

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

News and Notes



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Essential Fish Habitat

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council took significant action in February to conserve essential fish habitat (EFH) from potential adverse effects of fishing. EFH is defined as those waters used by fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, and growth to maturity. A 2,500 plus page scientific analysis was prepared to evaluate the total impacts of fishing on EFH, and evaluate alternatives to describe and conserve EFH from fishing impacts. Although the analysis concluded that fisheries do have long term effects on habitat, these impacts were considered minimal and would not have detrimental effects on fish populations or their habitats. Nevertheless, continuing with its long history of precautionary, ecosystem-based management policy, the Council adopted several new and significant measures to conserve EFH.

The first action the Council took was to revise existing descriptions of EFH by incorporating the most recent scientific information and improved mapping. As such, EFH is now described as habitats within a general distribution for a life state of a species based on GIS data analysis. The second action taken by the Council was to formally adopt a new approach for identifying Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC). The new approach will allow HAPC to be designated as specific sites within EFH, thereby focusing conservation efforts in particular areas.

To minimize the effects of fishing on EFH, the Council's preferred alternative will provide significant, additional habitat conservation in the Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska. To address concerns about the impacts of bottom trawling on benthic habitat (particularly on coral communities) in the Aleutian Islands, the Council took action to prohibit all bottom trawling, except in small discrete 'open' areas. Over 95% of the Aleutian Islands management area will be closed to bottom trawling (277,100 nm²) and about 4% (12,423 nm²) will remain open. Additionally, six areas with especially high density coral and sponge habitat will be closed to all bottom contact fishing gear (longlines, pots, trawls, etc.). These 'coral garden' areas, which total 110 nm², are thus essentially considered marine reserves. To improve monitoring and enforcement of the Aleutian Island closures, a vessel monitoring system (VMS) will be required for all fishing vessels. Additionally, a comprehensive plan for research and monitoring is envisioned

to improve scientific information about this area, and improve our understanding of the effects of fisheries and implementation of these closures.

Within the Gulf of Alaska, the Council voted to prohibit bottom trawling for all groundfish species in 10 designated areas along the continental shelf. These areas, which are thought to contain high relief bottom and coral communities, total 2,086 nm². At the time of the Council's five-year review on EFH, the Council will review available research information regarding two of the closed areas (Sanak and Albatross) to determine efficacy of continued closure.

If approved by the Secretary of Commerce, regulations will be in place by August 13, 2006. Additional information on EFH, including maps outlining the closed areas are provided on our website at: http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/current_issues/efh/efh.htm.

Also the Council took action to initiate an expanded analysis of alternatives to minimize the effects of fishing on EFH in the Bering Sea, and conduct an assessment of gear modification, that tiers off of the EFH EIS. The analysis will include the existing alternative in the document, an alternative to leave the rolling closure area open, and options to the closed areas south of Nunivak Island and north of the Bogoslof Area, as well as other alternatives to be developed. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

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Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

In February, the Council also took final action to designate and protect Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) off Alaska. HAPC are site-specific areas of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) of managed species. Identification of HAPC provides focus for additional conservation efforts for those habitat sites that are rare, ecologically important, sensitive to disturbance, or exposed to development activities.

This action represents another significant step forward by the Council as it implements the precautionary ecosystem-based approach for fisheries in the North Pacific. Twenty areas, consisting of seamounts and high density coral areas, were identified as HAPC. To protect these areas, the Council took action to eliminate virtually all environmental impacts due to fishing by prohibiting any gear type that contacts the bottom. As a result, these 20 areas will essentially be designated as marine reserves.

Specifically, 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 will be prohibited on these seamounts in Council-managed fisheries (a total of 5,329 nm²).

In Southeast Alaska, several recently discovered areas containing large aggregations ('thickets') of long-lived *Primnoa* coral, were also identified as HAPC. These areas, in the vicinity of Cape Ommaney and Fairweather grounds, total 67 nm². All Council-managed fisheries using bottom-contact gear (longlines, trawls, pots, dinglebar gear, etc.) in will be prohibited in several subsets of these areas where submersible observations have been made. These small 'marine reserves' total 13.5 nm².

In the Aleutian Islands region, the relatively unexplored Bowers Ridge was also identified as HAPC, and as a precautionary measure the Council acted to prohibit mobile fishing gear that contacts the bottom within this 5,286 nm² area.

If approved by the Secretary of Commerce, regulations will be in place by August 13, 2006. Additional information on HAPC, including maps outlining the closed areas are provided on our website at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/current/issues/hapc/hapc.htm>. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

Advisory Panel Elects Officers

The members of the Council's Advisory panel elected new officers at the February meeting to serve a one-year term. Eric Olson, Quota Manager for Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation was elected Chairman, and John Henderschedt of Premier Pacific Seafoods and Joe Childers will serve as co-Vice Chairmen and report the Advisory Panel's actions to the Council.

2005 List of Fisheries

NMFS has published the draft List of Fisheries (LOF) for 2005 that places all U.S. commercial fisheries into one of three categories based on the level of serious injury or mortality to marine mammals that occur in each fishery. The Council received an update on the LOF for 2005 and received from its SSC comments on the methodology used by NMFS in preparing the LOF. These comments include a review of the rationale and analyses that support NMFS' proposed change to Category II of five groundfish fisheries in the Alaskan EEZ: the BSAI Pacific cod longline, Greenland turbot longline, pollock trawl, and flatfish trawl and the Bering Sea sablefish pot fisheries. The Council plans to submit comments to NMFS and to request additional time for public review of the LOF. Staff contact is Bill Wilson.

Proposed State Pollock Trawl Fishery

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) will consider approving a pollock trawl fishery in State waters in two areas in the Gulf of Alaska and one area in the Aleutian Islands at its March 7-13, 2005 meeting. The BOF proposal would open certain waters around Steller sea lion haulouts in these areas which currently are closed to pollock trawling under Federal regulations. The Council received a report from NMFS which outlined the implications should the BOF approve this action, including the likelihood the action would trigger reinitiation of formal Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act. The Council and BOF will convene a joint meeting February 25, 2005 at 10:00 am in the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage to discuss these issues. Staff contact is Bill Wilson.

Western GOA Pollock Trip Limits

In December 2004, the Council requested that staff develop a discussion paper of recommended changes to the 300,000 lb pollock trip for catcher vessels. Multiple trips and offloading to tenders have allowed a faster catch rate by catcher vessels than if they were delivering to plants on shore or if only one trip was allowed per day. The faster paced fishery led to a 2,000 mt overage of the 5,000 mt seasonal pollock quota in the 2005 'A' season in Area 610. The Council expressed concern, but tabled further action indefinitely after receiving assurances from industry representatives that the pace of future fishing would be slower, and from NMFS that the 2006 'A' season would be more closely managed. If the problem is not addressed voluntarily, the Council may reschedule further discussion and possible regulatory action in the future. Contact Jane DiCosimo for more information.

GOA Rockfish

At the February 2005 meeting, the Council received staff analyses of most remaining options within the pilot program alternatives to rationalize the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) rockfish fishery. Staff analysis was intended to provide the Council with sufficient information to more fully define the alternatives by selecting provisions from the options. The Council selected provisions in most instances and added a few additional options to allow for a broader range of choice on some issues. In addition, the Council chose to revise the sector allocation alternative for catcher processors to allow for allocations to cooperatives to allow participants to achieve greater efficiency.

The Council chose to generally define allocations of secondary species caught incidentally in the rockfish fisheries (including Pacific cod, sablefish, shortraker/rougheye, and thornyheads) based on retained catch in the rockfish fishery divided by total retained catch in all fisheries. The allocations will be based on the average percent of retained catch in the rockfish fisheries during the qualifying years. The Council, however, chose to include an option to define allocations of shortraker/rougheye for the catcher vessel sector based on the highest percentage of total catch in the rockfish fishery (including discards) divided by total catch (including discards) of all fisheries during the qualifying years. In addition, the Council chose to manage Pacific cod incidental catch in the catcher processor sector using a maximum retainable allowance of 4% of the target rockfish. Participants in the rockfish fishery will be allowed to fish secondary species allocations independently of the target rockfish fishery allocations.

The Council added an option to allow additional processors to qualify for the limited processor entry alternative. The option that the Council added would qualify any processor that has purchased 250 metric tons or more rockfish in the aggregate during any of the qualifying years (1996-2000) and met a minimum investment threshold. The motion clarified the nature of the cooperatives and the participation of processor affiliated vessels. Cooperatives formed under the program are intended for the sole purpose of coordinating harvest activity and are not FCMA cooperatives. Processor affiliated vessels would thus be permitted to join cooperatives. The Council also specified thresholds for cooperative formation under each of the alternatives. Specific caps on share use and holdings were added to the alternatives for all harvest participants and a cap for the shoreside processing was specified. The Council defined a system of intrasector sideboards for the catcher processor sector intended to protect participants in other fisheries from the consequences of rationalization.

The Council also finalized provisions for the entry level fishery that would divide the fishery 50/50 between trawl and non-trawl participants. The trawl allocation would come first from the available Pacific Ocean perch entry level allocation. The trawl allocation would be made as individual allocations to applicants, while the non-trawl allocation would be fished in a competitive, derby fishery among applicants for that sector. The Council included a provision to allow both sectors to fish any entry level allocation remaining at the end of the third quarter.

A complete copy of the alternatives, elements, and options as updated through the February meeting appears on the Council website. Staff contact is Mark Fina.

Non-Target Groundfish Management

At its February meeting, the Council reviewed recommendations by the Non-Target Species Committee in 2004. The committee has recommended a problem statement, goals and objectives, and draft alternatives for revising management of non-target species. The Council is proceeding with interim steps for a precautionary approach to managing non-target groundfish species until the proposed rule for revising National Standard 1 guidelines is published. The first step is an FMP amendment to revise the TAC-setting process for the Gulf of Alaska other species category prior to the 2006 specification cycle. The second step for revising management of non-target species was described in a discussion paper provided to the Council in February. The discussion paper provides alternatives to amend the FMPs to separate the GOA and BSAI other species category into squid, shark, skate, sculpins, and octopus groups for TAC-setting. The Council referred the paper to the committee for comment (*see Upcoming Meetings on page 5*). It will report to the Council in April. Contact Jane DiCosimo for more information.

Gulf Rationalization: Community Provisions

The Council received a report summarizing the ongoing work of the Gulf Rationalization Community Committee that the Council formed to refine options for programs intended to benefit communities in the Gulf of Alaska. Based on this report and public testimony, the Council continued the process of refining its elements and options for both the Community Fisheries Quota (CFQ) Program and the Community Purchase Program (CPP). These programs are proposed for inclusion in either of the Council's primary Gulf groundfish rationalization alternatives.

The committee met for the second time on January 28 to further discuss the design and implementation issues associated with the CFQ Program and the CPP. In consideration of the work of the committee, the Council adopted the committee's recommendations to add several elements to the CFQ Program, including: representation of the administrative entity; timing of the CFQ allocation; individual use caps and vessel use caps; landing requirements; and restrictions on the use of proceeds derived from leasing community quota to eligible community residents. The Council also approved further changes to the purpose statement for the CPP, in order to achieve consistency with the community eligibility criteria options available to the Council. The Council requested the committee meet again to address outstanding issues associated with both programs. The committee meeting is scheduled for March 30 in Anchorage, and the agenda and location will be posted shortly. The current Council motion on the Gulf rationalization community provisions is on the Council website. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

Gulf Rationalization: Salmon/Crab Bycatch Measures

The Council received an updated report on salmon and crab bycatch in the GOA. The salmon and crab bycatch management alternatives are included in the proposed rationalization program alternatives for Gulf of Alaska groundfish. The analysis was updated to include bycatch data as available through 2004, and expanded to include specific items as requested at the December 2004 Council meeting, such as crab population estimates and current GOA closures. The Council refined the Chinook salmon alternatives and removed "other king crab" from the analysis as bycatch reduction measures for this species at this time seemed unnecessary. Currently measures are being considered for Chinook salmon, 'other' salmon, red king crab and *C. bairdi* Tanner crab. The revised alternatives are available on the Council's website. Some specific requests by the Council to be included in the analysis include: revisiting the red king crab closures to ascertain to what extent they are effective, analyzing the effects of other closed areas on salmon bycatch, as well as revised graphs, charts and updated annual bycatch information. Potential areas and bycatch limits by species for these alternatives are anticipated to be presented at the June Council meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Aleutian Islands Area- Specific Management

The Council reviewed a preliminary discussion paper addressing options for Aleutian Islands (AI) area-specific management. The discussion paper responds to a June 2004 Council motion relating to the implementation of the programmatic groundfish management policy, the analysis for which included an option to designate an undefined AI 'special management area'. The discussion paper examines the unique characteristics of the AI that could lead the Council to consider an area-specific management approach. Three management options are explored: a separate AI groundfish FMP, and two management options that would create an AI ecosystem plan to coordinate with the existing BSAI groundfish FMP.

The Council directed staff to continue development of the discussion paper. The revised paper will expand the description of AI research and activities, including an accounting of the Council's recent action on EFH and HAPC closed areas, and will address how the management options correspond with the national ecosystem-based management initiatives being developed by NOAA and NOAA Fisheries. Staff will present a version of the revised paper to the Council's Ecosystem Committee in April. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

GOA Groundfish Plan Amendments

The Council moved to split the proposed GOA plan amendments (the other species TAC calculation and the removal of dark rockfish to state management) into two separate amendment packages.

The Council revised the alternatives for the other species TAC calculation in order to streamline the analysis such that it could be in place in time for the specifications process in 2006. The following alternatives were approved for analysis as a plan amendment:

Alternative 1: Status Quo. TAC for the other species complex is established in regulations as equal to 5% of the sum of the target species TACs.

Alternative 2: Set the other species TAC as $\leq 5\%$ of the sum of the target species TACs. This would allow for some conservative flexibility in establishing other species TAC below the maximum allowed and would potentially allow for some directed fishing to occur in the complex.

Alternative 3: Set the other species TAC at a level sufficient to meet anticipated incidental catch levels in other directed fisheries during the fishing year. Under this alternative, directed fishing on the other species complex would be prohibited and the complex would be placed on bycatch-only status by NMFS at the beginning of the year.

Suboption: Revise maximum retainable allowances for "other species" by fishery.

A draft problem statement for this analysis was put forward by the Council's non-target species committee. Initial review of this analysis will be at the April Council meeting with final action anticipated for the June Council meeting.

For dark rockfish, the following two alternatives will be examined in a separate plan amendment analysis:

Alternative 1: Status Quo. Retain dark rockfish under the pelagic shelf rockfish assemblage. Continue to specify OFL and ABC for the complex as a whole, based primarily upon the stock assessment for Dusky rockfish.

Alternative 2: Remove dark rockfish from the federal groundfish FMP and move to the State of Alaska for management.

Analysis of this amendment will likely occur following the 2006 specifications process. Additional information on biomass and relative catch composition of the pelagic shelf rockfish assemblage will be available following the summer 2005 GOA groundfish trawl survey. Staff contact for both GOA amendments is Diana Stram.

Rockfish Management

In June 2004, the Council requested that staff prepare a discussion paper on management of rockfish that could be used as a baseline document for all future FMP amendments. In February, the Council tasked the Non-Target Species Committee with preparation of a draft problem statement for (target and non-target) rockfish management, and a draft outline for a discussion paper to address problem(s) with current rockfish management. The committee will meet on March 14-15 at NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center in Seattle (see Council website for future meeting announcement and materials). The committee will report to the Council in April and the discussion paper will be reviewed at the June or October Council meeting. Contact Jane DiCosimo for more information.

IR/IU

At this meeting, the Council received a progress report from staff, which included a few suggested revisions for the proposed action, revised strawman alternatives, and a revised allocation table. In addition, NOAA GC responded to a Council request at the December 2004 meeting to provide clarification of the BSAI Catcher Processor Capacity Reduction Program (legislated by Congress) as it pertains to Amendment 80. NOAA GC stated the Council could not select or impose different eligibility requirements for entrance to the Non-AFA Trawl Catcher Processor sector. NOAA GC also stated that participation in the buyback program is not dependent upon an allocation under Amendment 80. Finally, during staff tasking the Council elected to remove Amendment 80 from the April agenda to allow ample time for staff to complete the analysis. The amendment is scheduled for initial review in June 2005 followed by final action in October 2005.

As to the components and options for Amendment 80, the Council made a few additions and alterations. Major additions included a rollover provision for unharvested Amendment 80 primary species to the Non-AFA Trawl Catcher Processor sector on some specific date (August 1 or September 1), a more expanded rollover provision for the yellowfin sole threshold fishery, and some general language on the treatment of catch history associated with a license. Other modifications included:

- 1) Clarifying that associated secondary species allocated to the CDQ program does not include Pacific cod;
- 2) Eliminating one allocation option, total catch of the sector over TAC;
- 3) Clarifying the limited access fishery for Amendment 80 primary target species is limited to trawl vessels only (excluding Non-AFA Trawl Catcher Processor vessels);
- 4) Clarifying that sector splits of Pacific cod would supersede a need for sideboards; and
- 5) Changing TAC to ITAC in the yellowfin sole threshold fishery.

A complete copy of the Council's motion concerning the components and options for allocating Amendment 80 species to the Non-AFA Trawl Catch Processor sector and developing a cooperative program is available at the Council's website. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

BSAI Pacific Cod Allocations

The Council reviewed a discussion paper and annotated motion for a new analysis to evaluate and modify the allocations of BSAI Pacific cod to all participating gear sectors (trawl, jig, hook-and-line, and pot). At its October meeting, the Council modified the elements and options for BSAI Amendment 80 and removed Pacific cod allocations from that amendment package. At its December meeting, the Council approved a problem statement and a strawman document outlining draft components and options for analysis. The Council further refined that document at this meeting.

Upon review of the discussion paper and public testimony, the Council made several changes to its current components and options, including: (1) a new component which provides landings and participation criteria for non-AFA catcher vessels to be considered within the AFA catcher vessel sector for purposes of the cod allocations; (2) adding crab to the PSC species under consideration to apportion among the trawl sectors; (3) an option for apportioning PSC among the trawl sectors based on average bycatch rates and cod allocations; and (4) a decision to base sector allocations on the percentage of retained legal catch by sector (as opposed to total catch, which includes discards). The Council also included an option that makes explicit the ability of the Council to choose any percentages for cod allocations that fall within the range of percentages analyzed. A discussion paper will be provided at the April meeting to identify preliminary allocation percentages for each sector based on the series of years provided in the current motion, as well as information to help further refine the components and options for analysis. The full Council motion is provided on the Council's website. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

Upcoming Meetings

Joint Council/Board of Fisheries meeting, February 25, 2005
Egan Center, Lower Level #4, Anchorage, AK, 10am–5pm.

Scallop Plan Team, March 3, 2005, Clarion Suites, Glacier Room, Anchorage, AK 9am–5pm (teleconference line available; call Council office for information).

Ecosystem Committee, March 14, 2005 (teleconference).
April 4, 2005, Anchorage Hilton Hotel.

Non-Target Species Committee, March 14-15, 2005, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, Seattle. Building 4, Room 2143 (3/14 10:30am–4:30pm; 3/15 9am–5pm).

GOA Community Committee, March 30, 2005, Anchorage Hilton Hotel, Fireweed Room, 8am–5pm.

Observer Advisory Committee, May 12-13, 2005, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, Seattle. Building 4, Room 1055, 8:30am–5pm.

Ecosystem Committee

The ecosystem committee has been reconstituted with new membership. Ms. Stephanie Madsen will serve as Committee chair. The committee's mission statement is to discuss current ecosystem-related initiatives and assist in shaping NPFMC positions relative to: (1) defining ecosystem-based management; (2) structure and Council role in potential regional ecosystem councils; (3) implications of NOAA strategic plan; (4) draft guidelines for ecosystem-based approaches to management; (5) draft MSA provisions or requirements relative to ecosystem-based management; and (6) generally coordinating with NOAA and other initiatives regarding ecosystem-based management.

In preparation for its next meeting, the committee requested staff prepare a discussion paper suggesting ways for the NPFMC to be involved in the development of NOAA's proposed ecosystem approach to management of the Alaska large marine ecosystems, including how current Council structure might be utilized to create voluntary regional ecosystem governance structure. The committee also recommended that the Council submit nominations for the NOAA ecosystem research and science review panel, Dr. Clarence Pautzke and Dr. David Fluharty.

The proposed meeting schedule is as follows:

March 14, afternoon, teleconference

- Review initial draft of staff discussion paper, discuss upcoming national conference.

April 4, afternoon, Anchorage

- Update from Chris Oliver about Council-NMFS working group to develop national guidelines for an ecosystem approach to fisheries, discuss Council's chairs meeting, review Aleutian Islands management discussion paper.

May (TBA)

Staff contact is Chris Oliver, or Diana Evans.

BSAI Salmon Bycatch

The Council is currently working to address salmon bycatch management issues in the BSAI groundfish trawl fisheries following reports of an increasing problem with both chum and Chinook salmon bycatch in 2003 and 2004, which was possibly exacerbated by existing regulatory measures. After drafting alternatives for managing this problem in December, the Council chose to bifurcate the alternatives into two separate analyses based upon the relative analytical time constraints of the draft alternatives.

The first amendment package is prioritized for immediate analysis and contains alternatives to eliminate or suspend the regulatory salmon savings area closures. The Council had considerable discussion regarding the feasibility of suspending these closures and the means by which the pollock cooperatives would regulate themselves. The Council moved to require an annual report on the results of salmon bycatch measures implemented by the cooperatives (should the existing closures be suspended). The industry was requested to include in their bycatch cooperative agreement a list of considerations by which the annual review of performance will be evaluated. The CDQ groups are to be included in the inter co-op salmon avoidance program. The Council further requested that discussion at the April meeting be tailored towards providing

additional information from the cooperatives on their internal methodology for reducing bycatch in the fleet as well as an update from NMFS on the feasibility of suspending the closures and the regulatory requirements of doing so.

The second analytical package includes alternatives for establishing new salmon savings area closures as well as the development of a regulatory individual vessel salmon bycatch accountability program at both the individual vessel level as well as at the co-op level. The alternatives, problem statement and additional Council requests are available on the Council website. It is anticipated that the first amendment package would be available for initial review by the Council at the June meeting. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Halibut & Sablefish IFQ Program

At its December 2004 meeting, the Council initiated analysis of four proposals to amend the halibut and sablefish 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) remove halibut and sablefish QS from initial recipients who have never fished any of those shares across all regulatory areas. In February, the Council reviewed a discussion paper on the proposed amendments and revised the suite of alternatives. The Council made the following changes: (1) combined the first two issues into one action; (2) added two discussion points for the analysis of sablefish pots: (a) use of escape rings; and (b) limiting soak time, and (3) added an alternative to allow voluntary surrender of unused QS and an option to allow a lottery for awarding removed or surrendered QS to qualified crewmen. The revised alternatives are posted on the Council's website. The analysis will be scheduled for review later this year. Contact Jane DiCosimo for more information.

The Council also reviewed a petition submitted by the Seldovia Village Tribe to add Seldovia Village to the list of Gulf communities eligible to purchase halibut and sablefish quota share under the Community Quota Program (GOA Amendment 66). Upon review of the petition, the community eligibility criteria developed for this program, and the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) landings and permit data considered, the Council determined that Seldovia Village does not meet all of the criteria to be an eligible Gulf of Alaska community under this program. Specifically, the village does not meet the historic participation criterion defined in regulation as communities for which a resident has recorded a commercial landing of halibut or sablefish between 1980-2000 according to CFEC data for permit and fishing activity. The Council noted, however, that the implementing regulations specifically allow residents of Seldovia Village to participate in the program by leasing quota share purchased and held by an administrative entity formed on behalf of the City of Seldovia (which is an eligible community located adjacent to Seldovia Village). Given that there is not CFEC documentation to suggest that Seldovia Village meets the historical participation criterion, the Council opted not to initiate action to add the village as an eligible community. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

Save the Dates:

Managing Our Nation's Fisheries II – Focus on the Future

Mark your calendar to save **March 24-26, 2005**, for the second national fisheries management conference, co-sponsored by the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils, the three Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). The conference will be held in Washington, D.C. and will be open to the public.

Managing Our Nation's Fisheries II – Focus on the Future, promises pertinent and informative discussions that will interest members of the public, fishery participants, environmental advocates, policymakers, and reporters on the fisheries beat. The conference will focus on key issues raised by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, and issues surrounding re-authorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which governs management of our nation's marine fisheries.

The conference will provide a forum for information exchange and for participants to examine a wide range of perspectives on potential legislation that would impact future fisheries management.

Primary focus will be on implementing an ecosystem-based approach for fisheries, strengthening scientific advice for fishery management decisions, addressing the various statutes governing our nation's fishery management process, and design of IFQ programs for fisheries.

The conference will provide an opportunity to meet with the nation's fisheries managers and others involved in living marine resource management.

When: March 24-26, 2005
Where: Omni-Shoreham Hotel and Conference Center,
2500 Calvert Street, Washington D.C.
Registration: Advance registration is required.

Don't miss this opportunity! More information will be available soon on the conference web site:
www.managingfisheries.org

Managing Fisheries – Empowering Communities

A community conference sponsored by NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region.

When: April 21-23, 2005
Where: Anchorage Marriott Hotel
820 W. 7th Avenue
Anchorage, AK

For more information: www.uaf.edu/seagrant/conferences/fish-com/announce.html

NPFMC Tentative Meeting Dates for 2005-2007

| | February Week of/Location | April Week of/Location | June Week of/Location | October Week of/Location | December Week of/Location |
|------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2005 | 7/Seattle | 4/Anchorage | 1/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.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 2/23/05

| April 4, 2005 Anchorage, Alaska | June 1, 2005 Girdwood, Alaska | October 3, 2005 Anchorage, Alaska |
|---|---|--|
| BOF Action on State pollock fishery: Action as necessary | Bairdi Crab Amendment: Action as necessary | Bairdi Crab Amendment: Initial Review (T) |
| CDQ Management of Reserves: Initial Review (T) CDQ Allocations: Review and action as necessary | CDQ Management of Reserves: Final Action (T) | Crab Overfishing: Initial Review (T) |
| 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 |
| PSEIS priorities: Review objectives and redevelop workplan | Halibut Charter IFQ Cost Recovery: Review Discussion Paper (T) | IFQ Omnibus 5 Amendments: Initial Review (T) |
| Scallop SAFE: Review | | |
| Scallop FMP Update: Final Action | | |
| | Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: Initial Review (T) | Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: Final Action (T) |
| | Observer Program: Initial Review | Observer Program: Final Action |
| Rockfish Management: Review Committee Report | Rockfish Management: Review Discussion Paper | |
| MMPA List of Fisheries: Review and comment | AI Special Management Area: Determine next steps | Groundfish specs for 2006/07: Review proposed specs |
| EFP for IWG longline: Review and action as necessary | Ecosystem Chapter: Review | |
| GOA Other Species Calculation: Initial Review (T) | GOA Other Species Calculation: Final Action (T) | |
| BSAI P.cod sector allocations: Action as Necessary | BSAI P.cod sector allocations: Action as Necessary | BSAI P.cod sector allocations: Initial Review (T) |
| BSAI salmon bycatch: Finalize Alternatives | BSAI salmon bycatch: Initial Review (T) | BSAI salmon bycatch: Final Action (T) |

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
 BOF - Board of Fisheries
 EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit
 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



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
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North Pacific Research Board Seeks Members for New LTK Committee

The North Pacific Research Board, created by Congress to support marine research on or relating to the fisheries or marine ecosystems in the North Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean, is establishing a special committee to help it develop the local and traditional knowledge (LTK) component of its overall science program.

LTK refers to an array of information, understanding, and wisdom accumulated over time based on experience and often shared within a group or community. It offers many things in the context of North Pacific research, including more and better information, new perspectives and paradigms for understanding the marine ecosystem, and greater involvement of those who live and work in the region. The Board has identified six strategies for utilizing LTK: (1) generating research hypotheses, (2) documenting existing LTK, (3) recording observations, (4) fostering collaborative analyses, (5) collaborating on specific projects, and (6) supporting exploratory research.

The special LTK committee will include representatives of the Board and its science and advisory panels, plus three representatives from each of the three large marine ecosystems of Alaska, the Arctic Ocean, Bering Sea and Aleutians, and Gulf of Alaska. **The three representatives from each region include one elder, one fisherman, and one community member at large who represents the broader community.** They are the subject of this call for nominations for one-year memberships, renewable for up to three terms. Residency within the region of nomination is encouraged. The Board reimburses travel costs for committee members.

Nominations and resumes for the three seats for each region (1 elder, 1 fisherman, and 1 community member at large) should be sent by email to cpautzke@nprb.org or by mail to the following address:

Clarence Pautzke
Executive Director
North Pacific Research Board
1007 W. 3rd Avenue, Suite 100
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Nominations must be submitted by March 11, 2005. Additional information about the North Pacific Research Board and its research programs is available at www.nprb.org.



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