

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE SEPTEMBER 2005 MEETING

Highly Migratory Species Management

Bigeye Tuna Overfishing Response Update

Further consideration of a draft bigeye tuna overfishing response for public review was postponed until the November Council meeting, pending receipt of National Marine Fisheries Service recommendations.

Proposed Council Operating Procedure for Approving Exempted Fishing Permits for Highly Migratory Species

The Council adopted, for public review, draft permanent and interim protocols for reviewing exempted fishing permits (EFP) under the highly migratory species fishery management plan. Final action is scheduled for the November 2005 Council meeting in San Diego, California. If adopted at that time, the interim protocol would be applicable to EFPs submitted before April 2006 for the April 2006-March 2007 fishing year and the permanent protocol would be applicable to EFPs submitted after April 2006 for the fishing years beginning in April 2007 and thereafter.

Pacific Halibut Management

Proposed Changes to the Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations

The Council adopted for public review several proposed changes to the Area 2A Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan in Oregon and Washington waters dealing with changes in dates, areas, quota, size limit, and bag limit requirements for recreational fisheries. Detailed descriptions of the proposed changes will be posted on the Council website at www.pcouncil.org in the near future.

Pacific Halibut Bycatch Estimate for the International Pacific Halibut Commission

The Council recommended NMFS forward the report on Pacific halibut bycatch estimates in 2004 Area 2A trawl fisheries (Agenda Item D.2.a, Supplemental Attachment 1) to the International Pacific Halibut Commission for use in management of 2006 fisheries. These estimates show a significant reduction in bycatch mortality, approximately 200,000 pounds less than 2003.

Habitat

Current Habitat Issues

The Council directed the Habitat Committee to proceed with three tasks for a report at the November 2005 Council meeting: (1) preparation of a draft letter for the briefing book to the U.S. Department of Interior on essential fish habitat conservation recommendations relative to in-stream water management below the Klamath River for approval at the November Council meeting; (2) review of an off-shore development guidance document

from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, with recommendations for the Pacific Council as appropriate; and (3) hear a presentation on Klamath River salmonid micro-disease, with recommendations as appropriate.

Groundfish Management

Status of 2005 Groundfish Fisheries and Consideration of Inseason Adjustments

The Council adopted the following inseason adjustments to 2005 groundfish fisheries:

- 1) Increase the trawl RCA to 0-250 fm north of 36° N lat. and 50-250 fm south of 36° N lat. with changes in Dover sole, thornyhead, and sablefish limited entry trawl trip limits to respond to conservation concerns for petrale sole and canary rockfish;
- 2) Increase the daily trip limit fishery for limited entry fixed gear and open access sablefish fisheries north of 36° N lat. to 500 lb/day; 1,500 lb/week, and 9,000 lb/ 2 months;
- 3) Increase the widow rockfish cap in the non-tribal whiting fishery from 200 mt to 212 mt;
- 4) Allow the commercial lingcod harvest guideline to be exceeded;
- 5) Conform federal regulations to match recent state regulation changes for recreational groundfish fisheries in Washington and Oregon.

Amendment 18 (Bycatch)

The Council adopted, for public review, language for draft fishery management plan (FMP) Amendment 18 with a few changes to the draft FMP amendment text presented at this meeting. Final action is scheduled for the November Council meeting.

Amendment 19 (Essential Fish Habitat)

The Council adopted, for public review, language for draft fishery management plan (FMP) Amendment 19 with a few changes to the draft FMP amendment text presented at this meeting. Final action is scheduled for the November Council meeting.

Process and Schedule for 2007-2008 Biennial Management Specifications Adoption

The Council provided guidance on a detailed schedule and process for the 2007-2008 biennial groundfish management period. The process involves three Council meetings: (1) initial considerations at the November 2005 Council meeting; (2) adoption of final ABC and OYs, a range of management measures alternatives and if possible, a tentative preferred alternative for management measures at the April 2006 Council meeting; and (3) final action at the June 2006 Council meeting.

Rebuilding Plan Revision Policy

The Council adopted a Rebuilding Plan Revision Policy that provides for "banking" stock rebuilding gains when the stock rebuilds faster than anticipated, reducing harvest rates

when rebuilding is proceeding slower than planned, and proceeding cautiously as the stock approaches the final years of achieving the target rebuilding year. The policy is to target an 80% rebuilding probability (within the maximum allowable time), where possible.

Stock Assessments for 2007-2008

The Council approved stock assessments for:

English Sole	Starry Flounder	Gopher Rockfish
Cowcod	California Scorpionfish	Darkblotched Rockfish
Pacific Ocean Perch	Cabazon (California only)	Sablefish
Dover Sole	Shortspine Thornyhead	Longspine Thornyhead
Widow Rockfish	Bocaccio	Blackgill Rockfish
Kelp Greenling (Oregon only)	Yelloweye Rockfish	Yellowtail Rockfish

The Council approved the SSC recommendation to not use the stock assessments for vermilion rockfish and kelp greenling in California. Stock assessments for lingcod, canary rockfish, and petrale sole will be considered for approval at the November Council meeting.

Management Specifications for Spiny Dogfish and Pacific Cod for 2006

The Council adopted a range of alternative 2006 trip limits for spiny dogfish and Pacific cod for analysis and Council consideration at the November 2005 Council meeting. The range is shown in Agenda Item F.9.b, Supplemental GMT Report, and will be available on the Council website in the near future.

Salmon Management

Klamath River Fall Chinook Conservation Objective

The Council deferred action on considering an amendment to the salmon fishery management plan (FMP) to revise the conservation objective for Klamath River fall chinook until the November meeting in San Diego. The Council deferred action to allow for consideration of additional information from four areas: (1) the opportunity for Klamath Fishery Management Council to review the Salmon Technical Team (STT) analysis of stock-recruitment relationships and submit comments to the Council on possible initiation of an FMP amendment; (2) an assigned task to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) for review of the STT analysis with respect to the data sets used, the three models used, and a comparison of their utility with the current conservation objective; (3) a report from NMFS regarding any changes in federal emergency regulatory activity between 1992 and the present, and the implications of any changes to emergency flexibility to the current conservation objective; and (4) consideration of the implication of a possible *Ceratomyxa Shasta* epidemic and other pathological conditions in the Klamath basin.

Salmon Methodology Review

The Council directed the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to review the documentation for the Chinook and Coho Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM) provided by the Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW) and Ocean abundance predictor methodologies for Columbia River fall Chinook, and report their findings at the November Council meeting in San Diego.

Marine Protected Areas

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

The Council discussed potential responses to a Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary request for draft fishing regulations to be implemented under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) for the federal waters portion of the sanctuary. The Council adopted three alternatives for public review, including (1) no proposed regulations under the NMSA; (2) regulations reflecting closures adopted by the Council at the June 2005 meeting to protect groundfish essential fish habitat under the MSA; and (3) regulations reflecting larger marine protected areas than alternative (2) above. The range of options will be included in the November 2005 briefing book for public review and final Council action at the November 2005 meeting.

Administrative Matters

Legislative Matters

The Council discussed a discussion draft bill for the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) distributed by staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Due to time constraints, the Council focused only on important omissions in the draft bill, including clarification of fishery management authority under the MSA and the NMSA, removal of the 10 year time frame for rebuilding overfished species, and use of data collected through a vessel monitoring system. At the request of Oregon Senator Gordon Smith, the Council reviewed Senate Bill. 1549, the Cooperative Hake Improvement and Conservation Act of 2005. The Council reaffirmed opposition to any Congressional action that could pre-empt the Council's consideration of alternatives of an individual fishing quota program, which is currently underway, but also made specific recommendations on improving bill language establishing a rationalized shore-based Pacific whiting program.

Appointments to Advisory Bodies, Standing Committees, and Other Forums

The Council made the following appointments to advisory bodies:

- Dr. Stephen Stohs to replace Dr. Sam Herrick on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team as a representative of NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center.

- Ms. Heather Munro Mann to the vacancy on the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) representing the processor sector.
- Ms. Heather Munro Mann to the vacancy for a non-voting advisor to the Groundfish Allocation Committee (GAP) representing the processor sector.
- Mr. Neil Guglielmo to the vacancy on the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) representing the California commercial fishery sector.
- Mr. Calvin Frank to the vacancy on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) representing Washington coast tribal fishermen.

The Council announced the following appointments to standing and ad hoc committees:

- Mr. Rod Moore to replace Mr. Ralph Brown on the Legislative Committee.
- Mr. Donald Hansen as a new member on the Legislative Committee.
- Ms. Marija Vojkovich to replace Mr. Ralph Brown on the Groundfish Strategic Plan Implementation Oversight Committee.
- Ms. Diane Pleschner-Steele to replace Mr. Orlando Amoroso on the Marine Protected Areas Committee (non-voting advisor).
- Mr. Brian Corrigan to replace LT Gregg Casad and Mr. Tony Warrenton to replace Ms. Nancy Foley on the Trawl Individual Quota Enforcement Group.
- Mr. Donald Hansen as a new member on the Coastal Pelagic Species Tribal Allocation Committee.
- Mr. Brian Corrigan to replace LT Gregg Casad and Ms. Heather Munro Mann to replace Mr. Rod Moore on the Vessel Monitoring System Committee.

The Council proposed modifying Council Operating Procedure (COP) 7 to include the non-voting advisors to the Groundfish Allocation Committee (GAC) as formal members of the GAC. Further, the Council will consider a new advisory seat for the GAC to represent the whiting fishery sector in addition to the current six non-voting advisors on the GAC. The Council will solicit nominations for the vacancy to be filled at the November 2005 Council meeting in San Diego, contingent on approval of the proposed changes to COP 7.

Recruitment will continue for the vacant the conservation representative and processor representative on the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel.

Draft November 2005 Council Meeting Agenda

The Council adopted the draft agenda for the November 2005 Council meeting to be held October 30-November 4, 2005 in San Diego, California. The draft agenda will be available on the Council website, www.pcouncil.org, during the month of October 2005.

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