

C5(a) – Essential Fish Habitat Council Motion
April 3, 2011

Pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Council must identify essential fish habitat, the adverse impacts on that habitat, and the actions that should be considered to ensure the conservation and enhancement of that habitat for each fishery under Council authority. In 2010, the Council and NMFS conducted a thorough review of all EFH components within each of its Fishery Management Plans. From the 2010 EFH 5-year review, the Council takes the following actions below.

Problem statement:

The EFH Final Rule and each of the Council's FMPs state that a review of EFH components should be completed every 5 years and the EFH provisions should be revised or amended, as warranted, based on the best available information. The 5-year review of EFH was completed in April 2010, and synthesized in a Summary Report presented to the Council. Based on the review, the Council has determined that new habitat and life history information is available to revise many of the EFH descriptions and recommendations in the Council FMPs. Additionally, the EFH review process has proven to be an appropriate vehicle for identifying HAPC priorities, and the Council intends to consider whether periodic calls for HAPC proposals should be synchronized with future 5-year reviews.

Motion:

The Council adopts the following actions regarding EFH:

1. Amend the EFH description of the BSAI Groundfish FMP for all twenty-four groundfish species or complexes.
2. Amend the EFH description of the GOA Groundfish FMP for all twenty-four groundfish species or complexes.
3. Amend the EFH description of the BSAI King and Tanner Crab FMP for the five crab species or complexes.
4. Amend the EFH description of the Alaska Scallop FMP for the weathervane scallop.
5. Amend the EFH conservation recommendations for non-fishing activities in all Council FMPs.
6. Revise the timeline for considering HAPCs from three to five years in all Council FMPs.
7. Revise the research objectives for EFH in the five Council FMPs subject to the 2010 EFH review (excludes the Arctic FMP).

In taking this action, the Council recognizes that certain EFH components under its Salmon FMP and that an examination of the effects of fishing on spawning and breeding of Bristol Bay Red King Crab in Southern Bristol Bay under its BSAI King and Tanner Crab FMP continue to be reviewed and any resulting changes to the EFH description for these species will be initiated as separate trailing amendments.