

Decision Summary Document

Pacific Fishery Management Council

June 12, 15-19, 2020

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 transcripts](#) or the [Council newsletter](#).

Highly Migratory Species Management

International Management Activities

The Council made the following recommendations on management of HMS in international forums:

- Mr. David Hogan, Department of State representative on the Council, discussed the formation of a working group composed of stakeholders to advise U.S. Government negotiators on port access and other matters under the U.S. Canada Albacore Treaty. The Council supports the formation of this group, emphasizing that it should fairly represent the interests of harvesters, processors, and other industry interests.
- Should negotiation of a successor to Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Resolution C-18-01 (Measures for the Conservation and Management of Pacific Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, 2019 and 2020) involve increases in catch limits and national allocations, the U.S. should seek a more equitable allocation between the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Western and Central Pacific Ocean than the current approximately 25 percent/75 percent split, and between the U.S. and Mexico of the EPO allocation.
- In negotiating a successor to IATTC Resolution C-17-02 on tropical tunas (i.e., yellowfin, bigeye, and skipjack tuna), which expires at the end of the 2020 calendar year, the U.S. should protect the interests of domestic harvesters.
- The Council encourages National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to work with the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee and Commission science staff to prioritize assessing the striped marlin stocks within the IATTC Convention Area.

Salmon Management

Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation Update

The Council adopted the [‘Terms of Reference and Timeline’](#) document which outlines the purpose, milestones, and schedule to guide the ad-hoc SONCC Coho Workgroup in accomplishing its tasks. The Council also supported the tentative schedule and membership roster provided in the Workgroup’s [progress report](#).

Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) Endangered Species Act Consultation Update

The Council adopted the Workgroup’s [Risk Assessment of the Pacific Fishery Management Council Salmon Fishery Management Plan Impacts to Southern Resident Killer Whales](#) as final, and directed the Workgroup to continue developing recommendations on a potential management framework for adjusting salmon ocean fisheries in response to the Chinook prey base for the whales as described in the Workgroup’s [progress report](#). The Council will consider a range of alternatives for a Fishery Management Plan or regulatory amendment to implement a management strategy in September.

Amendment 20: Annual Management Schedule and Boundary Change

The Council adopted for public review a range of alternatives for both the annual management schedule and the southern Klamath Management Zone boundary change being considered under Amendment 20. The alternatives are consistent with those described in the [Project Team report](#), with the addition of a third boundary change alternative, which would designate the proposed 5 nm area as a conservation zone available for use during years of low Klamath River fall Chinook abundance forecasts.

Groundfish Management

Final Action to Adopt Management Measures and Exempted Fishing Permits for 2021-2022 Fisheries

The Council forwarded six 2021-2022 exempted fishing permits (EFP) applications ([Year-round Coastwide Midwater Rockfish](#); [California Department of Fish and Wildlife Recreational Cowcod Sampling in California EFP](#); [Yellowtail Rockfish Jig Fishing off California EFP](#); [Commercial Midwater Hook and Line Rockfish in the Rockfish Conservation Area Off Oregon EFP](#); [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Enhanced Yelloweye Recreational Fishery Biological Sampling EFP](#); and the [Monterey Regional EFP Targeting Chilipepper Rockfish](#)) to NMFS for implementation, clarifying that the yellowtail rockfish jig fishing EFP should include 100 percent observer coverage.

The Council adopted final 2021 and 2022 harvest specifications for stocks and stock complexes by confirming their [April 2020 decision](#) for all stocks except shortbelly rockfish. The Council recommended shortbelly rockfish be designated an Ecosystem Component Species. The Council also determined there would be a trigger of 2,000 mt of cumulative catch in a calendar year for further Council consideration of shortbelly rockfish impacts. The stock will continue to be monitored by the GMT and inseason catches will be tracked using the [species scorecard](#).

The Council confirmed their preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) as final preferred alternative (FPA) for routine management measures 2021 and 2022 groundfish fisheries, including the annual catch limit deductions for Tribal, research, recreational, EFP, and incidental open access fisheries, as well as set-asides for the at-sea whiting fisheries, as recommended by the [GMT](#). The Council adopted trip limits for incidentally caught yellowtail rockfish for salmon troll fisheries both north and south of 40° 10' N. lat. For the salmon troll fishery north of 40° 10' N. lat., the Council eliminated the salmon to yellowtail ratio requirement and recommended a monthly trip limit of 500 lbs of yellowtail rockfish, with the additional requirement that salmon are included in the landing. For the salmon troll fishery south of 40° 10' N. lat, the Council adopted their PPA of 1 lb. of yellowtail rockfish per 2 lb. of Chinook salmon landed, with a cumulative monthly limit of 200 lbs. of yellowtail rockfish.

The Council adopted the harvest guidelines and allocations, and established a 50 mt annual catch target for cowcod south of 40° 10' N. lat., as recommended by the [GMT](#). Further, the Council confirmed their PPA as FPA for the two-year trawl/non-trawl and commercial trip limits for all stocks. As part of the trip limit action item, the Council removed flatfish gear restrictions within the non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) south of 42° N. lat and established a 50 lbs per month shortspine thornyhead and 50 lbs. per month longspine thornyhead trip limit north of 34°

27' N. lat. The Council also converted the allocations from Amendment 21 formulas for widow rockfish, petrale sole, lingcod south of 40° 10' N. lat., and the Slope Rockfish Complex, including blackgill rockfish, to new two-year allocations as detailed in the [Draft Environmental Assessment](#).

The Council adopted the recreational management measures recommended by the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), the [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), and the [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#).

Additionally, the Council adopted multiple changes to the non-trawl RCA off California for recreational and commercial fisheries. The recreational management area depth changes to the RCA are as follows:

- Mendocino Groundfish Management Area (Cape Mendocino to Point Arena): Increase the allowable depth during the open season (May through October) from 20 to 30 fathoms.
- San Francisco Groundfish Management Area (Point Arena to Pigeon Point): Increase the allowable depth during the open season (April through December) from 40 to 50 fathoms.
- Southern Groundfish Management Area (Point Conception to the U.S.-Mexico border): Increase the allowable depth during the open season (March through December) from 75 to 100 fathoms.

The changes to the commercial non-trawl RCA depth boundaries are:

- Implementation of a new management line at 38° 57.5' N. lat., (Point Arena) for purposes of defining RCA boundaries.
- In the area between 38° 57.5' and 34° 27' N. lat., (Point Arena to Point Conception): increase the depth of the shoreward RCA boundary from 40 to 50 fathoms. [*NOTE: The shoreward RCA depth between 40° 10' N. lat. and 38° 57.5' N. lat. would remain unchanged; at 40 fathoms.*]
- From 34° 27' N. lat. (Point Conception) to the U.S.-Mexico border: Increase the depth of the shoreward RCA boundary from 75 fathoms to 100 fathoms.

The Council recommended to move the shoreward boundary of the non-trawl RCA between 40° 10' N. lat. and 46° 16' N. lat from 30 fm to 40 fm and, within this area and depth range, to only allow fishing with hook and line gears, with the exception of dinglebar and longline (defined at 50 CFR 660.11).-

Stock Assessment Plan and Terms of Reference (TOR) – Final Action

The Council adopted groundfish stock assessments to be conducted in 2021 as follows: full assessments for vermilion and sunset rockfishes (to be assessed as a complex of the two species), Dover sole, and lingcod; data-moderate assessments for spiny dogfish, copper rockfish, quillback rockfish, and squarespot rockfish; an update assessment of sablefish; and catch-only projection updates for arrowtooth flounder, canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, and petrale sole. There will be three Stock Assessment Review (STAR) panels next year to review the full assessments with one panel for vermilion and sunset rockfishes and one panel for lingcod since there will be separate area assessments. The third STAR panel will review Dover sole and the data-moderate spiny dogfish assessment since that assessment will be more complex and in need of a more robust review process. The Council also adopted three terms of reference to guide the 2021-2022 stock assessment review process for groundfish and coastal pelagic species (CPS), the 2021-2022 methodology review process for groundfish and CPS, and groundfish rebuilding analyses. Effective 2023, the Council requested separate stock assessment terms for reference for groundfish and CPS.

The Council also adopted a list of candidate stocks for assessment in 2023 as follows (underlined stocks are stronger candidates): full assessments for petrale sole, black rockfish, sablefish, roughey rockfish, shortbelly rockfish, and redbanded rockfish; a full or update assessment for yellowtail rockfish north of 40° 10' N. lat.; full or data-moderate assessments for yellowtail rockfish south of 40° 10' N. lat., greenspotted rockfish, and flathead sole; data-moderate assessments for bank rockfish, brown rockfish, starry rockfish, longspine thornyhead, shortspine thornyhead, English sole, rex sole, treefish, olive rockfish, and speckled rockfish; and an update assessment for yelloweye rockfish. A final decision on 2023 stock assessment priorities is anticipated in June 2022.

Electronic Monitoring Program – Final Action

The Council adopted final recommendations for changes to West Coast electronic monitoring (EM) Program regulations. These include the following items:

1. Hard Drive Deadline: increase the hard drive submission deadline to 72 hours from the beginning of the offload.
2. Reusing Hard Drives: require EM data to be removed before reusing hard drives only if end-to-end encryption is not used.
3. Limit on Switching Between EM and Observers for Whiting: remove the limit on switching between observers and EM for whiting vessels.

4. Mothership/Catcher Vessel (MS/CV) Endorsement: remove the requirement for an MS/CV endorsement to use EM on mothership catcher vessel trips.
5. Logbook Processing: allow EM providers to receive and enter logbook information, rather than submitting to NMFS.
6. Reporting Deadlines for EM Service Providers: require deadlines for EM service provider reports of technical assistance, logbook data, vessel operator feedback, EM summary and data compliance reports, and other as specified elsewhere.
7. Data retention: align data retention requirements with [NMFS Procedural Directive 04-115-03](#) entitled third party minimum data retention in EM programs for federally managed U.S. fisheries.
8. Correct a reference: edit regulations to correct reference number from 660.603(a)(1) to 660.603(b)(1)(vii) for “a NMFS-accepted EM Service Plan”.
9. EM Implementation date: change the implementation date to be no earlier than January 1, 2022 in the EM Program regulations for both the electronic monitoring provider permits and responsibilities, and the vessel and first receiver responsibilities.
10. Revise definition to authorized release of EM data: revise the regulations at §660.603(n)(3) to refer to an “authorized representative of the vessel” consistent with other west coast regulations.
11. Revise definition of a conflict of interest: revise regulations at §660.603(h) for limitations on conflicts of interest for EM service providers to exclude providing other types of technical and equipment services to fishing companies.

In addition, the Council recommended that NMFS approve the continuation of the existing EM exempted fishing permits (EFPs), until the effective date of the amended regulations and to allow new entrants to join the extended EM EFPs, particularly to gain additional information on EM in the bottom trawl fishery.

The Council also recommended that NMFS, in consultation with the Council, conduct a comprehensive review of EM program guidelines and provider manual consistent with the revised proposed rule, the final data retention procedural directive, and any other relevant NMFS directives.

Inseason Adjustments – Final Action

The Council recommended the following [new trip limits](#) for limited entry fixed gear (LEFG) and open access for bocaccio rockfish south of 40° 10' N. lat.: 6,000 lbs per two months for LEFG and 4,000 lbs. per two months for open access to be implemented as soon as possible.

Coastal Pelagic Species Management

Sardine Rebuilding Plan

The Council adopted the sardine rebuilding plan range of alternatives recommended in the [CPSMT report](#), and added a five percent fixed harvest rate alternative. The Council directed the SSC CPS Subcommittee to meet in July to consider the Rebuilder tool specifications and its application for analysis of the rebuilding alternatives. The alternatives will be available for public review prior to the Council taking final action to adopt a rebuilding plan for sardine at its September 2020 meeting.

Administrative Matters

Fiscal Matters

The Council approved the 2020 Operational Budget of \$6,173,557, which includes the Marine Resource Education Program and the Council Coordinating Committee's Council Member Ongoing Development program for 2021.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COPs)

The Council elected Mr. Marc Gorelnik as the Council Chair and Mr. Brad Pettinger as the Council Vice-Chair for the August 11, 2020 through August 10, 2021 term.

The Council appointed Mr. David McGowen to the vacant Northern Charter Boat Operator position on the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel formerly held by Ms. Linda Buell.

The Council appointed Dr. Xi He to the Southwest Fisheries Science Center position on the Groundfish Management Team formerly held by Dr. Andrew Thompson and appointed Dr. Matthew Craig to the Southwest Fisheries Science Center position on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team formerly held by Mr. James Carretta. These two appointments will become effective following the September 2020 Council meeting.

The Council considered proposed COP revisions regarding groundfish exempted fishing permits and public submission of copyrighted materials to the Council. Council staff will develop review materials and schedule a two-meeting process to address these matters.

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