

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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FINAL
ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
June 4-7, 2012
Kodiak, Alaska

The following (21) members were present for all or part of the meetings:

Kurt Cochran	Jeff Favour	Matt Moir
Craig Cross	Becca Robbins Gisclair	Theresa Peterson
John Crowley	Jan Jacobs	Ed Poulsen
Julianne Curry	Alexus Kwachka	Neil Rodriguez
Jerry Downing	Craig Lowenberg	Lori Swanson
Tom Enlow	Chuck McCallum	Anne Vanderhoeven
Tim Evers	Andy Mezirow	Ernie Weiss

Minutes of the March 2012 meeting were approved.

C-1(a) Halibut Workshop Report

The AP heard a report on the NPFMC/IPHC Halibut Workshop held in April 2012 from Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC) and Gregg Williams (IPHC).

C-1 (b) GOA Halibut PSC

The AP recommends the Council take final action to reduce halibut PSC limits in the GOA groundfish fisheries.

Preferred Alternative. Amend the GOA Groundfish FMP to remove setting GOA halibut PSC limits from the annual groundfish harvest specifications process. GOA halibut PSC limits would be established (and amended) in federal regulation.

Option 2. Revise the existing 2,000 mt trawl and 300 mt hook and line halibut PSC limits and write them into regulation

Suboption 1. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for hook and line gear CP sector by:
c) 15%

Suboption 2. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for hook and line gear CV sector by:
c) 15%

Suboption 3. Reduce the halibut PSC limit for trawl gear sector by:
c) 15% (267 MT)

All reductions are reflected in Table 1, Part 3 of the supplemental, option 3 – 15% reduction. Reductions are applied to the sideboard limits as reflected in Tables 2, 3 and 4, in Part 3 of the supplemental, option 3 – 15% reduction (see Attachment).

Suboption 3.1.

- a) Applied as percentage against the GOA halibut PSC limit

Suboption 3.2

Allow the Amendment 80 sector to roll unused halibut PSC from one season to the subsequent season (similar to the non-Amendment 80 sectors).

Suboption 3.3

Allow available trawl halibut PSC in the second season deep water and shallow water complexes to be aggregated and made available for use in either complex from May 15th through June 30th. Halibut PSC sideboards for the Amendment 80 and AFA sectors would continue to be defined as deep water and shallow water complex in the second season.

The halibut PSC used during that period will be deducted from where the PSC limit was originally designated for use. NMFS will accomplish this by re-specifying halibut between the deep and shallow complex halibut complexes after the fishery is complete to capture actual use.

Note: Any unused PSC will be rolled over to the fisheries where it was initially assigned.

PSC limit for HAL demersal shelf rockfish in SE Outside District: status quo of 10 mt.

Motion passed 12-9.

Minority Report on C-1(b), GOA Halibut PSC: *A minority of the AP opposed cutting PSC levels in the GOA by 15%, for the following reasons:*

The proposed PSC reduction is allocative and responsive to political concerns, not scientifically based, and does nothing to address wastage in the directed halibut fishery. Reduced size at age, the cause of decline is exploitable biomass, is not remedied by bycatch reduction. Reducing target catch of competing species may exacerbate the problem. Age 8+ total biomass and abundance coastwide is high, with strong year classes anticipated in the next several years. If this is an equity issue, PSC levels should be restored as Ebio increases.

Both hook and line CP and all trawl sectors have already experienced significant reductions in PSC caps (1995 longline split; cod sector split; rockfish program off-the-top and rollover reductions). The HAL CP fleet has developed a voluntary coop with internal and external review, 100% observer coverage, careful release, and other measures to minimize bycatch. The diversity between trawl sectors (WGOA, CGOA, CP and CV) precludes that option for trawlers, and realistic reductions under a race for fish have already been implemented. The community of Kodiak and the Nation as a whole will be significantly harmed by reduced bottom trawl deliveries and lost processing jobs under a 15% cap reduction. Rationalization of the fishery will provide tools for more significant PSC reductions, as demonstrated in other programs, and will result in increased observer coverage and possible further increases in PSC limits. The revised observer program will provide much better data on actual catch, bycatch and wastage.

Signed by: Kurt Cochran, Craig Cross, Jerry Downing, Tom Enlow, Jan Jacobs, Matt Moir, Neil Rodriguez, Lori Swanson, Anne Vanderhoeven

C-1 (c) GOA Comprehensive Halibut Bycatch Amendments

The AP recommends that the Council schedule a specific agenda item for the October meeting that begins the process of developing a catch share program for bycatch tools and reductions for the Central Gulf of Alaska trawl groundfish fishery. The Council should develop a purpose and need statement with goals and objectives for a new fishery management system at that time. *Motion passed 20 -1.*

C-1 (d) BSAI Halibut PSC Limits

The AP heard a report on the discussion paper from Marcus Hartley with Northern Economics.

C-2 BSAI HAPC Skate Egg Sites

The AP recommends that the Council release the document for public review. *Motion passed 21-0.*

C-3 (a) BSAI Crab Plan Team Report: Set Catch Specifications for 4 stocks

The AP recommends that the Council approve the BSAI Crab SAFE document. *Motion passed 19-0.*

The AP acknowledges the work the Crab Plan Team has done revising the PSC alternatives and looks forward to revising alternatives for crab PSC in the future. *Motion passed 20-0.*

C-3 (b) Pribilof BKC Rebuilding Plan

The AP recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 2b (Preferred Alternative) for final action. In addition, the AP recommends the following changes to the problem statement:

*The Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock remains overfished and the current rebuilding plan has not achieved adequate progress to rebuild the stock by 2014. In order to comply with provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) an amended rebuilding plan must be implemented prior to the start of the 2011/2012 fishing season. The directed blue king crab fishery has been closed since 1999 and action has been taken to limit bycatch mortality in other crab **and groundfish** fisheries occurring near the Pribilof Islands; ~~however no similar action has been taken for groundfish fisheries.~~ **Additional action to reduce bycatch in groundfish fisheries may be necessary.** Recent trends in crab bycatch suggest that groundfish fisheries occurring near the Pribilof Islands have the potential to exceed the annual overfishing level and acceptable biological catch for this stock.*

This action is necessary to facilitate compliance with requirements of the MSA to end and prevent overfishing, rebuild overfished stocks and achieve optimum yield.

Motion passed 18/2.

The AP notes that PIBKC stock boundaries are currently being re-evaluated. Prior to any further action, the AP recommends to the Council:

1. Work be done with NMFS to develop workable means of whole-hauling for PIBKC on trawl vessels participating in fisheries included in any future management actions.
2. Work be done to resolve bycatch extrapolation problems with observer data in fisheries with lower levels of observer coverage (pot, hook and line).

3. Work on genetic and crab movement research for PIBKC to evaluate remaining questions of determining if PIBKC bycatch is comprised of PIBKC, SMBKC or other stocks.
4. Improvements to weight to numbers conversions where average weight is used in lieu of actual weights or numbers.
5. Information be incorporated on seasonal movement and availability of groundfish stocks including effects of ice edge position on assumptions in the model used to look at economic effects of potential closures.
6. Consideration of 100% observer coverage on vessels fishing within the PIBKC stock boundaries.

Motion carried 19/0.

C-5 (a) Freezer Longline GOA cod sideboards

The AP requests that the Council develop a problem statement that includes the following:

- A description of the vessels eliminated from the GOA Pacific Cod fishery at sector split under the recalculated sideboards and the negative impacts that will occur to the crew and operators of these vessels if the current sideboard for these vessels is permanent.
- A description of the effects of narrowing of the sideboard limit under Amendment 83 from a non-gear specific sideboard to a sector specific sideboard and the significantly reduced sideboard limits for those sideboarded freezer longline vessels active in the GOA Pacific cod fishery prior to sector split.

The AP further requests that the Council develop a suite of alternatives that includes the following:

Alternative 1: No Action. Under this alternative, the current Freezer Longline GOA Pacific cod sideboards would continue to apply.

Alternative 2: Removal of Freezer Longline GOA Pacific Cod Sideboards.

Motion passed 18-1.

C-5 (b) Freezer Longline Vessel Replacement (MLOA adjustment)

The AP recommends that the Council release the document for public review with modifications to the options under Alternative 3 provided below:

Alternative 3: The MLOA requirements on LLP licenses with catch processor and hook-and-line Pacific cod endorsements for the BS or AI would not apply and the Council recommends that vessels named on these LLP licenses be authorized for use in the EEZ under the jurisdiction of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, which is intended to clarify that these vessels are eligible to receive a certificate of documentation consistent with 46 U.S.C. 12102(c) and MARAD regulations at 46 C.F.R. 356.47.

Option 3.1 - Any vessel replaced under this program would not be eligible to be designated on an FFP or an LLP.

Option 3.2 - Replaced vessels may not be used to replace other BSAI hook and line catcher processor vessels.

~~Option 3.3: Any replaced vessel may not exceed 220' LOA.~~

Option 3.3 - The MLOA on LLP licenses with catcher processor and hook-and-line Pacific cod endorsements for the BS or AI would be modified to 220' MLOA.

~~Option 3.4: The MLOA requirements on LLP licenses with catcher processor and pot cod endorsements would continue to apply when the LLP is used in BS or AI fishery pot cod fishery.~~
Option 3.4 - Owners of LLP licenses with catcher processor and pot cod endorsements will have 36 months from the implementation of this action to either surrender the pot cod endorsements and receive a LLP license at 220' LOA or the current LLP length restriction would continue to apply.

Further, the AP recommends the Council adopt Alternative 3 with revised Options 3.3 and 3.4 as a Preliminary Preferred Alternative.

Motion passed 19-1.

D-1 (a) Limiting gear on jig vessels

The AP recommends that the Council take no action on this item at this time. *Motion passed 19-0.*

D-1 (b) Gear Specifications for BSAI Greenland Turbot TAC

The AP recommends that the Council move forward an analysis that would consider establishment of gear allocations for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Greenland turbot fishery.

The AP requests that the Council develop a problem statement that includes the following:

- A description of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Greenland Turbot fisheries limited access derby-style management and the current competition among the trawl and fixed gear sectors.
- A description of the participants in the fisheries who have made long-term investments and are dependent on the fisheries and uncertainty as a result of the competition for catch shares among sectors.
- A description of changes in fishing practices resulting from Amendment 80, Amendment 85, formation of the Freezer Longline Coalition, and Steller sea lion protection measures.

The AP requests that the Council develop a suite of alternatives that includes the following:

Alternative 1: Status quo. Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Greenland Turbot TAC will continue to be allocated without gear specific split.

Alternative 2: Gear specific fixed gear / trawl gear Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Greenland Turbot TAC split.

Option 1 - Roll over provisions: Any portion of Bering Sea or Aleutian Island Greenland Turbot TAC determined by NMFS to remain unharvested by the trawl or fixed gear sectors during the remainder of the fishery year will become available as soon as practicable to the other sector.

Motion passed 18-2 with 1 abstention.

D-1 (c) BSAI Flatfish Specification Flexibility

The AP recommends initiating analysis of an option to allow Amendment 80 cooperatives and CDQ groups to access yellowfin sole, rock sole, and flathead sole in excess of their respective TACs in exchange for an equal quota amount for any of these three species. This option should ensure that individual species ABCs are not exceeded, and aggregate adjusted TACs do not exceed the 2 million mt

BSAI optimum yield. If potential negative effects are identified, the analysis should suggest options for mitigating these effects. The analysis should include:

Option 1 - Yellowfin sole could be used to fund rock sole/flathead but those species could not be used to fund yellowfin sole (one-way valve).

Option 2 - Limit the amount of rock sole/flathead sole that could be used to fund yellowfin sole.

Transfers between species within the Amendment 80 sector should be able to go back and forth between categories; i.e., a transfer from one species would not preclude transferring back to that species at a later date.

Motion passed 20/1.

D-1 (d) Grenadiers

The AP recommends the Council task the Non-target Species Committee to review the discussion paper to provide recommendations for future action, and report back to the Council at the October meeting.

Motion passed 19-0.

D-1 (e) 5-Year Research Priorities

The AP recommends the Council consider the list of research priorities from the recent IPHC/Council Halibut Workshop as priorities for this 5-year research plan. The AP also recommends that the Council add genetic and crab movement research for Blue King crab to evaluate remaining questions of determining if BKC bycatch is comprised of Pribilof Island BKC, St Matthews BKC, or other stocks.

Motion passed 19-0.

D-1 (f) Programmatic Groundfish SEIS

The AP recommends the Council evaluate the need for a revised PSEIS through a supplemental information report (SIR).

Motion passed 20-0.

D-2 Staff Tasking

The AP recommends the Council take no action on the letter from the Alaska Charter Association if it results in any delay in analysis and approval of the CSP in October.

Motion passed 20-0.

The AP recommends that the Council initiate a discussion paper to remove restrictions on CQE communities buying small blocks of IFQ at least and especially from CQE residents.

Motion passed 19-0.

	Total allowance**	<u>1st season</u> January 20 to April 1	<u>2nd season</u> April 1 to July 1	<u>3rd season*</u> July 1 to September 1	<u>4th season</u> September 1 to October 1	<u>5th season</u> October 1 through December 31
<u>Total Allowance</u>						
seasonal share		27.5 percent	20 percent	30 percent	7.5 percent	15 percent
Total Allowance (15% reduction)	1,705	469	341	512	128	256
<u>Deep-water complex</u>						
seasonal share		12.5 percent	37.5 percent	50 percent*	0 percent	NA
Option 3 - 15% reduction	682	85	256	150 or (341)	0	
<u>Shallow-water complex</u>						
seasonal share		50 percent	11.1 percent	22.2 percent	16.7 percent	NA
Option 3 - 15% reduction	767	384	85	170	128	
<u>Undesignated</u>						
seasonal share						100 percent
Option 3 - 15% reduction	256					256

All values are metric tons, except where noted as percentages.

* Number in bracket is total allocation plus 191.4 metric ton rockfish program halibut PSC allocation.

** The current 2,000 MT limit is reduced by the 27.4 MT Rockfish Program halibut PSC reduction.

^ PSC available: 15% reduction (1,705 MT)

Maintaining current percentages

A80 sideboards

all amounts are tonnages

	Total sideboard	<u>1st season</u> January 20 to April 1	<u>2nd season</u> April 1 to July 1	<u>3rd season</u> July 1 to September 1	<u>4th season</u> September 1 to October 1	<u>5th season</u> October 1 through
<u>Deep-water complex</u>						
Option 3 - 15% reduction	350	19	180	87	2	62
<u>Shallow-water complex</u>						
Option 3 - 15% reduction	114	8	32	24	12	38

All values are metric tons, except where noted as percentages.

* Note: excludes rockfish program halibut PSC allowance and usage.

Rockfish Sideboards

	<u>July sideboard tonnage</u>
<u>Deep-water complex</u>	
Option 3 - 15% reduction	42
<u>Shallow-water complex</u>	
Option 3 - 15% reduction	2

* Excludes rockfish program halibut PSC allowance and deduction.

AFA non-exempt catcher vessels

	<u>Total sideboard</u>	<u>1st season January 20 to April 1</u>	<u>2nd season April 1 to July 1</u>	<u>3rd season July 1 to September 1</u>	<u>4th season September 1 to October 1</u>	<u>5th season October 1 through December 31</u>
<u>Deep-water complex</u>						
Option 3 - 15% reduction	47	6	18	24	0	NA
<u>Shallow-water complex</u>						
Option 3 - 15% reduction	257	128	28	57	43	NA
<u>Undesignated</u>						
Option 3 - 15% reduction	52					52

All values are metric tons, except where noted as percentages.