

**EFH Final Action NPFMC February 10, 2005**  
**Council Motion**  
**(M/S Krygier/Rasmuson 1:20 pm)**  
**Passed Unanimously at 2:45 pm**

**Action 1: Describe and Identify EFH**

Adopt Alternative 3—Revised General Distribution (The Council’s Preliminary Preferred Alternative) as described on page ES-2 of the Preliminary Final EFH EIS – January 2005.

**Action 2: Adopt an Approach for Identifying HAPCs**

Adopt Alternative 3—Site based Concept (The Council’s Preliminary Preferred Alternative) as described on pages ES-4.

**Action 3: Minimize Adverse Effects of Fishing on EFH.**

Adopt a Modified 5B to expand Bottom Trawl Closures in the GOA and Aleutian Islands Management Areas to protect Sponge, Coral and other important habitat for managed species.

Bering Sea: Initiate an expanded analysis for the Bering Sea, **as well as an assessment of gear modifications** that tiers off of this EFH EIS analysis to further explore possible mitigation measures in the Bering Sea. The analysis should include the existing alternative, an alternative to leave the rolling closure area open, and options to open the “red hatched” closed area south of Nunivak Island and north of the Bogoslof area, **with other alternatives to be developed.**

Aleutian Islands: Allow bottom trawling to continue in AI areas that have supported the highest catches in the past, and prohibits bottom trawling in all other portions of the AI management region to prevent future impacts to undisturbed habitats in those areas as described in a modified Option 3, as described in the attached Figure (modified ES-12) and including six Aleutian Islands Coral Gardens (as identified in Figure ES-11). The six coral gardens are closed to all bottom ~~contact tending~~ gear. Pelagic trawls could be used outside of the designated open areas, but only in an off-bottom mode. The existing observer program will be utilized, and a vessel monitoring system (VMS) for **all fishing vessels is fishing groundfish** is required. A comprehensive plan for research and monitoring will be developed. Option 3 opens designated areas based on areas of higher effort distribution from 1990 through 2001 as modified through input from trawl fisherman and public testimony.

Gulf of Alaska: Prohibit the use of bottom trawl for all groundfish in 10 designated areas (Figure ES-7 in the Executive Summary of the January 2005 Preliminary Final EFH EIS). At the time of the Council’s five year review period, the Council will review available research information regarding the two GOA closed areas (one west [area 610] and one east [area 620] of Sanak HAPC closure to determine the efficacy of continued closure.

The Council will review these actions in five years to consider new information from on-going and future research.

## **Final Draft Motion on HAPC- February 12, 2005.**

The Council adopted the following alternatives by Action within the HAPC EA/RIR/IRFA (dated January, 2005).

### **Action 1: Seamounts**

Alternative 3: Designate 16 named seamounts in the EEZ off Alaska as HAPC, and prohibit all bottom contact fishing by Council-managed fisheries on these seamounts.

### **Action 2: GOA Corals**

Alternative 3: Designate three areas in Southeast Alaska (in the vicinity of Cape Ommaney, Fairweather grounds NW, and Fairweather grounds SW) as HAPC. Bottom contact gear would be prohibited in several subareas within the HAPC designated areas.

### **Action 3: AI Corals**

Alternative 3: Designate an area of Bowers Ridge as HAPC, and prohibit bottom contact mobile gear (BCMG) including pelagic trawls that contact the bottom, non-pelagic trawls, dredges, and troll gear that contacts the bottom (including dinglebar gear).

## **Key to maps for North Pacific Fishery Management Councils February 2005 action on EFH and HAPC.**

### Map 1- Aleutian Island region- EFH and HAPC

EFH preferred alternatives (from EFH EIS) include an area within the Aleutian Islands that would allow areas shown in green to remain open to bottom trawling (12,423 nm<sup>2</sup>), all other areas in the Aleutian Islands EEZ would be closed ( 279,114 nm<sup>2</sup>). Additional areas in red are to be closed to all bottom contact gear to protect six coral and sponge gardens (110 nm<sup>2</sup>).

Bowers Ridge HAPC designation (from HAPC EA/RIR/IRFA). Designate an area of Bowers Ridge as HAPC (5,286 nm<sup>2</sup>), and prohibit bottom contact mobile gear (BCMG) including pelagic trawls that contact the bottom, non-pelagic trawls, dredges, and troll gear that contacts the bottom (including dinglebar gear).

### Map 2- Aleutian Island region.- EFH – coral garden portion

Component of EFH preferred alternatives (from EFH EIS) that depict areas in red to be closed to all bottom contact gear to protect six coral and sponge gardens (110 nm<sup>2</sup>).

### Map 3- Gulf of Alaska-HAPC

Three areas within southeast as HAPC designation (from HAPC EA/RIR/IRFA), these areas, in the vicinity of Cape Ommaney and Fairweather grounds, total 67nm<sup>2</sup>. All Council managed bottom-contact gear (longlines, trawls, pots, dinglebar gear, etc.) will be prohibited in several subsets of these areas totaling 13.5nm<sup>2</sup>.

### Map 4- Gulf of Alaska-EFH

EFH preferred alternatives (from EFH EIS) include areas within the Gulf of Alaska that specifically prohibit the use of bottom trawl for all groundfish in 10 designated areas.

Map 5- Seamount HAPCs.

The Council action includes all 16 seamounts in the EEZ off Alaska, named on NOAA charts (Bowers, Brown, Chirikof, Marchand, Dall, Denson, Derickson, Dickins, Giacomini, Kodiak, Odessey, Patton, Quinn, Sirius, Unimak, and Welker). All bottom contact fishing by Council-managed fisheries will be prohibited on these seamounts which total 5,329 nm<sup>2</sup>.