

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON TRANSITION OF AREA 2A FISHERY MANAGEMENT

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the documents in the advanced briefing book for this agenda item, discussed the topic on our February 25th webinar, and offers the following comments for Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) consideration.

In the draft range of alternatives document ([Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 2, March 2020](#)), there are alternatives for how to best inform the Council on topics related to the Pacific halibut (halibut from here on in this document) commercial fishery management transition. Alternative 2.c. is to:

“expand current advisory bodies to include new members or identify current members as halibut representatives to work on the management transfer in the short-term and advise the Council on the technical and/or managerial aspects related to the halibut fisheries in the long-term.”

The GMT recommends the Council not move Alternative 2.c. forward for consideration. Several GMT members do work on halibut as part of their other duties; however the team does not currently have someone who is a federal halibut regulation writer. The management team responsible for the transition and ongoing management of Pacific halibut does not include a member that is familiar with the federal regulations and the appropriate expertise to provide the Council with meaningful input. The GMT members who also staff halibut will have diminished capacity to take on groundfish workload items moving forward with increased management needs for halibut management. The GMT is already over prescribed in terms of analytical, and overall workload, and does not have the workload capacity to take on the necessary analysis for the transition. However, once the fishery transition is completed, the GMT, with the halibut regulation expertise added, may be able to take on the workload associated with inseason management, such as modeling trip limits.

The GMT believes an ad hoc advisory body (Alternative 2.a.) would be a workable option for conducting the management transition analysis. Appropriate expertise, both management and fishery participants, could be gathered whose focus would be on the transition. The ad hoc advisory body could be disbanded once the transition is completed. Once transition is complete, pre- and inseason management advice could be provided by members of the Salmon Advisory Subpanel, Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, and GMT as currently occurs for other halibut related agenda items.

The GMT did not spend time at this meeting reviewing and discussing all of the potential alternatives in [Attachment 2](#). Once the Council identifies their range of alternatives, the GMT may have comments on the alternatives forwarded.