

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES North Pacific Fishery Management Council March 26-30, 2012 Anchorage, Alaska

The following (21) members were present for all or part of the meetings:

Kurt Cochran	Jeff Farvour	Matt Moir
Craig Cross	Becca Robbins Gisclair	Theresa Peterson
John Crowley	Jan Jacobs	Ed Poulsen
Julianne Curry	Alexus Kwachka	Neil Rodriguez
Jerry Downing	Craig Lowenberg	Lori Swanson
Tom Enlow	Chuck McCallum	Anne Vanderhoeven
Tim Evers	Andy Mezirow	Ernie Weiss

The Panel welcomed new AP members Craig Lowenberg and Andy Mezirow. Minutes of the February 2012 meeting were approved.

### **C-1(c) AFA Pollock Cooperative and IPA Reports**

The AP received the AFA Report on the Non-Chinook Salmon Rolling Hot Spot Program.

### **C-2(a) Update on BSAI Salmon Genetics**

The AP received a report from Dr. Jeff Guyon of NOAA Auke Bay Laboratory. No action was taken.

### **C-2(b) Chum Salmon Bycatch Measures**

The AP recommends that the Council request the following changes to the EA/RIR/IRFA and bring the document back for review before final action.

1. Make component 1 Alternative 3 a separate alternative: Fleet PSC management with non-participant triggered closure.
2. Create a new Alternative 4 which includes Components 1 - 6: Fleet PSC management with non-participant triggered closure AND trigger closure area and timing for RHS participants.

Option: General objectives and goals for rolling hot spot program would be in regulation; specific parameters of the hot spot program would **not** be in regulation.

3. Include analysis of specific modifications to the RHS program:
  - Modification of RHS to operate at a vessel level, platform level for mothership coop;
  - Prioritize RHS closures to best protect Western Alaska origin chum and Chinook salmon using best information available. Use identification tools, for example:

- Non-genetic identifiers like length and weight;
  - Genetic identification of bycatch on an as close to real time analysis as possible;
  - Use information being developed (i.e. Dr. Guyon’s ongoing research to identify areas and times more likely to have higher proportions of Western Alaska chum salmon);
  - Floor on base rate;
  - Speed up shoreside data flow by obtaining trip chum counts as soon as it becomes available;
  - Increase chum salmon protection measures during June/July. For example:
    - Weekly threshold amounts that would trigger additional protection measures when bycatch is abnormally high;
    - Initiate “Western Alaska chum core closure areas.” These areas would trigger during abnormally high encounters of chums believed to be returning to Western Alaska river systems;
  - Limit weekly base rate increases to 20% of the current base rate;
  - Stop RHS closures in a region (east and west of 168° West Longitude) as Chinook salmon bycatch levels start to increase in the later part of the B season;
  - Adjustments to the tier system – consider a range of incentives that would lead to different levels of bycatch reduction.
4. Make the following revisions to the Draft EA/RIR:
- The analysis should also provide information on the necessary provisions or objectives of the RHS that would need to be in regulation under new Alternatives 3 and 4.
  - Include worst case impact rates as if entire bycatch is from one stock (i.e. Norton Sound, Kuskokwim, lower Yukon, etc.) in addition to impact rates calculated against an aggregated Western Alaska run size.
  - Include information from Wolfe et. al. about projections for future subsistence demand for chum salmon in the AYK region.

*Motion passed 21-0.*

### **C-3(a) Initial Review of HAPC Skate Sites**

The AP recommends that the Council request staff to revise the analysis as follows:

The skate egg sites boundaries for Alternatives 2 and 3 would be set to the original HAPC recommendations as in current Alternative 2.

1. Add a sub-option to Alt. 2 that would have NMFS monitor the HAPC skate sites for changes in egg density or other potential effects of fishing.
2. Gear description and potential fishery impacts to skate egg sites should be redrafted to reflect current science and technology and to differentiate between survey trawl gear and current commercial trawl gear.
3. The analysis should focus on the use of updated VMS technology such as increased pulling rates and geo-fencing to monitor activity in and around skate egg sites.
4. The analysis should return to the Council before going out for public review.
5. Remove options c and d from Alternative 3.
6. The analysis should include a description of the methodology used in determining target catch rates in these areas.
7. The analysis should include other fishery closures that may overlap with these areas.

*Motion passed 21-0.*

### **C-3(b) GOA Flatfish Trawl Sweep Modification**

The AP recommends that the Council take final action to adopt trawl sweep modifications in the Central Gulf of Alaska flatfish fishery (Alternative 2). The AP further recommends that the Council amend the proposed action to extend slightly the exempted area on the net bridles and door bridles from 180' to 185' to accommodate hammerlocks attached to net and door bridles (as shown on page 16 of the analysis). This change would apply to both the Bering Sea and the Central GOA. *Motion passed 21-0.*

### **C-3(c) Review BS Habitat Conservation Area Boundary**

The AP recommends that the Council postpone this agenda item until no sooner than October to allow the interested parties to continue to negotiate. *Motion passed 19-0.*

### **C-3(d) EFH consultation criteria: Ecosystem Committee Report**

The AP recommends that the Council adopt the Ecosystem Committee's recommendations for EFH consultation criteria. *Motion passed 19-0.*

### **C-4(a) Final Action 4b Fish Up**

The AP recommends the Council take final action to allow IFQ derived from Category D QS to be fished on Category C vessels in Area 4B. *Motion passed 10-9, with 1 abstention.*

*Minority report: A minority of the AP did not support the motion. The Halibut /Sablefish fish season is nearly 8 months long which allows vessels adequate time for weather windows to fish safely in. 4B D class Halibut quota is less than 3% of the total halibut quota share in 4B and 4B now has two processors that buy halibut.*

*D class halibut quota was earned on D class vessels, is typically less expensive than higher class quota and is often a way for those who wish to enter the halibut fishery to get started. Allowing D class halibut quota to be fished up will basically eliminate the D class fishery, which may drive up the price of D class quota, create further barriers to entering the halibut fishery and compromise the integrity of the Halibut/Sablefish IFQ program.*

*Signed by: Andy Mezirow, Julianne Curry, Anne Vanderhoeven, Chuck McCallum, Becca Robbins Gisclair, Theresa Peterson, Tim Evers, Jeff Farvour, Alexis Kwachka*

*A motion to recommend final action to allow fish-up in Area 4A failed 5-14 with 1 abstention.*

### **C-4(b) Review Halibut CSP**

The AP recommends that the Council adopt (1) the unanimous recommendation made to the Council in the March 27, 2012 minutes of the Halibut Charter Management Implementation Committee and replace the management matrix in the CSP preferred alternative with the "2012 Model" for charter halibut management; and (2) the committee's unanimous recommendation to adopt the ADF&G logbooks as the primary data collection method for estimating charter halibut harvests under the CSP, with an appropriate adjustment factor applied to the allocations. The AP recommends that the Council work with ADF&G to develop a fair correction factor for switching from the SWHS to the logbook.

The AP further recommends that the Council adopt revisions to the GAF program as follows:

- Convert GAF average weight calculated annually by managers and the new average weight used as the conversion factor of IFQ pounds to GAF issued as numbers of fish.
- In the first year of the GAF program, GAF weight to number to number of fish conversion factor based on previous year's data or most recent year without maximum size limit in effect.
- Define the leasing limitation from one IFQ shareholder from 10% or 1500 pounds, whichever is greater, to 10% or 1500 pounds in Area 2C and 15% or 1500 pounds, whichever is greater, in Area 3A.
- Include a requirement for anglers to mark GAF by removing the tips of the upper and lower lobes of the tail and report the length of retained GAF halibut to NMFS through the NMFS approved electronic reporting system.
- A complete review within three years of the start of the GAF program, taking into account the economic effects on both sectors.

The AP further recommends the Council initiate a separate analysis on the ability to purchase IFQ/GAF as soon as possible without delaying implementation of the CSP.

*Motion passed 20-0.*

### **C-5 Scallop SAFE**

The AP recommends the Council approve the Scallop SAFE report. *Motion passed 18-0.*

### **C-6(a) GOA Pacific Cod Jig Management (Reverse Parallel) discussion paper**

The AP recommends the Council take no further action at this time on the reverse parallel concept. Given the legal concerns by NOAA GC, the complexity of multiple state areas, and the uncertainty with recently implemented sectors splits, the AP believes it is appropriate to continue with the current management structure at this time. *Motion passed 19-0.*

### **C-6(b) Limiting Other Gear on Jig Vessels in GOA Pacific cod fishery**

The AP recommends the Council request expanding the discussion paper on limiting other gear on board vessels while jigging Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska. The AP further recommends the Council consider:

- Limiting other groundfish gear types on board while jigging
- Limiting to other deployable groundfish gear onboard
- Limiting the ability to fish two gear types concurrently
- Limiting the number of hooks allowed on board.
- Comparing State regulations with Federal regulations being considered.

*Motion passed 20-0 with 1 abstention.*

### **D-1(b) VMS Use and Requirements**

The AP recommends the Council request the discussion paper be expanded to include better technology for more precise vessel tracking, including increased VMS polling rates and associated costs. Improved vessel tracking could minimize the need for buffers around closed areas and could help corroborate voluntary attempts at area avoidance. *Motion passed 20-0 with 1 abstention.*

### **D-1(d) Report from the BSAI Crab ROFR Workgroup**

The AP recommends the Council accept the BSAI Crab ROFR workgroup's report as the final product, which has attempted to provide the full range of alternatives available to address each action item, and that this report be moved forward for analysis and initial review. *Motion passed 17-0.*

### **D-2 Staff Tasking**

The AP recommends the Council request the AFSC update the 2007 paper on Bering Sea canyons incorporating new information available since that time. Following, Council staff should prepare a discussion paper including fishery activity in the area, past actions for protection in the area and process for any potential future actions. *Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP recommends the Council initiate a discussion paper on sablefish release survival rates.

*Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP requests that we receive a report on the status of the restructured observer program.

*Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP recommends the Council continue to strongly support development of a discussion paper on halibut CSP leasing prohibition by NMFS that is currently scheduled for review in June.

*Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP recommends the Council request staff expand the C-4(b) CSP supplemental analysis to include a more detailed text description of the differences in allocations when comparing GHJ actual harvest and CSP allocation in such a way to clarify it for industry. *Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP recommends the Council either completely include Military Welfare and Recreation charter halibut limited entry permit holders under the CSP and have their harvests count against the charter sector allocation, or exclude them from the charter sector allocation by taking the military harvests off the CEY, similar to the process for accounting for unguided removals. *Motion passed 15-2.*

The AP recommends the Council work with NMFS to revise the definition of "charter guide" to include outfitters, consistent with the State definition. *Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP supports the IFQ Implementation Committee priority recommendations from the March 26, 2012 meeting with the Committee's suggested language change for Proposal #4. The AP further recommends that IFQ proposals do not delay other halibut items on the Council agenda such as charter halibut and bycatch. *Motion passed 17-0.*

The AP recommends the Council request NOAA provide an update on the status of providing closure areas on disk that are certified by NMFS that can be integrated into navigational software (ECC Globe and Olex). *Motion passed 17-0.*