



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Philip Anderson, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 22, 2017

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: September 2017 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meets September 11-18, 2017, at the Riverside Hotel in Boise, Idaho. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Thursday through Saturday, September 14-16. The HMSAS will be in the North Star Room and the HMSMT will be in the Clearwater Room. The meetings begin at 8 a.m. each day. Six HMS topics are on the Council agenda. I have also included the briefing materials for Agenda Item I.2- Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiatives: Scoping and Selection and H.5- Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning. Summaries of these topics follow.

#### J.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

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

#### J.2 Swordfish Management Project Planning

This agenda item is an opportunity for the Council to learn about, discuss, and plan various ongoing activities related to West Coast swordfish fisheries. NMFS will brief the Council on three topics: 1) progress on the Council recommendation for 100 percent monitoring in the drift-gillnet (DGN) fishery by 2018, 2) progress on issuing exempted fishing permits (EFPs) for DSBG fishing based on Council recommendations to date, and 3) observer and logbook data reporting improvements for deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) EFPs.

#### J.3 Recommend International Management Activities

NMFS and Council staffs will report on the outcomes of recent regional fishery management organization (RFMO) meetings including: the July 11-18, 2017, Plenary Session of the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC); the July 24-28, 2017, Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) held its annual

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meeting; and the August 28-September 1, 2017, Thirteenth Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee meeting. A second joint Northern Committee-IATTC meeting on Pacific Bluefin Tuna Conservation Management will take place concurrently with the Northern Committee meeting.

#### J.4 Fishery Management Plan Amendment 4: Status Determination Criteria Final Action

Amendment 4 incorporates both housekeeping changes to the HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) as well as revised language describing the Council's role in the status determination process for HMS stocks. At its June meeting, the Council adopted the amendment language for public review including additional changes proposed by the HMSAS and HMSMT. At this meeting the Council will take final action on the FMP amendment. The HMSMT has submitted a report with revised proposed changes to FMP section 4.2, describing the specification of maximum sustainable yield (MSY), which is used as a basis for computing status determination criteria.

#### J.5 Proposed Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits

The Council has received nine new applications for DSBG EFPs for review at the September Council meeting. In June, the Council requested seven applicants to resubmit their applications with the requested information for Council review at its September meeting. Of these, three applications have been resubmitted for review. Attachment 2 provides summary information on the applications submitted or resubmitted for review at the September 2017 Council meeting. In addition to these applications, I have included a letter from Mr. Bob Ball. The Council approved his application in June but asked that he submit additional information to NMFS. Attachment 3 is his response, which has been forwarded to NMFS.

#### J.6 Authorization of Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permitting

Since March 2016, the Council has been developing a range of alternatives to authorize a fishery using DSBG. At the June 2017 Council meeting, the HMSMT submitted for Council consideration a report describing a preliminary range of alternatives and the Council provided guidance for further development of the alternatives. The HMSMT met August 8-10, 2017, and prepared a report, included in the briefing materials, with a revised range of alternatives addressing Council guidance. At this meeting, the Council will review the proposed range of alternatives, provide guidance, and adopt them for public review, as appropriate.

#### Other Topics

Under Agenda Item I.2, the Council will select the ecosystem initiative it wants to move forward with over the next few years. In March 2017, the Council identified two candidate initiatives: a combined initiative on the socio-economic effects of fisheries management practices on fishing communities and on human recruitment to the fisheries, and an initiative on the effects of near-term climate shift and long-term climate change on our fish, fisheries, and fishing communities. In response to Council guidance, the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup prepared a report identifying objectives, available information, and a timeline for completion for these candidate initiatives. I am including these materials in case you want to make a recommendation on which initiative the

Council should pick. Agenda Item I.2 comes to the Council on Friday afternoon; should you decide to take it up, you would have to do so on the first day of your meetings in order to submit a report no later than Friday morning. I haven't formally scheduled times on your agendas for this purpose but you can make adjustments as needed when you first convene on Thursday morning.

To help you keep abreast of topics at future Council meetings, I am also including the materials for Agenda Item H.5, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning. You may wish to provide comments on what topics are proposed and at what meetings.

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.

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

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Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.5: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item I.2: Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiatives: Scoping and Selection
3. Agenda Item J.1: NMFS Report
4. Agenda Item J.2: Swordfish Management Project Planning
5. Agenda Item J.3: Recommend International Management Activities
6. Agenda Item J.4: Fishery Management Plan Amendment 4: Status Determination Criteria Final Action
7. Agenda Item J.5: Proposed Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits
8. Agenda Item J.6: Authorization of Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permitting
9. Agenda Item H.5: Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
10. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
11. Informational Reports
12. Hotel-related Information
13. Council Roster
14. Memorandum from Executive Director Chuck Tracy

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