fishing regime under the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty will expire at the end of the 2016 fishing season and, without a new agreement, albacore fishing by either country in the other country's exclusive economic zone will not be allowed next year. The Council will be briefed by NMFS and the State Department on the status of negotiations.

I.4 Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)

In June, the Council announced it would accept EFP applications for deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) at any meeting when HMS topics are on the agenda. As specified in Council Operating Procedure 20, EFP applications must be received at least two weeks before the start of the Council meeting or November 2.

The Council also directed the HMSMT to identify key data gaps relevant to authorizing a DSBG fishery, which could be used as criteria for evaluating EFP applications. The HMSMT and HMSAS provided reports on the data gap issue at the September Council meeting. The HMSMT also proposed developing a DSBG application "template" to make the applications easier to prepare and more relevant to information needs. The HMSMT has submitted a report with a draft application template, which includes as part of the background materials a revised list of research priorities/data gaps. Based on Council guidance, these materials will be posted to the Council's website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/highly-migratory-species/efp-application-info-for-dsbg/>.

I.5 Swordfish Fishery Management

In November, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requested that the HMSAS' November meeting agenda include the subject of permitting policy advice on Federal permits for California large-mesh drift gillnet (DGN) and future (DSBG). The HMSAS and HMSMT are scheduled to meet jointly on Saturday, November 19 to address this request. A report is due to the Council on Monday, November 21.

On October 13, 2016, NMFS published a proposed rule that would implement the Council's September 2015 final action to establish hard caps for the DGN fishery. Since the comment period on the proposed rule closes November 28, the Council has the option of submitting comments.

To help you keep abreast of topics at future Council meetings, I am also including the materials for Agenda Item C.6, 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: The headquarters of the Government of Free Vietnam, a self-styled anti-Communist group, is in Garden Grove.

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 I.1: NMFS Report
3. Agenda Item I.2: International Issues
4. Agenda Item I.3: U.S.-Canada Albacore Tuna Treaty
5. Agenda Item I.4: Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)
6. Agenda Item I.5: Swordfish Fishery Management
7. Agenda Item C.6: Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
8. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
9. Hotel-related Information
10. Council Roster

PFMC

10/25/16