

DECISION SUMMARY DOCUMENT
PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
April 5-10, 2014

HABITAT

Current Habitat Issues

The Council directed staff to send a letter, to the National Marine Fisheries Service (Agenda Item B.1.a, Supplemental Attachment 3) on the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, with the edits recommended by the Habitat Committee (HC). The Council also directed staff to send the letter in Agenda Item B.1.a, Supplemental Attachment 4, to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management but to include striking the section on the Oregon Ocean Uses Atlas and substituting the language recommended by the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel. In addition, the Council directed the HC to draft a general letter on the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries' boundary expansion process for the advance June briefing book, towards a goal of enabling input and additions by other Council advisory bodies. The Council also tasked the HC with several other matters for Council consideration at the June Council meeting (see Council blog at <http://www.pcouncil.org/blog/>).

PACIFIC HALIBUT MANAGEMENT

Final Incidental Landing Restrictions for 2014-2015 Salmon Troll Fishery

The Council recommended maintaining the current Pacific halibut landing limits in regulation of no more than one Pacific halibut per each four Chinook, except one Pacific halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 12 halibut landed per trip. These limits would remain in regulation, unless modified by inseason action, from May 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 and April 1-30, 2015. Additionally, to improve the accounting of landings, the Council recommends that both pounds and numbers of Pacific halibut be reported on state fish tickets.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

Fisheries in 2015-2016 and Beyond: Adopt Biennial Specifications Final Preferred Alternatives

The Council adopted all the 2015 and 2016 overfishing limits (OFLs) endorsed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The Council also confirmed all the preliminary preferred 2015 and 2016 acceptable biological catches (ABCs) previously adopted, with the exception of specifying an overfishing probability (P*) of 0.4 for spiny dogfish and a P* of 0.45 for the Washington substock of cabezon to determine the ABCs for those stocks. The Council adopted a reconfigured Other Fish complex comprised of kelp greenling coast wide, the Washington substock of cabezon, and leopard shark with OFL and ABC contributions from kelp greenling in California, Washington cabezon, and leopard shark to determine the complex specifications. The Council confirmed the preliminary preferred 2015 and 2016 annual catch limits, except higher values were adopted for Dover sole (50,000 mt), widow rockfish (2,000 mt), and spiny dogfish (2,101 mt in 2015 and 2,085 mt in 2016). The Council confirmed the preliminary preferred annual catch target (ACT) of 4 mt and an ACL of 10 mt for cowcod south of 40°10' N

latitude. Adopted values for these catch limits are shown in Table 5 of Agenda Item C.4.a, Supplemental REVISED Attachment 2.

The Council elected to defer a decision on a new target year to rebuild cowcod until their June 2014 meeting. The Council confirmed its Ecosystem Component species designations displayed in Table 4, page 12 of Agenda Item C.4.a, Supplemental REVISED Attachment 2; and noted that would include all other skates, other than longnose skate.

The Council also adopted preliminary preferred management measures, including allocations for all fisheries. Final action on harvest specifications and management measures is scheduled for the 2015-2016 groundfish fisheries and Amendment 24 to the fishery management plan is scheduled for the June 2014 Council meeting.

Implement 2014 Pacific Whiting Fishery under the U.S.-Canada Pacific Whiting Agreement

The Council adopted a yield set-aside of 1,500 mt of Pacific whiting to accommodate 2014 research activities and incidental bycatch in the pink shrimp fishery.

Sablefish Catch Share Program Review Phase 1 (This Includes Electronic Fish Tickets for Open Access Sablefish Deliveries)

The Council requested the program review document be expanded to provide additional explanation and data on the origins of the endorsement system and changes to the regulatory environment which have occurred since the program was implemented, as well as to respond to recommendations in the SSC report. A topic the Council may take up in June 2014 is whether to consider allowing vessels in the fixed gear sablefish catch share program to switch between longline and fishpot gear. With respect to the rules for determining which permits an entity controls for the purpose of evaluating compliance with the three-permit control limit, the Council selected Action Alternative 2a: for up to two vessels, if a vessel owner has a 20 percent or less ownership share in a vessel the limited entry fixed gear permits associated with that vessel would be exempt from counting against that owner's three-permit control. With respect to consideration of Federal requirement for electronic fish tickets for fixed gear sablefish landings, the Council modified the alternatives by adopting the NMFS recommendations that are contained in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental Attachment 3 (eliminating unnecessarily specific language and removing suboptions for maintaining paper tickets). It should be noted that Alternative 4 would require electronic fish tickets for vessels delivering sablefish taken on open access trips.

Electronic Monitoring Program Development Including Preliminary Approval of Exempted Fishing Permits

The Council recommended that four of the five Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) applications for use of electronic monitoring be forwarded for further consideration and potential final approval at the June 2014 meeting in Garden Grove, California, Agenda Item C.7.a, Attachment 7 (Leipzig), Attachment 8 (CA Risk Pool), and Attachment 9 (Mann/Paine); and in Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental Attachment 12 (Eder et al.). The Council provided guidance to the applicants for

refinement and asked that applicants consider resubmitting applications for the June 2014 Council meeting. The following additions to the applications were requested by the Council: regarding the Leipzig EFP application – limit the number of vessels and require up to 100 percent observer coverage; regarding the CA Risk Pool application – limit the number of vessels and require up to 100 percent observer coverage on the bottom trawl vessels; regarding the Eder et al. application – limit the number of vessels. The Council also requested that the EFPs, address how the halibut viability assessments could be conducted without the presence of a human observer, with the intention that halibut retention not be permitted. In addition, the Council recommended that EFP applicants include a feature requiring providing National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the States a list of vessels and processors that will be participating in the EFP a minimum of 30 days before they commence their EFP. The West Coast Region Sand Point office also volunteered to work with applicants on an ad hoc basis to improve EFP applications and would consider convening a meeting in the near future.

Regarding the full fleet regulatory development process, a Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Policy Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for May 7-8 in Seattle, Washington to refine regulatory options for each fleet sector. The Council will consider sector specific progress at the June 2014 Council meeting.

Fisheries in 2015-2016 and Beyond: Stock complex Restructuring

The Council adopted the status quo slope rockfish complexes with a sorting requirement for roughey and blackspotted rockfish as the preliminary preferred alternative for 2015 and beyond. In addition, only the action alternative proposed for analysis under Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 2, Option A was forwarded for additional detailed analysis. More detailed analysis of these two alternatives will be provided for the June 2014 Council meeting when the final preferred alternative will be decided.

SALMON MANAGEMENT

Methodology Review for 2014

The Council adopted the following preliminary topics for the 2014 methodology review (lead agencies are in parentheses):

- Willapa Bay natural coho conservation objective, annual catch limit and status determination criteria (Salmon Technical Team, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)).
- Southern Oregon coastal Chinook conservation objective (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife).
- Standardized method for calculation of age-2 Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM) stock scalars Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW).
- Progress report on new Chinook FRAM base period (MEW).
- New conservation objective for Grays Harbor Chinook (WDFW, Quinault Indian Nation).

The Council is scheduled to review progress and select final topics at the September 2014 Council meeting in Spokane, Washington.

Lower Columbia Natural Coho Harvest Rate Matrix Review

The Council received a status update from the Lower Columbia River Natural Coho Workgroup (LRC Workgroup) and approved a process, schedule, and initial assignments. The LRC Workgroup is tentatively scheduled to meet in Portland on May 15, 2014 to review the status of Lower Columbia River coho stocks, alternative harvest policies, risk assessment methods and criteria, and to draft a report on coho populations in the upper Willamette River. The Council is scheduled to receive an update on progress at the June 2014 Council meeting in Garden Grove, California.

Final Action on 2014 Salmon Management Measures

The Council adopted management measures for commercial and recreational ocean salmon fisheries for 2014. Details are posted on the Council website at <http://www.pcouncil.org>.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Sardine Assessment, Specifications, and Management Measures

The Council approved an OFL of 39,210 mt and an ABC of 35,792 mt, based on a P* value of 0.40. The Council set the ACL and ACT equal to 23,293 mt, and adopted a 500 mt incidental set aside for each of the three fishing periods. Accounting for a Quinault Indian Nation allotment of 4,000 mt and a total of 1,500 mt incidental set-aside, the period allocations will be as follows: Period 1 (July 1-September 14, 2014) = 7,218 mt; Period 2 (September 15-December 31, 2014) = 4,323 mt; and Period 3 (January 1-June 30, 2015) = 6,252 mt. Any uncaught allocation from Periods 1 and 2 will be rolled into the subsequent period. Any uncaught allocation from Period 3 will not be rolled into the subsequent period. The Council also adopted a mixed load allowance of up to 45 percent sardines caught in other coastal pelagic species fisheries, after directed fishing is closed.

ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT

Protecting Unfished and Unmanaged Forage Fish Species Initiative

The Council approved a range of alternatives for protecting unfished and unmanaged forage fish species and identified the Ecosystem Trophic Role pathway as a preliminary preferred alternative. Under this pathway, protective measures for forage species would be added to each of the Council's four fishery management plans (FMP), perhaps under an omnibus process aggregating the four actions into one process. The Council is scheduled to review the alternatives and proposed amendatory FMP language at the September Council meeting in Spokane, Washington.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Advisory Body Position Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

The Council Chair appointed Dr. Galen Johnson to the Scientific and Statistical Committee seat on the Model Evaluation Workgroup.

The Council appointed LCDR Joe Giammanco to the USCG 11th District seat on the Enforcement Consultants and LT Shannon Anthony as his alternate.

The Council added a seat on the Groundfish Management Team for the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program, with seating an individual scheduled for the June 2014 Council meeting.

The Council approved an updated management schedule for Pacific halibut in Council Operating Procedure 9.

Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for June 2014 in Garden Grove, California. The Council made a number of changes to the draft proposed June Council meeting graphic shown in Agenda Item J.3.a, Supplemental Attachment 4; a revised graphic will be posted on the Council website in the near future. In particular, the Pacific Halibut Catch Share Plan Change Scoping agenda item was dropped, the Highly Migratory EFP and swordfish fishery changes were postponed to further discussion at the June 2014 Council meeting, and the Habitat Committee meeting was postponed until later in the week.

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