

Decision Summary Document
Pacific Fishery Management Council
June 7-13, 2018

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Meeting Decision Summary Documents are highlights of significant decisions made at Council meetings. Results of agenda items that do not reach a level of highlight significance are typically not described in the Decision Summary Document. For a more detailed account of Council meeting discussions, see the [Council meeting record and voting logs](#) or the [Council newsletter](#).

Groundfish Management

New and Continuing Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Approval for 2019-2020

The Council approved three EFPs for final recommendation to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):

[Yellowtail Rockfish Jig Fishing for the 2019-2020 Fishing Season](#); [Commercial Midwater Hook and Line Rockfish Fishing in the Rockfish Conservation Area off the Oregon Coast](#); and [Monterey Bay Regional EFP – Chilipepper Rockfish](#). It forwarded a fourth EFP, [Year-Round Coastwide Midwater Rockfish](#), for public review and comment, with a final recommendation scheduled for the September 2018 Council meeting. The Council also adopted set asides for these EFPs, as summarized in Groundfish Management Team [\(GMT\) Report 3](#), except that it reduced the canary rockfish set aside from 10 mt to 5 mt for the EFP for commercial midwater hook and line fishing off the Oregon Coast.

Final Action on Stock Assessment Plans and Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Council adopted the following stock assessment priorities for 2019:

Full assessments: sablefish, cabezon (CA and OR), longnose skate, big skate, cowcod, and gopher rockfish/black-and-yellow rockfish as a complex;
Update assessments: petrale sole and widow rockfish;
Catch-only projections: lingcod, canary rockfish, and black rockfish; and
Catch report: yelloweye rockfish.

The Council adopted the 2019-2020 TOR for [rebuilding analyses](#) with the modifications recommended by the [Scientific and Statistical Committee](#) (SSC) and the terms of reference for [methodology reviews](#). The Council also provisionally adopted the TOR for [stock assessment](#) with consideration for further changes at the September Council meeting as recommended by the [SSC](#).

Additionally, the Council adopted the 2019 stock assessment review schedule proposed by [NMFS](#).

For 2021, the Council adopted the list of assessments recommended by the [GMT](#), with the addition of yelloweye rockfish as a full assessment. This is a refined list of preliminary priorities that will be finalized in 2020.

Final Action to Adopt Management Measures for 2019-2020 Fisheries

The Council adopted final harvest specifications and management measures for 2019 and 2020 groundfish fisheries as follows:

The Council adopted a new rebuilding plan for yelloweye rockfish that specifies a spawning potential ratio (SPR) harvest rate of 65 percent; 2019 and 2020 annual catch limits (ACLs) of 48 mt and 49 mt, respectively; and a target rebuilding year of 2029. The non-trawl sectors will be managed using annual catch targets based on the lower harvest rate (SPR = 70 percent) analyzed under Alternative 1 with the associated management measures predicted to stay within those lower ACLs.

The Council confirmed the preliminary preferred alternative for routine management measures with revised estimates of off the top deductions to accommodate groundfish catch in Tribal fisheries, research fisheries, non-groundfish fisheries, and set-asides for approved EFPs, as well as set-asides for at-sea whiting fisheries as recommended by the [GMT](#). The Council also confirmed their preliminary preferred alternative for two-year sector allocations and commercial trip limits for all stocks with revised trip limits for sablefish north of 36° N. Latitude and lingcod north of 40° 10' N. Latitude for limited entry as recommended by the [GAP](#). The Council adopted the recreational management measures under Alternative 1 recommended by [California Department of Fish and Wildlife \(CDFW\)](#), [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife \(ODFW\)](#), and [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife \(WDFW\)](#), as well as the Treaty Tribal management measures recommended by the [Tribes](#).

The Council adopted the following new management measures for groundfish fisheries: new salmon mitigation measures, the preliminary preferred alternative for new stock complexes with the specification of harvest guidelines for the stocks in the new Oregon complexes, elimination of daily vessel limits in the individual fishing quota (IFQ) trawl fishery, new sablefish and lingcod discard mortality rates for the IFQ trawl fishery, continuation of the Adaptive Management Pass-Through in the IFQ trawl fishery, removal of automatic authority to close at-sea whiting fisheries if darkblotched rockfish or Pacific ocean perch set-asides are exceeded, allowance to fish shoreward of the 40 fm line in the Western Cowcod Conservation Area by commercial and recreational fixed gear fisheries, and Alternative 1 for lingcod retention in the salmon troll fishery as recommended and analyzed by [WDFW](#).

Inseason Adjustments – Final Action

The Council received a briefing from the [GMT](#) on performance of 2018 groundfish fisheries and made no adjustments to 2018 fisheries.

Coastal Pelagic Species Management

Live Bait Fishery Allowance Amendment Scoping

The Council initiated a fishery management plan amendment process to address take in the coastal pelagic species (CPS) live bait fishery, when a stock is overfished. The Council directed the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) to develop alternatives for consideration, and to provide additional background information on the live bait fishery, at the September Council meeting.

Highly Migratory Species Management

Recommendations for International Management Activities

The Council recommended that the U.S. oppose proposals to increase catch limits for Pacific bluefin tuna at the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee meetings. At its August meeting, the IATTC will be negotiating a new measure for Pacific bluefin management in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) for 2019 and beyond. Immediately following, the Joint Working Group of the Northern Committee and IATTC will meet to discuss long-term Pacific bluefin management and the Northern Committee could propose a revised Conservation and Management Measure for adoption by the WCPFC. In both these forums there will likely be pressure to increase catch limits, because of a recent increase in recruitment resulting in more optimistic projections of stock rebuilding. However, the Council notes these projection results are due to a single year of increased recruitment so it is still highly uncertain that rebuilding targets can be met.

The Council also noted new permit requirements for U.S. vessels intending to fish for albacore in Canadian waters during the 2018 season starting on June 15. The Council asked NMFS to work with the Canadian government to resolve any impediments to access and to keep stakeholders informed.

Drift Gillnet (DGN) Performance Metrics

The Council directed its SSC to review current and proposed methodologies for setting and evaluating bycatch performance metrics for the California large mesh drift gillnet fishery. The HMSMT, with assistance with NMFS, was tasked with preparing the requisite information for SSC review. Based on SSC recommendations, the Council will consider changes to the performance metrics and adopt changes, if any, for the next report on the metrics in June 2019.

Deep-Set Buoy Gear (DSBG) Authorization - Final Range of Alternatives and Preliminary Preferred Alternative for Number of Limited Entry Permits

The Council revised the range of options for the number of permits and the manner of issuance under the limited entry alternative. (Limited entry would apply to the area east of a line

extending due south from Point Conception). These options would allow a phased in approach whereby the Council would issue an initial number of permits and could then issue additional permits in subsequent years up to a cap of 300 permits. These options for initial issuance and total issuance are:

1. Not more than 50 permits per year, not to exceed 300 total.
2. Not more than 100 permits per year, not to exceed 300 total.
3. Not more than 300 permits maximum.

The options are meant to allow flexibility such that the Council would not be obligated to issue the whole of the specified annual number, nor would the Council have to issue all permits up to the specified cap. Rather, these options facilitate the analysis of a phase-in approach, which would allow the Council to proceed cautiously to reach a level of permits that best meets management objectives.

The Council specified an estimate of 500 vessels for the purposes of analyzing an open access fishery.

Preliminary Review of New Non-Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permit Applications and Resubmission of Previous DSBG Applications

The Council reviewed two EFP applications. Mr. David Hutto submitted a revised application to use DSBG, as requested by the Council in March 2018. The Council recommended that NMFS issue the EFP to Mr. Hutto based on his revised application. Dr. John Hall submitted an [application to test short \(≤5 nm\) deep-set pelagic longline gear within the West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone \(EEZ\)](#). The Council approved this application for public review, noting that fishing in waters off Washington should not be allowed, and will make a final recommendation at its September 2018 meeting.

Swordfish Management Project Planning and Observer Coverage

The Council recommended making basic revisions to the draft Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan based on recommendations from [NMFS](#), the [HMSMT](#), and Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel ([HMSAS](#)). The Council will review the draft plan, with the intention of adopting a final plan at a future meeting once more information on ongoing initiatives becomes available. These include SSC review of bycatch estimation methodologies that could be used for DGN fishery performance standards; trials of electronic monitoring in the DGN fishery, especially for unobservable vessels; results from EFPs the Council previously recommended for issuance or is currently considering; and establishing a regulatory framework for a DSBG fishery.

Increased monitoring of the DGN fishery is an objective of the SMMP. The Council reaffirmed its preferred alternative adopted in September 2015. The Council's preferred alternative, as reaffirmed, is in the near term to achieve a 30 percent monitoring coverage level through a combination of human observers and electronic monitoring and work toward the objective of monitoring all vessels. In doing so, NMFS should find ways to ensure all vessels are capable of

observation by electronic monitoring (including those vessels that cannot currently accommodate human observers). The Council will further consider its proposal at a future time as information becomes available on initiatives to enhance DGN fishery monitoring.

Administrative Matters

Electronic Monitoring Cost Allocation Policy Directive

The Council reviewed the draft [procedural directive on cost allocation in electronic monitoring programs](#) and drafted a letter providing comments and requesting additional time for advisory body review and comment on the policy. NMFS stated that it also welcomes comments from other constituents. The Council will finalize its comments at its September meeting.

National Marine Fisheries Service White Paper on Best Scientific Information Available

The Council was briefed on a [draft white paper](#) from NMFS on a proposed national policy on determining best science information available (BSIA) for stock assessments, establishing reference points, and making status determinations. The Council reiterated concerns with potential delays in NMFS BSIA determinations, especially where analyses are used immediately to inform Council management decisions. The Council also recommended that the NMFS representative who is present during SSC deliberations not be a member of the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Finally, the Council requested clarification on how BSIA determinations will be made in the various international processes where assessments and scientific analyses used in Council decision-making are developed in international fora. The Council will send a comment letter to NMFS with their comments and concerns this summer.

Research and Data Needs Document – Preliminary Draft

The Council adopted the [draft 2018 Research and Data Needs document](#) for public review incorporating the [comments from the Council's Ecosystem Workgroup](#) to the degree possible. The Council is soliciting comments on research and data needs priorities and requested public notice on the need to maintain long-term databases that are used in assessments and other analyses. The Council is scheduled to adopt a final draft of the 2018 Research and Data Needs document at their September meeting in Seattle, Washington.

Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs

As requested by the NMFS, the Council reviewed a list of candidate management activities and regulations developed by Pacific Council and NMFS staff with the potential of meeting the intent of Executive Orders 13771 and 13777. The Council approved [a draft letter and list of examples](#) of recently completed and ongoing regulatory review and revision efforts with a particular focus on regulations which are outdated, unnecessary, ineffective, or could be streamlined. The Council tasked the Executive Director with submitting the letter to NMFS by the July 2, 2018 deadline.

Federal Fishery Permit Citizenship Requirements – Scoping

The Council reviewed information on eligibility requirements for Federal fishery permits established pursuant to the Council's four fishery management plans and considered a request to expand eligibility for the HMS general commercial permit to American Indians Born in Canada. The Council decided to retain the current eligibility requirements for all permits, which restrict eligibility to U.S. citizens.

Fiscal Matters

Council approved a calendar year 2018 Operational Budget of \$4,947,154 and the 2017 audit results.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

The Council elected Mr. Phil Anderson as the Council Chair and Mr. Marc Gorelnik as the Council Vice-Chair for the August 11, 2018 through August 10, 2019 term.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) revised their list of Council designees adding Mr. Roy Elicker, Dr. Kyle Hanson, Mr. Roger Root, and Mr. John Netto. Dr. Denise Hawkins and Mr. Michael Clarke will continue as designees.

The Council reviewed and approved the following appointments:

- Mr. Jon Carey was appointed to the NMFS West Coast Region seat on the Salmon Technical Team (STT) currently held by Mr. Larrie LaVoy on an interim basis until such time as the SSC can review this appointment.
- Mr. August Felando has resigned his Purse Seine seat on the HMSAS. Council Chair, Phil Anderson, will work with the California contingent to appoint an interim representative before the September Council meeting for the remainder of the current three-year term which ends December 31, 2018.
- Chair Anderson, in consultation with the Council, appointed Dr. Tommy Moore to the Tribal seat on the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup.

Regarding Council representatives to other forums:

- Mr. Rich Lincoln has been appointed as an Alternate United States Commissioner to the North Pacific Fisheries Commission and will represent the Council at the Commission's 4th Annual session in early-July of this year in Tokyo, Japan.
- Ms. Dorothy Lowman will continue to represent the Council on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

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