

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

News and Notes



Stephanie Madsen, Chair
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

605 West 4th Avenue, Ste 306
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252
Phone (907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817

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Call for Nominations

Terms for members of the Council's **Advisory Panel (AP)** and **Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)** expire in December. The SSC advises the Council on scientific and other technical matters relating to issues before the Council. The AP is composed of representatives of the fishing industry and others interested in managing our fisheries, and provides advice from those perspectives. Included as an attachment to this newsletter is the Council's new Advisory Panel Policy, outlining the intent and purpose of the Panel. Members of these panels are expected to attend up to five meetings, three to five days in length, each year. Both the SSC and AP serve one-year terms and are eligible for reappointment each year.

Letters of interest or nomination, along with a resume of experience, for persons wishing to be considered for any of these panels, should be sent to the NPFMC, 605 W. 4th Avenue, #306, Anchorage, AK 99501, by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 12. Appointments will be announced at the end of the next Council meeting the week of December 6th at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage and will become effective in January 2005. For more information, contact the Council office.

The North Pacific Research Board is also soliciting nominations for a seat on its board. The call for nominations for that 3 year term is included in this newsletter as an attachment. For more information, contact Clarence Pautzke at the NPRB, 907-644-6700.

Council Additions

Mr. Doug Hoedel was recently appointed and sworn in as a voting member on the Council. Doug has been fishing commercially, based out of Kodiak, and operating in various capacities in the industry for the past 38 years, covering all gear types and species in Alaska. Welcome aboard, Doug!

Chair and Vice Chair re-elected

The Council unanimously re-elected Stephanie Madsen to her second year as Council Chair, and Dennis Austin to his fifth year as Vice Chair. Both are long-time Council participants, and we welcome them again in their leadership roles.

Improved Retention/ Improved Utilization

At this meeting, the Council made major modifications to the scope of Amendment 80. The intent of the Council's action was to streamline the proposed action back to its original intent, to provide the non-AFA trawl catcher processor sector with a tool to meet Amendment 79 groundfish retention standard.

Primary among the Council's modifications is the removal of Pacific cod allocations from Amendment 80. Nevertheless, the Council reaffirmed that sector allocations of Pacific cod are an important issue, and they plan to initiate an analysis of Pacific cod allocations at the December Council meeting, where they will develop a problem statement and begin drafting elements and options.

Other modifications to Amendment 80 include limiting allocations of species to the following primary target fisheries: yellowfin sole, rock sole, flathead sole, Atka mackerel, Aleutian Islands Pacific Ocean perch, Alaska plaice, and arrowtooth flounder. The Council also limited allocations of these target fisheries to only the non-AFA trawl catcher processor sector; the remaining unallocated portion of TAC will be available for the open access fishery for all other participants with the appropriate LLP endorsements. The Council also removed the option of an underutilized species threshold fishery, and instead addressed the concept by adding four new allocation options. Finally, since the focus of Amendment 80 has shifted back to the non-AFA trawl catcher processor sector, eligibility criteria for all other sectors are no longer required and have been removed from the proposed action. A complete copy of the components and options as updated through the October meeting appears on the Council website.

For the December Council meeting, staff will provide a discussion paper outlining the components and options for the revised Amendment 80, and highlighting those that need further clarification. Included in the discussion paper will also be tables of historic catch of the primary target groundfish species for all of the trawl sectors. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

CDQ Program

The Council received a report on the status of an analysis for a regulatory amendment to revise the fisheries management regulations for the groundfish CDQ fisheries. The alternatives would allow the Council to recommend changes to which CDQ reserves would be allocated among the individual CDQ groups and which would be managed at the CDQ sector (or CDQ reserve) level. These alternatives were proposed by NMFS to address a concern that the CDQ groups may be constrained in the future from fully harvesting their target species due to some very small individual allocations of non-target species.

The Council reviewed a draft analysis in June, and approved two new alternatives for analysis at that meeting: (1) allow after-the-fact CDQ transfers between CDQ groups during the year (allowing a CDQ group to cover an overage of its allocated quota); and (2) allow the CDQ groups to manage the harvest of their respective allocations of target species among themselves in a cooperative manner, pursuant to a contract that is filed with the Council, NMFS, and the State of Alaska. In October, the Council reviewed a paper that reformulated all of the alternatives using a series of issue questions, with options and suboptions, to clarify the analysis. The Council requested that NMFS move forward with the analysis as proposed, with a request to retain the option to allow after-the-fact transfers of both CDQ and PSQ. The issue paper is provided on the Council website. NMFS plans to present a revised initial draft analysis at the April 2005 Council meeting.

The Council also received an update on the issue of community eligibility in the CDQ Program. NMFS regulations include the same community eligibility criteria as found in the MSA, but the regulations also state that a community can be eligible for the CDQ Program if listed on Table 7 to 50 CFR 679. At least one community (King Salmon) does not meet the eligibility requirements for the CDQ Program, but was authorized to participate in the program in 1992 by being listed in Table 7.

In a legal opinion dated August 15, 2003, NOAA GC advised that NMFS regulations must be revised to be consistent with the MSA and that the eligibility status of all 65 communities currently participating in the program must be reviewed to ensure consistency with the MSA eligibility criteria. Upon review, the Council recommended that staff develop a draft analysis to this effect, unless an act of Congress made this review unnecessary. NMFS received a letter from Senator Lisa Murkowski (November 26, 2003) requesting that the agency refrain from further action, given that Congress would likely address the issue in 2004. While several bills (S. 2197, H.R. 3645, H.R. 3550) have been introduced to keep all of the currently participating communities eligible, at this time, none of the bills have passed.

The Council also received a brief report on questions that have arisen regarding the confidentiality status of documents submitted to NMFS by the CDQ groups. The CDQ groups typically mark different information in their CDPs as 'confidential' and there has not been an administrative decision or legal opinion to determine what constitutes confidential information. NMFS expects to receive additional requests for information that the groups consider confidential during administrative appeals of the upcoming 2006–2008 allocation process, and has thus requested that NOAA GC provide guidance both on how to address new information requests and whether a regulatory amendment is necessary to resolve the issue. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

GOA Rockfish

At its October 2004 meeting, the Council finalized the alternatives for analysis that would establish a demonstration program to rationalize the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) rockfish fishery. The demonstration program is being developed in consultation with NOAA Fisheries, who was directed by Congressional legislation to establish a pilot rationalization program for the CGOA rockfish fishery.

The Council elected to remove the non-trawl catcher vessels from the primary program because that sector has very little historic participation in the rockfish fisheries. Non-trawl catcher vessels are included in the entry level program that will be allocated up to 5% of the TAC under the proposed alternatives.

The Council also adopted sideboards that would limit the ability of participants in the primary program from increasing participation in other fisheries to the detriment of current participants in those fisheries. The provisions adopted for analysis are separated into three categories: intersectoral restrictions, catcher processor restrictions, and catcher vessel restrictions. The intersectoral restrictions will limit qualified vessels in each sector (in the aggregate) to their historic portion of the TAC during the month of July in fisheries that are typically closed by TAC in the Gulf of Alaska. For flatfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska that are closed by halibut bycatch, qualified vessels in each sector would be limited, in the aggregate, in the month of July to the historic average halibut mortality.

Participants in the catcher processor sector would also be limited by a stand down provision. Under this sideboard, CGOA rockfish fishing would begin in July, as under the current regulations. Participating catcher processors would be precluded from entering other fisheries until the earlier of 2 weeks, or the time at which 90% of the vessel's allocation is caught. A participant could opt out of the catcher processor sector, forfeiting its rockfish allocation, to avoid this stand down, but would continue to be limited by the intersectoral sideboards.

Catcher vessel participants would be prohibited from participating in directed fisheries for yellowfin sole, other flatfish, and Pacific Ocean perch fisheries in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) in the month of July. In addition, these participants would be limited, in aggregate, to their historic average total catch in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery in July. AFA catcher vessels, which are bound by sideboards of that program, would not be subject to additional sideboards under this program.

A complete copy of the alternatives, elements, and options as updated through the October meeting appears on the Council website.

GOA Groundfish Rationalization

The Council received discussion papers from staff concerning the alternatives for rationalization of the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries. The first discussion paper briefly summarized the alternatives and described a process by which the Council could simplify the alternatives for analysis. The second discussion paper summarized the community provisions in the Council alternatives and requested that the Council clarify the purpose of the programs in order to focus the development of the elements and options. The third discussion paper reviewed several issues in the Council motion, requesting clarification and suggesting that the Council could decide several issues on a policy basis in order to simplify the alternatives. Based on the discussion papers and public testimony, the Council continued the process of refining its rationalization alternatives.

To simplify the process of defining rationalization programs, the Council elected to separate the preliminary analyses of provisions intended to benefit Gulf communities (with the exception of the regionalization of harvest allocations and processing licenses).

Regarding the specific community provisions proposed for analysis, the Council approved a revised purpose statement for both the Community Fisheries Quota (CFQ) Program and the Community Purchase Program that focused on mitigating adverse economic impacts of rationalization on the smallest (populations of less than 1,500), isolated Gulf coastal communities with a historical dependence on groundfish. The Council made revisions to the community eligibility criteria to be consistent with the stated purpose, and also added options to expand the range of choices for an administrative entity to receive and hold the Gulf quota on behalf of the eligible communities. In addition, the Council eliminated the Community Incentive Fisheries Trust (CIFT) Program for further analysis, noting that the proposed program did not address the concerns of individual, small fishing communities and sustained participation in the Gulf groundfish fisheries by community residents. ***The Council is soliciting nominations for a new committee to focus on further development of the structure of the CFQ Program and Community Purchase Program under Gulf rationalization. Nominations are due to the Council office by November 3rd.***

The Council also took action on several specific provisions to simplify the alternatives. Under Alternatives 2A (IFQs with limited licenses for processors) and 2B (IFQs with processor linkages), the Council elected to apply processor landing requirement designations only to annual allocations (and not to long-term shares). To protect independent harvesters, processors and their affiliates would receive their entire allocations as delivery restricted shares, increasing the allocation of unrestricted shares to independent harvesters. In addition, the Council elected to license processing facilities by gear type (trawl and/or non-trawl), creating separate processing licenses that would authorize the holder to accept deliveries from these different fleets.

Under Alternative 3, the Council defined species aggregations (pollock, Pacific cod, rockfish, flatfish, and other species) that would be used for establishing cooperative/harvester associations,

ownership and use caps, and catcher processor qualification. The Council also elected to use a facility basis (rather than a company basis) for determining cooperative/processor associations.

The Council also clarified its intent to base the allocations under all of the alternatives on retained catch excluding fish destined for meal production.

Under all alternatives, the Council has elected to adopt a system of periodic reviews to assess the extent to which the program is meeting its intended purpose and facilitate any amendments to address unintended negative consequences.

A complete copy of the Council's motion concerning alternatives, elements, and options for the rationalization of the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries is available at the Council's website. Staff contacts are Jane DiCosimo and Mark Fina, and Nicole Kimball for community issues.

Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

In October, the Council reviewed a draft analysis of alternatives for designating specified HAPC sites and implementing measures to provide additional habitat conservation within those areas. Three separate actions are considered in the analysis: (1) HAPC designation and conservation of seamounts; (2) HAPC designation and conservation of hard coral areas in the Gulf of Alaska; and (3) HAPC designation and conservation of hard corals areas in the Aleutian Islands.

The Council recommended releasing the document for public review, with the addition of adding a management option prohibiting bottom trawling in the 6 southeast HAPC subareas while designating the remainder as research priorities for longline gear impacts. Additionally, the Council requested that information on Canadian bottom contact fisheries in the proposed Dixon Entrance HAPC be included in the analysis.

The Council requested staff revise the HAPC proposal process (Appendix J EFH EIS) to incorporate the joint plan teams' recommendations.

Final action on the HAPC EA/RIR/IRFA and the EFH EIS is scheduled for February 2005. Full details on the Councils' previous actions on HAPC (including maps of the HAPC sites) are available on our website: www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

Halibut Issues

Halibut and Sablefish Commercial IFQ/CDQ

The Council approved the release for public review of two analyses to amend halibut and sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) and halibut Community Development Quota (CDQ) program regulations. Final action on these analyses is scheduled for December 2004.

One analysis would allow Area 4C IFQ and CDQ to be harvested in Area 4D. A second analysis contains seven proposed changes to the IFQ program: (1) allow medical transfers; (2) tighten hired skipper regulations; (3) vessel clearance requirements; (4) revise the product recovery rate for bled sablefish; (5) amend the halibut block program; (6) amend halibut quota share categories; and (7) amend fish down regulations.

The Council made minor alterations to alternatives and options, and suggested other additions and clarifications to the analysis. The revised alternatives and options for each of the actions are posted on the Council website. The analysis presented to the Council at this meeting (the Initial Review drafts) are currently accessible on the website also. Public Review drafts that incorporate revisions resulting from this meeting will be posted in early November.

The Council also requested that staff prepare a discussion paper on four additional proposals to revise the IFQ program: (1) allow non-IFQ species to be frozen onboard while directed fishing for halibut and sablefish; (2) allow category A quota shares to be fished at any time and in any sequence with category B, C, and D quota shares; (3) allow the use of pot longline gear in the Bering Sea sablefish fishery during June; and (4) institute forfeiture of never-activated IFQ permits. The IFQ Implementation Team will convene prior to the December Council meeting to review the proposals. The Council may decide in December whether to initiate analysis of some or all of these proposals. Staff contacts are Jane DiCosimo and Diana Evans.

Halibut Subsistence

The Council approved release of an analysis of six proposed changes to subsistence halibut regulations to the public. Action 1 re-addresses a preferred alternative adopted by the Council in April 2002. The proposed action would revise subsistence gear and harvest limits and add a community harvest permit (CHP) program in Kodiak, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, and revise subsistence gear and harvest limits in the Sitka Sound LAMP. An option could implement proposed Sitka LAMP limits to all of Area 2C, along with CHPs, or less restrictive measures. Another option could require mandatory retention of rockfish caught in the subsistence halibut fishery. Action 2 would add Port Tongass Village and Naukati to the list of eligible subsistence halibut communities. Action 3 would implement a possession limit equal to two daily limits to enhance enforcement in Areas 2C, 3A, and/or 3B. Action 4 would either eliminate a prohibition on the use of charter vessels for hire for harvesting subsistence halibut or revise the regulatory language to restrict the use of a charter vessel registered with the State of Alaska for the use by an owner, along with immediate family members to harvest subsistence halibut. Action 5 would revise the regulations that allow a \$400 customary trade limit for subsistence halibut to either lower the limit to \$100, eliminate the cash limit, or replace the \$400 limit but allow: (1) rural residents eligible for subsistence use of halibut to share the expenses directly related to subsistence harvest of halibut with other members of their community; and (2) allow customary trade and barter between a member of an Alaska tribe eligible to harvest halibut for subsistence use and any other member of an Alaska tribe provided the monetary exchange shall be limited to sharing expenses directly related to the subsistence harvest of halibut. Action 6 would allow the use of special permits in non-subsistence use areas by tribes whose traditional fishing grounds are located within areas designated as non-subsistence use areas. Final action is scheduled for December 2004. The Council motion is posted on the Council website. Contact Jane DiCosimo for more information.

NPFMC Tentative Meeting Dates for 2004-2007

	February Week of/Location	April Week of/Location	June Week of/Location	October Week of/Location	December Week of/Location
2004		Mar 29/Anchorage	7/Portland	4/Sitka	6/Anchorage
2005	7/Seattle	4/Anchorage	Wed, June 1 st / Girdwood*	3/Anchorage	5/Anchorage
2006	6/Seattle	3/Anchorage	5/Kodiak*	2/Dutch Harbor	4/Anchorage
2007	5/Portland*	2/Anchorage	4/Sitka*	1/Anchorage	3/Anchorage

*Meeting dates subject to change depending on availability of meeting space. Any changes will be published in the Council's newsletter.

Scallop Management

The Council took final action on the EA/RIR/IRFA for Amendment 10 to the Scallop FMP to modify the existing license limitation program (LLP). The current LLP contains a gear restriction endorsement on 2 of the 9 LLP licenses. This restriction limits those two licenses to the use of a single six foot dredge when fishing in federal waters outside of Cook Inlet. The remaining 7 licenses are authorized to fish with a maximum of two 15-ft dredges in federal waters outside of Cook Inlet. The Council selected Alternative 3 as their preferred alternative. This alternative modifies the current gear restriction endorsement on two licenses to allow them to fish in federal waters outside of Cook Inlet with a maximum of two-ten foot dredges (or two dredges with a combined width of no more than 20 feet). The Scallop FMP is also being updated to better reflect current biology and management of the scallop stocks. Final action on the Scallop FMP update is scheduled for the December 2004 meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Crab Management

The Council reviewed and approved the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands king and Tanner crabs. The SAFE report summarizes the current biological and economic status of fisheries, guideline harvest levels (GHLs), and analytical information used for management decisions or changes in harvest strategies. Of the six annually surveyed stocks, four are below their minimum stocks size threshold (MSST). These stocks, which are all currently under federally approved rebuilding plans, are Pribilof Islands blue king crab, Saint Matthew blue king crab, EBS Tanner crab, and EBS snow crab. Of the two remaining surveyed stocks, biomass of Bristol Bay red king crab is well above the approved harvest threshold and thus is open for a directed fishery. Although at apparently high abundance levels, the Pribilof Islands red king crab stock remains closed due to imprecision of estimates and concerns about potential bycatch of blue king crab. For the remaining crab stocks with no annual survey, only the Aleutian Islands red king crab (Petrel Bank) and Aleutian Islands golden king crab were open to a directed fishery in 2003/04. Copies of the SAFE report may be obtained through the Council office, or on-line at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc>.

The Council was notified of progress by the Inter-Agency working group on the analysis of revisions to the crab overfishing definitions. This amendment analysis is scheduled for initial review by the Council in June 2005. The working group will provide progress reports to the SSC at every Council meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Groundfish Harvest Specifications

The Council approved preliminary and interim overfishing levels (OFLs), acceptable biological catches (ABCs) and total allowable catches (TACs) for BSAI and GOA groundfish for 2005 and 2006. This year represents the first time that specifications are being recommended for a period of up to two years, per FMP amendments 48/48 modifying the TAC-Setting Process.

For the BSAI groundfish, the Council recommended that the 2005 and 2006 OFL and ABC for Atka mackerel be rolled over from 2004 given updated information provided at the Council meeting. For all other OFLs and ABCs, the Council approved the Plan Team and SSC recommendations. The Council recommended that 2005 and 2006 TACs for BSAI groundfish be set equal to 2004 TACs for all stocks with the following exceptions: EBS pollock TAC decreased slightly from 2004 while AI pollock TAC increased given the opening in 2005 of a directed pollock fishery in the AI; TAC increased slightly from 2004 for rocksole and Pacific cod; and TAC was set equal to the projected 2005 and 2006 ABCs for Sablefish and Pacific Ocean Perch.

The Council recommended rolling over the annual and seasonal BSAI prohibited species bycatch allowances for halibut, crab and herring in the BSAI trawl and non-trawl fisheries (these PSC limits are available on the NMFS website).

For the GOA groundfish, the Council approved the Plan Teams and SSC's recommended OFLs and ABCs, and recommended that 2005 and 2006 TACs be set equal to ABCs for all stocks with the exception of Pacific cod, and area-specific apportionments of Shallow water flatfish, Flathead sole, Arrowtooth flounder, Other slope rockfish and Big and Longnose skates. The Pacific cod TAC was reduced in order to account for the guideline harvest level (GHL) in the State waters fishery. For the following species the 2005 and 2006 TACs were set equal to the 2004 TACs: Shallow water flatfish and Flathead sole (Central and Western GOA); Arrowtooth flounder (gulfwide); Other slope rockfish (EYAK/SEO); and Big and Longnose skates (CGOA).

The Council recommended rolling over the 2004 halibut PSC apportionments, annually and seasonally, for 2005 and 2006.

The initial specifications for the GOA and BSAI are included as attachments. Staff contacts are Diana Stram (GOA) and Jane DiCosimo (BSAI).

EFH

The Council received a report from the Center for Independent Experts (CIE), who reviewed the effects of fishing analysis contained in Appendix B of the EFH EIS. Overall, the CIE concluded that the model provided useful estimates on the effects of fishing on habitat. They also made a number of recommendations to improve the model and provided input on how stock biomass and other indicators should be incorporated into the evaluation of fishing on EFH.

The Council also reviewed draft comments and responses to the EFH EIS. The Council recommended that a short discussion paper be prepared to provide more details on issues relative to the conservation recommendations included as part of Appendix G (Non-Fishing Impacts to EFH).

Lastly, the Council provided direction on one of the suboptions being considered for EFH EIS Alternative 5b. Fishing Industry representatives had commended that the areas designated as open to trawling, based on the 200 mt criteria, would not encompass many of the trawled areas because the data are based on haulback positions. The Council recommended the trawl groups get together with the fishermen to provide their recommendations on boundaries for the open areas, and provide these to the Council in a letter no later than early-November. This would allow some analysis of these areas and further deliberation by the Council at the December meeting.

Protected Species Report

The Council received a comprehensive update on a number of protected species issues, including fur seal status and development of the fur seal EIS; Steller sea lions (SSL) and agency plans for future consultations relative to the groundfish fisheries; proposed listings (Categories) of fisheries under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (for which the Council expects to provide formal comment in December); development of the SSL Recovery Plan; proposed sea otter listing; northern right whale information; seabird interactions and current international efforts to reduce seabird bycatch; and a report from the Council's SSL Mitigation Committee. That report, as well as a compendium of abstracts of SSL scientific papers and reports, is available upon request from the Council offices. Council staff contact is Bill Wilson.

Aleutian Islands Pollock Fishery

At the request of NOAA Fisheries, the Council revisited its June 2004 action relative to the congressionally-authorized Aleutian Islands (AI) pollock fishery, allocated to the Aleut Corporation and the community of Adak. The Council was requested to clarify its June recommendations, to make explicit its intent with regard to the calculation of mandatory CDQ allocations, and the attendant calculation of the directed fishery allocation to the Aleut Corporation. The Council recommended separate Total Allowable Catch (TAC) levels for the Bering Sea and for the AI areas, as opposed to a combined TAC for the two areas, with a TAC of 19,000 mt for the AI fishery. Deducted from that amount is the mandatory 10% CDQ allocation (1,900 mt) and an incidental catch allowance (ICA) of 2,000 mt to cover bycatch of pollock in other AI fisheries. The Council intends to examine the ICA amount relative to the future specifications process. The result is a directed pollock fishery allocation for the Aleut Corporation of 15,100 mt, which is expected to be available for harvest in the 2005 A season fishery.

The Council also discussed proposals to adjust SSL regulatory measures in the AI, to possibly allow enhanced access to that fishery for smaller vessels, and whether the Council or its SSL Mitigation Committee should pursue further development of such proposals. After receiving a report from NOAA Fisheries, which indicated that any relaxation of management measures to allow fishing in critical habitat would result in a finding of adverse modification and jeopardy under the Endangered Species Act (and therefore formal consultation under the ESA), the Council chose not to further pursue such proposals at this time. Rather, this issue will be considered at such time as the next overall consultation for North Pacific groundfish fisheries occurs, likely a few years from now.

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Gulf of Alaska

2004 groundfish specifications and recommendations for 2005-2006 specifications (in mt)

SPECIES	OFL 2004	ABC 2004	TAC 2004	Catch 2004**	OFL 2005	ABC 2005	TAC 2005	OFL 2006	ABC 2006	TAC 2006	
Pollock	W (61)	22,930	22,930	17,531		22,930	22,930		22,930	22,930	
	C (62)	26,490	26,490	21,264		26,490	26,490		26,490	26,490	
	C (63)	14,040	14,040	11,704		14,040	14,040		14,040	14,040	
	WYAK	1,280	1,280	144		1,280	1,280		1,280	1,280	
	SubTotal	91,060	64,740	64,740	50,643	91,060	64,740	64,740	91,060	64,740	64,740
	EYAK/SEO	8,690	6,520	6,520	0	8,690	6,520	6,520	8,690	6,520	6,520
	TOTAL	99,750	71,260	71,260	50,643	99,750	71,260	71,260	99,750	71,260	71,260
Pacific Cod	W	22,610	16,957	14,937		21,204	15,903		17,406	13,054	
	C	35,800	27,116	26,027		33,573	25,432		27,560	20,877	
	E	4,400	3,960	112		4,123	3,711		3,384	3,046	
	TOTAL	102,000	62,810	48,033	41,076	78,400	58,900	45,046	63,950	48,350	36,977
Deep water flatfish ¹	W	310	310	8		310	310		310	310	
	C	2,970	2,970	614		2,970	2,970		2,970	2,970	
	WYAK	1,880	1,880	55		1,880	1,880		1,880	1,880	
	EYAK/SEO	910	910	4		910	910		910	910	
	TOTAL	8,010	6,070	6,070	681	8,010	6,070	6,070	8,010	6,070	6,070
Rex sole	W	1,680	1,680	499		1,680	1,680		1,680	1,680	
	C	7,340	7,340	927		7,340	7,340		7,340	7,340	
	WYAK	1,340	1,340	0		1,340	1,340		1,340	1,340	
	EYAK/SEO	2,290	2,290	0		2,290	2,290		2,290	2,290	
	TOTAL	16,480	12,650	12,650	1,426	16,480	12,650	12,650	16,480	12,650	12,650
Shallow water flatfish ²	W	21,580	4,500	129		21,580	4,500		21,580	4,500	
	C	27,250	13,000	2,808		27,250	13,000		27,250	13,000	
	WYAK	2,030	2,030	1		2,030	2,030		2,030	2,030	
	EYAK/SEO	1,210	1,210	0		1,210	1,210		1,210	1,210	
	TOTAL	63,840	52,070	20,740	2,938	63,840	52,070	20,740	63,840	52,070	20,740
Flathead sole	W	13,410	2,000	806		11,694	2,000		11,111	2,000	
	C	34,430	5,000	1,472		30,024	5,000		28,527	5,000	
	WYAK	3,430	3,430	0		2,992	2,992		2,842	2,842	
	EYAK/SEO	450	450	0		390	390		370	370	
	TOTAL	64,750	51,270	10,880	2,278	56,500	45,100	10,382	53,800	42,850	10,212
Arrowtooth flounder	W	23,590	8,000	2,748		26,249	8,000		27,924	8,000	
	C	151,840	25,000	11,970		168,953	25,000		179,734	25,000	
	WYAK	10,590	2,500	75		11,787	2,500		12,539	2,500	
	EYAK/SEO	8,910	2,500	33		9,911	2,500		10,543	2,500	
	TOTAL	228,130	194,930	38,000	14,826	253,900	216,900	38,000	270,050	230,740	38,000
Sablefish ⁴	W	2,930	2,930	1,914		2,411	2,411		2,237	2,237	
	C	7,300	7,300	6,874		5,892	5,892		5,468	5,468	
	WYAK	2,550	2,550	2,087		2,036	2,036		1,889	1,889	
	SEO	3,770	3,770	3,423		3,053	3,053		2,834	2,834	
	TOTAL	22,160	16,550	16,550	14,298	19,008	13,392	13,392	17,633	12,428	12,428

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Gulf of Alaska

2004 groundfish specifications and recommendations for 2005-2006 specifications (in mt)

SPECIES	OFL 2004	ABC 2004	TAC 2004	Catch 2004**	OFL 2005	ABC 2005	TAC 2005	OFL 2006	ABC 2006	TAC 2006	
Other Slope rockfish ³	W	40	40	240		40	40		40	40	
	C	300	300	522		300	300		300	300	
	WYAK		130	130	76		130	130		130	
	EYAK/SEO		3,430	200	26		3,430	200		3,430	
	TOTAL	5,150	3,900	670	864	5,150	3,900	670	5,150	3,900	670
Northern rockfish ³	W		770	770	1,052		730	730		678	
	C		4,100	4,100	3,711		3,870	3,870		3,592	
	E		na	na	na		0	0		0	
	TOTAL	5,790	4,870	4,870	4,763	5,400	4,600	4,600	5,070	4,270	4,270
	Pacific ocean perch	W	2,990	2,520	2,520	2,301	2,964	2,489	2,489	2,872	2,419
C	9,960	8,390	8,390	8,445	9,828	8,253	8,253	9,526	8,020	8,020	
WYAK		830	830	877		802	802		779	779	
SEO		1,600	1,600	0		1,556	1,556		1,512	1,512	
E(subtotal)	2,890				2,808		2,358	2,722		2,291	
TOTAL	15,840	13,340	13,340	11,623	15,600	13,100	13,100	15,120	12,730	12,730	
Shortraker/rougheye	W		254	254	262		254	254		254	
	C		656	656	325		656	656		656	
	E		408	408	362		408	408		408	
	TOTAL	2,510	1,318	1,318	949	2,510	1,318	1,318	2,510	1,318	1,318
Pelagic shelf rockfish	W		370	370	284		370	370		370	
	C		3,010	3,010	2,157		3,010	3,010		3,010	
	WYAK		210	210	199		210	210		210	
	EYAK/SEO		880	880	11		880	880		880	
	TOTAL	5,570	4,470	4,470	2,651	5,570	4,470	4,470	5,570	4,470	4,470
Thornyhead rockfish	W		410	410	274		410	410		410	
	C		1,010	1,010	399		1,010	1,010		1,010	
	E		520	520	131		520	520		520	
	TOTAL	2,590	1,940	1,940	804	2,590	1,940	1,940	2,590	1,940	1,940
Big/Longnose Skates Other Skates ⁵	C		4,435	3,284	1,421		4,435	3,284		4,435	
	GW		3,709	3,709	1,410		3,709	3,709		3,709	
	TOTAL	10,859	8,144	6,993	2,831	10,859	8,144	6,993	10,859	8,144	6,993
Demersal Rockfish	SEO	690	450	450	222	690	450	450	690	450	
Atka Mackerel	GW	6,200	600	600	798	6,200	600	600	6,200	600	
Other Species	GW			12,942	1,530	NA	NA	12,584	NA	NA	
TOTAL	660,319	506,642	271,776	155,201	650,457	514,864	264,265	647,272	514,240	253,867	

catch through October 2, 2004 (BOLD** = Catch >TAC)

1/ Deep water flatfish includes dover sole, Greenland turbot and deepsea sole.

2/ "Shallow water flatfish" includes rock sole, yellowfin sole, butter sole, starry flounder, English sole, Alaska plaice, and sand sole.

3/ The EGOA ABC of 5 mt for northern rockfish has been included in the WYAK ABC for other slope rockfish.

* Indicates rollover from previous year (no age-structured projection data available)

4/ The ABC for sablefish has been reduced by 5 % in the SEO and added to the WYK to allow for 5% of the EGOA TAC to be made available for trawl incidental catch

5/ Other skates means big and longnose skates in the W and E GOA and bathyrja sp. Gulfwide

NOTE:

ABCs and TACs are rounded to nearest mt.

GW means Gulfwide.

Catch data source: NMFS Blend Reports.

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands

2004 Council groundfish specifications and 2005-2006 Proposed and Interim specifications

Species	Area	2004				2005			2006		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch**	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock	EBS	2,740,000	2,560,000	1,492,000	1,248,817	2,909,800	2,363,000	1,474,450	2,542,900	2,087,800	1,474,000
	Aleutian Islands	52,600	39,400	1,000	1,128	52,600	39,400	19,000	52,600	39,400	19,000
	Bogoslof District	39,600	2,570	50	0	39,600	2,570	50	39,600	2,570	50
Pacific cod	BSAI	350,000	223,000	215,500	166,776	352,500	225,500	215,952	344,700	220,500	215,500
Sablefish	BS	4,020	3,000	2,900	748	3,432	2,418	2,418	3,184	2,244	2,244
	AI	4,620	3,450	3,100	912	3,960	2,790	2,790	3,674	2,589	2,589
Atka mackerel	Total	78,500	66,700	63,000	54,789	78,500	66,700	63,000	78,500	66,700	63,000
	WAI	—	24,360	20,660	17,341	—	24,360	20,660	—	24,360	20,660
	EAI/BS	—	11,240	11,240	9,616	—	11,240	11,240	—	11,240	11,240
	CAI	—	31,100	31,100	27,832	—	31,100	31,100	—	31,100	31,100
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	135,000	114,000	86,075	68,822	129,710	109,300	86,075	124,900	105,250	86,075
Rock sole	BSAI	166,000	139,000	41,000	47,875	153,290	128,370	41,450	136,240	114,060	41,000
Greenland turbot	Total	19,300	4,740	3,500	2,136	17,740	11,230	3,500	16,490	10,430	3,500
	BS	—	3,162	2,700	1,730	—	7,524	2,700	—	6,988	2,700
	AI	—	1,578	800	406	—	3,706	800	—	3,442	800
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	142,000	115,000	12,000	17,130	144,990	96,140	12,000	145,180	96,300	12,000
Flathead sole	BSAI	75,200	61,900	19,000	16,611	69,100	56,860	19,000	64,870	53,380	19,000
Alaska plaice	BSAI	258,000	203,000	10,000	7,624	254,970	159,040	10,000	255,220	159,230	10,000
Other flatfish	BSAI	18,100	13,500	3,000	4,669	18,100	13,500	3,000	18,100	13,500	3,000
Pacific ocean perch	BSAI	15,800	13,300	12,580	11,032	15,790	12,020	12,020	15,990	12,170	12,170
	BS	—	2,128	1,408	701	—	1,923	1,923	—	1,947	1,947
	AI total	—	11,172	11,172	10,331	—	10,097	10,097	—	10,223	10,223
	WAI	—	5,187	5,187	4,998	—	4,655	4,655	—	4,713	4,713
	CAI	—	2,926	2,926	2,970	—	2,655	2,655	—	2,689	2,689
	EAI	—	3,059	3,059	2,363	—	2,787	2,787	—	2,821	2,821
Northern rockfish	BSAI	8,140	6,880	5,000	4,166	7,900	6,030	5,000	7,670	5,850	5,000
Shortraker	BSAI	701	526	526	207	701	526	526	701	526	526
Rougheye	BSAI	259	195	195	189	259	195	195	259	195	195
Other rockfish	BS	1,280	960	460	304	1,280	960	460	1,280	960	460
	AI	846	634	634	309	846	634	634	846	634	634
Squid	BSAI	2,620	1,970	1,275	814	2,620	1,970	1,275	2,620	1,970	1,275
Other species	BSAI	81,150	46,810	27,205	21,795	81,150	46,810	27,205	81,150	46,810	27,205
Total		4,193,736	3,620,535	2,000,000	1,676,853	4,338,838	3,345,963	2,000,000	3,936,674	3,043,068	1,998,423



NORTH PACIFIC RESEARCH BOARD

“Building a clear understanding of the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean ecosystems that enables effective management and sustainable use of marine resources.”

Tylan Schrock, Chairman
Jim Balsiger, Vice Chairman
Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director

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Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 644-6700 Fax: 644-6780

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Secretary of Interior
Drue Pearce, USGS
Secretary of State
Stetson Tinkham, DOS
U.S. Coast Guard
Mark Gullory

Appointed Members: Alaska
Five members to be announced

Appointed Members: Washington
Three members to be announced

Appointed Member: Oregon
One member to be announced

Fishing Industry Representative
One member to be announced

North Pacific Research Board Seeks Industry Representative

The North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) was created by Congress in 1997 to recommend marine research activities to the Secretary of Commerce, supported by interest earned from the Environmental Improvement and Restoration Fund. The enabling legislation requires the funds to be used to conduct research on or relating to the fisheries or marine ecosystems in the North Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean (including any lesser related bodies of water). NPRB must strive to avoid duplicating other research and must emphasize research designed to address pressing fishery management issues or marine ecosystem information needs. NPRB's mission is to develop a comprehensive science program of the highest caliber that will provide a better understanding of the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean ecosystems and their fisheries. NPRB has drafted a science plan for National Research Council review, and has provided nearly \$12 million in funding support for 61 projects since being organized in spring of 2001.

NPRB's enabling legislation restricts it to 20 members knowledgeable by education, training, or experience regarding fisheries or marine ecosystems in the north Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, or Arctic Ocean. Ten members are *ex-officio* members representing various agencies and organizations. Nine other members are nominated by the governors of Alaska (5), Washington (3), and Oregon (1), and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to serve a 3-year term, and may be reappointed. Their first terms expired on October 1, 2004, and the nomination and appointment process is now in progress.

The 20th member is nominated by the Board itself and appointed by the Secretary for a 3-year term. That member is on the executive committee of the Board and shall represent fishing interests, according to Section 401(e)(3)(N) of the enabling legislation. That seat became vacant as of October 1, 2004, and the Board is seeking nominations from industry. Nominations and resumes may be sent by email to cpautzke@nprb.org or by mail to the Board office at the following address:

Clarence Pautzke, Ph.D.
Executive Director
North Pacific Research Board
1007 W. 3rd Avenue, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501

Nominations will be accepted until November 15, 2004. Additional information about the North Pacific Research Board and its research programs is available at www.nprb.org.

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Policy on Advisory Panel Structure and Operations

(Revised October 2004)

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council appoints an Advisory Panel of recognized experts from the fishing industry and several related fields. Recognizing that to best serve the Council the AP should represent a variety of gear types, industry and related interests as well as a spread of geographic regions of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest having major interest in the fisheries off Alaska; and Recognizing that the Council relies on the AP for comprehensive industry advice on how various fishery management alternatives will affect the industry and local economies, on potential conflicts between user groups of a given fishery resource or area, and on the extent to which the United States will utilize resources managed by the Council's fishery management plans; and Recognizing that gear conflicts and allocations will be the issue of greatest concern for the next few years - The Council approves the following with respect to its Advisory Panel's structure and operations:

Size

The AP will consist of 20 members. However, the Council will not necessarily keep all seats filled. This arrangement should allow sufficient flexibility in funding so the Council can invite as necessary other individuals with particular expertise to work with the AP on an ad hoc basis.

Qualifications

The Council will give highest priority to the following considerations when selecting AP members:

- (1) Of paramount importance is the demonstrated ability of the candidate to be objective and to consider all aspects of an issue.
- (2) The AP members should be of top quality and caliber and be committed to full and active participation for each meeting during their term.
- (3) The candidate should be considered because of the experience he/she brings to the Council rather than his/her political clout or connection.
- (4) The candidate should be an active, involved member of his/her community and business to ensure the best and most pertinent input into the Council and likewise be responsible and diligent in reporting Council decisions and concerns back to his/her community/business.
- (5) The AP membership should represent a broad geographic spread both for Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. Representation for the three states should be in the same proportions as those of the voting membership of the Council. However, recognizing that issues and priorities will change, the Council cautions that no seat is reserved for a particular area.
- (6) The AP membership should represent a variety of interests within the fishing industry and others with interests in maintaining and managing Council fisheries. While it is hoped that major gear types from the harvesting sector will be broadly represented, as with geographic representation, no particular seat is guaranteed to a gear type or fishery.

Note: It is expected that as the issues and concerns of the Council change and evolve so, too, will the profile of the membership of the AP.

Terms

AP members will serve for three-year terms beginning with the first meeting each calendar year. All members will be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Council and may be reappointed to two subsequent consecutive terms. Appointments will be staggered to provide for the appointment of 1/3 of the membership of the AP each year. Persons wishing to serve on the Advisory Panel may submit their names with a short resume to the Executive Director who will keep for the calendar year a list of candidates at the Council headquarters. Resumes and requests to serve will not be retained after the annual appointment process. The Council may use

this list of candidates in choosing Panel members to fill full-year terms or interim vacancies, but may also solicit individuals not on the list if a particular combination of experience and expertise is deemed desirable. The Council Chairman is authorized to remove members from the Panel and to fill interim vacancies on the AP subject to confirmation by the Council at the next regular meeting. Interim appointments are for the remaining unexpired term of the vacancy.

Members of the Panel serve without compensation. They may be paid their actual expenses for travel and per diem incurred in the performance of their duties during the days in which the panel is in session. The chairman, vice-chairman, or the AP member designated to report to the Council may be paid expenses for additional days when necessary and approved by the Council chair. Security clearances for Panel members are requested as necessary.

Operations

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the AP are nominated for one-year terms by the Panel from among its members and are confirmed by the Council.

The Panel meets as a whole, or in part, at the request of the Chairman of the Panel with approval of the Chairman of the Council, as often as necessary to fulfill the Panel's responsibilities, taking into consideration time and budget constraints. Panel members are expected to attend all meetings and participate fully at these meetings including voting on each issue. Poor attendance will be cause for a member being removed. Generally, acceptable absences will be the result of or involve personal emergencies or unavoidable conflicts related to the member's area of expertise.

In addition, the Panel, or members thereof will attend Council meetings at the request of the Council Chairman to advise the Council on particular fisheries problems. Panel members will also attend public hearings on Council-related activities, as requested by the Council Chairman. Expenses will be approved for any such attendance requested by the Council Chairman.

The Panel will set up such workgroups as the Chairman of the Panel and the Council deem necessary to carry out the Panel's duties. Additional members outside the Panel may be added to these workgroups as deemed appropriate by the Council Chairman.

The Council or the Council Chairman may assign the agenda topics for the Advisory Panel to discuss at its meetings. These topics will not normally include all items on the Council's agenda, but the AP may consider any topic or issue it deems important to bring to the Council's attention, time permitting. The panel members should be given sufficient advance notice of these topics to allow adequate preparation before the meeting.

The panel is expected to conduct meetings in a timely fashion with the objective of presenting AP recommendations to the Council consistent with the Council's order of business. Generally, the panel should utilize Council procedures limiting the time allowed for public testimony and questions by AP members.

The Advisory Panel Chairman or designee will be responsible for reporting the Panel's recommendations to the Council. This report should focus on the full discussion of the pros and cons of the issues in addition to the results of any vote that was taken, including minority reports which are signed by more than one member and submitted in writing. All minority reports consistent with the above standard shall be included in the AP report to the Council.

The Executive Director of the Council shall, upon request of the Chairman of the Panel, provide such staff and other support as the Council considers necessary for Panel activities, within budgetary limitations.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 9/30/04

December 6, 2004 Anchorage, Alaska	February 7, 2005 Seattle, Washington	April 4, 2005 Anchorage, Alaska
Halibut Subsistence Changes: Final Action		Bairdi Crab Amendment: Initial Review (T)
MMPA listing proposal rule Review (T)		
Review Crab Rationalization proposed rule		CDQ Management of Reserves: Initial Review (T)
IFQ Program changes: Final Action		
GOA Rockfish Demonstration: Action as necessary	GOA Rockfish Demonstration: Initial Review (T)	GOA Rockfish Demonstration: Final Action (T)
GOA Rationalization: Action as necessary	GOA Rationalization: Action as necessary	GOA Rationalization: Action as necessary
HAPC: Action as necessary EFH: Review 5B analysis	HAPC: Final Action EFH: Final Action	
Groundfish FMP Updates: Final Action		
Scallop FMP Update: Final Action		
Flatfish IRIU Amendment 80: Review Progress	Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: Initial Review (T)	Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: Final Action (T)
Observer Program: Preliminary Review	Observer Program: Initial Review (T)	Observer Program: Final Action (T)
Rockfish Management: Draft Discussion Paper	Rockfish Management: Review Discussion Paper	Rockfish Management: Determine next steps
AI Special Management Area: Review initial discussion paper	AI Special Management Area: Review Discussion paper	AI Special Management Area: Determine next steps
Non Target Species: Report from Committee		
Groundfish Specifications and SAFE: Final Action		PSEIS Priorities: Review (T)
P.cod sector allocations: Discussion/Direction	P.cod sector allocations: Review Alternatives (T)	P.cod sector allocations: Action as Necessary
BSAI salmon bycatch: Discussion/Direction	BSAI salmon bycatch: Review Alternatives (T)	BSAI salmon bycatch: Action as Necessary

TAC - Total Allowable Catch
BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
AFA - American Fisheries Act
HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
LLP - License Limitation Program
PSC - Prohibited Species Catch

MSA - Magnuson Stevens Act
GOA - Gulf of Alaska
SSL - Steller Sea Lion
VIP - Vessel Incentive Program
SEIS - Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
CDQ - Community Development Quota
IRIU - Improved Retention/Improved Utilization

SAFE - Stock assessment and fishery evaluation
VMS - Vessel Monitoring System
CV - Catcher Vessel CP- Catcher Processor
SSC - Scientific & Statistical Committee
FMP - Fishery Management Plan
DPSEIS - Draft Programmatic Groundfish SEIS
(T) Tentatively scheduled

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Miscellaneous Council Actions

During discussions under its Staff Tasking and Other Business agenda items the Council took a number of actions related to Council committees and other issues - these include: (1) initiation of a plan amendment to the crab rationalization program to divide the harvesting and processing allocations of *bairdi* crab into two areas - one east of 166W and the other west of 166W longitude. Under the proposed options, shares could be allocated based on either the area in which the harvests occurred, or divided with equal allocations in each of the newly identified east/west areas; (2) requested staff development of a problem statement relative to current fishery conditions in the chinook and chum salmon savings areas of the Bering Sea, where high bycatch of salmon has recently occurred. The Council will review this issue in December, propose alternative management measures, and likely initiate a plan amendment to address this issue; (3) revision of the Council policy on operations of its industry Advisory Panel (see attached), and approval of revised Council Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures (SOPPs); (4) appointed Mr. Nick Sagalkin (Alaska Department of Fish & Game) to the Gulf of Alaska groundfish Plan Team; and, (5) scheduled for December a review of preliminary discussion papers on rockfish management and possible designation of an Aleutian Islands Special Management Area.

Upcoming Meetings

- Groundfish Plan Teams, November 15-19, Seattle
- IFQ Implementation Committee (TBA)
- GOA Groundfish Rationalization Community Committee (TBA)
- Non-Target Species Committee, November 15 (T)
- Council Meeting, December 6-14, Anchorage Hilton