

**C-2 Salmon FMP motion
December 8, 2011**

The Council adopts the following motion and amended problem statement for final action.

Problem Statement:

Although the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's *Fishery Management Plan for the Salmon Fisheries in the EEZ off the Coast of Alaska* (Salmon FMP) has been amended nine times in the last two decades, no comprehensive consideration of management strategy or scope of coverage has occurred since 1990. State fisheries regulations and Federal and international laws affecting Alaska salmon have changed since 1990 and the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Management Act (MSA) expanded the requirements for FMPs. The Council recognizes that the Salmon FMP is vague with respect to management authority for the three directed commercial salmon fisheries that occur in the EEZ west of Cape Suckling. The Salmon FMP must be updated in order to comply with the current MSA requirements, and it should be amended to more clearly reflect the Council's desires with regard to the State of Alaska continued management authority over commercial fisheries in the West Area EEZ, the Southeast Alaska (SEAK) commercial troll fishery, and the sport fishery.

~~Updating the Salmon FMP in the West Area EEZ to include pre-season stock status determination criteria and exploitation rate based annual catch limits through the Council process as described in NS1 Guidelines would not be appropriate for Alaska salmon fisheries given the unique characteristics of salmon biology, the state's escapement based management strategy for salmon, and current state abundance based inseason management approaches which have been applied for many years and historically have sustained high yields. The same concerns would apply in establishing annual catch limits in SEAK. The distinction between the East and West Area EEZ's needs to be retained due to Pacific Salmon Treaty and Endangered Species Act issues associated with the SEAK salmon fisheries.~~

Motion:

The Council's salmon management policy is to facilitate State of Alaska salmon management in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Pacific Salmon Treaty, and all other applicable federal law. Under this policy, the Council has identified six management objectives to guide salmon management under the FMP. These six objectives, as currently laid out in the analysis and working draft FMP, accurately reflect Council intent towards achieving this policy.

To reflect this policy and objectives, the Council adopts Alternative 3 to modify the Federal Salmon FMP to specifically exclude the three historical net commercial salmon fishing areas and the sport salmon fishery from the West Area EEZ. The FMP would prohibit commercial salmon fisheries in the modified West Area and would continue to delegate management authority to the State of Alaska for the directed commercial salmon troll fishery and the sport salmon fishery in the East Area EEZ.

Under Alternative 3, the Council adopts the following FMP provisions to comply with the MSA and to ensure that all management measures will be based on the best scientific information available.

Status Determination Criteria (SDC)

The FMP maintains the current SDC for the East Area. The FMP implements State escapement goal management as an alternative approach for the West Area, recognizing that the FMP prohibits fishing in the West Area so that the State can manage the salmon fisheries in adjacent State waters and the traditional net fishing areas in EEZ waters.

Annual Catch Limits (ACLs)

Chinook salmon stocks in the East Area fall under the MSA exception to ACLs for stocks managed under an international fisheries agreement, the Pacific Salmon Treaty. For the remaining salmon stocks caught in the troll fishery in the East Area, the Council proposes using the State's scientifically-based management program, which is based on spawning escapement goals and inseason management, as an alternative approach to address the MSA's annual catch limit requirement and comply with National Standard 1.

The EA provides the rationale for this approach and its consistency with the MSA.

Optimum Yield

Optimum yield (OY) in the East Area is based on the MSY established in the SDC. OY for Chinook salmon is the portion of the all-gear catch limit allocated to troll gear. OY for remaining stocks caught in the troll fishery is the fishery's annual catch which, when combined with the catch from all other fisheries, results in a post-harvest run size equal to the MSY escapement goal for each indicator stock.

The directed harvest OY is zero in the West Area. There has been no commercial salmon harvest from the West Area in nearly 60 years, outside of the three traditional areas. This OY recognizes the lack of social or economic dependence on commercial salmon harvest from the West Area, that salmon are fully utilized by State managed fisheries, and that the State manages fisheries based on the best available information using the State's escapement goal management system.

Peer Review Process

The FMP establishes the State's peer review process as the Council's peer review process for purposes of developing fishing level recommendations and providing the Council with scientific information on the salmon fisheries under the FMP.

Fishery Impact Statement and State Management Compliance with the MSA and FMP

The Council has reviewed all the information provided by the State in the Fishery Impact Statement regarding its salmon fisheries and bycatch management measures and finds that the Fishery Impact Statement addresses the MSA information requirements and that the State bycatch measures meet MSA requirements and the FMP's management objectives.

Process for Federal Review of State Management Measures

The FMP establishes the process, as described in Chapter 9 of the working draft FMP, for federal review of State salmon management measures applicable in the East Area.

Limited Entry

There is not a continued need for federal salmon limited entry permits in the East Area and therefore this action removes that provision from the FMP.