

**North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee Meeting
April 17-19, 2007
National Marine Fisheries Service, Juneau**

Minutes

The Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee (SSLMC) convened in Juneau at the offices of the National Marine Fisheries Service on April 17-19, 2007. The SSLMC's Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring met on April 16 to develop recommendations on a procedure for scoring proposals. Their report is provided as a part of these minutes. Committee members present were: Larry Cotter (Chairman), Jerry Bongen, Julie Bonney, Sam Cotten, Ed Dersham, John Gauvin, John Henderschedt, Dan Hennen, Sue Hills, Frank Kelty, Terry Leitzell, Steve MacLean, Max Malavansky Jr, Mel Morris, and Art Nelson. Also present were Mike Turek, (ADF&G), Bill Wilson (Council staff); Doug DeMaster (NMFS AFSC); Kristin Mabry and Melanie Brown (NMFS AK Region staff); John LePore (NOAA General Counsel AKR); and several members of the public. Chairman Cotter noted that with the recent changes in composition of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF), Art Nelson has been re-appointed to the SSLMC as a member to represent CDQ group interests, and Mel Morris has been appointed to represent the BOF. The primary focus of this meeting was to develop a process for scoring proposals and their corresponding status quo with the Proposal Ranking Tool (PRT), receive presentations on the proposals from the proposers and define any additional questions on each proposal, and set a future SSLMC meeting schedule in light of recent changes in the SSL Recovery Plan and FMP consultation schedule.

Chairman Cotter reviewed the agenda (attached), the work schedule for the coming several days, and Bill Wilson reviewed the handout materials provided to each committee member. Cotter reminded the SSLMC that the next meeting, May 7-10 in Seattle, will focus on scoring the proposals and on receiving new scientific information on SSLs, killer whale predation, and other new papers recently published.

The minutes of the SSLMC's January 8-9, 2007 meeting were reviewed and approved. Wilson provided an overview of the proposed schedule for revising the SSL draft Recovery Plan and continuing the FMP consultation and preparation of a draft Biological Opinion (BiOp). As it now stands, NMFS will prepare another draft of the recovery plan by early May. NMFS will then submit the revised draft plan to the Center for Independent Experts (CIE) for peer review. After completing the final recovery plan in late 2007, NMFS will begin anew on the consultation process and develop a draft BiOp on the status quo by spring 2008. At that time the Council may wish to submit a recommended action (recommended changes in SSL protection measures) and NMFS will revise the BiOp to include the proposed action. This revised draft BiOp would be available for review by fall 2008; a final BiOp would be prepared by early 2009. With an accompanying NEPA analysis process, the completion of a final BiOp and the approval of a package of changes to SSL protection measures, if any, would be completed such that new regulations are scheduled for completion in July 2009.

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The SSLMC discussed the implications of this new schedule. Some questioned the amount of time it will take to have any new regulations in place, and how the State of Alaska may view this schedule. It was noted that the State suggested completion of the recovery plan prior to continuing with the consultation, so the State is aware of the revised schedule. Dr. DeMaster also noted that with new scientific information now available on SSL productivity, SSL predation by killer whales, SSL nutrition, and other information, NMFS believes it prudent to develop sound recovery criteria before continuing with development of a draft BiOp. Thus, reemphasizing the completion of the recovery plan is an appropriate action to take now.

Chairman Cotter noted that the SSLMC needs to continue with its work, complete the PRT, develop a procedure for ranking proposals with the PRT, and perhaps then stand down until a time in the future when the Committee may be asked to develop a recommendation for a proposed action.

Cotter also noted that the SSLMC will receive the revised draft recovery plan at its June meeting, and conduct a review of that plan. The SSLMC provides a good forum for public review and for assisting the public in understanding the revised recovery plan and the proposed recovery criteria. Some noted that the recovery plan will include new scientific information and how that information informs the agency in its development of SSL recovery criteria; this perspective will help the SSLMC as it develops any future proposed changes to SSL protection measures. DeMaster noted that, while there is little consistency in what constitutes appropriate recovery criteria for a listed species among NMFS and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the goal is to avoid jeopardy and adverse modification; the jeopardy determination is linked to the survival of a species while adverse modification is linked to the recovery of a species. These two determinations are key factors in the development of recovery criteria.

Review of Study of Direct Mortality to SSLs by Humans

Mike Turek, ADF&G, presented the results of a study conducted by ADF&G's Subsistence Division on the sources of direct mortality to SSLs from human actions. This study was supported by the Council and the North Pacific Research Board, and was designed to shed more light on mortality of SSLs in the late 20th Century to inform our understanding of the causes for the decline in this same time period. Turek summarized information on SSL mortality from commercial hunting, domestic commercial fisheries and foreign trawl fisheries, the joint venture fisheries of the 1980s, and intentional shooting. Turek noted many instances of significant mortality, but overall concluded that human-caused direct mortality was unlikely a *primary* cause of the SSL decline but it could have contributed. A draft report from this study will be out in June and a final report later this summer. Some public comment noted that some sectors of the fishing industry did not contribute to this study.

Proposal Ranking Tool Review by the SSC

Wilson reviewed the SSC minutes from their February 2007 meeting. The SSC has agreed that the PRT is ready to be used for ranking proposals, but that the SSLMC should develop a framework for the overall proposal evaluation process. The SSC also

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recommended that as the SSLMC uses the PRT, it documents how it is used and any issues that arise as it is used, and bring periodic updates to the SSC.

Report from Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring

Dr. Hennen reported on the work completed by the subcommittee (Dan Hennen, Doug DeMaster, Kristin Mabry, Sue Hills, Bill Wilson) during its meeting of April 16; Melanie Brown assisted the subcommittee. The subcommittee was tasked with developing a recommended procedure for “dissecting” a proposal into its components that can be scored using the PRT’s hierarchy. Dr. Hennen noted that the PRT contains three “arms” – and the subcommittee recommends that when scoring a proposal, these three questions will be the initial step in defining what elements of the PRT the proposal will trigger:

1. Does the proposal shift TAC or change the length of the season?
2. Does the proposal open or close areas proximate to SSL sites?
3. Does the proposal shift TAC from one fishery to another?

Dr. Hennen noted that the third arm is the least useful, as it is only used when a proposal shifts TAC from one fishery to another. John Henderschedt noted that this arm might be useful in comparing two proposals that have close scores.

Dr. Hennen walked through several proposal examples and how the subcommittee would use the PRT to score both the proposal and its status quo. Some proposals were divided into sub proposals, particularly those that may affect multiple seasons. For those proposals that offered a tradeoff action, only the proposal would be scored; the subcommittee did not offer a recommendation on how to treat a tradeoff proposal. The SSLMC needs to decide how to handle some of these situations.

NOTE: This subcommittee met again at the end of the SSLMC meeting to revisit the approach to inputting proposals to the PRT. The subcommittee added BOF proposals 6, 182, and 185 to the list of proposals to be scored. The subcommittee also reviewed the proposal presentations from the last two days, and updated the list of elements in the PRT that would be triggered by the proposed actions, and it revisited the definition of season and fishery duration. Additional updating of the procedures will be developed by the subcommittee prior to the next SSLMC meeting. It was agreed that the subcommittee will meet Monday May 7, 8:30 am to noon, to review these procedures and prepare a presentation for the full SSLMC.

Proposal Presentations

Proposers gave an overview of their proposals. This provided an opportunity for the SSLMC to ask questions and clearly understand the proposals. The following is a brief overview of main points presented or discussed for each proposal.

Proposal 3 – Paul Soper (Trident)

Proposal is to start B season for BSAI P. cod pot C/P August 15 instead of September 1 (status quo). It would be safer to fish earlier in the B season and more efficient for this fleet. Another benefit is these vessels can more quickly enter the crab fishery after completing the cod fishery. This could affect up to 8 vessels. No conflicts with other fisheries appears likely; C/P fleet fishes more to the north from the C/V pot cod fleet.

Proposal 26 – Brent Paine (UCB)

Proposal is to change current 3 seasons into 2 seasons for the BSAI C/V cod trawl fishery. The proposed split would be 89/11 for the A/B seasons, as opposed to the current 74/11/15 A/B/C seasons. The fishery in the A season is higher value, thus providing economic benefits. Also, part of the C season TAC cannot be harvested and thus is rolled to the fixed gear sector. The proposal would move all of the C season TAC into the A season.

Proposal 27 – Brent Paine (UCB)

Proposal is to change split in BSAI pollock TAC from 40/60 A/B seasons to 45/55 for both CDQ and non-CDQ fisheries. Benefits are primarily economic; value of pollock in A season is higher. An offsetting option would be to restrict the harvest of the additional 5 % to outside SSL CH. Possible effect of proposal is a shorter fishing year overall if B season is shortened because of less TAC but fleet fishes A season harder (same number of days as status quo but effort could be higher because of increased value of the TAC). Need information on value of a mt of pollock in A season versus the value of a mt of B season pollock.

Proposal 28 – Brent Paine (UCB)

Proposal is to extend the BSAI pollock B season by 1 month – end the season November 30 instead of current October 31. It is becoming more difficult to harvest B season because of long run times to the grounds; this gives the fleet more time to harvest the quota. It also could give the fleet a jump on the upcoming winter roe fishery. This could increase Chinook salmon bycatch rates as these bycatch rates tend to increase in winter – but this also could reduce chum salmon bycatch rates which tend to go down. This also could increase cod deliveries (MRA cod) into later in the year than currently occurs.

Proposal 29 – Brent Paine (UCB)

Proposal would start BSAI pollock A season fishery 5 days earlier – change start date from January 20 to January 15. Objective is to capitalize on value of roe, which is maturing earlier, thereby facilitating the harvesting of a higher proportion of high value product with larger economic returns. An option is to also close the A season 5 days earlier, retaining the overall same season length – although not necessarily retaining the same actual fishing time. It is unknown what the current view of the importance of the November 1 to January 20 period when all trawl fishing is closed as a SSL protection measure.

Proposal 1 – Paul MacGregor (APA)

Proposal is similar to Proposal 29 but asks for an earlier start date for the BSAI pollock A season fishery. Proposal would change start date from January 20 to 10-15 days earlier. Objective is to harvest a greater proportion of high value pollock roe which seems to be at peak quality early in January. Proposal includes cutting the A season shorter by the same amount of days it starts earlier. Sixty % of the value of the BSAI pollock fishery comes from the first 40% of the quota (the A season). Amendment 80 should alleviate some concerns over effects of this proposal on other fisheries.

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Proposal 2 – Paul MacGregor (APA)

Similar to Proposal 27, this proposal would change the A/B season TAC split for the Bering Sea pollock fishery. However, this proposal would framework the split such that it remains status quo (40/60) at Bering Sea pollock TACs of >1.3 million mt but reverts to 45/55 at TACs ≤ 1.3 million mt. This would help optimize the harvest of high value roe pollock when TACs are lower; the capacity of the fleet would be easier to optimize when TACs are lower and the fleet has more “time” to use a harvest strategy that allows them to harvest the maximum amounts of high value roe-bearing fish.

Proposal 9 – Jerry Bongen (UFMA)

Proposal would change the BSAI cod pot C/V ≥60' sector apportionment from the current 51/49 (under Amendment 85) to 80/20. Right now, the effect of Amendment 85 is an increase in the B season allocation but a freeze on the A season allocation. B season cod are more difficult to harvest (regime shift?).

Proposal 13 – Frank Kelty (UNFM)

Proposal would increase the cod harvest cap in the Bogoslov exemption area near Unalaska Island for the C/V longline ≤60' and jig sectors from the current 113 mt cap to an unspecified amount. Mr. Kelty recommends that 0.5% of the BSAI cod TAC be the formula for setting the exemption area amount. There is an increasing interest among local fishermen to fish in this area (less fuel, safer) and a higher cap is needed. This will affect up to 4 vessels and is a very small amount of the overall BSAI cod TAC. (At the June 2007 meeting, added to this proposal is ≤60' pot vessels as legal gear for harvest in the exemption area.)

Proposal 7 – John Gauvin (H&G Environmental Workgroup)

Proposal would shift management of the Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel Area 542 fishery from platoon to co-op management. Amendment 80 approved co-ops for this fishery. Under this proposal, these coops would take over management of the 542 fishery to retain the overall effect of platoon management: limits on amounts of fish harvested from within SSL critical habitat areas. Co-ops would limit numbers of fishing vessels allowed into subareas and thus regulate the harvest in these subareas. The proposal also eliminates the proportion of inside/outside CH harvest limits of 60/40 and replaces these limits with a 70/30 limit. It also would remove the restriction on concurrent mackerel and cod fishing inside CH west of 178 degrees. A suggestion is that the proposal include a comprehensive change in management in all areas (i.e. include 541 and 543 in the proposal).

Proposal 8 – John Gauvin (H&G Environmental Workgroup)

Proposal would adjust the trawl exclusion zone around Seguam Island area to allow Atka mackerel fishing closer to shore. Currently this rookery is closed to 20 n mi but the proposal would be to allow fishing to 10 n mi. The open area would be adjusted to retain complete closure of the Seguam foraging area. Recently, industry agreements are such that a higher TAC is apportioned to the western Aleutians and therefore some additional fishing opportunity would allow the fleet to harvest Atka mackerel more in line with available biomass distributions in the area. Also, FIT studies suggest this species tends to remain in small home ranges, and thus restricting fishing to outside 20 n mi may result in harvesting some parts of the stock heavily (those whose home ranges are only in areas

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currently fished). The implication is that opening more area would distribute the harvest effort to a larger area (areas inside 20 and outside 20) and as a consequence put lower pressure on discrete groups within the overall population. The objective is to fish proportionate to available biomass; the proposers suggest consulting with the FIT group to best devise an appropriate closed zone for Atka mackerel in this area. A trade-off is suggested – closing an area in Area 543 to compensate for the proposed open areas, but the proposers suggest working with NMFS to find an appropriate area in 543 that could be excluded from fishing for Atka mackerel and that would provide optimal benefit to SSLs (e.g. closing an area of declining SSL numbers).

Proposal 18 – Mike Alfieri (W GOA Fishermen)

Proposal would be in Area 610 affecting the cod trawl fishery. SSL measures have closed productive cod fishing areas that also have safe refuge areas nearby. Proposal is to open area around Chernabura Island, Jan 20-June 10, so that the area between Sagai Island and Bird Island is available to fishing. A piece-of-pie-shaped opening would be acceptable – in the area NW of Chernabura. An earlier ending date, say in March, would be an acceptable part of the proposal also.

Proposal 12 – Sam Cotten (AEB)

Proposal would change the Jude Island 20 n mi closure to pollock trawling to a 10 n mi closure. Objective is to allow fishing in outer Pavlov Bay. An option is to only open a piece-of-pie-shaped area that would encompass the area NW of Jude Island and outer Pavlov Bay.

Proposal 10 – Sam Cotten (AEB)

Proposal is to change the cod trawl 60/40 TAC split in Area 610 to a 100/0 split in the A season starting Jan 1, including the State parallel fishery. It is difficult to harvest the 40% in the B season because cod disaggregate and weather is poor. This proposal relates to BOF Proposal 182 as well which seeks to apportion 50% - instead of the current 25% - of the Federal ABC into State waters in the W GOA. This proposal is on hold by the BOF – will be discussed by the SSLMC later in this meeting. Reference the NMFS January 31, 2007 letter to the BOF for more insights into Proposal 182 and its effects on SSLs.

Proposal 11 – Sam Cotten (AEB)

Proposal would change the current apportionment of TAC in the Area 610 pollock trawl fishery to put more TAC into the A and B seasons when economic return will be higher. More vessels could be attracted to the fishery as a result. Options include setting trip limits or daily limits. It was noted that, currently, the area apportionments are related to projected biomass levels and TACs are set accordingly. The result of the proposal would be higher fishing rates earlier in the year and possibly an overall shortened season. Some concern was expressed if this fishery attracted vessels from other parts of the GOA.

Of the three proposals from the AEB, Mr. Cotten noted that the 60/40 split change was the primary concern.

Proposal 19 – Max Malavansky, Jr. (St. George Traditional Council)

Proposal is to enlarge the current trawl closure at Dalnoi Point on St. George Island to 20 n mi (currently it is closed 0-3 n mi). This would provide more protection for an

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increasing SSL population at this haulout. Haulout is currently used by many hundreds of SSLs, some with brands from other AI regions and Russia and some are weaning juveniles and nursing females; there have been sightings of California sea lions here also. Proposers suggest these SSLs primarily rely on pollock, as well as cod and squid, for their diet; a larger trawl closure could reduce competition for these food sources.

Proposal 21 – Chuck McCallum (Chignik Marketing Association)

Proposal would affect the current 20 n mi closure to jig and pot cod fishing at Sutwik Island. Desire to open this area to 3 n mi. This is a haulout for SSLs, but the fishery would involve only 4 vessels that fish slowly. Although not stated in the written proposal, proposers suggest limiting vessel participation to those ≤ 60 ft LOA.

Proposal 20 – Chuck McCallum (Chignik Marketing Association)

Proposal is to open to the beach jig and pot cod fishing at Spitz Island (currently closed 0-3 n mi). This SSL haulout is used by very few if any SSLs, and the suggestion is that this closure is not needed given the very low usage of the haulout.

Proposal 4 – Thorn Smith (NPLA)

Proposal is to allow H&L C/P cod fleet to harvest an A/B season split of 70/30. The current split is 60/40 but will be 51/49 when Amendment 85 starts. Cod are more valuable and easier to harvest early in the year, and this would give the fleet more efficiency and more economic value from the catch. The proposal includes a provision that the additional fishing above status quo in the A season would be restricted to outside SSL CH. Benefits include reduced seabird incidental take, reduced halibut bycatch, a higher harvest of more valuable cod, and improved safety since fishing in October can be more dangerous.

Proposal 14 – Julie Bonney (AGDB, ADA, W GOA Fishermen)

Proposal is to aggregate seasonal pollock quotas when TACs are small. Aggregate the A and B seasons or the C and D seasons into single season TACs when the individual allocations to a season are 3000 mt or less (this would create up to a 6000 mt combined A&B season TAC or a combined 6000 mt C&D TAC for the C GOA). This would create a more efficient fishery.

Proposal 15 – Julie Bonney (AGDB, ADA)

This proposal provides protection for small vessels in poor weather. Proposal is to open to trawling for pollock areas around Cape Ugat to 3 n mi (currently closed 0-10 n mi). This would provide more fishing opportunity to small trawlers in this part of Shelikof Strait when weather is poor, as they can hide in nearby bays yet still have access to pollock fishing areas near this Cape.

Proposal 16 – Julie Bonney (AGDB, ADA, W GOA Fishermen)

Proposal would change the pollock trawl C season in C GOA to open on September 1 from the current August 25. This would alleviate conflicts with the pink salmon processing activities in Kodiak. It would shorten the overall C season.

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Proposal 17 – Julie Bonney (AGDB, ADA, AEB, UFMA, W GOA Fishermen)

This is a GOA-wide proposal to change the 60/40 cod split for all gear to improve ability of all the fleets to harvest cod more effectively and efficiently. There would be less cod left in the water (from the B season) and more revenue to fishermen with less halibut bycatch. Options are for a 100/0 split or an 80/20 split of the TAC.

Proposal 22 – Dave Fraser and Sandra Moller (AEC, Adak Fisheries)

Proposal is to allow pollock trawling in AI region under the same SSL closure scheme as currently imposed on the cod fleet in the AI region. This would open up more areas to fishing yet preserve 10 n mi closures around SSL rookeries and 3 n mi closures around haulouts. Proposal includes several asserted “non-impacts” to SSLs based on data on overlap of fishing areas with SSL diving depths and foraging areas. An option is to apply changes in open/closed areas only in certain regions of the AI: Kanaga Sound, Atka Island, Rat Islands, Amutka Pass, and Shemya, with the priority areas being Kanaga and Atka. Outside the model mitigation is also suggested such as dividing the pollock TAC into three areas (541, 542, and 543), harvest caps, weekly catch limits, and other suggestions.

Proposal 24 – Dave Fraser and Sandra Moller (AEC, Adak Fisheries)

Proposal is to provide an alternative to the Atka mackerel platoon system after the Amendment 80 regulations are in place. This new system under Amendment 80 will create a limited access fleet that can fish for Atka mackerel and that will still be under platoon management. Instead of platoons, require registration for all vessels fishing in the open access fishery, set limits on number of trips per week, set a 100 mt limit per trip, and impose a lottery to choose participating vessels if more than three register. This fishery management would only apply to the inside-CH harvests in Area 542, but could include Area 541 if approved under Proposal 25 – (see below). This proposal includes some suggested options for outside the model considerations.

Proposal 25 – Dave Fraser and Sandra Moller (AEC, Adak Fisheries)

Proposal would allow non-amendment 80 C/Vs <100’ to fish for Atka mackerel inside SSL CH in a 6 n mi x 6 n mi square area west of Kasatochi Island. This would open a currently closed area 10-20 n mi around the Kasatochi rookery. About 5% of the TAC would be involved and would affect 1 haulout and 1 rookery. This would allow access to fish by smaller C/Vs and more economic return to these vessels.

Proposal 23 – Dave Fraser and Sandra Moller (AEC, Adak Fisheries)

Proposal is to devise a way to split the cod TAC between the AI region and the Bering Sea and avoid SSL concerns. This could be done with a sector split or other mechanism, but more specifics are not provided in the proposal. Basically this is a concept the Council has worked on, and has postponed into the future. The objective would be to try to find a way to do an AI/BS split without triggering a formal consultation.

Board of Fisheries Proposals

Mel Morris reported on recent BOF decisions. Proposals 182 and 185 were discussed at the recent joint BOF/Council meeting, and these were referred to the State side of the Joint Protocol Committee for further review and a recommendation. That group will

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meet soon to decide what to recommend. Ed Dersham noted that the BOF has received a new package of proposals, some of which may affect groundfish fisheries and SSLs. He suggested that the BOF might be able to sort through these and assemble a package for SSLMC review at its next meeting. There also may be implications to the SSLMC process from any action the Council may take on GOA cod sector slits. Also, the BOF could receive Agenda Change Requests in October, which could generate additional proposals for SSLMC review. Morris noted that his previous disclosures about BOF Proposal 6 no longer are relevant as he is no longer personally involved in this particular fishery (he had recused himself in previous BOF discussions of this proposal). In summary, the SSLMC agreed that BOF Proposals 6, 182 and 185 are still potentially relevant and should be scored with the PRT.

Proposal 182 – This proposal was previously presented and discussed by the SSLMC earlier in this meeting.

Proposal 185 – Sam Cotten (King Cove Advisory Committee)

Proposal is for the Federal parallel cod fishery in the W GOA. It would limit vessel participation to $\leq 58'$. This would benefit local fishermen and local communities, but could disadvantage larger vessels. It was noted that large vessel participation could help with harvest in the B season given the recent difficulties in harvesting that season's TAC because of weather and cod disaggregation.

Proposal 6 – ADF&G/BOF

This proposal is to open a State waters pollock trawl fishery in the C GOA between 159 and 160 degrees near Seward, including areas around three haulouts; at those sites closures would continue to be 0-3 n mi. One haulout could be recategorized as a rookery given the pup production noted in recent years (Chiswell). The proposal has two options for harvest amounts: 1500 mt or an unlimited quota. Several additional measures would apply as well. It would benefit local fishermen and the seafood processing plant in Seward. It could reduce TAC available to C GOA fishermen and preempt some pollock fishing in other areas. Also, Chiswell is an active SSL research site and fishing near that site could affect this ongoing research; on the other hand, fishing here could also set up an experiment on the effect of pollock trawling on SSLs.

Future SSLMC Meetings

Chairman Cotter stated that the May and June meetings will be held in Seattle. The purpose for these meetings is summarized below.

May 7-10 (8:30 am – 5:00 pm daily) - Seattle, AFSC - This meeting will be structured into two time-certain parts: May 7-8 will focus on proposal work, and May 9-10 will focus on receiving new scientific information. The Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring will meet during the morning (8:30 am to noon) of May 7 to prepare for the full SSLMC. The overall goals for this meeting are to receive an updated report from the Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring and to work through and score all proposals (the full SSLMC will input proposals to the PRT and discuss resulting scores). In this process the SSLMC will receive any additional proposal information requested previously. On May 9-10, the SSLMC will receive and discuss new scientific information. The latter will

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entail presentations from available scientists to update the SSLMC on new information collected in 2006-2007 (transient killer whale studies, FIT studies, SSL surveys, etc.).

June 19-21 (8:30 am – 5:00 pm daily) - Seattle, AFSC – This meeting will be focused on receiving a presentation on the revised draft of the SSL recovery plan. The Committee may also discuss the PRT in light of information contained in the revised recovery plan. The SSLMC will discuss what kind of report to make to the Council at its special August 1-3 meeting.

For the May 7-10 meetings, the Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring will bring its list of elements triggered by the proposals as a starting point for the full SSLMC. The subcommittee will also develop a preliminary list of outside the model considerations for each proposal, based on those elements that could affect SSLs that are not adequately evaluated by the PRT. The full SSLMC will develop additional outside the model considerations that may affect fishermen such as safety, economics, etc. The goal is to assemble a list of these considerations for each proposal to inform the process for evaluating all the proposals in the future.

PRT Weighting Factors

Chairman Cotter asked for a discussion on when to release to the public the final weighting factors contained in the PRT. The SSLMC felt that it would be better to wait until after the May meeting so that the Committee has the opportunity to become familiar with the scoring process and to input proposals itself. Also, the Committee was concerned that some proposers could “run their own proposals” or others’ proposals, setting up potentially very lengthy discussions at the May meeting which could distract the SSLMC proposal scoring process. The Committee felt there will be ample opportunity for discussion of the scoring process in May.

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned at 9:50 am.

Bill Wilson
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North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee Meeting
Regional Administrator's Conference Room
National Marine Fisheries Service
Juneau, Alaska
April 16, 2007 – Subcommittee Only
April 17-19, 2007 – Full Committee

Purpose: Proposal Scoring Subcommittee reviews and develops a process for inputting proposals to the PRT and defining *status quo* for each; SSLMC receives subcommittee report and reviews proposal input process; receive proposal presentations from proposers; discuss proposals with proposers and request additional information as needed.

AGENDA

April 16 – 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

SSLMC Subcommittee on Proposal Scoring Meets to Review/Score Proposals (Hennen, DeMaster, Mabry, Hills)

April 17 - 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

1. Introductions and Opening Remarks, Announcements, Agenda Approval (Cotter)
2. Minutes of Last Meeting (Wilson)
3. Update on SSL Recovery Plan and FMP Consultation Schedule (Wilson, Cotter)
4. State of Alaska's SSL Mortality Study Results (Turek, Krygier)
5. Review Comments on Proposal Ranking Tool from SSC's February Meeting
6. Review and Discuss Process for Proposal Input to PRT with Proposal Scoring Subcommittee (Hennen et al.)
7. Receive Presentations on Proposals from Submitters

April 18 – 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

8. Proposal Presentations (Continued)
9. Committee Work Session on Proposals

April 19 – 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

10. Committee Work Session on Proposals (Continued)
11. Identify Additional Information Needed from Proposers
12. Action Items, Closing Remarks, Adjourn (Cotter)

Public comment periods will be provided during the meeting.

Contact Bill Wilson at the Council offices if you have questions: 907-271-2809 or bill.wilson@noaa.gov