

**Decision Summary Document  
Pacific Fishery Management Council**

**September 7-12, 2018**

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](#).

## **Coastal Pelagic Species Management**

### **Amendment 17: Live Bait Fishery Allowance**

The Council adopted a [range of alternatives](#) for a potential Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan amendment to address live bait harvest when CPS stocks are in an overfished condition, and asked the CPS Management Team to continue developing an analysis to support final action at the November 2018 meeting. The alternatives are: 1) Status quo: incidental landing allowance for live bait fisheries of no more than 15 percent of landed weight of an overfished stock, and 2) Remove the prescribed incidental allowance for live bait fisheries to allow the potential for directed take.

## **Salmon Management**

### **Salmon Methodology Review – Final Topic Selection**

Three potential topics for review were identified at the April 2018 Council meeting. Analytical work on the three topics has not been completed due, in part, to the substantial workload associated with the ongoing development of five rebuilding plans. Therefore, the Council decided to forego a methodology review in 2018. The Council and its advisory bodies are scheduled to review draft rebuilding plans at the November Council meeting.

## **Ecosystem Management**

### **Fishery Ecosystem Plan Five-Year Review – Scoping**

The Council directed its Ecosystem Work Group (EWG) to continue discussions with the Management Teams under the Council's four Fishery Management Plans on potential changes to the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), considering how the results of the Climate and Communities

Initiative may influence desired revisions. Based on those discussions, the EWG, with Council guidance, will:

1. Revise and update the goals and objectives in FEP Chapter 2 after analyzing the existing goals and objectives, the progress that has been made on implementing them, and determining how the goals and objectives could be improved to be more specific and measurable and better guide integration of ecosystem objectives into fishery management plans.
2. Develop an outline of FEP revisions to reflect updated science and results of both completed and candidate initiatives.

The EWG will report on its progress at the March 2019 Council meeting.

### **Climate and Communities Initiative Update**

Council members Caren Braby, Rich Lincoln, and John Ugoretz were appointed to the Ad Hoc Climate Scenarios Investigation Workgroup (CSI). The purpose of the CSI is to coordinate with the EWG and bring forward recommendations on how to consider scenario planning efforts to advance the Climate and Communities Initiative process. The CSI laid out a [series of actions](#) between now and November 2019 for this purpose.

## **Highly Migratory Species Management**

### **Final Recommendations on Non-Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)**

The Council approved the [Hall EFP](#) testing deep-set longline inside the Exclusive Economic Zone and forwarded it to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for processing.

### **Recommend International Management Activities**

The Council recommended the following Pacific bluefin tuna catch limits and management measures for 2019 and 2020 West Coast Highly Migratory Species (HMS) fisheries:

1. In 2019, apply a 15 mt commercial fishery trip limit until landings reach 200 mt. Once landings have reached this level, the trip limit is reduced to 2 mt. The 2019 annual overall catch limit is 300 mt. The fishery is closed for the balance of the year when this limit is reached.
2. For 2020, apply a 15 mt commercial fishery trip limit until cumulative 2019-2020 landings reach 475 mt. Once this cumulative biennial level is reached, the trip limit is reduced to 2 mt. The fishery is closed for the balance of the year once the biennial limit of 600 mt is reached.
3. Consistent with Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Resolution [C-18-01](#), underages or overages in any one year are applied to the following year.

4. Pacific bluefin tuna landings must be reported within 24 hours of landing using the California E-tix reporting system.
5. NMFS will develop a method to close the fishery or reduce the trip limit via United States Coast Guard radio transmittal, or other means that will halt additional fishing in the most timely manner possible.

The Council also recommended that the 2019 ISC Pacific bluefin Management Strategy Evaluation workshop be held at a location on the U.S. West Coast.

The Council directed its HMS Management Team (HMSMT) to analyze fishing effort in the West Coast North Pacific albacore fishery to support discussions at the IATTC about specifying effort limits consistent with Resolution C-05-02. Based on the comparable Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) conservation and management measure, the WCPFC Northern Committee (NC) defined the effort limit as the 2002-2004 average level. A fishing effort analysis could also support a change in the NC effort definition, to harmonize it with any limit adopted by the IATTC.

### **Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures**

The Council directed its HMSMT to develop a Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) report for Council consideration, incorporating the estimates of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and status determination criteria (SDC) [recommended by NMFS](#). The Council requested its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to review these estimates for their suitability in management. The Council will consider SSC comments and the contents of the SAFE report at its November 2018 meeting. The Council may then adopt the estimates of MSY, optimum yield, and SDC presented in the SAFE document for management use and, as appropriate, recommend them to the IATTC and WCPFC. As part of this process, the Council also asked NMFS to provide information relative to the need to establish acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits for Council-managed HMS stocks.

The Council directed the HMSMT and HMS Advisory Subpanel to begin developing a long-term management strategy for Pacific bluefin tuna, recognizing that the stock is rebuilding and there is an opportunity for U.S. catch limits to increase in future years.

### **Drift Gillnet Performance Metrics Methodology**

The Council adopted the regression tree methodology for reviewing the performance of the drift gillnet (DGN) fishery in relation to bycatch of rarely encountered non-marketable species. The Council directed the HMSMT to:

1. Develop proposed metrics for 22 bycatch species encountered in the DGN fishery using the regression tree method.

2. Compare a single estimate within a year with a multi-year trend to measure performance in the DGN fishery.
3. Compare performance indicator uncertainty under different levels of DGN fishery observer coverage.
4. Develop a proposed process, including potential bycatch reduction measures, that the Council would consider if the fishery is not performing within such metrics.

The Council directed the HMSMT to report back to the Council on these matters at the March 2019 meeting.

### **Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan**

The Council recommended that edits identified in the [Highly Migratory Species Management Team report](#) be added to the Swordfish Monitoring and Management Plan (SMMP), and then hold the plan in draft form. Further revision or adoption of the SMMP for public review was not scheduled. The Council did [schedule](#) several future HMS actions, including the development of a deep-set buoy gear fishery, review of proposed drift gillnet performance metrics and analyses, and scoping the development of a shallow-set longline fishery beyond the U.S. economic exclusive zone (outside 200 miles).

## **Groundfish Management**

### **National Marine Fisheries Service Report**

NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) gave a presentation on recent activities including a proposal to study gear effects and habitat recovery times in response to recent modifications to essential fish habitat protections and the Rockfish Conservation Area. The NWFSC will hold an evening session at the November Council meeting on Tuesday, November 6 to coordinate with the fishing industry on this research opportunity. The Council received an update from NMFS West Coast Region regarding *Federal Register* notices and rulemaking. NMFS Office of Law Enforcement provided an oral report on ongoing vessel monitoring systems work, including efforts to update the list of approved monitoring devices.

### **Amendment 28 – Essential Fish Habitat and Rockfish Conservation Area Implementation Update**

The Council received an update on the development of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and preliminary Groundfish FMP language reflecting Council final action taken under Amendment 28. The Council adopted the [draft FMP language](#) for public review. The Council is tentatively scheduled to review the implementation of Amendment 28 at the March 2019 Council meeting and requested that Council Executive Director deem the proposed implementing

regulations as meeting Council intent. NMFS plans to complete the rulemaking process in 2019, with implementation by January 1, 2020.

### **Endangered Species Act Consultation on Eulachon**

The Council supported NMFS use of the measures identified in the [draft incidental take statement](#).

### **Stock Assessment Terms of Reference – Final Action**

The Council adopted the draft [Terms of Reference for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species \(CPS\) Stock Assessment Review Process in 2019-2020](#) with changes recommended by the [Scientific and Statistical Committee](#). These terms of reference outline the roles and responsibilities of participants in 2019 and 2020 groundfish and coastal pelagic species stock assessment review processes.

### **Methodology Review – Preliminary Topic Selection**

The Council took no action on this agenda item since no new methodology proposals were endorsed for a formal review next year by the [Scientific and Statistical Committee](#).

### **Science Improvement Report**

The Council took no action on this agenda item since no new methodologies were endorsed for informing future Council decisions by the [Scientific and Statistical Committee](#).

### **Five-Year Catch Share Follow-On Action – Preliminary Action**

The Council adopted the following preliminary preferred alternatives on each issue.

**At-Sea Whiting Fishery Bycatch Needs and Set-Aside Management** – Alternative 4: Set-aside management for all four rockfish species (Pacific ocean perch, darkblotched, widow, and canary); and, remove at-sea set-aside distribution formulas from the FMP.

**Blackgill Annual Vessel QP Limits** - Alternative 3: 20 percent.

**Shorebased IFQ Sector Harvest Complex Needs** – Alternative 2: Allow post-season trading for accounts in deficit with the sub-option to not limit vessels by the annual vessel quota pound (QP) use limits in covering their previous year deficits. Alternative 3: Eliminate September 1 QP expiration. (Alternatives are not mutually exclusive)

**Catcher-Processor (CP) Accumulation Limits** –

- A. CP Implementation Alternative 3: Apply accumulation limits to the existing co-op program (no delay).

- B. CP Permit Limit Alternative 2: Establish a five-permit limit; to attribute ownership, use the “individual and collective rule” consistent with the IFQ program.
- C. Processing Limit Alternative 1: No Action

**New Data Collections for CPs and QS Owners –**

- A. CPs Alternative 2: Collect detailed CP ownership data annually.
- B. QS Owners New Alternative: NMFS would implement a system for collection of these data, but the Council recommends that NMFS identify the most efficient and effective way to conduct the collections.

Additionally, for the blackgill vessel QP limits, the Council adopted the draft purpose and need statement and range of alternatives provided for consideration in the [analytical document](#).

**Continuing Midwater Trawl and Gear EFP and Salmon Bycatch Provisions in New EFPs**

The Council recommended implementation of the year-round midwater trawl and gear EFP for 2019 and preliminary action to recommend the EFP for 2020. The salmon bycatch caps for 2019 will be 1,000 Chinook north of 42° and 100 Chinook south. The Council also recommended salmon caps of 10 Chinook for San Francisco Community Fishing Association EFP, 50 Chinook for the Scott Cook EFP, and 50 Chinook for the Real Good Fish EFP. The Council did not recommend coho caps for any of the EFPs. The Council also anticipates reports from completed EFP research at the November Council meeting.

**Omnibus Workload Planning Process**

The Council will take up omnibus workload planning at its November meeting for the purpose of updating the list of possible new management measures to be included on the omnibus list and identifying whether there are some items that might be scheduled for work over the winter. Over the winter, the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) will make a preliminary cost/benefit and workload assessment of all of the items on the omnibus list. At its March 2019 meeting, the Council will review the GMT’s assessment and develop or refine priorities, as needed. Additionally, the Council will review the [GMT proposal](#) for modifying the omnibus process and consider changes to Council Operating Procedure 9 as necessary to reflect modifications to the existing process.

**Inseason Adjustments—Final Action**

The Council reviewed the status of groundfish fisheries and recommended the following inseason actions.

Regarding Commercial Fisheries:

1. From [I.10.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1](#): Alternative 1 for the LEN sablefish fishery (1,400 lbs/wk, not to exceed 4,200 lb/2 mo), Alternative 2 for the OAN (300 lb/day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,400 lbs, not to exceed 2,800 lbs/2 mo), and Alternative 2 for the OAS (300 lb/day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,600 lbs, not to exceed 4,800 lbs/2 mo).
2. From [I.10.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1](#): Alternative 1, increase the bocaccio LE trip limit for the area between 34°27'-40°10' to 1,500 lbs/2 months.
3. Move 9.7 mt of POP and 17.7 mt of darkblotched rockfish from the IOA sector into the buffer.
4. Increase the ratio of incidental halibut allowed in the primary sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis to 200 net lbs. halibut per 1,000 lbs. sablefish (plus 2 halibut).

The Council also addressed depth restrictions in the California recreational fishery to reduce yelloweye rockfish encounters as follows:

1. Northern Area – reduce from 30 to 20 fathoms; remove all-depth fishery slated for November-December 2018
2. Mendocino Area – remove the all-depth fishery slated for November-December 2018
3. San Francisco Area – Reduce from 40 to 30 fathoms
4. Central Area – Reduce from 50 to 40 fathoms

## Pacific Halibut Management

### 2019 Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations

The Council adopted for public review proposed changes to the 2019 Area 2A Catch Sharing Plan and annual fishing regulations in Washington and Oregon recreational fisheries. No changes were proposed for California recreational fisheries.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife proposed three changes for public review:

1. Columbia River sub-area: Revise the description of the season opening date so that it more closely aligns with the opening date in the other Washington subareas.
  - Option 1: Open the second Thursday in May
  - Option 2: Open the second Friday in May.
  - Option 3: Consult with stakeholders and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to determine the season opening date prior to the November Council meeting.
2. Columbia River sub-area: Revise the days of the week that the season is open.
  - Option 1: Status quo (Thursday, Friday, Sunday).
  - Option 2: Friday and Sunday.

3. South Coast sub-area: Revise the CSP language to remove the set aside of 10 percent or 2,000 pounds for the nearshore fishery and allow the nearshore fishery to be open after the primary (all-depth) fishery closes, if sufficient quota remains.

ODFW proposed one change for public review.

1. Columbia River sub-area: Revise the season opening date so that it more closely aligns with the opening dates in other Washington or Oregon Subareas.

Status quo: Opens the first Thursday in May.

Alternative 1: Opens the second Thursday in May .

Alternative 2: Opens the second Friday in May.

Alternative 3: Consult with stakeholders and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to the November Council meeting to determine the season opening date for the following year.

## Administrative Matters

### Research and Data Needs Document – Final Adoption

The Council adopted the [draft 2018 Research and Data Needs document](#) with edits recommended by the [Scientific and Statistical Committee](#). The Research and Data Needs document outlines the Council's priority research and data needs and this document will be distributed broadly to NMFS science centers, academic institutions, Sea Grant, and other entities that conduct research activities that can potentially inform Council decision-making. The Council expressed a desire to reform the process for identifying research and data needs as recommended by many of the Council's advisory bodies and decided to include this initiative as a candidate item on the Council's September 2019 agenda.

### Legislative Matters

In response to a request from the Honorable Kurt Schrader, the Council directed staff to finalize and send a [draft letter](#) regarding a proposed appropriation of \$10 million to address the Pacific Coast groundfish trawl buyback loan, with an edit to clarify loan numbers.

### Electronic Monitoring Program Review and Cost Allocation Procedural Directive

The Council directed staff to submit all [comments](#) on the Draft Cost Allocation Procedural Directive to NMFS.



## **Fiscal Matters**

The Council approved the recommendations of the [Budget Committee](#) to include changes to the liaison contract funding, identifying potential special projects for development, and gave the Executive Director the flexibility to work with NFMS Region and Science Centers to develop joint proposals for both Headquarters Funding and WCR discretionary funds as appropriate.

## **Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures**

The Council is soliciting nominations for all of its Advisory Subpanels, the eight at-large seats on the SSC, and the non-agency and tribal representative seats on the Habitat Committee. Detailed information on how to submit nominations will be posted on the [Council's Advisory Body Vacancy web page](#) with nominations due to the Council office by October 5, 2018.

The Council reviewed and approved the following appointments:

- Mr. Jon Carey was appointed to the NMFS West Coast Region seats on the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW) formerly held by Mr. Larrie LaVoy.
- Dr. James Hilger was appointed to the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center seat on the CPS Management Team formerly held by Dr. Emmanis Dorval.
- Mr. Anthony Vuoso was appointed to the Purse Seine seat on the HMSAS formerly held by Mr. August Felando for the remainder of the current three-year term which ends December 31, 2018.
- Mr. Merit McCrea was appointed to the California Charter South of Point Conception seat on the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel formerly held by Mr. Louis Zimm for the remainder of the current three-year term.
- Chairman Anderson appointed Mr. Bob Dooley to the California seat formerly held by Ms. Joanna Grebel, and Mr. David Crabbe to the industry advisor seat formerly held by Mr. Bob Dooley, on the ad hoc Sablefish Management and Trawl Allocation Attainment Committee (SaMTAAC).
- Chairman Anderson appointed Vice Chairman Gorelnik and Ms. Christa Svensson to the Council's Legislative Committee, replacing outgoing Council members Mr. David Crabbe and Ms. Dorothy Lowman.
- Chairman Anderson appointed Mr. Brad Pettinger to the Council's Budget Committee, replacing outgoing Council member Ms. Dorothy Lowman.

Regarding the composition of Advisory Bodies and Ad Hoc Committees:

- The Council formed the ad hoc Climate Scenarios Investigation Workgroup and appointed Mr. Rich Lincoln, Ms. Caren Braby, and Mr. John Ugoretz. The Workgroup's charged with

working with the Ecosystem Workgroup and Council's Management/Technical Teams to provide further framing and guidance on the Climate and Communities Initiative under the Fishery Ecosystem Plan, including a detailed description of activities that would occur under scenario planning exercises.

- The Council added an at-large seat to the HMSAS. The representation for this seat is intended to be flexible, giving the Council the ability to review the nominations and choose the representation that best fits the group's charge for the coming term.
- The Council recognized the achievements of ad hoc Community Advisory Board and the ad hoc Sacramento River Winter Chinook Workgroup and the completion of their respective charges, and decommissioned both groups.

Additionally, the Council tasked Council staff with reviewing Council procedures and policies regarding Advisory Body alternates, Advisory Body consensus building and minority statements, and the Council rules of conduct.

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