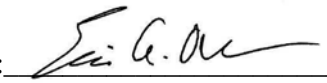
COUNCIL MINUTES
NPFMC MEETING
October 2013

APPROVED: 

DATE: 12/16/2013

MINUTES

215th Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Anchorage Hilton Hotel, Alaska

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1. Public Attendance Register
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COUNCIL MINUTES
NPFMC MEETING
October 2013

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met in October in the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage. The following Council, SSC and AP members, and NPFMC staff attended the meetings.

Council Members

Eric Olson, Chair
John Henderschedt, Vice Chair
Jim Balsiger
Cora Campbell/Nicole Kimball
Craig Cross
Ed Dersham
Duncan Fields
Dave Hanson
Roy Hyder
Dan Hull
David Long
Bill Tweit
RADM Tom Ostebo/LT Tony Kenne

NPFMC Staff

Gail Bendixen
Sam Cunningham
Jane DiCosimo
Peggy Kircher
Steve MacLean
Sarah Marrinan
Jon McCracken
Chris Oliver
Maria Shawback
Diana Stram
David Witherell

Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC met from September 30th through October 1st at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage AK.

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

Robert Clark, Vice Chair
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Jennifer Burns
University of Alaska Anchorage

Alison Dauble
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Sherri Dressel
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Anne Hollowed
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

George Hunt
University of Washington

Gordon Kruse
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Seth Macinko
University of Rhode Island

Steve Martell
Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission

Franz Mueter
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Lew Queirolo
NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region

Terry Quinn
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Kate Reedy-Maschner
Idaho State University Pocatello

Farron Wallace
NOAA Fisheries—AFSC

Advisory Panel

The AP met from October 1 – 4, 2013, Anchorage Hilton Hotel, Alaska. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent ~~stricken~~):

Ruth Christiansen
Kurt Cochran
John Crowley
Jerry Downing
Tom Enlow
~~Tim Evers~~
Jeff Farvour
Becca Robbins-Gisclair
John Gruver
Mitch Kilborn
~~Alexus Kwachka~~
Craig Lowenberg
Brian Lynch
Chuck McCallum
Andy Mezirow
Joel Peterson
Theresa Peterson
~~Neil Rodriguez~~
Lori Swanson
Anne Vanderhoeven
Ernie Weiss

Appendix I contains the public sign-in register and a time log of Council proceedings, including those providing reports and public comment during the meeting.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eric Olson called the meeting to order at approximately 8:03 am on Wednesday, October 2, 2013.

Mr. Bill Tweit participated in the entire meeting in place of Phil Anderson, WDF Director.

The agenda was approved as written.

B. REPORTS

The following reports were given: B-1 Executive Director's Report, Chris Oliver; B-2 NMFS Management Report (including update on LAPP Cost Recovery, Flow Scale analysis/regulations update), Mary Furuness and Jim Balsiger; B-3 ADF&G Report (including review of BOF Statewide Pacific cod proposals), Karla Bush; B-4 USCG Report, Tony Kenne; B-5 USFWS Report, written report from Doug McBride; and B-6 Protected Species Report, Steve Maclean.

The reports were given and questions were answered from the Council members. Many federal employees were not available due to the furlough and the shut-down of the federal government, however written materials had been provide and reviewed. Public comment was taken on all B items.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Olson noted that the Council should discuss MSA issues later under the staff tasking agenda item.

Board of Fisheries Proposals

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, that the Council not comment at this time on specific BOF proposals, but that the Council provide staff to answer questions and provide information as requested including documents prepared and provided to the Council under item B-3. Mr. Fields spoke to the motion, highlighting specific comments from public testimony regarding the Council making comments to the BOF, and that it is an area of concern. He stated that staff should be on hand to provide impacts on federal fisheries and prior Council actions. The Council might be able to help provide resources the State of Alaska may not have. Discussion ensued, and it was generally agreed that Council staff should not make comment to the BOF, but should be there to answer questions should additional information be requested. After brief discussion, it was agreed that the motion addresses stakeholder concern, and the **motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Hull briefly discussed retained and discarded species, which came up under B-2, and noted that any action to be taken should be considered under C-1, the Observer Program.

LAPP Cost Recovery

Mr. Henderschedt moved that the Council request NMFS provide one additional opportunity to the Council and public to comment on the program prior to publishing the proposed rule. The motion was seconded. Mr. Henderschedt acknowledged work and outreach that has been completed, and that

correctly identified issues and concern that lack resolution. He noted that impacts of how this program is implemented do not negatively affect how we manage fisheries. He stated NMFS should evaluate all possible remedies in identifying what fisheries qualify as LAPPs and find an alternative solution to identifying "person" who can receive a permit. He is concerned that the definition could reduce the Council's opportunity to work cooperatively with permit holders on other management challenges. (Did I get this right?) There was brief discussion regarding the legal opinion and the Council's ability to get a definition. It was generally agreed that either at the December or February meeting under the B reports, the Council would be able to hear an update and make comments. **The motion passed without objection.**

Board of Fisheries Issues
Mr. Dersham noted that during public comment the Council heard that the Council should comment on upcoming BOF finfish proposals, and it was generally agreed the item would be discussed under the Trawl Bycatch agenda item.

Mr. Cross commented on testimony that the Council provide comment to BOF about when to bring up scallop proposals and when the Council can provide comment on proposals. There was discussion regarding timing opportunities, and it was generally agreed that the Council could make comments on BOF Scallop Agenda Change Requests (ACRs) at its December meeting. Mr. Dersham noted the joint BOF/Council protocol establishes timing so that the Council can comment on issues.

Government Shutdown
Dr. Balsiger briefly discussed NMFS' ability to have staff on standby in event of need to protect life and property and to make sure no overfishing occurs, but that is the extent of personnel. IFQ permits cannot be issued, and there are potential issues that may not allow the normal opening of these fisheries.

C-1 Observer Program

(a) Report from NMFS on information requests
(b) Observer program: 2014 annual deployment plan
(c) Receive OAC report and take action as necessary
(d) EM discussion ~~and possible review of EFP~~

BACKGROUND

(a, b) NMFS Report and Annual Deployment Plan

At this meeting, the Council will review the draft 2014 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP), and provide recommendations to NMFS for the final 2014 ADP. During the Council's first performance review of the restructured observer program in June 2013, the Council made six specific recommendations and requests for the development of the 2014 ADP. The agency published a draft 2014 ADP in early September, which was distributed to the Council. The agency also wrote a letter to the Council responding directly to the six information requests.

In June 2013, the Council also requested that NMFS provide additional information on three specific issues for review at this meeting, separate from the ADP. This information comprised 1) more detailed information on program costs and potential for cost savings; 2) revisions to allow the Council and public to better understand coverage changes by fisheries between 2012 and 2013; and 3) an evaluation of the reliability of indices of Chinook salmon genetic information in the GOA. The first two items will be addressed in the agency's presentation to the Council, and the last has been included in an appendix to

the 2014 ADP, along with a proposed alternative approach to salmon genetic sampling in the GOA.

Finally, the Joint Groundfish Plan Teams also reviewed the 2014 ADP.

(c) Receive OAC report and take action as necessary

The Observer Advisory Committee (OAC) met in Seattle on September 18-19, to review the 2014 ADP. The meeting report includes comments and recommendations on the NMFS ADP letter, the 2014 ADP, and NMFS' letter on the 2014 EM pilot project (see (d), below).

(d) EM discussions ~~and possible review of EFP~~

In April, the Council approved formation of an Electronic Monitoring (EM) Working Group to evaluate alternative EM approaches, with a consideration of tradeoffs among achieving monitoring objectives, timelines, and other factors (e.g., costs, disruption to fishing practices). Only two people responded to the solicitation for appointment to the working group. The Council Chair and the working group's Chair deferred a further decision on how to proceed with the working group to a full Council discussion.

The Council has also received further information from NMFS on next year's proposed EM pilot project under the restructured program, whereby the agency proposes to encourage participation in the pilot program by moving 14 vessels that volunteer into the zero selection category. The agency is looking for guidance from the Council as to whether to limit this opportunity exclusively to vessels in the vessel selection pool, or to include all vessels in the partial coverage category.

Finally, the Council has been informed that an EM experimental fishing permit (EFP) application is being developed by the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association. Support for EM development in 2014 through such an EFP process has been referenced in the Senate's markup of the appropriations bill, however this bill has not yet been approved. In the meantime, under our regulated EFP process, the application will undergo the standard NMFS regional office and AFSC review process, which includes development of an appropriate NEPA analysis to support the EFP. Once this review is complete, the agency will bring the EFP to the Council for consultation.

Diana Evans gave the report on this agenda item, and answered questions from the Council. NMFS staff were not available due to the federal government furlough. The AP gave its report, the SSC gave its report, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded, that the Council supports the overall provisions for observer coverage described in the 2014 Draft Annual Deployment Plan and the specific Observer Advisory Committee (OAC) recommendations on pages 3-5 of the September OAC report. The Council also recommends continuing the policies that allow vessels to make an annual selection for 100% coverage in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery, not displacing IFQ crew members, and conditional release of vessels to address space and safety concerns.

The Council requests NMFS consider the suggestions provided on page 6 of the OAC report regarding how to prioritize deployment of the 14 cameras available in the NMFS electronic monitoring pilot project in 2014.

The Council requests NMFS explore whether allowing clean-up IFQ trips in multiple regulatory areas is best addressed through a regulatory amendment to the Observer Program or the IFQ Program.

The Council requests that the tables showing preliminary catch data and data on observer coverage from the B-2 supplemental be updated with the entire 2013 data set and included in the June 2014 program performance review. In addition, these tables should show the percentage of catch observed using these same categories. The methods used to calculate total mortalities of halibut in metric tons should also be reviewed and refined in these tables.

The Council requests that the agency incorporate the SSC comments and recommendations on the 2014 ADP and the preferred review schedule for June 2014.

Mr. Hull spoke to his motion, stating that the motion is based primarily on the OAC comments and AP recommendations. The Council recognizes that staff time is limited, and interest for exploring the tendering issue, as well as diminimus holding of IFQ vessels fishing in state waters will be facilitated by NMFS. Mr. Hull noted that the Council needs to understand how an EFP or EM pilot project will work and can work together before an EM workgroup needs to be formed. Mr. Hull answered questions of clarification. Dr. Balsiger noted that most NMFS staff has been furloughed; this issue remains a high priority.

Discussion continued. There was brief discussion regarding halibut mortality, and Mr. Hull noted that in the review, current data on mortality would be considered and a decision will be made as to whether additional assessment will be necessary. Mr. Cross highlighted that the Council is asking NMFS to keep current observer policies – impacting the fleet as little as necessary.

There was discussion regarding an EM program and generating more participation in the pool. Mr. Hull noted the OAC has been discussing the issue, and the committee had discussed waiting until NMFS had an implementation schedule to address EM logistics. (True?) Mr. Fields reminded the Council of the urgency of this issue – especially in regard to tendering issues and sampling protocols. He noted that Council should focus carefully on the review in 2014, and can then surgically make modifications as appropriate.

Motion passed unanimously without objection.

C-2 SSL EIS

BACKGROUND

In May, 2013 NMFS released a draft Environmental Impact Statement/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures for Groundfish Fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area. The analytical package is referred to as the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS provided an evaluation of the environmental, social, and economic effects of alternatives to the Steller sea lion protection measures for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area groundfish fisheries. The executive summary is attached as Item C-2(a).

Public comment on the Draft EIS was solicited and accepted until July 16, 2013. On September 20, 2013 NMFS released the draft Comment Analysis Report (CAR) which contained NMFS' formal responses to the summarized comments received during the comment period. The draft CAR also serves as an

intermediate document that is intended to inform NMFS, the Council, and the public of the issues that NMFS feels needs to be addressed in the final EIS. The CAR will become chapter 12 of the final EIS.

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to select a Preferred Alternative for the final EIS. The Council may wish to endorse its preliminary preferred alternative selected in April 2013, select one of the other alternatives evaluated in the draft EIS, or devise a new Preferred Alternative for analysis for the final EIS.

Steve MacLean gave the staff report on this agenda item. Staff from NMFS and AFSC were unable to be in attendance due to the federal government furlough. The SSC and AP gave reports, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION /ACTION

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, that the Council adopt the following:

In accordance with the schedule for completion of the NEPA process laid out by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Court, and to further meet its obligations under the Magnuson Stevens Act, the Council adopts Alternative 5, the current Preliminary Preferred Alternative as its Preferred Alternative. Based on the record, and using the best available scientific information including the scientific findings of the independent scientific reviews conducted by the CIE on behalf of NMFS and the Independent Scientific Review Panel convened by the States of Alaska and Washington, the Council believes that its Preferred Alternative will not result in jeopardy and adverse modification to SSL and their critical habitat.

NMFS has formally reinitiated consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act on the proposed action to change sea lion mitigation measures for the BSAI groundfish fisheries. The Council strongly recommends that NMFS provide a draft Biological Opinion (BiOp) that analyzes this Preferred Alternative, and that the draft BiOp be provided to the Council and its SSC for review and comment within the context of the existing schedule. In this analysis, the Council expects to see clear and specific responses to findings and conclusions made by the CIE and the independent scientific review convened by the States of Washington and Alaska regarding the 2010 Biological Opinion, as well as specific metrics and analyses regarding the effects of fishing on SSLs and their habitat in light of those findings and conclusions. This information is crucial for developing any reasonable and prudent alternatives to the Preferred Alternative, if needed. Receiving this information prior to final agency action is essential for the Council and the public to make informed comments and recommendations.

In adopting these two recommendations, the Council notes the following:

1. **In its letter of August 21, 2013, NMFS responded to the Council's request for additional information regarding the effects of fishing on SSLs and the metrics that would be used to evaluate the effects of the alternatives on SSL and their critical habitat, stating that there would be no new information provided to the Council at this meeting. NMFS cited several documents that might inform the Council's deliberations regarding selection of a preferred alternative. The Council has reviewed these documents and information sources and has taken them into consideration in making these recommendations.**
2. **The Council on numerous occasions has requested that NMFS provide the analyses and specific metrics and performance criteria that will be used to determine the effects of fishing on SSL and their critical habitat. The Council has repeatedly stated that it is necessary for these to be incorporated into the EIS at its various stages of development in order to inform**

the public and the Council about the relative effects of the alternatives on SSLs. The Council has specifically requested this information be made available to assist in choosing a preferred alternative. To date, NMFS has declined to make this information available.

3. **In making these recommendations, the Council notes that the existing schedule for completion of the EIS and rulemaking provides ample time to prepare the draft Biological Opinion, develop RPAs if necessary in a coordinated manner with the Council, and provide the opportunity for a meaningful public process. The Council believes that this is an important step as it will be the first opportunity for the public and the Council to review and comment on the analyses that will be used to assess the effects of fishing on SSL and their critical habitat, and to review and comment on the performance criteria and metrics that will be used to evaluate the effects of alternatives on SSLs.**

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that NEPA and ESA are different, but conservation is conservation, and the Council's primary chore should be to address primary needs while meeting fishing needs as stated by MSA. He stated the PPA has more negative economic impacts on communities, but not as much as others. This PPA will result in no jeopardy finding, but the PPA is responsive to performance measures. Using the information that is in front of the Council today, fisheries might be reshaped in an RPA development process and the Council requests the opportunity to review a Draft BiOp. Mr. Tweit answered questions from the Council members, specifically on timing and process.

Both Mr. Fields and Mr. Cross noted their agreement with the motion but also noted that there may not be time for a draft bi-op.

Dr. Balsiger stated that there is a court deadline for the EIS which is tied to the action the Council puts into regulations. There was discussion regarding direction the Council should take if the draft bi-op is not ready, or if there is a declaration of jeopardy, the Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Committee would meet and make recommendations before the Council discusses the issue in February 2014.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the motion, which was seconded: Should the Council's preferred alternative be assessed to create adverse modification, and should NMFS, as it works to complete the bi-op, consider regulation changes to avoid adverse modification, the Council should identify a small group of Council members and industry that is available for agency consultation.

Mr. Fields spoke to his motion, hoping that NMFS doesn't go back to status quo but that they look at other alternatives that can work. He stated that the current mitigation committee is too large to be strategic in a short period of time. There was discussion regarding committee process, and Dr. Balsiger stated a willingness to consider processes outside the regular Council schedule. It was generally agreed to move the discussion to staff tasking. **The motion was withdrawn with concurrence of the second.**

Discussion continued on the main motion. Dr. Balsiger noted that he will not be supporting the motion, although he does not disagree with most of the motion.

Motion passed 8/3 by roll call vote with Balsiger, Fields, and Hyder in opposition.

C-3 BSAI Crab Management

BACKGROUND
The Crab Plan Team met September 17-20 to review draft BSAI Crab stock assessments and provide recommendations for OFL and ABC for 7 of the 10 stocks. There are 10 crab stocks in the BSAI Crab

FMP and all 10 must have annually established OFLs. Three stocks (AI golden king crab, Pribilof Island golden king crab and Adak red king crab) had OFLs and ABCs recommended in the spring. The remaining stocks will have OFLs and ABCs recommended at this meeting. Specifications for the Norton Sound red king crab stock has been moved to coincide with the fall assessment cycle. The stock assessments for these stocks; as well as the economic summary chapter, were mailed to the SSC and copies are available at the meeting for reference.

Diana Stram provided the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. The AP and SSC gave its reports, and there was no public comment on this agenda item.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

Ms. Campbell moved, which was seconded, to adopt the BSAI CRAB SAFE, and adopt the SSC's recommendations for ABC/OFL's, for EBS Snow Crab, Bristol Bay Red King Crab, Eastern Bering Sea Tanner Crab, Pribilof Island Red King Crab, Pribilof Island Blue King Crab, and St. Matthew Islands Blue King Crab.

Ms. Campbell spoke to her motion, and stated her appreciation for all those involved and the time and deliberation put into the assessments. She noted that the recommendation to move assessment timing did not go as smoothly as hoped, and the recent recommendation of the SSC to go back to the June OFL specifications will give further time to examine stock assessment model and data.

Motion passed 9/0, Dersham and Long absent.

C-4 Groundfish Management

BACKGROUND

(a) Stock Structure Workshop Report

More than 70 people participated in a workshop on April 16, 2013, which was designed to assist the Council in developing a policy for spatial management of finfish and shellfish stocks under its management authority. Workshop participants reviewed and discussed information on application for groundfish, crab, and scallop stocks of spatial management (i.e., subarea allocations of annual harvest specifications (OFL, ABC, and/or TAC)) discussed case studies where subarea allocations have/have not been adopted based on these discussions, the following recommendations were suggested for the Council to consider in developing policy.

(b) BS Sablefish TAC Apportionment

In April 2013, the Council reviewed a discussion paper to revise sablefish TAC apportionments in order to attain higher optimum yield under the 2 million mt cap on BSAI Groundfish TACs starting in 2014. The paper described two potential approaches to reapportion BS sablefish trawl TAC, which is allocated 50% of the total BS sablefish TAC under the BSAI Groundfish FMP. The trawl fisheries take less than 10 percent of that allocation, and the fixed gear fisheries take less than 60% of that allocation.

In April, the Council encouraged stakeholders to work together to identify additional potential management approaches to Bering Sea sablefish to increase yield. Industry members have convened twice and will provide a report at this meeting.

(c) Plan Team Reports

During their meetings on September 10-13, 2013, the BSAI and GOA Groundfish Plan Teams recommended proposed groundfish harvest specifications for 2014 and 2015. The Teams also considered numerous informational reports, including the Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan and Stock Structure Workshop which will be reported under other agenda items. Team recommendations for the next two fishing years are based on rollovers of the published 2014 final harvest specifications, which were adopted by the Council in December 2012.

(d) Proposed Harvest Specifications

The Council is scheduled at this meeting to recommend proposed BSAI and GOA groundfish harvest specifications for the next two-year period to notify the public of likely outcomes for Council action to set final harvest specifications in December 2013. Following this practice, 2014 annual harvest specifications were published in the Federal Register in February 2013 (GOA) and March 2013 (BSAI) and will start the groundfish fisheries in January 2014. Proposed harvest specifications for 2015 will be adopted at this meeting and are set equal to the 2014 annual harvest specifications. Any proposed Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) limits for halibut, red king crab, Tanner crab, opilio crab, and herring and their gear type and target fishery apportionments, should be adopted by the Council at this meeting so that the final rule, based on final harvest specifications from December 2013, is a logical outgrowth of the proposed rule. Final harvest specifications will be based on stock assessments included in the respective Groundfish Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports for the BSAI and GOA, which will be released in late November 2013.

Diana Stram gave a report on the Stock Structure Workgroup, Jane DiCosimo gave the staff report on Bering Sea Sablefish TAC Apportionment, both Diana Stram and Jane DiCosimo gave the Groundfish Plan Team reports, as well as briefed the Council on proposed harvest specifications. The AP gave its report, and the SSC had given its report earlier. Public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Henderschedt moved, which was seconded, to recommend the following process for determining spatial management of stocks/assemblages:

1. **As soon as preliminary scientific information indicates that further stock structure separation or other spatial management measures may be considered, the stock assessment authors, plan teams (groundfish, crab, scallop), and SSC should advise the Council of their findings and any associated conservation concerns.**

2. **With input from the agency, the public, and its advisory bodies, the Council (and NMFS) should identify the economic and management implications and potential options for management response to these findings and identify the suite of tools that could be used to achieve conservation and management goals. In the case of crab and scallop management, ADF&G needs to be part of this process.**

3. **To the extent practicable, further refinement of stock structure or other spatial conservation concerns and potential management responses should be discussed through the process described in recommendations 1 and 2 above.**

4. **Based on the best information available provided through this process, the SSC should continue to recommend OFLs and ABCs that prevent overfishing of stocks.**

Mr. Henderschedt spoke stating that the motion reflects recommendations from the AP, SSC and Plan Teams, looks at new management tools and ensures basic conservation measures and regulatory requirements such as setting OFLs and ABCs remains in the purview of the SSC.

He noted that it is necessary to clearly justify reasoning for spatial management, with the purpose not for Council debate, but to be informed as to what management measures, or suite of management tools might be most effective. The process will also give the Council the ability to take comment from the public in evaluating spatial findings: by the time there is a need to act, a proper action has been identified. Mr. Henderschedt answered questions of clarification, and there was discussion regarding how the motion would be set into procedure in the Plan Teams and SSC. Mr. Henderschedt noted that a flexible outline would need to be established, and while all the elements are already in place, the advisory bodies need to be more deliberate in addressing these issues. He emphasized that the motion would not change what they do, but adds to what they consider.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the motion by adding a single word in the second paragraph: sociological. The sentence would read, "…should identify the economic, sociological and management implications…" The amendment was seconded.

Mr. Fields noted that the Council clarified that there are a variety of sciences, but Council should rely on other sciences relative to policy decision. **The amendment passed without objection.**

Discussion continued on the main motion, and Mr. Henderschedt noted that this motion is a blueprint or checklist as to how to leverage all the knowledge and expertise of all the parts of the process. The final decision relative to ABCs and OFLs, is the SSC's. However, he noted, there is value in addressing spatial management issues at an earlier point in stock structure of the Plan Teams and SSC.

The amended main motion passed without objection.

C-4 (b) BSAI Sablefish

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Hull noted that after hearing from the trawl sector and IFQ sector and the staff reports and the split AP report, **he moved to take no action on this issue at this time, but to try and address the root cause in the fixed gear fleet through the IFQ committee.** His motion was seconded. He noted that the IFQ Committee could address allowing increased harvest in the sablefish fish fixed gear fleet through use caps and adding D class shares. Committee tasking will be addressed under the staff tasking agenda item. Mr. Fields noted there is a continued under harvest in the trawl sector and the species is being underutilized. **Motion passed without objection.**

C-4 (d) Proposed Harvest Specifications

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION
Mr. Cross moved, which was seconded by Mr. Fields, to adopt BSAI ABCs, OFLs and TAC numbers for 2014/2015 as noted in ATTACHMENT 5 . Mr. Cross outlined the changes that are

different from the Advisory Panel's recommendations, noting that the motion accommodates the state water fishery for Pacific cod. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Cross also moved, which was seconded, the Council adopt the PSC numbers from the action memo on pages 10-13. Mr. Cross noted the numbers were rolled over from last year's numbers. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Cross moved to adopt the ABCs OFLs, and TACs for 2014/2015 for the Gulf of Alaska as recommended by the Advisory Panel. (And included as ATTACHMENT 5 to these minutes.) **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Cross also moved, which was seconded, the Council adopt the Halibut PSC apportionments on pages 10 and 11 from the action memo Mr. Cross noted these numbers are preliminary and will change depending on BOF actions, on completion of plan team deliberations in November, and any regulations that will have effects on halibut in the GOA. **The motion passed without objection.**

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded, that Council request the groundfish plan teams provide a discussion about incorporating data from the restructured observer program into stock assessments. The motion was seconded. Mr. Hull spoke to his motion, and noted that there is interest in how data from the observer program is incorporated, given changes in discard information from previous years. He noted the motion is a general statement in order to give the plan teams flexibility as to how they want to plan that discussion. **The motion passed without objection.**

C-5 (a) GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

BACKGROUND
In June 2013, the Council directed staff to prepare a discussion paper covering four specific topics. The paper was mailed to the Council in early September 2013.

The first section is a review of the research themes that appear in recent peer-reviewed literature on quota-based fishery management. The discussion presented in the paper attempts to draw out the conclusions and assertions that are most applicable to the Gulf of Alaska's groundfish trawl fisheries. This literature review is not meant to be a comprehensive summary of all catch share-related research; rather, it focuses on work that has been completed since the Council last considered elements and options for a quota-based program. Subsections discuss the impact of quota-based management on economic outcomes, social considerations, ecological outcomes, and program design.

The second section provides a structured summary of the stakeholder proposals that had been presented to the Council as of June 2013. The elements of each proposal are outlined in a format that identifies how it would approach the Council's "Tier 1" decision points (allocation, area, duration, and transferability), to the extent that those aspects are addressed. Not all proposals were made with the intention of describing every aspect of a potential management structure; missing Tier 1 issues are omitted in those cases. Each summary also notes how the proposal would address the overarching goal of providing the fleet with tools to avoid or minimize prohibited species catch.

The third section examines the aspects of a groundfish management program where federal and State of Alaska decision processes are interrelated. Some GOA groundfish fisheries are also prosecuted in state waters, and some vessels fish in both state and federal waters. Also, the State manages separate fisheries for some GOA groundfish species – or may elect to do so in the future. The paper identifies points in the program design process where Council action would need to be coordinated with, or reactive to, State

decisions. The paper notes several design elements that would allow management and reporting aspects of the program to function as both State and federal agencies intend.

The final section attempts to outline the Council's role in developing a Community Fishing Association (CFA) program structure. The Council's vision for a CFA has not yet been defined, and the Magnuson-Stevens Act does not define CFAs. This paper frames the discussion around experiences with community-held quota in two other regions (Pacific, New England), as well as the MSA definition of a Fishing Community.

Darrell Brannan and Sam Cunningham gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. The AP and SSC report were taken, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Commissioner Campbell moved, and was seconded by Mr. Tweit:
The Council requests that staff provide a discussion paper reviewing the program structure described below using the decision framework provided in the June 2013 'roadmap' document and the Council's purpose and need statement. The paper should evaluate whether and how the elements of this design address the objectives in the Council's purpose and need statement. The intent is to receive feedback characterizing: 1) how the fishery would operate under the new design; 2) how well it may meet the Council's stated objectives; and 3) which second-tier decisions are necessary to transform the program structure into alternative(s) for analysis. The paper should also include information on bycatch reduction results from other trawl catch share programs in the North Pacific and other regions.

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management Program

1. Bycatch management
The primary objective of this action is to improve incentives for PSC reduction and PSC management, achieved in several ways through this program design.

a. **Reduced PSC: The Council intends to adopt a program to: (1) minimize Chinook salmon bycatch, and (2) achieve more efficient use of halibut PSC, allowing some efficiency gains to provide additional target fishery opportunity while leaving some halibut PSC savings in the water for conservation and contribution to exploitable biomass.**
b. **Duration of shares: A portion of target species share allocations (maximum 25%) will be evaluated for retention based on achievement of performance targets relative to bycatch and other Council objectives after a set period of time (3 - 10 years). The time period and the criteria used to evaluate performance will be established in regulation.**
c. **Cooperative management: A system of cooperative management is best suited to managing and reducing bycatch (such as, hotspot program, gear modifications, excluder use, incentive plan agreements) while maximizing the value of available target species. Cooperatives are intended to facilitate a flexible, responsive, and coordinated effort among vessels and processors to avoid bycatch through information sharing and formal participation in a bycatch avoidance program.**
d. **Gear modification. Option: gear modifications for crab protection.**

2. Observer coverage
All trawl catcher vessels in the GOA will be in the 100% observer coverage category.

3. Areas
Western Gulf, Central Gulf, West Yakutat

4. Sector allocations of target species and PSC
Allocations for the trawl CP and CV sectors for WG and CG Pacific cod (Am 83), CGOA rockfish program (Am 88), and GOA pollock (Am 23) are maintained. Am 80 target sideboards and GOA flatfish eligibility are maintained. Allocate halibut and Chinook salmon PSC caps between the CP and CV sectors.

5. Allocated species
Target species are pollock and Pacific cod. PSC species include halibut and Chinook salmon.

6. Program structure for trawl catcher vessel fishery

Voluntary cooperative structure

- **a. Allocate target species (pollock, Pacific cod) at the cooperative level, based on aggregate catch histories associated with member vessels' LLPs.**
- **b. Apportion halibut PSC and Chinook salmon PSC limits to each cooperative on a pro rata basis relative to target fisheries of GOA trawl vessels in the cooperative such as, pollock Chinook salmon PSC cap divided based on pollock landings; non-pollock Chinook salmon cap divided based on non-pollock landings (excluding rockfish); halibut PSC apportioned in proportion to the cooperative's allocation of target species.]**
- **c. Participants can choose to either join a cooperative or operate in a limited access pool [sector-level, non-transferable target allocations and PSC]. Harvesters would need to be in a cooperative with a processor by a specified date prior to the season to access a transferable allocation of target species and PSC.**
- **d. Initial (2 years) cooperative formation would be based on the majority of a license holder's historical landings (aggregate trawl groundfish deliveries, excluding Central GOA rockfish harvested under a rockfish cooperative quota allocation) to a processor.**
- **e. Each cooperative would be required to have a private cooperative contract. The contract would require signatures of all harvesters in the cooperative and the processor (option: and community in which the processor is located). The contract would include clear provisions for how the parties may dissolve their contract after the first two years. If a harvester wants to leave that cooperative and join another cooperative, they could do so if they meet the requirements of the contract.**
- **f. Additional contract elements (such as, bycatch management, active participation, mechanism to facilitate entry, community provisions) may be required to ensure the program is consistent with Council objectives.**

Option: Each processor controls a portion of PSC within a cooperative and negotiates terms of access through private agreement. The processor would activate the incremental PSC through NMFS, making it accessible to the cooperative. PSC made available by these agreements cannot be used by processor-owned vessels.

7. Fishery dependent community stability

a. **Consolidation limits**

- **Vessel caps and limits on the percentage of the total allocation that a person can hold (accessible only through a cooperative).**
- **Processor caps in each area (WG and CG).**

b. **Target species quota would be regionalized (WG or WY/CG designation) based on historical delivery patterns.**

Option: Target species CG quota that has historically been landed in Kodiak would have a port of landing requirement to be delivered to Kodiak; CG quota not historically landed in Kodiak would be regionalized (WG or WY/CG).

c. **Require individuals or entities to meet fishery participation criteria in order to be eligible to purchase an eligible trawl license with associated history.**

8. Transferability

a. **(Annually) Full transferability for annual use within the cooperative. Cooperatives can engage in inter-cooperative agreements on an annual basis.**

b. **(Long-term) The LLP is transferable, with the associated history of the target species (which, when entered into a cooperative, brings with it a pro rata share of PSC). Target species history is severable and transferable to another eligible license.**

9. Gear conversion

Upon further development, the Council could include gear conversion provisions that allow Pacific cod trawl allocations to be fished with fixed gear, although any harvest would continue to be deducted from the vessel's annual trawl quota account and would not affect the fixed gear Pacific cod sector allocations.

Ms. Campbell spoke to the motion, noting it took an outline of potential development design that would best work. She noted the proposals analysed vary in response, and the shared elements are incorporated into this program design. The Council can direct public comment and focus input on elements of this program design. She continued, stating that the primary objective of this action is to provide incentives for PSC reduction and improve PSC management. A cooperative structure is the best strategy for achieving that objective, for information sharing, providing a way for cooperative agreements, and avenue of formal participation.

Ms. Campbell noted she does not intend to revisit sector allocations; where PSC isn't allocated, decisions would need to be made. Allocations of both target species and PSC will be made to cooperatives, and target species will be limited to Pcod and pollock as primary target species. She continued, stating PSC avoidance and cooperation is not maximized in a race for fish, which is why the motion goes with a program that allocates target species. Secondary species will be managed under MRAs.

She continued, noting that it is up to the Council to help define the cooperative management structure, cooperative formation requirements and other elements that need to be included in cooperative agreements, as well as reporting requirements to monitor progress. Ms. Campbell further defined elements of the motion and highlighted specific provisions, and answered questions of clarification from the Council.

Mr. Cross thanked the Commissioner for the motion and the direction, and noted that the framework is open for comment from industry and stakeholders. Mr. Dersham stated that it is not yet time to involve the Alaska Board of Fisheries, but that the motion states our concerns and the BOF will need to be consulted at a later date as the options are refined. Mr. Tweit noted that hard caps do not achieve the best

objectives, and that this motion provides a better way and a structure to implement and refine tools to reduce bycatch.

Mr. Hull stated that there is ample opportunity for the public and stakeholders to comment on elements that may or may not work and to offer input. Mr. Fields echoed that it is an opportunity for involvement and development by stakeholders. He noted he remained concerned about the economic health of Kodiak. Mr. Henderschedt stated that this motion has a platform on which the industry, Council, and stakeholders can work together to develop measures to manage bycatch.

The motion passed with Dr. Balsiger abstaining.

C-5 (b) GOA Trawl data collection

BACKGROUND

The Council reviewed the GOA Trawl Data Collection RIR/IRFA at the June meeting, selected a preliminary preferred alternative, released the document for public review, and scheduled final action on the proposed amendment for October 2013. This action will collect employment data and specific cost data associated with the harvesting and processing of GOA trawl caught groundfish. The Council's stated intent is to implement this data collection program and collect data before fishing begins under the proposed "GOA Trawl Bycatch Management" program. Implementation of data collection before that program is implemented would provide the Council, analysts, and the public better historical information to assess the impacts of the proposed amendment.

At this meeting the Council is scheduled to take final action. Based on the preliminary preferred alternative, the data collection program would apply to harvesters and processors that catch or process groundfish harvested with trawl gear from the Central or Western GOA. Trawl catcher vessels would be required to report information on the harvesting crew and crew compensation. In addition, the vessel owners would be required to report information on fuel cost and usage, and gear purchases that are fully expensed during the year. Catcher/processors that currently submit the Amendment 80 EDR would be required to submit additional information that identifies their harvesting crew and the crew's compensation. The one GOA Trawl catcher/processor that is not currently required to submit the Amendment 80 EDR would be required to complete that annual survey. Finally, shorebased and floating processors would be required to submit information on the number of processing crew, man-hours, and payments to processing crews (excluding managers, foreman, and other non-processing employees). The preliminary preferred alternative would also include the number of employees and payments to those employees, for foreman, managers, and other non-processing employees at the plant. Kodiak based processors would also be required to submit data on their use of electricity and water supplied by the community.

Darrell Brannan gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. The AP gave its report, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, that the Council adopt Alternative 2 as its preferred alternative, and the Council deems proposed regulations that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of this motion to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303(c). The Council authorizes the Executive Director and the Chairman to review the draft proposed

regulations when provided by NMFS to ensure that the proposed regulations to be submitted to the Secretary under section 303(c) are consistent with these instructions.

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that it marks a new step in the Council's ability to understand the impacts of its actions, not only in implementing the EDR but setting a model for future information gathering before major action. The cost of information collection to industry comes before the offsetting economic gains and efficiency, but the program has been structured to minimize reporting burden to industry. He noted the verification process is to be included in the program and will be completed by respective agencies for those programs. Mr. Tweit answered questions of clarification from Council members. In regards to the second part of the motion, Mr. Tweit noted that draft proposed regulations that are not 303(c) regulations would be proposed by NMFS under its authority at section 305(d). Also, the Executive Director and the Chairman would retain their ability to withhold submission of the FMP amendment and/or proposed regulations and take action back to the Council if the Executive Director and Chairman determine that the section 305(d) draft proposed regulations are not in keeping with Council intent for the action.

Mr. Cross noted that he supports the motion and that the Council is getting ahead of the curve. He is concerned about the definitions of CP's and harvesting crew.

Ms. Kimball spoke to the national standards and noted that the motion would provide better data than the Council would have access to otherwise, which is the intent of National Standard 7.

Ms. Kimball requested to discuss confidentiality, as brought up by the Seafood Coalition, under the staff tasking agenda item.

Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Mr. Tweit requested the Council support the AFSC efforts in developing volunteer surveys focused on community data, and be kept informed on the project.

C-5 (c) GOA Rockfish Chinook Cap Rollover

BACKGROUND

In June 2013, the Council took final action on management measures to limit prohibited species catch (PSC) of Chinook salmon in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) non-pollock trawl fisheries, and set an annual PSC limit of 7,500 Chinook salmon in the Western and Central GOA. Attainment of this hard cap will close the fishery. The hard cap is apportioned annually for the three identified trawl sectors as follows:

- *Central GOA Rockfish Program Catcher vessels: 1,200 Chinook salmon*
- *Non-Rockfish Program Catcher vessels: 2,700 Chinook salmon*
- *Catcher/Processors: 3,600 Chinook salmon*

At the time of final action, the Council initiated a related action that will consider allowing unused Chinook salmon PSC to be rolled over from the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program's catcher vessel (CV) sector to support other CV fisheries that occur later in the year.

A draft of the analysis was mailed to the Council in mid-September 2013. The Executive Summary is attached as Item C-5(c)(1). New information in this document is primarily located in the RIR. The EA summarizes what was presented in June 2013, since none of the alternatives under consideration would

allow an annual amount of Chinook salmon PSC that is greater than the levels previously analyzed. An IRFA will be completed after the Council identifies a preliminary preferred alternative for this action.

The 'no action' alternative would result in a final recommendation that is identical to the Council's preferred alternative for the related action, as voted on at the June 2013 meeting. If an action alternative is selected, it would be added to the Council's final recommendation for management measures to address Chinook salmon PSC in the Central and Western GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries.

Selecting the 'no action' alternative would apportion 1,200 Chinook salmon PSC to the CV sector of the Central GOA Rockfish Program fishery, resulting in a 2,700 Chinook PSC annual hard cap for all other non-pollock CV activity. Both CV sectors would retain the ability to earn a "buffer" of additional PSC for the year following one in which that sector performed to a defined standard of Chinook avoidance.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would make some amount of the Rockfish Program CV sector's unused Chinook PSC available to the non-Rockfish Program CV sector on October 1. That amount would depend on how much of the Rockfish Program CV sector's 1,200 Chinook apportionment has been used by that date; these alternatives and their suboptions differ in how much of the unused PSC may be rolled over. Under either alternative, all sectors would again remain eligible to earn a PSC buffer in the following year if their Chinook avoidance meets a certain standard.

Alternative 4 would not limit the amount of unused Chinook PSC that could be rolled over from the Rockfish Program CV sector to other CV fisheries, nor would it set a specific date on which the rollover would occur. If the rollover is to occur before the end of the Rockfish Program fishery (November 15), all Rockfish Program cooperatives must have "checked out" of the Program fishery. In addition, selecting Alternative 4 would make the Rockfish Program CV sector ineligible to earn a PSC buffer by achieving a certain Chinook avoidance standard in the preceding year.

This "trailing" analysis primarily considers whether or not incorporating a Chinook PSC rollover might reduce the efficacy of the "uncertainty pool" mechanism that the Council has already selected for its final recommendation. The document also examines the extent to which the Council's current preferred alternative might relatively disadvantage some CV fisheries relative to others.

Sam Cunningham gave the staff report on this issue and answered questions from the Council. The AP gave its report, and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION /ACTION

Ms. Kimball moved, which was seconded, to release the analysis for public review, with the addition of adopting Alternative 5 as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative: Rollover all Chinook PSC but 50 or 100 fish remaining in the Rockfish Program CV Chinook cap on October 1. Any salmon remaining when the rockfish fishery closes will be released to the other CV non-pollock fisheries on November 15. No uncertainty buffer would apply to the rockfish program CV sector.

Ms. Kimball spoke to the motion noting that providing a PPA will focus public comment in the future and meets the Council's objectives. She noted that it is critical to provide a rollover within the cap that Council set at the June 2013 meeting. Ms. Kimball answered questions of clarification. It was noted that the Council is not constrained by a PPA and there was general discussion regarding choosing a PPA so early in the process, but it was generally agreed that doing so can focus public comment. Ms. Kimball noted that this document can stand alone, and be included with a larger package at a later date.
The motion passed without objection.

C-6 Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch

(a) SeaShare report on the salmon donation program

In conjunction with discussions of salmon bycatch measures, the Council requested information on the SeaShare prohibited species bycatch donation program. A document prepared by SeaShare providing information on program function, what portion of salmon and halibut are distributed within Alaska and other information as relevant to discussion of program participation is attached as Item C-6(a)(1). Jim Harmon will be available to provide a presentation of the report and program overview at the meeting.

(b) Review Chinook Salmon Report

In April 2013, the Council requested that staff compile a report including the following general elements (the full Council motion from April is attached as Item C-6(b)(1)):

1. *A review of the status of Alaska Chinook salmon stocks, including subsistence, sport, and commercial fishery restrictions and whether escapement goals have been met.*
2. *An updated adult-equivalency (AEQ) analysis incorporating the most recent genetic data on stock of origin (2011) and where possible PSC harvest rate analyses for Chinook salmon stocks. It was further requested that the AEQ analysis include an estimate of the impacts of bycatch at the current cap levels (47,591 and 60,000) and at actual bycatch levels in 2011 and 2012.*
3. *Measures of fishing performance including sector and vessel specific bycatch rates by season and estimated use of excluder devices on trawl nets for salmon avoidance.*
4. *Description and/or presentation of the incentive mechanisms contained within the IPAs.*

A staff discussion paper which addresses the first three items of the Council's request was made available on September 17th and is attached as Item C-6(b)(2). Representatives from the sector specific incentive program agreements (IPAs) will provide information to the Council during the meeting to address the 4th request. These reports on bycatch management performance measures are being considered at this time in the context of the ongoing interest and actions in front of the Council to minimize salmon bycatch and to allow an opportunity to evaluate this issue with updated information on directed salmon fisheries and with the most recent genetic information, AEQ analysis and examination of individual vessel performance. Information included in the staff report provides both an update of what was previously available to the Council at final action in 2009 for Amendment 91 (Bering Sea Chinook PSC Management Measures action) as well as information and analyses that were not available in the 2009 analysis. The latter includes calculated AEQ impact rates by stock grouping at current levels and cap levels, vessel-specific bycatch comparison, and voluntary excluder usage.

Diana Stram gave the staff report on this agenda item. John Linderman of ADF&G updated the staff on (?), John Gruver industry report on the Inshore Salmon Savings Plan, Joe Bursch, Amanda Sterne and Stephanie Madsen gave the APA Chinook Incentive Plan, The AP gave its report, and public comment was heard. Jim Harmon gave an update on the Sea Share salmon donation program.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Campbell made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hull:
The Council requests a discussion paper that evaluates the regulatory changes needed to incorporate Bering Sea chum salmon bycatch avoidance into the Chinook salmon Incentive Plan Agreements (IPAs). The objectives of this action are to prioritize Chinook salmon bycatch avoidance, while preventing high chum salmon bycatch and focusing on avoidance of Alaska chum

salmon stocks, and allowing flexibility to harvest pollock in times and places that best support those goals. The paper should include an evaluation of the necessary changes to the IPA objectives and reporting requirements in regulation, and identify both the effects of such a change and whether there are elements of a rolling hotspot system (RHS) that the Council should consider retaining or adding to the regulations that define IPA requirements (such as, institutionalizing fleet-wide information sharing; requiring an RHS within the IPA; establishing an adjustable floor on the base rate, etc.).

The Council requests the discussion paper also evaluate possible measures to refine Chinook salmon bycatch controls in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries. These include:

1) **Requiring modification of IPAs to include restrictions or penalties targeted at vessels that consistently have the highest Chinook salmon PSC rates.**
2) **Requiring use of salmon excluder devices at times of year in which Chinook salmon encounter rates are relatively high (regulatory or through IPAs).**
3) **Requiring a lower base rate beginning September 1 (regulatory or through IPAs).**
4) **Provisions to shorten the pollock season to end when pollock catch rates significantly decline and Chinook salmon PSC rates increase in October (regulatory or through IPAs).**
5) **Closing the fishery to a sector (or cooperative) if the sector's (or cooperative's) weekly Chinook salmon PSC rate exceeds a specified rate in September and/or October (regulatory or through IPAs).**
6) **Changing the accounting of the Chinook salmon PSC limit to begin with the start of the pollock B season (June 10) and continue through the A season of the subsequent year.**

This evaluation should also include information on potential revisions to the annual reporting requirements, combined for chum and Chinook salmon measures, based on suggestions in the Council's October staff report, such as, frequency of excluder use, variability in individual vessel bycatch rates over the season and years, and numbers and rates of bycatch by month.

The Council requests that the AEQ and impact rate analysis be conducted on a regular basis, using updated genetic information and actual bycatch levels, and presented to the Council as a regular report. The Council also recommends that the observer program evaluate and implement ways to improve the sample size of Chinook salmon length data, to improve the confidence in estimates of salmon ages spatially and temporally for AEQ analyses.

Ms. Campbell spoke to the motion, noting that it is appropriate to combine chum and Chinook bycatch because measures taken to reduce one species may affect another. The Pollock sectors have developed a proposal and it is up to the Council to provide further direction. Ms. Campbell spoke to the rolling hot spot program and noted that it doesn't prioritize Western chum or Chinook. Chum avoidance through and IPA gives more flexibility and provides the ability to adapt to changing conditions quickly, allows for increased priority of Chinook salmon into the fall season. She noted her expectation of staff is to meet with affected stakeholders and NMFS as they draft the next discussion paper and moves forward with adding chum into the IPAs.

She highlighted that that there are multiple years of historical salmon low returns and it is the Council's responsibility to make changes to the salmon bycatch reduction plan. She noted that a critical part of Amendment 91 is that incentives are more important than the cap. She would like to have more information of difference of bycach rates of individual vessels, and information on excluder use and the choices being made. Ms. Campbell outlined specific details and answered questions of clarification.

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend provision 1, add "relative to other vessels fishing at the same time" at the end of the sentence. The amendment was seconded.

Mr. Henderschedt noted that measuring opportunity, fitting into a rotation schedule, and fishing in October or not, has been discussed as choices that should be reviewed in the discussion paper. However, he noted it should not be limited to just October fishery, and choices should be relative to how other vessels fish at the same time, under the same conditions throughout the season. He stated that the discussion should not focus only on October, but decision making throughout seasons. There was discussion regarding the levels of decision making. **The amendment passed 6/5, with Balsiger, Campbell, Fields, Hull and Long in opposition.**

Mr. Henderschedt moved to amend provision 6: to
option a, Begin with the start of the pollock B season, June 10
option b, October 1, and continue through the A season, (or September 30 and continue through the A season of the subsequent year.)
The amendment was seconded by Mr. Tweit.

Mr. Henderschedt spoke to the motion, noting that the chances for unintended consequences are high. In 2011, one of the things that drove the bycatch in October was efforts to avoid chum. He stated that a way to avoid trade-off is to time the chum fisheries with when the Chinook runs are lowest.

Mr. Fields moved to amend the amendment, which would add an Option C, September 1, and continue through A season of the subsequent year. The amendment was seconded. Dr. Stram reviewed catch information and rates, and answered questions from the Council as to how the calendar dates would affect the action. **The amendment to the amendment passed without objection, as did the amendment.**

Mr. Fields moved to amend the second to last paragraph adding, " In addition, the staff's evaluation should include a discussion of the feasibility of reporting contributions to the Sea Share program in numbers of fish. The motion was seconded. Mr. Fields spoke to his motion stating that is burdensome for SeaShare to report numbers of fish, but from the production side, it would be much easier to do so. Mr. Fields noted that the processors can note how they contribute to the program. There was discussion regarding voluntary reporting, and charity vs. bycatch management. While all agreed that SeaShare is a valuable program, there was discussion over adding another requirement to a charitable donation. Mr. Hyder noted that the information is already available in pounds. Discussion continued, and **the amendment failed, 3/8, with Hyder, Fields and Olson voting in favor.**

Mr. Hull commented that the presentation, testimony, and discussion paper has been very informative, and thanked the staff and public. He noted he remains very concerned about the salmon stocks at the low levels and thinks that the motion is the best and quickest way to take action and the best path forward.

Mr. Henderschedt noted the motion clearly articulates the Council's priorities relative to bycatch management, including how IPAs can improve. He acknowledged that there have been successes to date, and there are further improvements to be made. Mr. Fields also thanked the industry, public and stakeholders. He noted the Council is not moving along on status quo track, and is supporting the motion because the Council is moving toward regulatory change. Mr. Fields noted he will be considering in the future a cap on chum salmon.

The amended main motion passed without objection.

D-1 a Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod Processing

BACKGROUND
In April 2013, the Council reviewed a discussion paper addressing the implications of pending SSC action to set separate ABCs in 2014 for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pacific cod. In addition, the discussion paper included an updated summary of the December 2009 AI Pacific cod processing sideboard analysis. After reviewing that discussion paper, the Council tasked staff to prepare a new discussion paper to evaluate the impacts of reserving a portion of the AI Pacific cod directed fishing allowance in Area 541/542 for the catcher vessel sectors with a regionalized delivery requirement to shoreplants in the AI.

Jon McCracken gave the staff report on this agenda item and answered questions from the Council. The AP gave its report, and public comment was heard.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Cross moved to postpone further action on this issue until the February 2014 or a time to be determined by Council staff. The motion was seconded. Mr. Cross noted that this issue needs to be addressed, and that Adak and Atka have an important cod fishery, but there is too much information missing to continue. Information from TAC setting and decisions from Alaska BOF still need to be made and there is no clear direction as to how Steller sea lion decisions may impact the fishery. He stated that the Council should wait to continue work on the discussion paper until other variables are resolved. There was discussion regarding timing, and it was generally agreed to continue discussion on timing under the staff tasking agenda item. Dr. Balsiger noted that a date should be specified so the agenda item remains in consideration. Mr. Fields noted he will reluctantly support, stating that the issue should not be bounced around for many years. **The motion passed without objection.**

D-1 (b) GOA Sablefish Pots

BACKGROUND
A proposal to amend the regulations implementing the sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program to redefine legal gear in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) was recommended to the Council by its IFQ Implementation Committee and Advisory Panel (AP) during the 2009 call for IFQ proposals. In February 2010, the Council requested a discussion paper on this proposal to allow the use of pots to retain sablefish IFQs in the GOA to be scheduled after Council action was completed on several other higher priority proposals. The Council also decided to appoint a gear committee to advise it on a wide range of management issues related to the proposed action.

In April 2012, the Council approved the formation of a gear committee composed of affected stakeholders to assist in the development of the requested discussion paper and make recommendations to the Council.

In June 2013, the Council reviewed a draft discussion paper that was prepared by staff without the benefit of committee guidance on the above issues to move the proposal forward. The Council issued a call for nominations for a Gear Committee to be comprised of persons who may be affected by potential deployment of single or longline pots in the GOA sablefish IFQ fishery. The Council charged the committee with developing implementation strategies to allow the use of pots in the GOA sablefish IFQ fishery to mitigate negative impacts of whale depredation on sablefish caught on longline gear. The committee will assist staff in expanding information in the next draft of the paper on a variety of topics related to the use of sablefish pot gear in the Gulf. Agency staff with expertise on management of the

sablefish IFQ fishery, marine mammal depredation and gear avoidance techniques, and sablefish biology, surveys, and stock assessments will assist the committee.

Jane DiCosimo gave the staff and committee report on this agenda item. The AP gave its report and public comment was taken.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Hull moved, which was seconded by Mr. Dersham, to have the staff develop an expanded discussion paper on use of pots of in the GOA sablefish IFQ fishery, and that the analysis include the topics of concern and recommendations identified in the minutes of the September 30, 2013 GOA Gear Committee. In addition to the topics brought forth by the Gear Committee, the following topics should also be included for analysis:

- **The cost of gear conversion from longline to pot gear**
- **Vessel demographics: vessel size by area and Quota Share size by area**
- **Halibut bycatch by different pot configurations**
- **Information on the biodegradability of twine used for escape ports at sablefish fishing depths**
- **A wider range of gear location methods than only AIS as found in the committee report.**

Mr. Hull noted that there was a consensus in the Committee to find a way to make pot fishing feasible for sablefish in GOA. He noted his intent with having a discussion paper draft was to have a problem statement and options for analysis. Discussion ensued regarding the bulleted points noting that some of them are not very specific. Mr. Hull encouraged input through the Committee. **The motion passed without objection.**

D-2 Staff Tasking

Chris Oliver reviewed the items of importance that have been flagged for discussion throughout the meeting. Jane DiCosimo discussed scheduling D2(f) Halibut/Sablefish IFQ proposals. Diana Evans gave the Ecosystem Committee report and answered questions from the Council. Lori Swanson gave the AP report, and public comment was taken. Mr. Oliver reviewed the 3 meeting outlook.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ACTION

Mr. Fields moved, which was seconded, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Steller Sea Lion Issues

Mr. Tweit noted that it is uncertain that the Council would receive a draft bi-op before the February meeting, but that it may be prudent for the Council Chairman and Executive Director to track the development. If issues arise, the SSL Mitigation Committee could meet prior to the February meeting for review, or if there are materials available the Committee could review and to provide recommendations.

Bering Sea Canyons

It was generally agreed that due to the shutdown, the Bering Sea Canyons Workshop needs to be postponed, and that it is more important to have a good workshop and a meaningful one than it is to have at the present time. Mr. Henderschedt noted the workshop should be rescheduled and it is not necessary to gather more data for the workshop, but to evaluate what is now known.

GOA Trawl Bycatch

Mr. Olson noted that the issue should be brought back at the April meeting, as well as hosting a Community Fishing Associations' workshop to discuss the proposal and solicit input and benefit from the expertise of other communities who have implemented community protections. There was discussion regarding appropriate times for outreach efforts. It was generally agreed that the Chairman and Executive Director would discuss scheduling options and work with staff to include interested stakeholders in a workshop during the February meeting in Seattle.

Amendment 91

Mr. Olson noted that April would be the best time for final action for the amendment. Mr. Fields noted that the Council should be prepared to develop an outreach plan, and as information and opportunities develop for outreach, the Council should take advantage and participate in outreach. It was agreed that the Council would look for appropriate outreach opportunities.

Halibut Use Caps in Sablefish Fishery

Mr. Hull reviewed the IFQ Implementation Committee tasking, and recommended holding a meeting prior to the December Council meeting to review proposals. Mr. Hull briefly outlined the proposals. It was generally agreed the committee meeting would be held the Monday or Tuesday before the Council meets in December.

MSA Reauthorization

Mr. Olson noted that the Council will continue as outlined from the Council Chair's Committee process, and may need to form an executive committee to form a response to a specific issue. Mr. Olson noted the Council may look for other opportunities to formalize a Council position.

Observer Advisory Committee

Mr. Hull reviewed issues that the OAC will be discussing over the next few meetings, and reviewed tasking specifics. He noted the OAC will not need to meet prior to the December council meeting. Mr. Hull answered questions regarding specific issues. Dr. Balsiger noted that the Observer staff will be busy preparing for the December meeting, but other issues that need comment can be addressed as necessary, and it is not necessary to have an OAC review.

Ecosystem Committee

Mr. Tweit moved, which was seconded, the following:
1. The Ecosystem Committee is tasked with further development of a vision statement for maintaining productive ecosystems and sustainable long-term fisheries that would incorporate the components described in the Committee minutes. The Committee should provide the Council with an analysis of the respective value of an ecosystem-based fishery management framework (refining our current management approach) in contrast to a more comprehensive ecosystem-based

management framework that includes additional factors and considers social-ecological systems. The Committee should include an evaluation of the implications of each approach for both near-term and long-term Council actions.

2. The Council requests a history of the development of the PSEIS ecosystem-based management policy during the presentation of the PSEIS SIR.

3. The Ecosystem Committee should track the following:
- **a) Development of a PSSA designation in the AI.**
- **b) Funding levels for research in the Arctic, relative to impacts to ongoing research and stock assessment work in the BSAI and GOA.**
- **c) The development of the Bering Sea FEP discussion paper.**
- **d) Bering Sea canyons and coral conservation issues (including revisiting the discussion of research and conservation closures following the BS canyons workshop).**

Mr. Tweit spoke to his motion, noting that the Committee noted a vision statement is necessary to move forward and provide guidance for ecosystem based management. Mr. Tweit reviewed the Ecosystem Committee's discussion regarding different options and components. There was general discussion, and Mr. Tweit noted that the Committee could meet prior to the December meeting, and further define a vision statement to focus the Council's recommendations. **The motion passed without objection.**

Charter Halibut Management

Mr. Dersham updated the Council on the Charter Halibut Committee, and noted that it will be meeting two times before the December meeting. He reviewed tasking for the committee, and noted that the intention is to be able to make recommendations to the Council in December on Halibut Management, regardless of the management structure of GHL or CSP.

Data Confidentiality in the Limited Access Privilege Programs

Mr. Henderschedt discussed the proposed rule having to do with the confidentiality of data. He noted that the Council has a vested interest in data quality and a collaborative and cooperative approach to collecting industry data. He requested the Council provide a letter to NMFS that could reflect the Council's interests. Ms. Campbell noted that the State of Alaska may have concerns should NMFS take a different approach to the data confidentiality, because the state has specific regulations relating to fisheries and release of records.

AI Cod Processing

It was generally agreed that this agenda item would be agendaed in February.

Red King Crab Proposal

Mr. Olson noted the Council may want to put a proposal on the agenda for June 2014 in Nome, Alaska. Hearing from a broader set of stakeholders would benefit the process. Mr. Fields noted the issues are related to an LLP recency issue as well as elimination of the exemption of vessels 32' and under to have an LLP. Mr. Tweit noted that a background document related to the issues would be helpful.

CDQ proposals

Mr. Fields moved the Council initiate a discussion paper adopting a problem statement and considering proposed regulatory changes for exemptions that will: 1. Promote the development of a CDQ village directed cod fishery. 2. Allow CDQ and IFQ halibut harvesters, under 46' in length, to retain CDQ Pacific cod in excess of 20% MRA. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Fields noted that he is talking about a class of vessels for the recommendations. Mr. Tweit noted he will be supporting the motion and will be paying attention to VMS requirements. He noted it is a creative and useful step forward. Mr. Olson noted that this is not an allocation issue, and will be supporting the issue. **The motion passed without objection.**

Flatfish Flexibility

Mr. Henderschedt noted the Council should be prepared to adopt ABC buffers. Council needs to establish what portion of the balance between the ABC and TAC of those species would be available through flatfish flexibility program, and would need to address the issue at the annual specification process in December.

GOA Pot Cod Fishery

Mr. Fields moved to request a brief discussion paper that evaluates changes in participation, harvest patterns, and permit use in GOA pot cod fisheries since implementation of LLP reduction. The motion was seconded. Mr. Fields spoke to his motion noting that the Council heard in public comment that it is an issue of concern to that gear group. **The motion passed without objection.**

Chairman Olson announced appointments to the Charter Halibut Committee, SSC and noted that they will be soliciting nominations for the AP and SSC in the Newsletter. The Chairman thanked those for participating, and the meeting adjourned at 12:41 pm.

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

October, 2013 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
Frank Kelty	City of UNALASKA
Heather McCarty	McCarty's Assoc, Juneau
Stephen Taufen	Groundswell Fisheries Movement
Simeon Swetzof JR.	City of ST. Paul
BRENT PAINE	UCB
Dick Tremaine	Sm Alaska
Jan Standaert	Deep Sea Fishermen's Union
Bob Alverson	FVOA-Seattle
Jon Warrenchuk	Oceana
Todd Loomis	Ocean Peace, Inc.
Jeff Stephan	UFMA
Steven Marshall	FPHC
Donna Parker	Arctic Storm
CRAIG LOWENBERG	BSPCC
Mark Upton	US Seafoods
Kris Norosz	Icicle Seafoods
VINCE O'SHEA	PSPA
Michael LAKO	Alaska Observers Inc.

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

OCT, 2013 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
[illegible] Thomson	Alaska Salmon Alliance
Jan Standaert	Deep Sea Fishermen's Union
PAUL MACGREGOR	AT-SEA PROCESSORS ASSN.
Bill Alverson	FVOA - Seattle
Gerald Dixon	Access Alaska
[illegible]	PPSI - DPLA
[illegible]	White Mountain / Kawerak Inc.
Linda Kozak	Kozak & Assoc.
Molly Dischner	AJOC
[illegible] Roberts	APICDA
Becca Robbins Gisclair	YRDFA
Chuck McCallum	GOAC3
Heather Mann	MTC
Peter G. Bu[illegible]	[illegible]
Charles [illegible]	[illegible]
MARK FINA	US SEAFOODS
BETH STEWART	Peninsula Fishermen's Coalition
Greg Ruczicka	K'm Salmon Mgmt Working Group

MEETING ATTENDEE SIGN-IN SHEET

OCT, 2013 N.P.F.M.C. MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE FOR MEETING RECORDS

PLEASE PRINT - THANK YOU!

NAME	AFFILIATION
TERRY HAINES	FISHHEADS
JOE PLESHA	TRIDENT
GLENN REED	PSPA
Rob Sanderson JR	CCTHITA
SINCLAIR WILT	WESTWARD SEAFOODS
Matt Upton	US Seafoods
MARCOS ALDEN	WESTWARD FISHING
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	KRSMWG
PAUL BEANS	MTN. VILLAGE
Mathew Westlay	Mt. Village
Charlotte Weaver	Mountain Village
Sylvia Ettefagh	Unalaska Plant Corp
Loren Peterson	Azachorok Village Corp.
Mike Szymanski	FFI

Time Log
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Meetings held in Anchorage, Alaska at Hilton Hotel
October 2-8, 2013

October 2, 2013 **Time of Day**	**Subject**
08:05	Call to Order
08:15	Chris Oliver, B-1 ED Report
09:12	Darrell Brannan, B-2 Update on LAPP cost recovery
09:17	Diana Evans, Catch Estimates Observer Program
10:11	Karla Bush, B-3 ADFG report
10:53	Tony Kenne, B-4 USCG Report
11:05	Steve MacLean, B-6 Protected Resources report
11:15	Greg Williams, IPHC
11:38	Public comment, B reports
11:38	Craig Lowenberg
11:47	Jim Stone
11:49	Jeff Steele
11:53	Chad See
12:00	Break for Lunch
01:13	Brent Paine
01:22	Steve Taufen
01:27	Jeff Stephan
01:40	Stephanie Madsen
01:44	Donna Parker
01:47	Julie Bonney
02:14	Fields motion on BOF proposals
02:47	Diana Evans, C-1 Observer Program
03:44	Questions of the NMFS report
03:58	Evans continue C-1
04:30	Recess

October 3, 2013	
Time of Day	**Subject**
09:59	Call to Order
10:07	Dan Hull C-1 Motion
10:07	10:05
01:01	Steve MacLean C-2 SSL
01:24	Public comment on C-2
01:24	Dave Fraser
01:39	John Warrenchuck and Mike Levine
01:53	John Gauvin
01:53	Chad See
02:19	Action on C-2 SSL
02:19	Motion
02:24	Bill Tweit
03:01	Recess

October 4, 2013	
Time of Day	**Subject**
08:04	Call to order
08:04	Balance of SSC Report
09:15	Diana Stram, C-3 Crab Management
10:06	Becca Robbins AP report
10:06	no public comment
10:10	Groundfish Specifications
10:20	Jane DiCosimo, C-4(c) Groundfish Specs
10:51	Diana Stram CPT comments
11:48	Lori Swanson, AP report C-4C
11:52	Break for Lunch
02:01	C-4 public comment
02:02	Jason Anderson
02:08	Merrick Burden
02:14	Henderschedt motion on C-4a
02:51	C-4(b) Sablefish TAC
02:56	Start Recording [02:56]
02:56	Jane DiCosimo, C-4 (b)
03:00	Report from Chad See
03:14	Jason Anderson Report
03:19	Lori Swanson AP report on C-4b
03:31	Lenny Hertzog
03:31	Public comment
03:42	Lori Swanson
03:47	Action on C-4 B
03:58	Recess

October 5, 2013	
Time of Day	**Subject**
08:03	Call to order - John Henderschedt
08:05	C-5 GOA Trawl, Darrell Brannan & Sam Cunningham
09:51	AP report on C5
09:55	Public Testimony on C5, Jim Richardson
10:03	Pat Branson, Denby Lloyd
10:07	Mark Fina Lori Swanson
10:26	Heather Mann
10:44	Ernie Weiss
10:49	Chuck McCallum
10:55	Robert Sanderson
10:58	Beth Stewart
11:06	Bob Kruger
11:14	Terry Haines
11:21	Julie Bonney
11:37	Jeff Stephan
11:47	Jody Cook
11:52	Break for Lunch
01:00	Halibut Report
01:46	Glenn Reed
01:46	Continue Public Comment C-5
02:00	Heather McCarty, Mike Okoniewski
02:21	Theresa Peterson Becca Robbins Gisclair
02:32	Stephan Taufen
02:38	Bill Fejes
02:56	Council motion on C-5a, Cora Campbell
02:58	Council discussion on motion
04:05	AP Report on C5b, Lori Swanson
04:16	Bob Kruger
04:19	Julie Bonney
04:20	Terry Haines
04:33	C-5(c) GOA Chinook Byc, Sam Cunningham
05:12	AP report
05:14	Public Comment on C5c, Julie Bonney
05:21	Bob Krueger
05:32	Kimball motion C5c
05:32	Recess for the day

October 6, 2013	
Time of Day	**Subject**
09:00	Call to order
09:01	C-6 BSAI Salmon Bycatch, Diana Stram
09:17	John Linderman, ADFG
10:11	Diana Stram - AEQ analysis, IPAs
01:03	John Gruver Inshore salmon savings lan
02:06	Joe Bursch
03:19	Stephanie Madsen APA chinook Incentive Plan
03:59	Amanda Sterne
04:18	AP report on C6, Becca Robbins Gisclair
04:26	Public Comment on C6
04:26	Brandon Ahmasule
04:26	Greg Roszicka
04:32	Victor Lord
04:40	Brent Paine
05:04	Recess

October 7, 2013	
Time of Day	**Subject**
08:58	Call to order
08:59	continued Public Comment on C6
08:59	John Gruver
09:03	Dan Martin
09:10	Paul Beans
09:14	Matthew Watsky
09:17	Charlotte Weaver
09:26	James Mize
09:26	Sylvia Ettefagh
09:29	Donna Parker
09:53	Art Nelson
10:06	Art Ivanoff
10:13	Becca Robbins Gisclair
10:21	Sky Starky
10:26	Jim Harmon
10:50	C-6(c) IPA Reports BSAI Chum
10:50	Diana Stram
10:56	John Gruver, James Mize, Stephanie Madsen, Karl Haflinger
11:43	AP report on C-6 c, Becca Robbins Gisclair
11:47	Lunch break
01:03	Public Comment on C-6(c)
01:03	Roy Ashenfelter
01:09	Brent Paine
01:11	Becca Robbins Gisclair
01:13	Art Nelson
01:15	D-1 testimony out of order
01:15	April Dromeka, APICDA
01:30	Cora Campbell motion on C-6(b, c)
01:30	D-1(a) AI Pcod Processing, Jon McCracken
03:13	Lori Swanson, AP report
03:17	Public Comment D-1a
03:17	Lori Swanson
03:22	Chad See
03:29	Jan Jacobs
03:31	Frank Kelty
03:35	Todd Loomis
03:40	Dave Fraser
03:53	Clem Tillion
03:59	Matt Upton
04:35	D-1(b) Sablefish Gear Committee, Jane DiCosimo
04:44	AP report on D1b, Lori Swanson
04:49	Public Comment on D1b
04:49	Jeff Stephan
04:57	Lenny Hertzog
05:03	Recess

October 8, 2013 **Time of Day**	**Subject**
09:00	Call to order
09:00	D-2 Staff Tasking, Chris Oliver
09:02	Jane DiCosimo - IFQ committee proposals
09:17	Diana Evans, Ecosystem Committee
10:07	AP report on D2, Lori Swanson
10:33	Public Comment on D2
10:33	Lori Swanson
10:35	Becca Robbins Gisclair, Chuck McCallum
10:38	Linda Kozak
10:40	Mike Levine
10:47	Adem Bockmann
10:54	Heather McCarty, Ernie Weiss, Mateo Paz Soldan, Frank Kelty
10:58	Simeon Swetzoff
11:00	Chad See
11:12	George Pletnikoff
11:12	Ernie Weiss, Paul Gronholdt
11:17	Anne Vanderhoeven, Troy Urkinmon, Angel Drubnoka, Angie Fontz
11:18	Jeff Kauffman
11:25	Julie Bonney
12:07	Council Discussion on D2
12:42	Meeting Adjourned

DRAFT
ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES
October 1 – 4, 2013
Anchorage, Alaska

The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent ~~stricken~~):

Ruth Christiansen	Becca Robbins-Gisclair	Andy Mezirow
Kurt Cochran	John Gruver	Joel Peterson
John Crowley	Mitch Kilborn	Theresa Peterson
Jerry Downing	~~Alexus Kwachka~~	~~Neil Rodriguez~~
Tom Enlow	Craig Lowenberg	Lori Swanson
~~Tim Evers~~	Brian Lynch	Anne Vanderhoeven
Jeff Farvour	Chuck McCallum	Ernie Weiss

C-1 Observer Program

The AP recommends the Council adopt the OAC recommendations captured in pages 3 – 6 of the OAC report. *Motion carried 18/0*

- The OAC report includes the rationale for the recommendations.
- This includes the comments on the NMFS letter on the EM pilot program listed on page 6.

The AP recommends the Council ask NMFS to collect data on number of sets and hauls made by vessels carrying observers, the number of sets or hauls sampled, and the percent of each observed set or haul sampled. *Motion carried 18/0*

- This information could help in understanding the data from the observer samples.
- It is not expected to be expensive or burdensome to collect. Note this could not be verified with the Agency due to federal shutdown.

C-2 SSL EIS Final Action

The AP recommends the Council select its Preliminary Preferred Alternative as its preferred alternative for the SSL EIS. The AP recommends the Council request that the Agency provide a draft biological opinion to the Council prior to the February 2014 Council meeting. The draft BiOp should provide clear and definitive information to allow the Council to understand what elements of the PA do not create JAM and what adjustments are needed to any elements that may cause JAM. The draft BiOp should also allow the Council to discern what combinations of elements in each AI subarea are allowable.
The timing of the draft BiOp should allow the Council to have full participation in crafting the final RPAs.
Motion passed 17/1

C-3 BSAI Crab SAFE Report

The AP recommends the Council approve the 2013 BSAI Crab SAFE report and the 2013/2014 OFL and ABC specifications as recommended by the SSC. *Motion carried 18/0*

C-4 Groundfish Specifications

a) Stock Structure

The AP recommends the Council establish a process for addressing stock structure concerns raised by the Plan Teams as part of the harvest specifications process. This process should encompass the following:

A) Clearly identify the problem that justifies a need for spatial management. i.e., Is this a yield issue? Is it a conservation of genetic diversity issue? Has a new stock been identified?
B) Identify the possible tools that may be appropriate for dealing with the concern. These may include industry's ability to adjust harvest on a spatial scale, specification of OFLs, ABCs, or TACs, or other tools.
C) This process should allow time for input by in-season management, stakeholders, and the Council before final SSC recommendations are made on harvest specifications

Motion carried 17/0

- Public needs to understand what the problem is, and why action is needed. Stock structure alone may not require management action.
- Industry has demonstrated the ability to respond to spatial concerns.
- Input from management and fishermen will help all decision-makers understand the possible unintended effects of spatial management.

b) Sablefish TAC apportionment

The following motion failed on a 9/9 vote

AP recommends that Council direct staff to develop an expanded discussion paper analyzing a broad range of options aimed at maximizing the utilization of all sablefish in the BSAI fishery. Included in the analysis would be an evaluation of use caps, effects on CDQ participation in the fishery, adjustment of the trawl and fixed gear TAC apportionment, underutilized sablefish harvest by sector and gear type, and potential entry level opportunity in the sablefish fixed gear fishery.

<u>Minority Report</u>
BSAI Sablefish TAC Apportionment: The minority felt that an expanded discussion paper regarding an evaluation of potential options aimed at increasing the utilization of Sablefish in the BSAI is appropriate at this time.

- *Additional analysis is required to provide information capable of achieving an adequate response to this issue.*
- *Regulations regarding use caps and sector allocations in the BSAI may no longer accurately reflect current industry conditions, and restrict some industry participants from increasing their harvest of otherwise non-harvested sablefish.*
- *Employing a broader scope to examine possible actions will help avoid adverse consequences to sectors, current and future industry participants, and CDQ fisheries.*
- *Additional analysis on potential factors impeding full utilization should also be addressed.*

Signed by: Becca Robbins Gisclair, Ruth Christiansen, Ernie Weiss, Jeff Farvour, Theresa Peterson, Chuck McCallum, Brian Lynch, John Crowley, Joel Peterson.

C-4 (b) continued

Rationale against the motion:

- This is a very complex issue and only provides more fish to the few vessel owners that are at the IFQ use cap in the Bering Sea fixed gear sablefish fishery. The Council has much bigger issues of greater importance to address.
- There is unharvested TAC in both the trawl and fixed gear Bering Sea sablefish fishery. Moving TAC from one sector to another does not address the root problem.
- The Council is already considering a change in use caps to address this issue.
- There are other options for fixed gear participants, including leasing CDQ fish.
- As proposed, this could fund a new fishery (entry level) for fixed gear using TAC allocated to the trawl sector.

c) Groundfish harvest specifications

BSAI:

The AP recommends that the Council adopt the ABC, OFL and TAC numbers for 2014 and 2015 contained in the attached spreadsheet.
Motion passed 18/0

The AP recommends that the Council adopt the PSC limits and apportionments contained in Tables 10 to13 in the Action Memo for the BSAI for 2014 and 2015.

Motion passed 18/0

- These TAC numbers make some slight adjustments, but primarily roll over last year's numbers as a placeholder.
- The AP adjusted the industry proposal slightly down for pollock and up for Alaska plaice .
- *C*atch to date is 21,600 mt for plaice and went to PSC in May. There is a viable market for these fish and it is important to fund the fishery adequately

GOA:

The AP recommends that the Council adopt the SSC recommendations for ABC and OF**L**s for the GOA proposed specifications for 2014 and 2015, and:

Roll over the TACs from Table 2 of the final specifications for 2013/2014 (attached) with the following changes

1) Shallow-flatfish in WYAK to 4,299 MT
2) Shallow flatfish in SEO to 1,092 MT
3) Rex sole in WYAK to 823 MT

For the 2014 and 2015 proposed TACs.

Adopt the tables (pages 10 and 11 in the action memo) that reflect:

1) 2013/2014 halibut PSC limits, allowances and apportionments.
2) 2013/2014 halibut PSC trawl limits between the trawl gear deep-water species fishery and the shallow-water species fisheries.
3) Apportionment of the "other H&L fisheries" 2013 and 2014 halibut PSC allowance between the H&L catcher vessel and catcher processor sectors.

For the proposed 2014 and 2015 specifications.
Motion passed 18/0

- This primarily rolls over the numbers from last year for now and adjustments can be made in December when we have more information available.

C-5 GOA Trawl Issues

a) Updated discussion paper on GOA trawl bycatch management.

The AP recommends the Council accept the revised proposals received by the AP (Groundfish Forum and Pacific Seafoods) for inclusion in future discussion and analysis along with the current suite of proposals.
Motion passed 18/0

- The current suite of proposals has merit and its worth continuing to analyze all of them.
- The revised proposals flesh out some important details from the previous proposals.
- There are still details which need to be further developed in many of the proposals and we expect to see additional revisions as we move through the process.
- The fleet needs tools to reduce bycatch and it is important to continue to move this process forward.

The AP recommends the Council request an expanded discussion paper which compares the current/revised suite of proposals to the Council's goals and objectives.
Motion passed 18/0.

- While the proposals are still works in progress, comparing the current proposals to the Council's goals and objectives will assist us in measuring the proposals against the Council's stated goals and objectives.
- This comparison should assist us in narrowing the range of proposals under consideration.

b) GOA trawl data collection

The AP recommends the council take final action and adopt the Preliminary Preferred Alternative.
Motion passed 18/0

- Adopting a data collection program now before the new trawl management program is in place makes sense to collect pre-program data.
- The consistency between this data collection program and that utilized in the Bering Sea will be helpful to industry in collecting and reporting data.

C-5 continued

c) GOA rockfish Chinook cap rollover

The AP recommends the Council add:
Alternative 5. Rollover all Chinook PSC but 50 fish remaining in the Rockfish Program CV Chinook cap on October 1. No uncertainty buffer would apply to the Rockfish Program CV sector.
Motion passed 18/0

- A rollover provision is critical to the operations of this fishery. It is important that we develop a plan that works
- Utilizing an uncertainty buffer in the rockfish program makes things complicated.
- For ease of managing the fishery, we need something simple and clean.
- This alternative combines several approaches and is worth analyzing.

C-6 BSAI Salmon Bycatch

a) SeaShare report on Salmon Donation Program

The AP received a report on the SeaShare PSC donation program.

b) BSAI Chinook salmon report and industry Chinook IPA reports

The Advisory Panel recognizes the continued importance of maintaining low Chinook salmon bycatch by the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The AP has determined that the Amendment 91 IPAs are working as intended and are reducing Chinook bycatch at all levels of abundance. The Performance Standard at 47,591 and the 60,000 hard cap are accomplishing their role in establishing incentives as originally designed by the unique nature of Amendment 91. Therefore, the AP recommends the Council take no further action on Amendment 91 at this time.
Motion passed 13/5

- Industry IPAs have been a factor in recent low Chinook bycatch numbers; they are working.
- The industry is doing a lot to avoid bycatch, at a cost in terms of higher fuel use, lower value products.
- Industry is developing salmon excluders and developing new fishing styles that are effective at reducing bycatch.
- Amendment 91 has only been in effect for two years. It is too early to revisit.

Minority Report

A minority of the AP supported this substitute motion:

The AP recommends the Council request an expanded discussion paper which investigates methods to further reduce bycatch, including the overall cap level and placing limitations on late September through October fishing. The discussion paper should include additional information on Western Alaska stock status including detailed descriptions of the restrictions imposed on commercial and subsistence salmon fisheries in the region over the last 5 years, total subsistence harvests and whether amounts necessary for subsistence have been met.

C-6 (b) continued

Minority report continued:
Chinook salmon stocks are in a state of crisis throughout Western Alaska. Subsistence harvests have been dramatically reduced and commercial harvests virtually eliminated for Chinook salmon. Despite these reductions and the extreme sacrifices made by in-river users, escapement goals are not being met. In this context, it's critical that all sources of mortality are reduced. In a time when every fish counts, bycatch in the pollock fishery has an impact. Coming close to the Amendment 91 cap limits in these conditions of stock abundance would be devastating to Western Alaska stocks. It is therefore imperative that we take a look at what can be done to further reduce bycatch as both a matter of conservation and equity.

Becca Robbins Gisclair, Theresa Peterson, Andy Mezirow, Jeff Farvour, Chuck McCallum

c) Industry IPA reports for BSAI chum salmon

The AP supports the IPA/RHS proposals and recommends the Council request a discussion paper which further evaluates the following:

- Modifications needed to Amendment 91 and Amendment 84 to adopt this type of proposal.
- What components of the rolling hot spot program are critical and could be placed into regulation while still providing flexibility for the industry to adapt the program to new information?
- Improved reporting requirements.
- Potential approaches for combining reporting requirements for chum and Chinook IPAs.

Motion passed 18/0

- The AP appreciates industry's work to develop IPA's which are responsive to the Council's requests and supports moving forward with these.
- The IPA presented by industry focuses chum salmon bycatch reduction on the time period when mature Western Alaska stocks are more present in the bycatch and provides mechanisms for balancing chum and Chinook salmon avoidance.
- A discussion paper will help clarify the regulatory process for adopting this approach via amendments to Amendment 84 or 91.
- Forwarding the proposal will provide an opportunity for public and Council review, along with information on regulatory process which can inform our path forward on chum salmon bycatch bycatch measures.

D-1 Miscellaneous issues

a) Discussion paper on AI Pacific cod processing

The AP recommends the council request staff to bring back a discussion paper to develop a problem statement.
Issues that should be addressed include:

- A history of both shoreside and offshore processing of all species in the Aleutian Islands.
- What protections currently exist and may be required to provide for community stability?

- Dependence of the communities on cod and other fishery-related operations
- Proposed scale of processing in the communities
- The impact of the AI TAC split on creating a race for fish
- Considerations to mitigate harm from any potential action on other stakeholders
  Historic and relative dependence by all fishery sectors on Aleutian Island fisheries
  The effect competition among processors on CV operations
  Other opportunities available for affected stakeholders.

b) GOA Gear Committee report on implementing a sablefish pot fishery

The AP recommends that the Council direct staff to develop an expanded discussion paper on the use of pots in the Gulf Of Alaska sablefish IFQ fisheries, and that the analysis include the topics of concern and recommendations identified in the minutes of the September 30 meeting of the Gulf of Alaska Gear Committee. In addition to the topics brought forth by the Gear Committee, the following topics should also be included for analysis:

- The cost of gear conversion from longline to pot gear
- Vessel demographics: vessel size by area and Quota Share size by area
- Halibut bycatch by different pot configurations
- Information on the biodegradability of twine used for escape ports at sablefish fishing depths
- A wider range of gear location methods than only AIS as found in the committee report.

Motion passed 17/0

D-2 Staff Tasking

The AP recommends that the Council initiate a discussion paper, adopting a problem statement, and considering proposed regulation changes or exemptions that will: 1) promote the development of a CDQ village directed Pacific cod fishery; and 2) allow CDQ and IFQ halibut harvesters to retain CDQ Pacific cod in excess of the 20% MRA, as proposed in the handout by the CDQ groups.
Motion passed 17/0

- Current regulations applicable to vessels targeting Pcod with hook and line gear are prohibitive for the CDQ village fleets.
- The CDQ groups believe easing certain regulations will make the development of the fishery viable, particularly as the halibut quotas they currently fish continue to decline.
- Regulatory precedence has been set with similar sized vessels in jig fisheries having been exempted from VMS and LLP requirements.
- It would be most efficient and conservative to allow retention of CDQ Pcod when the village fleet targets CDQ and/or IFQ halibut.

The AP acknowledges the request submitted in writing by Melvin Grove Jr and recommends that the Council take no further action on this item.
Motion passed 17/0

Advisory Panel Proposed BSAI OFL and ABC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

		2013				2014			2015		
Species	**Area**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**	**Catch**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**
Pollock	EBS	2,550,000	1,375,000	1,247,000	1,146,604	2,730,000	1,430,000	1,249,000	2,730,000	1,430,000	1,249,000
	AI	45,600	37,300	19,000	2,916	48,600	39,800	19,000	48,600	39,800	19,000
	Bogoslof	13,400	10,100	100	57	13,400	10,100	100	13,400	10,100	100
Pacific cod	BSAI	359,000	307,000	260,000	178,388	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	BS	n/a	n/a	n/a	169,840	352,470	300,390	243,100	352,470	300,390	243,100
	AI	n/a	n/a	n/a	8,548	22,500	16,900	7,381	22,500	16,900	7,381
Sablefish	BS	1,870	1,580	1,580	548	1,760	1,480	1,480	1,760	1,480	1,480
	AI	2,530	2,140	2,140	702	2,370	2,010	2,010	2,370	2,010	2,010
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	220,000	206,000	198,000	101,596	219,000	206,000	198,000	219,000	206,000	198,000
Greenland turbot	BSAI	2,540	2,060	2,060	1,097	3,270	2,650	2,060	3,270	2,650	2,060
	BS	n/a	1,610	1,610	818	n/a	2,070	1,610	n/a	2,070	1,610
	AI	n/a	450	450	279	n/a	580	450	n/a	580	450
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	186,000	152,000	25,000	18,515	186,000	152,000	25,000	186,000	152,000	25,000
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	16,300	12,200	10,000	7,500	8,300	7,100	7,100	8,300	7,100	7,100
Northern rock sole	BSAI	241,000	214,000	92,380	55,401	229,000	204,000	92,450	229,000	204,000	92,450
Flathead sole	BSAI	81,500	67,900	22,699	15,317	80,100	66,700	22,699	80,100	66,700	22,699
Alaska plaice	BSAI	67,000	55,200	20,000	19,982	60,200	55,800	23,700	60,200	55,800	23,700
Other flatfish	BSAI	17,800	13,300	3,500	1,467	17,800	13,300	3,500	17,800	13,300	3,500
Pacific Ocean perch	BSAI	41,900	35,100	35,100	26,460	39,500	33,100	33,100	39,500	33,100	33,100
	BS	n/a	8,130	8,130	1,573	n/a	7,680	7,680	n/a	7,680	7,680
	EAI	n/a	9,790	9,790	8,209	n/a	9,240	9,240	n/a	9,240	9,240
	CAI	n/a	6,980	6,980	6,614	n/a	6,590	6,590	n/a	6,590	6,590
	WAI	n/a	10,200	10,200	10,064	n/a	9,590	9,590	n/a	9,590	9,590
Northern rockfish	BSAI	12,200	9,850	3,000	1,892	12,000	9,320	3,000	12,000	9,320	3,000
Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish	BSAI	462	378	378	324	524	429	429	524	429	429
	EBS/EAI	n/a	169	169	173	n/a	189	189	n/a	189	189
	CAI/WAI	n/a	209	209	151	n/a	240	240	n/a	240	240
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	493	370	370	333	493	370	370	493	370	370
Other rockfish	BSAI	1,540	1,159	873	653	1,540	1,159	873	1,540	1,159	873
	BS	n/a	686	400	146	n/a	686	400	n/a	686	400
	AI	n/a	473	473	507	n/a	473	473	n/a	473	473
Atka mackerel	BSAI	57,700	50,000	25,920	16,031	56,500	84,900	25,379	56,500	84,900	25,379
	EAI/BS	n/a	16,900	16,900	8,899	n/a	16,500	16,500	n/a	16,500	16,500
	CAI	n/a	16,000	7,520	7,012	n/a	15,700	7,379	n/a	15,700	7,379
	WAI	n/a	17,100	1,500	120	n/a	16,700	1,500	n/a	16,700	1,500
Skates	BSAI	45,800	38,800	24,000	19,643	44,100	37,300	24,000	44,100	37,300	24,000
Sculpins	BSAI	56,400	42,300	5,600	4,323	56,400	42,300	5,600	56,400	42,300	5,600
Sharks	BSAI	1,360	1,020	100	100	1,360	1,020	150	1,360	1,020	150
Squids	BSAI	2,620	1,970	700	235	2,620	1,970	500	2,620	1,970	500
Octopuses	BSAI	3,450	2,590	500	132	3,450	2,590	500	3,450	2,590	500
Total	BSAI	4,028,465	2,639,317	2,000,000	1,620,216	4,193,257	2,686,688	1,990,481	4,193,257	2,686,688	1,990,481

Advisory Panel Proposed GOA OFL, ABC, and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

Species	Area	2013 OFL	2013 ABC	2013 TAC	2013 Catch	2014 OFL	2014 ABC	2014 TAC	2015 OFL	2015 ABC	2015 TAC
Pollock	W (61)		28,072	28,072	6,173		25,648	25,648		25,648	25,648
	C (62)		51,443	51,443	41,988		47,004	47,004		47,004	47,004
	C (63)		27,372	27,372	11,357		25,011	25,011		25,011	25,011
	WYAK		3,385	3,385	2,917		3,093	3,093		3,093	3,093
	Subtotal	150,817	110,272	110,272	62,435	138,610	100,756	100,756	138,610	100,756	100,756
	EYAK/SEO	14,366	10,774	10,774	0	14,366	10,774	10,774	14,366	10,774	10,774
	Total	165,183	121,046	121,046	62,435	152,976	111,530	111,530	152,976	111,530	111,530
Pacific Cod	W		28,280	21,210	13,587		29,470	22,103		29,470	22,103
	C		49,288	36,966	23,574		51,362	38,522		51,362	38,522
	E		3,232	2,424	313		3,368	2,526		3,368	2,526
	Total	97,200	80,800	60,600	37,474	101,100	84,200	63,150	101,100	84,200	63,150
Sablefish	W		1,750	1,750	1,003		1,641	1,641		1,641	1,641
	C		5,540	5,540	4,285		5,195	5,195		5,195	5,195
	WYAK		2,030	2,030	1,910		1,902	1,902		1,902	1,902
	SEO		3,190	3,190	2,593		2,993	2,993		2,993	2,993
	Total	14,780	12,510	12,510	9,791	13,871	11,731	11,731	13,871	11,731	11,731
Shallow-Water Flatfish	W		19,489	13,250	152		18,033	13,250		18,033	13,250
	C		20,168	18,000	2,962		18,660	18,000		18,660	18,000
	WYAK		4,647	4,647	1		4,299	4,299		4,299	4,299
	EYAK/SEO		1,180	1,180	2		1,092	1,092		1,092	1,092
	Total	55,680	45,484	37,077	3,117	51,580	42,084	36,641	51,580	42,084	36,641
Deep-Water Flatfish	W		176	176	22		176	176		176	176
	C		2,308	2,308	126		2,308	2,308		2,308	2,308
	WYAK		1,581	1,581	4		1,581	1,581		1,581	1,581
	EYAK/SEO		1,061	1,061	3		1,061	1,061		1,061	1,061
	Total	6,834	5,126	5,126	155	6,834	5,126	5,126	6,834	5,126	5,126
Rex Sole	W		1,300	1,300	98		1,287	1,287		1,287	1,287
	C		6,376	6,376	3,129		6,310	6,310		6,310	6,310
	WYAK		832	832	0		823	823		823	823
	EYAK/SEO		1,052	1,052	-		1,040	822		1,040	822
	Total	12,492	9,560	9,560	3,228	12,362	9,460	9,242	12,362	9,460	9,242
Arrowtooth Flounder	W		27,181	14,500	779		26,970	14,500		26,970	14,500
	C		141,527	75,000	13,164		140,424	75,000		140,424	75,000
	WYAK		20,917	6,900	49		20,754	6,900		20,754	6,900
	EYAK/SEO		20,826	6,900	68		20,663	6,900		20,663	6,900
	Total	247,196	210,451	103,300	14,060	245,262	208,811	103,300	245,262	208,811	103,300
Flathead Sole	W		15,729	8,650	569		16,063	8,650		16,063	8,650
	C		26,563	15,400	1,556		27,126	15,400		27,126	15,400
	WYAK		4,686	4,686	0		4,785	4,785		4,785	4,785
	EYAK/SEO		1,760	1,760	-		1,797	1,797		1,797	1,797
	Total	61,036	48,738	30,496	2,125	62,296	49,771	30,632	62,296	49,771	30,632

Advisory Panel Proposed GOA OFL, ABC, and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

Species	Area	2013				2014			2015		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pacific Ocean Perch	W		2,040	2,040	436		2,005	2,005		2,005	2,005
	C		10,926	10,926	8,484		10,740	10,740		10,740	10,740
	WYAK		1,641	1,641	1,537		1,613	1,613		1,613	1,613
	W/C/WYAK	16,838				16,555			16,555		
	SEO	2,081	1,805	1,805	0	2,046	1,775	1,775	2,046	1,775	1,775
	E(subtotal)										
	Total	18,919	16,412	16,412	10,457	18,601	16,133	16,133	18,601	16,133	16,133
Northern Rockfish	W		2,008	2,008	2,164		1,899	1,899		1,899	1,899
	C		3,122	3,122	2,360		2,951	2,951		2,951	2,951
	E		-	-	-		-	-		-	-
	Total	6,124	5,130	5,130	4,524	5,791	4,850	4,850	5,791	4,850	4,850
Shortraker Rockfish	W		104	104	39		104	104		104	104
	C		452	452	376		452	452		452	452
	E		525	525	246		525	525		525	525
	Total	1,441	1,081	1,081	661	1,441	1,081	1,081	1,441	1,081	1,081
Dusky Rockfish	W		377	377	215		354	354		354	354
	C		3,533	3,533	2,597		3,317	3,317		3,317	3,317
	WYAK		495	495	3		465	465		465	465
	EYAK/SEO		295	295	7		277	277		277	277
	Total	5,746	4,700	4,700	2,822	5,395	4,413	4,413	5,395	4,413	4,413
Rougheye and Blackspotted Rockfish	W		81	81	20		83	83		83	83
	C		856	856	385		871	871		871	871
	E		295	295	188		300	300		300	300
	Total	1,482	1,232	1,232	593	1,508	1,254	1,254	1,508	1,254	1,254
Demersal shelf rockfish	Total	487	303	303	209	487	303	303	487	303	303
Thornyhead Rockfish	W		150	150	216		150	150		150	150
	C		766	766	449		766	766		766	766
	E		749	749	221		749	749		749	749
	Total	2,220	1,665	1,665	886	2,220	1,665	1,665	2,220	1,665	1,665
Other Rockfish (Other slope)	W		44	44	194		44	44		44	44
	C		606	606	425		606	606		606	606
	WYAK		230	230	65		230	230		230	230
	EYAK/SEO		3,165	200	44		3,165	200		3,165	200
	Total	5,305	4,045	1,080	728	5,305	4,045	1,080	5,305	4,045	1,080
Atka mackerel	Total	6,200	4,700	2,000	1,241	6,200	4,700	2,000	6,200	4,700	2,000
Big Skate	W		469	469	71		469	469		469	469
	C		1,793	1,793	1,807		1,793	1,793		1,793	1,793
	E		1,505	1,505	61		1,505	1,505		1,505	1,505
	Total	5,023	3,767	3,767	1,939	5,023	3,767	3,767	5,023	3,767	3,767
Longnose Skate	W		70	70	37		70	70		70	70
	C		1,879	1,879	972		1,879	1,879		1,879	1,879
	E		676	676	365		676	676		676	676
	Total	3,500	2,625	2,625	1,374	3,500	2,625	2,625	3,500	2,625	2,625
Other Skates	Total	2,706	2,030	2,030	1,409	2,706	2,030	2,030	2,706	2,030	2,030
Sculpins	GOA-wide	7,614	5,884	5,884	1,241	7,614	5,884	5,884	7,614	5,884	5,884
Sharks	GOA-wide	8,037	6,028	6,028	793	8,037	6,028	6,028	8,037	6,028	6,028
Squids	GOA-wide	1,530	1,148	1,148	147	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148
Octopuses	GOA-wide	1,941	1,455	1,455	191	1,941	1,455	1,455	1,941	1,455	1,455
Total		738,676	595,920	436,255	161,600	723,580	584,094	427,068	723,580	584,094	427,068

Catcher Processor Gulf Bycatch Incentive Program

The catcher processor sector has developed this paper in response to the Council's request for stake holder input concerning an appropriate bycatch incentive program in the Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries. The paper represents the discussions within the sector of possible measures to include in a program. The sector has **not** reached a consensus on these issues. The paper is intended only to show the Council the scope of discussions and the general program structure that the sector believes may beneficially address its bycatch concerns.

Rationale for the program structure - regulatory bycatch measures and cooperative bycatch measures

The Council has clearly indicated that performance-based PSC avoidance measures will be a component of any Gulf trawl bycatch program. The Council has suggested that performance based measures should be administered at the individual vessel level to ensure that all participants undertake efforts to avoid PSC. While the use of individual performance based measures can create effective incentives, if poorly designed, they may not achieve broader objectives. In the development of a performance based program, the Council should take care to avoid creation of individual incentives that might result in poorer PSC performance overall.

Two concerns with individual performance measures should be considered. First, the measures should not deter vessels from sharing information across a fleet to achieve the PSC avoidance. Since the actions to avoid PSC may change over time with fishing conditions (such as hotspots and target concentrations), it is important not only that a fleet share information, but that it develop means for timely information sharing. Measures that create an incentive to withhold bycatch information from others could lead to poorer bycatch performance. While performance-based measures can lead to improved PSC performance, in some cases individual competition arising from those measures can impede the development of PSC improvements leading to poorer overall PSC performance.

Similarly, measures should create an incentive for development of technologies (such as excluders) for PSC avoidance. Past practices have demonstrated that the development of new technologies are most likely if undertaken at the fleet level where costs can be dispersed across several vessels. Given the potential for individual performance based measures to lessen incentives for sharing costs and information to avoid PSC, the Council should consider developing a program that mitigates these effects.

A carefully developed cooperative program can overcome these incentives, while maintaining a meaningful vessel level performance based component. Such a program structure needs to have a fleet level incentive for information sharing that outweighs any disincentive created by the vessel level performance measures. Cooperative programs also have an inherent benefit for information sharing by creating an institutional structure for undertaking that sharing. A program could be developed that rewards cooperative members collectively for acceptable bycatch performance. A cooperative bycatch performance incentive could be created by either an inseason or annual reward for acceptable PSC performance. Such a provision could be a bonus for acceptable PSC performance that is shared pro rata by all cooperative members. An individual performance measure could be imbedded in that structure by giving the best performing individuals a slightly larger share of the cooperative's reward. For example, some percentage of the cooperative's reward could be allocated based on vessel performance. This

performance based incentive would need to be large enough to be meaningful, but small enough not to overshadow the incentive for information sharing.

Using a cooperative structure has an added benefit in that it is flexible. Gulf fisheries are currently a series of overlapping target fisheries. Under a new cooperative structure, it is anticipated that target fishery seasons will be extended, with more overlaps. In addition, PSC avoidance capability is likely to change under the revised program. Relying on a cooperative to set and administer individual incentive provisions is more likely to result in an acceptable incentive structure, since changes in that structure can be made based on experience without regulatory action. Given the lack of experience administering individual performance measures, it is possible that the first effort to define such a measure could be less than perfect. Allowing a cooperative to negotiate and administer the measure would allow for rapid correction of any such errors.

Cooperative administration also can encourage experimentation needed for PSC avoidance developments. PSC avoidance often requires some trial-and-error. At the simplest level, a vessel may do a single tow to determine PSC rates at a particular time and location. Exempting this test tow from a reward system (or at least establishing a system that does not discourage it, is likely necessary to penalize it) is a necessary component of any effective reward system. Regulations establishing penalties and rewards cannot possibly identify this type of experimentation and address the disincentive for their use that may arise from general rules that reward performance.

A80 CP Trawl Co-op management measures for PSC

- ***Possible performance standards and incentives currently under discussion***
    - A80 CP co-op sets performance standards for PSC rates based on actual fishing conditions, past history, and achievability by target fishery (*see halibut rate and mortality Tables in Chapter 4 from Amendment 95 EA for example*) – used for implementing individual performance rewards
    - Incentive measures (*in development*)
    - CPs receive pro-rata share of halibut and salmon, under co-op mgmt., based on agreed upon formula (*TBD*)
    - Possible A80/Rockfish Program cost recovery payments tied to PSC usage (inverse relationship)
- ***Cooperative communication***
    - Monitor PSC by vessel, fishery, time and area
    - Daily call-in to discuss PSC, ongoing communication on grounds
    - Information sharing between sectors, coops
    - Seastate program monitors vessels' fishing locations and bycatch data, and disseminates daily (as in whiting fishery)
- ***Reporting to the Council***
    - Annual Report to Council, detailing bycatch avoidance measures and progress (similar to Seastate presentation on whiting)

- Cooperatives to inform Council on measures taken to date and what's in the pipeline, ie salmon excluders, BS and GOA halibut excluder)

- ***Possible PSC measures***
  - Chinook:
    - 200% observer coverage
    - Video monitoring in factory
    - whole haul instead of basket sampling
    - Seashare program participation
    - genetic sampling for Auke Bay lab
    - use of cameras on headrope and/or along body of net to see where salmon is with respect to water column
    - NMFS cooperative research program on salmon excluder panels
    - Industry experimentation with salmon flaps and panelsVoluntary stand downs
  - Halibut
    - 200% observer coverage
    - Basket sampling
    - Ongoing use and refinement of excluder devices and gear modification
    - EFP for Deck sorting to reduce mortality
    - Cameras on headrope and intermediate
    - Test tows
    - Spread out effort (avoid chumming in halibut)
- ***Gear Development***
  - Continue trawl gear modifications presently in use to reduce bycatch
  - Continue to investigate new gear modifications, camera systems, EM
  - EFP for Halibut Deck Sorting program
  - NMFS cooperative research program on salmon excluders

NMFS Regulatory management changes necessary to reduce footprint, bring greater efficiency to harvesting for resultant reduction in halibut take and mortality

- **Hard cap allocations between sectors**
- **Allocate halibut to each co-op as one aggregate amount**: **not divided into either SW or DW; not divided into 5 seasonal apportionments; not divided between WGOA or CGOA**
  - *Rationale: Captains can fish when target is most aggregated, ie rex sole in the end of April or May, to reduce halibut (conversely may avoid fishing rex sole in May to avoid Chinook)*
- **Enforce MRAs on trip to trip/offload to offload basis**
  - *Rationale: When marketable species which are on MRA "bycatch status" are caught before there is adequate basis species, the amt in excess of the allowable MRA is discarded. However, the vessel will "top off" at the end of the trip to catch that same marketable species. This results in the Captain towing twice in the same area, to catch*

an amt of fish that has been 1) discarded previously in the trip and 2) doubles PSC catch because the same tow is made twice for one total amt of fish.

- **Allow Deck sorting in the Gulf fisheries where feasible**
  - *Rationale: getting halibut off the deck within 20 minutes greatly reduces the mortality. Catcher vessels sort at sea, and have lower mortality as a result. Afford same benefit to CPs (and to the resource). Decreased halibut mortality allows greater arrowtooth harvest which helps to better achieve OY and removes more arrowtooth from the GOA biomass so that halibut have less competition for food.*

Catcher processor program structure

Catcher processor sector members have actively participated in the industry stakeholder discussions with the shoreside sector. The following provisions, elements, and options are patterned after the stakeholder group's submission to the Council to aid in integrating the provisions into a single document in the future. The format, presentation, or absence of competing options for a provision should not be interpreted as suggesting that the sector has reached consensus on any provision.

Sector allocations

Pollock (620/630) – The target fishery shall be prosecuted exclusively by the inshore sector with an ICA set aside for the offshore sector as currently defined by Amendment 23 – offshore sector is regulated through the current MRAs.

Pacific cod (CG) Allocations as currently defined and managed for trawl CP and CV sectors for Western/Central Pacific cod by Amendment 83

CGOA rockfish – Primary, Secondary, PSQ allocations as currently defined by Amendment 88 (the rockfish program)

CGOA Flatfish

Option 1: No allocation
Option 2: Allocate rex sole, arrowtooth, and/or deepwater flatfish (as defined in the TAC sheet) based on:

a) Sector total catch/trawl total catch (allocates entire TAC)
b) Sector total catch/ABC (allocates only a portion of the TAC),
c) Arrowtooth as total/abc

Under either option, sector catch is the trawl catch of eligible LLPs that apply for sector under the program. For CP LLPs that apply for the inshore sector, any catch of the vessel (including catch processed onboard) will count toward the LLP's allocation. For CP LLPs that apply for the offshore sector, only catch that is processed onboard will count toward the LLP's allocation.

Based on sector catches from:

Option 1: 2010-2012
Option 2: 2008-2012

Option 3: 2003-2012
Option 4: 1998-2004

WGOA rockfish

Option 1: No allocation
Option 2: Allocate Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish to the offshore sector based on A80 sideboards for Pacific ocean perch and northern rockfish with the remainder allocated to the inshore. For dusky rockfish recalculate A80 sideboard based on catches of dusky alone. Black rockfish, blue rockfish, and dark dusky, yelloweye, and widow rockfish were removed from pelagic shelf rockfish complex since implementation of the sideboards and are now managed by the State of Alaska.

WYak rockfish

Option 1: No allocation
Option 2: Allocate Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish to the offshore sector based on A80 sideboards for Pacific ocean perch and northern rockfish with the remainder allocated to the inshore For dusky rockfish recalculate A80 sideboard based on catches of dusky only, since black rockfish, blue rockfish, and dark dusky rockfish were removed from pelagic shelf rockfish complex and are now managed by the State of Alaska

Sablefish - (excluding CGOA rockfish program sablefish allocation)
Long-nose skate
Big skate
Other species could be allocated after consideration of data and circumstances.

2 Sector PSC Apportionments

3.1 Halibut

The annual PSC limit will be apportioned between the following sectors and areas:

Offshore sector Gulfwide

Allocations to each sector/area will be based on relative historical PSC usage from:

Option 1: 2010-2012
Option 2: 2008-2012
Option 3: 2003-2012
Option 4: 1998-2004
Option 5: Allocation to the offshore sector will be based on the Amendment 80 sideboards, plus the history of any qualifying vessel the history of which is not included in the Amendment 80 sideboard.

3.2 Chinook

Apportionment to the inshore and offshore sectors will be based on the current apportionment to the pollock fishery and Council's June 2013 motion.

A review of Amendment 80 and Central Gulf rockfish program sideboards may be appropriate.

Catcher processor cooperative program

Eligible catcher processors

Those A80 vessels, and their replacement vessels, defined by Column A of Table 31 CFR part 679, and the LLP currently issued to them.

Allocation of groundfish history and apportionment of PSC limits within the catcher processor sector

Target species:

All allocations from the Central Gulf rockfish program will be maintained (including primary, secondary and PSC).

For distribution of allocations within the catcher processor sector other allocated target species , catch history is based on total catch during the qualifying period, with each eligible license receiving history based on catch of the vessel it is assigned to relative to the total catch of all vessels in the sector. All history will be attributed to the LLP license identified by the vessel owner at the time of implementation. To assign history to a license, that license must have gear, operation type, and area endorsements permitting that history.

Allow offload to offload MRA management for certain species when on bycatch status, to minimize regulatory discards:

Options: pollock, cod, other non-allocated species as determined

Note: Cod management needs special consideration because of the small allocation to the sector.

Halibut PSC:

Apportionment of halibut to LLP licenses under the Central Gulf rockfish program will continue as prescribed by that program.

The remainder of the sector's PSC will be apportioned within the sector to the following target species:

Pacific cod

Rex sole

Arrowtooth flounder

WGOA and WYAK rockfish

(A complete list of species should be developed after examining PSC usage and rates)

based on the average use of halibut PSC in each target species within the CP sector from the years ____, expressed as a percent of the total halibut PSC allocation to the sector (i.e., same general allocation system used for A80).

Each eligible license will then be assigned a share of the sector's available halibut PSC based on its catch of those target species equal to its proportion of the sector's qualified catch history of the target species. (Note – Halibut PSC apportionments may be made for targets that are not allocated under this program.)

Chinook PSC:

The sector's Chinook PSC will be apportioned within the sector to the following target species:

Central Gulf Rockfish (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish) in the aggregate

Western Gulf rockfish (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish) in the aggregate

Pacific cod

Rex sole

Arrowtooth flounder

(A complete list of species should be developed after examining PSC usage and rates)

based on the average use of Chinook PSC in each target species from the years ____, expressed as a percent of the total Chinook PSC allocation to the sector.

Each eligible license will then be assigned a share of the sector's available Chinook PSC based on its catch of those target species equal to its proportion of the sector's qualified catch history of the target species. (Note – Chinook PSC apportionments may be made for targets that are not allocated under this program.)

The PSC apportionments will not change from year to year (i.e., will not fluctuate annually with target TACs).

Catch history used for allocation and eligibility purposes will be legal and documented catch. For the catcher processor sector WPR data shall be used to determine catch.

Cooperative provisions for the catcher processor sector

No later than November 1 of each year, an application must be filed with NOAA fisheries by the cooperative with a membership list for the year.

In order to operate as a cooperative, membership must be comprised of:

At least ____ separate entities (using the 10% AFA rule) and

At least _____% of the eligible LLP licenses.

Annually, each cooperative will receive allocations of each allocated target species equal to its members' LLPs aggregate share of the sector's target species allocation.

Annually, each cooperative will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to its members' LLPs aggregate share of the sector's halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively.

Annual allocations would be to the cooperative and will be transferable within the cooperative among its members without NOAA Fisheries approval.

Annual allocations to the cooperative will be transferable among Gulf catcher processor cooperatives.

Inter-cooperative transfers must be processed and approved by NOAA Fisheries.

The cooperative(s) would need to show evidence of binding private contracts and remedies for violations of contractual agreements would need to be provided to NOAA Fisheries. The cooperative would need to demonstrate adequate mechanism for monitoring and reporting prohibited species and groundfish catch. Participants in the cooperative would need to agree to abide by all cooperative rules and requirements. Cooperative members are jointly and severally responsible for cooperative vessels harvesting in the aggregate no more than their cooperative's allocation of target species and PSC mortality.

CP annual cooperative allocations may be transferred to CV cooperatives.

All transfers of annual cooperative allocations would be temporary, and history would revert to the original LLP at the beginning of the next year.

Permit post-delivery transfers of cooperative quota (annual allocations to cooperatives)

There would be no limits on the number or magnitude of post-delivery transfers. All post-delivery transfers must be completed by December 31st.

<u>Catcher processor limited access fishery</u>

The catcher processor limited access fishery is prosecuted by eligible catcher processor LLP participants who elect not to be in a cooperative.

Annually, the catcher processor limited access fishery will be allocated a share of the sector's allocation of each allocated target species equal the aggregate share of all LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative.

Annually, the catcher processor limited access fishery will receive allocations of halibut and Chinook PSC equal to __ percent of the aggregate share of the sector's halibut and Chinook PSC apportionments, respectively, of LLPs that are not assigned to a cooperative. Note: this provision is used to create an incentive for cooperative membership and participating in the PSC reduction measures required of cooperatives.

The catcher processor limited access fishery will be subject to all current regulations including all seasonal and deepwater/shallowwater complex fishery regulations and restrictions of the LLP and MRA limitations.

All vessels participating in the Gulf catcher processor fisheries will need to have an eligible catcher processor LLP with the appropriate gear, operation type, and area endorsement assigned to the vessel at the time of fishing.

Permanent transfers of an eligible license and its associated catch history would be allowed. Eligible LLP licenses and their associated catch history and eligibility endorsements would not be separable or divisible.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Certified: Dan Benda
Date: 12/6/13

REPORT
of the
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE
to the
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 30th – October 1st, 2013

The SSC met from September 30th through October 1st at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage AK.

Members present were:

Pat Livingston, Chair *NOAA Fisheries—AFSC*	Robert Clark, Vice Chair *Alaska Department of Fish and Game*	Jennifer Burns *University of Alaska Anchorage*
Alison Dauble *Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*	Sherri Dressel *Alaska Department of Fish and Game*	Anne Hollowed *NOAA Fisheries—AFSC*
George Hunt *University of Washington*	Gordon Kruse *University of Alaska Fairbanks*	Seth Macinko *University of Rhode Island*
Steve Martell *Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission*	Franz Mueter *University of Alaska Fairbanks*	Lew Queirolo *NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Region*
Terry Quinn *University of Alaska Fairbanks*	Kate Reedy-Maschner *Idaho State University Pocatello*	Farron Wallace *NOAA Fisheries—AFSC*

C-1(b) Observer Program 2014 deployment plan
A presentation was given by Craig Faunce (NMFS-AFSC) on the NMFS Annual Deployment Plan (ADP) for the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program in 2014. Public testimony was provided by Bob Alverson (FVOA).

The SSC appreciates the extensive work done to initiate the revised observer program in 2013 and to develop the draft 2014 ADP. For years, the SSC has pointed out the bias that may occur by not placing observers on vessels according to a random sampling design. The new observer program has finally addressed this problem although several issues remain.

The 2014 deployment plan provides details on the deployment that attempts to obtain observation rates that constrain program costs and provide sample sizes for precisely observing catches at sea and dockside for groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands. The draft 2014 ADP also provides an initial review of successes and challenges of implementing the ADP based on data from a portion of the 2013 season. This will be an ongoing process to improve the program.

The SSC looks forward to a complete performance review of the 2013 season along with an evaluation of the efficiency of the current sample design with respect to coverage of catch and bycatch. A standard

set of performance measures should be developed for the purpose of evaluating how well the observer program is meeting its objectives (precision and accuracy of estimating catch, bycatch, and catch of prohibited species, collection of biological information, and ability to fulfill assigned tasks, including special projects).The review should also highlight any changes in the magnitude of sampling rates of harvests and other harvesting characteristics (such as discard rates) that deviate significantly from years prior to implementing the revised program.

Additional SSC comments on the 2014 ADP are:

- The revised Chinook salmon genetics sampling design for the GOA appears to be well suited for the fisheries in the GOA. This revised design should result in many more genetic samples taken at a lower cost than the Pella-Geiger sampling design, which was developed for systematically sampling a 100% observed bycatch of Chinook salmon in the BSAI.
- The trip selection process appears to be working well with respect to the implementation of a random sample of trips. The SSC recommends addressing the potential problems associated with self-selecting the order of trips and the ability of captains to opt out of carrying an observer without apparent penalty in a future ADP. There was also a potential bias detected in 2013 as it appears that trips delivering to tenders are not being observed. **This omission needs to be addressed with a regulatory change as soon as possible.**
- **Problems with the vessel selection process need to be addressed in the next ADP.** The registry of vessels to be potentially selected is based on prior year fishing activity, leading to potential bias in the selection of vessels to be observed. Perhaps a pre-registration system for vessels that will be fishing in the coming year could be implemented to resolve this sampling issue.
- Further research is needed on the use of EM technology as an auditing tool to reduce the "observer effect" (the alteration of harvesting behavior when an observer is onboard).
- Observer program personnel could look at other observer programs from around to world to see how they deal with the observer effect.
- Now that small vessels are being observed, an analysis should be conducted to compare the spatial distribution of catch and bycatch with that of larger boats.
- A list of vessels that opt out of observer coverage and their reasons for opting out could be maintained and published to determine representativeness of sampling.

C-3 BSAI Crab Management

Diana Stram (NPFMC) presented the Crab Plan Team report and sections of the Crab SAFE. There was no public testimony. The SSC reviewed the SAFE chapters and information provided by the Plan Team with respect to the stock status information from 2012/2013 relative to total catch in that time period (Table 1). The SSC notes that no stock was subject to overfishing in 2012/2013. In addition, Tables 2 and 3 contain the SSC recommendations for 2013/2014 catch specifications.

Table 1. Stock status of BSAI crab stocks in relation to status determination criteria for 2012/13. Values are in thousand metric tons (kt).

Chapter	Stock	Tier	MSST	B_{MSY} or $B_{MSYproxy}$	2012/13 MMB	2012/13 MMB / MMB_{MSY}	2012/13 OFL	2012/13 Total catch	Rebuilding Status
1	EBS snow crab	3	77.1	154.2	170.1	1.10	67.8	32.4	
2	BB red king crab	3	13.19	26.4	29.05	1.10	7.96	3.90	
3	EBS Tanner crab	3	16.77	33.54	59.35	1.77	19.02	0.71	
4	Pribilof Islands red king crab	4	2.61	5.22	4.03	0.77	0.90	0.013	
5	Pribilof Islands blue king crab	4	1.99	3.98	0.58	0.15	0.00116	0.00061	overfished
6	St. Matthew Island blue king crab	4	1.8	3.6	2.85	0.79	1.02 [total male catch]	0.82 [total male catch]	
7	Norton Sound red king crab	4	0.8	1.6	2.08	1.30	0.24	0.21	
8	AI golden king crab	5					5.69	3.12	
9	Pribilof Islands golden king crab	5					0.09	Conf.	
10	Adak red king crab	5					0.054	0.001	

MMB as estimated during this assessment for 2012/13 as of 2/15/2013.

Table 2. Maximum permissible ABCs for 2013/14 and SSC recommended ABCs for those stocks where the SSC recommendation is below the maximum permissible ABC as defined by Amendment 38 to the Crab FMP. Bold indicates where SSC recommendations differ from Crab Plan Team recommendations. Values are in thousand metric tons (kt).

Stock	Tier	2013/14 *Max*ABC	2013/14 ABC
EBS Snow Crab	3a	78.03	70.30
BBRKC	3b	7.07	6.36
Tanner Crab	3a	25.31	17.82
PIRKC	4b	0.759	0.718
PIBKC	4c	0.00116	0.00104
SMBKC	4b	1.23	0.45
Norton Sound RKC	**4a**	**0.26**	**0.24**
Adak red king crab	5	0.05	0.03

Table 3. SSC recommendations for 2013/2014 (stocks 1-7). Note that recommendations for stocks 7-10 represent those final values recommended by the SSC in June 2013. Bold indicates where SSC recommendations differ from September 2013 Crab Plan Team recommendations. Note diagonal fill indicated parameters not applicable for that tier level. Values are in thousand metric tons (kt).

Chapter	Stock	Tier	Status (a,b,c)	F_{OFL}	B_{MSY} or $B_{MSYproxy}$	Years[1] (biomass or catch)	2013/14[2] [3] MMB	2013 MMB / MMB_{MSY}	γ	Mortality (M)	2013/14 OFL	2013/14 ABC
1	EBS snow crab	3	a	1.58	154.2	1979-current [recruitment]	157.6	1.02		0.23(females) 0.386 (imm) 0.2613 (mat males)	78.1	70.3
2	BB red king crab	3	b	0.29	26.4	1984-current [recruitment]	25.0	0.95		0.18 default Estimated[4]	7.07	6.36
3	EBS Tanner crab	3	a	0.73	33.54	1982-current [recruitment]	59.4	1.77		0.34 (females), 0.25 (mat males), 0.247 (imm males and females)	25.35	17.82
4	Pribilof Islands red king crab	4	b	0.16	5.16	1991-current	4.68	0.91	1.0	0.18	0.90	0.72
5	Pribilof Islands blue king crab	4	c	0	3.99	1980-1984 1990-1997	0.28	0.07	1.0	0.18	0.00116	0.00104
6	St. Matthew Island blue king crab	4	b	0.18	3.1	1978-current	3.01	0.98	1.0	0.18	0.56 [total male catch]	0.45 [total male catch]
7	Norton Sound red king crab	4	**a**	**0.18**	**1.86**	1980-current [model estimate]	**2.27**	**1.22**	1.0	0.18 0.68 (>123 mm)	**0.26** [total male]	**0.24** [total male]
8	AI golden king crab	5				See intro chapter					5.69	5.12
9	Pribilof Island golden king crab	5				See intro chapter					0.09	0.08
10	Adak red king crab	5				1995/96–2007/08					0.05	0.03

[1] For Tiers 3 and 4 where B_{MSY} or $B_{MSYproxy}$ is estimable, the years refer to the time period over which the estimate is made. For Tier 5 stocks it is the years upon which the catch average for OFL is obtained.
[2] MMB as projected for 2/15/2014 at time of mating.
[3] Model mature biomass on 7/1/2013
[4] Additional mortality males, two periods: 1980-1985; 1968-1979 and 1986-2013. Females, three periods: 1980-1984; 1976-1979; 1985-1993 and 1968-1975; 1994-2013. See assessment mortality rates associated with these time periods.

Snow Crab

Jack Turnock (NMFS-AFSC) presented results from this year's snow crab assessment. Survey estimates of both male and female biomass, as well as base model estimates of MMB at mating, decreased in 2012/13 compared to the previous year. The model structure of this year's base model differs from the September 2012 assessment in two ways: discard mortality was changed to 30%, and new growth data from Somerton (2012) was fit by sex within the model to estimate parameters of a linear growth function. Three alternative scenarios were explored. Model 2 used the new growth data but a 50% discard mortality as in previous years, while models 3 and 4 used the old growth data (with priors on growth parameters and a common intercept for both sexes) with a 30% and 50% discard mortality, respectively.

The SSC concurs with the CPT to use the base model for specification purposes for 2013/14, although we share CPT concerns over the poor fit to the female growth data. **Results from the assessment place the EBS snow crab stock in Tier 3a, with a mature male biomass at mating in 2013/14 that was estimated to remain above the current proxy for B_{MSY} ($B_{35\%}$ = 154.2 kt).** The SSC had some concerns over the current stock status. After a substantial increase in biomass in 2010/11 and 2011/12, both survey and model estimates of biomass have dropped substantially in the last two years and the model estimate is currently projected to stay just above $B_{35\%}$. This drop occurred in spite of conservative harvest levels and favorable environmental conditions for young crab (cold bottom temperatures). Earlier surveys, particularly in 2009/10, suggested a large pulse of small crab was entering the population, but the anticipated strong recruitment failed to materialize. For these reasons, and because of the continuing concerns over how growth is modeled, **we concur with the CPT recommendation to use a 10% buffer to set the ABC below maximum permissible. This results in an OFL for 2013/14 - as determined by the $F_{35\%}$ control rule - of 78.1 kt (172.1 million lb) and an ABC of 70.3 kt (154.9 million lb).**

The SSC further endorses the Plan Team recommendations for improving the stock assessment as listed in CPT minutes and offers some additional suggestions. The SSC recommended in June 2013 to use a "best" estimate of discard mortality in addition to discard mortalities of 0.5 and 0.3. Based on their review of available information on discard mortality, the CPT recommended 0.3 as a "best" estimate; however, their estimate is still based on the maximum short-term mortality estimate and maximum injury rate, multiplied by 1.5 to account for unknown long-term mortality. The assumed level of discard mortality has a substantial impact on reference points (e.g. $F_{35\%}$) and the SSC re-iterates its request from June 2013 to develop a "best" estimate of total handling mortality derived by adding the average annual short-term estimate (0.04) to the average injury rate, and multiplying the result by a factor corresponding to the best guess of additional long-term mortality.

The CPT and SSC previously recommended a 2-piece growth function, but the model failed to converge, hence a linear growth model by sex is used in the current assessment, using the growth data recommended by Somerton (2012). The model is reasonably consistent with observed male growth but not with observed female growth. The SSC recommends that the authors further examine how to best parameterize growth in the model to achieve a better fit to the growth data, maybe using a simple curvilinear or non-linear model rather than the suggested two-piece model.

Additional minor comments on the assessment follow:

- Some figures (e.g. Figure 4) have mis-labeled lines and there is a discrepancy between the units in the figure legend and in the y-axis label.
- The paragraph on the centroids of the cold pool in the middle of the section on "Mating ratio and reproductive success" is out of place and should be moved.

Bristol Bay Red King Crab

This assessment was based on six alternative model scenarios. The base model for the alternatives, Scenario 0, was identical to the Scenario 7ac model used in the 2012 assessment, except that it was updated using the 2013 survey and 2012/13 fishery data, and used NMFS length-weight relationships. The author explored alternative ways to estimate effective sample sizes and molting probabilities. The SSC agrees with the author's and Plan Team's recommendation to use the proposed new methods for estimating effective sample size and molting probability. The author also explored the implications of alternative start dates (i.e., start in 1975, Scenario 1) and the incorporation of length / sex composition and survey biomass estimates from the BSFRF survey (Scenario 4). In response to an SSC request, the authors implemented a random walk approach for estimating natural mortality to evaluate the evidence for time blocks of high natural mortality. The SSC appreciates the responsiveness of the author to Plan Team and SSC requests. The SSC agrees with the Plan Team recommendation to use Scenario 4 as the basis for 2013/14 harvest specifications. The SSC agrees with the author that the results from Scenario 7 were informative and indicate that further exploration of the time blocks used for estimating elevated natural mortality is needed.

The SSC appreciates the author's consideration of breakpoints for estimation of biological reference points. This year's assessment contains a detailed statistical evaluation of the stock recruitment relationships. The authors provided several lines of evidence to support their selection of the 1984-2012 time period. **The SSC agrees with the author's recommendation for use of this time period for estimation of reference points for 2013/14.**

The author was responsive to SSC and Plan Team requests to conduct retrospective analyses. The previous evidence for overestimation at the end of the time series appears to be less evident in the new model.

The SSC accepts the OFL recommendations of the Plan Team. Based on the results of Scenario 4, the stock is in Tier 3b resulting in an OFL of 7.07 kt (15.58 million pounds).

The SSC agrees with the Plan Team that a 10% uncertainty buffer should be applied to determine ABC. The rationale for this decision is the lack of small crab in the survey since 2008. While the 2011 survey showed a very high catch of crab <60 mm CL at a single station, this high catch did not track into the 2012 or 2013 surveys.

The SSC accepts the ABC recommendations of the Plan Team. Based on the results of Scenario 4, the stock is in Tier 3b resulting in an ABC of 6.36 kt (14.02 million pounds).

Recommended research:

1. Shifts in the center of distribution of BBRKC can be a function of depletion of the stock, the crab closure area, shifts in larval drift, habitat selection, or fishing. The interpretation of which of these potential causes contributes to the selection of a time period should be investigated.
2. We suggest that the authors work with flatfish authors to come up with a consistent approach to treatment of biomass outside of the survey area.
3. Further study of maturity is needed.
4. The SSC suggests a re-evaluation of predation pressure on BBRKC.
5. The Plan Team should investigate the impact of dropping hotspots as per the CIE review.
6. The Plan Team should investigate the impact of corner stations for hotspots as per the CIE review.
7. The Plan Team should investigate the impact of re-tows as per the CIE review.

Tanner Crab

With the acceptance of a new stock assessment model last year, the Tanner crab assessment was shifted in 2012 from Tier 4 to Tier 3, which resulted in a significant reduction in B_{MSY}. As a consequence, this stock

was found to no longer be overfished and was declared to be rebuilt in 2012. However, despite the specification of an ABC, the fishery remained closed this year owing to the State of Alaska harvest strategy.

The 2013 Tanner Crab assessment is clearly written. The SSC appreciates the summary of changes and detailed responses to previous Crab Plan Team and SSC comments. The model code was modified to improve user friendliness, computational speed, and presentation of output. Also, a few coding errors were discovered and corrected. Impacts of model coding fixes are clearly shown in tables and figures and the net effects are relatively minor. Several extant Crab Plan Team and SSC comments have not yet been addressed and the SSC looks forward to the progress on those in the next assessment. The Crab Plan Team again highlighted some of those in their report.

The SSC agrees with the authors' and team's recommendation to use Model 01 (based on the 2012 base model including fixes to known errors in model code) for this year's specifications. Last year, the SSC recommended adoption of a 3-year stair-step strategy to transition from the lower ABCs resulting from the previous assessment to the higher ABCs indicated by the 2012 assessment. Application of this stair step resulted in an ABC of 8.17 kt for 2012/2013. In this year's assessment, the authors noted that, if the third and final step were to be applied with a 10% buffer, the ABC would equate to a 40% harvest rate. The authors further noted that rates of this magnitude were associated with stock collapses during the history of this fishery. Owing to these concerns, the authors recommended re-starting the stair step transition at the first step (8 kt) for 2013/2014. The Crab Plan Team recommended continuing with the SSC approach and implementing the second step for 2013/2014, which would equate to an ABC of 17.82 kt. However, in so doing, the Plan Team also expressed concern about the uncertainty in this stock assessment and the stock status. The Plan Team indicated that they will reevaluate their ABC recommendations next year, rather than automatically applying the final stair step.

The SSC agrees with the Crab Plan Team's recommendation to apply the second stair step for setting OFL and ABC for 2013/2014. In doing so, the SSC noted that the State of Alaska harvest policy will reduce the TAC by 50% if a fishery is opened, given that next year will be the first year of a resumed fishery after a period of closure. So, there is an additional large buffer between ABC and TAC for 2013/2014. This will not be the case for 2014/2015.

Over the long term, the SSC shares the author's and team's concerns about the control rule used to set OFL and ABC for Tanner crab and looks forward to additional advice from the authors and team in next year's assessment. The SSC recommends conducting a management strategy evaluation (MSE) to determining the long-term consequences of alternative harvest rates on stock status and yield under various sources of uncertainty. The SSC understands that a MSE may not be feasible in the coming year, especially given additional planned work on the assessment model.

The Crab Plan Team provided a number of recommendations to the stock assessment authors, which the SSC supports. The SSC continues to note that some retrospective patterns in model estimated biomass remain. For instance, the model under-estimates the decline in male and females in the survey in the mid-1980s and overestimates them in recent years. On the other hand, legal males appear to be overestimated in recent years. There are patterns in other residuals. The SSC continues to encourage alternative model specifications to address these patterns. Possibly, inclusion of a time-varying growth function may address some of those retrospective patterns, as pointed out in previous comments. New growth studies on EBS Tanner crab remains a very high priority.

The SSC greatly appreciates the author's additional work on break-point analyses shown in the Appendix that largely address the SSC's previous comments on this matter. Two candidate periods for break points were identified: 1974-1975 and 1983-1987. The former was interpreted as a decrease in productivity,

whereas the latter was interpreted as an increase in density-dependent mortality. The team discounted the latter and pointed out that the 1974-1975 change point was quite similar to the 1976-1977 regime shift recommended by the SSC on an interim basis. This results in the use of recruitments from 1982 onwards for purposes of MSY estimation. However, as noted by the authors and team, the break point analysis did not lead to a compelling reason to differ from the regime shift-based break point recommended by the SSC. **Given this, the SSC continues to support the use of recruitments since 1982 for purposes of computing B_{MSY}.** The author listed additional work to be conducted on this topic in the future. The SSC looks forward to any new findings that may shed more light on this topic.

Finally, the SSC encourages the authors to continue to review model code for any lingering errors, and also encourages a thorough review and re-compilation of all data sources. The team raised some questions about the validity of the size composition data used in the assessment, however it would be wise to check and verify all data used in the assessment.

Pribilof Islands Red King Crab

The fishery for red king crab in the Pribilof Islands district has been closed since 1999 due to concerns about low abundance, imprecise biomass estimates, and bycatch of Pribilof Islands blue king crab, which are classified as overfished. Fishing mortality since the closure of the directed fishery has been limited to incidental catches in other crab fisheries and in groundfish fisheries. The SSC supports the CPT recommendation to continue using the same base years as used previously (1991 to the current year) for determination of B_{MSY} for the Pribilof Islands red king crab stock. **The SSC also supports a Tier 4b designation for this stock, noting that the estimate of mature male biomass (MMB; 4.68 kt) is below B_{MSY} (5.16 kt). As in 2012, estimates of MMB were calculated in the assessment as a 3-year weighted moving average, centered on the current year and weighted by the inverse variance. Under the Tier 4b designation, the OFL for 2013/2014 is 0.90 kt.**

The SSC agrees with the CPT recommendation to include additional uncertainty ($\sigma_b = 0.4$) when calculating the ABC using the P* approach, resulting in an ABC of 0.72 kt. The SSC's support for this approach is based in large part on the recognition that the brief history of exploitation of this stock makes it difficult to identify an appropriate period of time suitable for establishing B_{MSY}, such that the true distribution of the OFL is poorly known. The SSC notes that large cohorts of young crab have not been observed since the mid-2000s and that estimates of bycatch in the groundfish fisheries were higher in 2012/13 than in previous years.

The SSC appreciates the author's responses to requests for CVs in tables of abundance estimates and confidence intervals in the table of weighted moving average estimates of abundance, and appreciates the improved estimates of discard catch for 2009/10-2012/13 based on a new methodology using State reporting areas.

Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab

Retained catches for Pribilof Island blue king crab have not occurred since 1998/1999. Improved estimates of discard catch were calculated for 2009/10-2012/13 based on a new methodology using State reporting areas. Bycatch and discards have been steady or decreasing in recent years, but increased in the trawl fishery for 2012/13.

In this assessment, survey biomass estimates were updated to include an additional 20 nm strip on the eastern portion of the Pribilof District due to the change in the stock boundary. Stock biomass estimates decreased by more than 50% from 2012 to 2013, but the uncertainty in biomass estimates is extremely high due to low survey catches. Following the approach in the 2012 assessment, biomass estimates were based on a 3-year weighted average, centered on the current year and weighted by the inverse of the variance. The projected

mature male biomass (MMB) decreased substantially in this assessment, from 0.58 kt in 2012/13 to 0.28 kt in 2013/14, and remained well below the minimum stock size threshold.

The SSC supports the CPT and author recommendations for management of Pribilof Islands blue king crab under Tier 4c to reflect the conservation concerns with this stock and to acknowledge the existing non-directed bycatch mortality. Following the advice of the CPT, **the SSC recommends a modified Tier 5 calculation of average catch mortalities between 1999/2000 and 2005/2006, resulting in a total catch OFL of 0.00116 kt. Similarly, the SSC supports using a 10 percent buffer for the ABC calculation, resulting in an ABC_{max} of 0.00104 kt.** The SSC discussed using a more conservative buffer (e.g., 20%) to further reduce the ABC due to concerns over the status of the Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock, but continues to recommend the 10% buffer for 2013/14. **The Pribilof blue king crab stock is overfished; however, overfishing did not occur during the 2012/2013 season.**

The MSY stock size (B_{MSY}) is based on mature male biomass at the time of mating (MMB_{mating}), which serves as an approximation for egg production. The MMB for 2013/14 was estimated at 0.28 kt. For 2012/2013, $B_{MSYproxy}$ = 3.99 kt of MMB_{mating} derived as the mean MMB from 1980 to 1984 and 1990 to 1997. The stock demonstrated highly variable levels of MMB during both of these periods. Compared to other BSAI crab stocks, the uncertainty associated with the biomass estimates for Pribilof Islands blue king crab is very high due to insufficient data and the small distribution of the stock relative to the survey sampling density, likely leading to uncertain approximations of B_{MSY}.

A revised rebuilding plan was approved by the Council in June 2012 and was submitted for review by the Secretary of Commerce in early 2013. The revised rebuilding plan closes the Pribilof Habitat Conservation Zone to Pacific cod pot fishing.

Saint Matthew Island Blue King Crab

The author evaluated 11 alternative model configurations against the base model first used to provide harvest specifications in 2012. Alternative model configurations differed in their treatment of M, weighting of trawl survey and pot survey size-compositions, and trawl survey selectivity by crab stage. The author also provided a preliminary evaluation of a stage-transition matrix based on the growth study of Otto and Cummiskey (1990) on Pribilof and St. Matthew Island blue king crab. Results from alternative model scenarios do not provide a compelling reason to switch models. **Thus both the author and CPT recommended continued use of the base model for the 2013 harvest specifications using Tier 4b. The SSC agrees and also concurs with the team's recommendation to set the ABC to be 20% below the OFL instead of the more usual 10%.** The use of a larger buffer is recommended due to large uncertainty in stock abundance estimates owing to a retrospective pattern. With each year's new assessment, there is a decline in the estimates of abundance in prior years, suggesting that the stock is in poorer condition than the current-year model indicates. Additionally, there is a declining trend in abundance coupled to very large CVs in trawl survey estimates in recent years. In combination, these factors lead to higher than usual uncertainty in current year biomass estimates for this declining stock.

For next year's assessment, the SSC encourages the stock assessment author to focus on addressing the retrospective bias in the current assessment and offers the following recommendations:

- Develop a likelihood profile over a large range of Ms and provide diagnostics on model fits. Misspecification of M can lead to biases in abundance estimates.
- As suggested by the team, further work on a biologically defensible age-transition matrix may be fruitful. Alternative models should be developed using this approach.
- Investigate all other model assumptions to evaluate their potential contribution to the retrospective pattern.

Norton Sound Red King Crab

The lead author, Toshihide Hamazaki (ADF&G), was available to answer questions on this assessment. In June 2013 the Crab Plan Team and SSC recommended that the assessment model be used to calculate ABC and OFL, and ABC and OFL values were determined for 2013-2014 because there is no survey for this stock. It was also recommended that the assessment schedule be changed from July 1 – June 30 to November 1 – October 31 to better accommodate the summer fishery.

Thus, an updated assessment was completed for this meeting to commence the new schedule. Updated data included the 2013 summer commercial fishery catch, the 2012/2013 winter commercial fishery catch, and standardized CPUE data with the 2013 summer commercial fishery observer data. Revised data included time series of the historical winter total subsistence catch (now including mortality of discards) and crab abundance estimates from the 1976-1991 NMFS survey (re-estimated from the original survey data). The model was revised to start in February instead of July. Some other minor changes were also made. Assessment results now calculate retained OFL and ABC for both winter (including subsistence) and summer fisheries.

The assessment authors had only about two weeks to complete the stock assessment and SAFE document, because CPUE data were not available until the end of summer. Initial results from the full model that used all the data were puzzling, showing very high recruitment in 2013, and resulting in very high projected legal biomass in 2014 (almost double that of the previous year). The authors then conducted a reduced model run without the 2013 observer data, which resulted in a slight decline in projected legal biomass in 2014.

The authors checked that the change of assessment schedule did not have an effect. There were no differences in fits to all data sources between the full model and the reduced model. Almost all parameter estimates and their standard errors (SE's) were similar. The exception was the last recruitment parameter, which was estimated to be 4.5 million in 2013 in the full model (more than twice as high as the next largest estimate) and 0.646 million in 2013 in the reduced model (lower than average; Table 12). The uncertainty (SE) for log recruitment in 2013 in the full model was 1.1, and it was higher in the reduced model (SE = 7.0; Table 11). The authors examined the observer data from 2013 in great detail and found nothing that would indicate an error in data collection. Over 50% of the sublegal crab were in the smallest length class, the highest percentage on record (Table 7). This apparent large recruitment event seems at odds with declining fishery CPUE; fishery CPUE in 2013 was the lowest of the past 12 years.

The Crab Plan Team chose the reduced model because it did not find the 2013 recruitment estimate to be credible. The SSC declined to follow this course because it could find no reason to reject the data, which was collected according to normal protocols. Instead, it encourages the stock assessment authors to further examine the data and stock assessment model to see if better understanding of the effect of the 2013 observer data can be found by the time of the next assessment cycle in May/June 2014. In addition, the SSC requests a sensitivity analysis of data weighting, with consideration of recent recruitment events. Effectively, this will put off the change in the assessment cycle until next year. Also, there will be a trawl survey next year that should help reconcile data conflicts and should substantially reduce the uncertainty in the 2013 recruitment estimate.

In the absence of an accepted model from this new assessment, the SSC recommends using the assessment results from June 2013. This places Norton Sound RKC in Tier 4a, with an ABC of 0.24 kt and an OFL of 0.26 kt.

Pribilof Island Golden King Crab

This is a Tier 5 stock and it is not possible to determine stock status; therefore, it is unknown if the stock is overfished. Due to the limited number of participants in this fishery, catch information is confidential;

however, the author does indicate that the total catch did not exceed the OFL of 0.20 million lb. The OFL for 2014 was calculated as 90.7 t (0.20 million lb), and the ABC is based on a 10% buffer at 81.6 t (0.18 million lb). **The SSC supports the CPT recommendation of a 10% buffer to set the ABC below the maximum permissible.**

This year the assessment author also prepared an appendix proposing a Tier 4 biomass calculation for catch specifications. The crab plan team reviewed this appendix and recommends that alternative OFL and ABC specifications based on this approach be included in the 2014 assessment. **The SSC recommends including any auxiliary trend information that can be used to support Tier 4 recommendations.**

Adak Red King Crab

The CPT discussed the Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals to establish an Adak red king crab district in order to prosecute a proposed red king crab fishery in the AI. The SSC agreed with the comments and concerns raised during the CPT discussion regarding these proposals and their associated implications for Adak red king crab management.

Economic SAFE

A brief presentation of the Economic SAFE was provided by Diana Stram (NPFMC) on behalf of the AFSC Social and Economic Program staff. The subject SAFE is nicely presented, including interesting reporting on price projection modeling efforts. **The SSC believes it would be very valuable if the authors of the Economic SAFE report(s) could be present during the annual Council meeting cycle to provide the SSC with the opportunity to formally interact with them.** Over several consecutive years, the SSC has not received a "formal" presentation of the Economic SAFE, either for crab or groundfish. This puts the SSC at a disadvantage in conducting a meaningful review, as questions cannot be asked of the analyst, nor can recommendations be offered.

The SSC suggests that the AFSC undertake modifications to the Economic SAFE documents (again, ultimately for both crab and groundfish) to accommodate and reflect new Small Business Administration mandates to employ separate thresholds to determine the relevant size of the directly regulated entity for RFA. Effective July 22, 2013, an entity participating in commercial finfish fishing is small for RFA purposes if their total average annual gross receipts, from all economic activity, including that of all affiliates, worldwide, is $19.0 million or less. Commercial entities participating in shellfish fishing are small for RFA purposes if their total average annual gross receipts, from all economic activity, including that of all affiliates, worldwide, is $5.0 million or less. Previously, commercial fishing had a single threshold, making target species differentiation unnecessary. This is no longer true.

NMFS has provided initial guidance on application of these new standards. That advice will require identifying the principal commercial fishery source of gross receipts for each directly regulated entity. Council management actions will require analysis of these differential principal-source thresholds for each future action it proposes. The Economic SAFE is an excellent opportunity to provide one identifiable official source.

C-4 (a) Stock Structure Workshop Report

Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC) provided a report on the Council workshop on spatial management held in Seattle on April 16, 2013. Public testimony was provided by Merrick Burden (Marine Conservation Alliance) and Jason Anderson (Alaska Seafood Cooperative). The purpose of the workshop was to improve the current process for determining spatial management by raising new ideas, issues to be addressed in the future, and potential actions. It was also a venue to discuss the need for and application of the stock structure template.

Determination of stock structure is a scientific matter. It is one of the most fundamental and most important tasks of fishery scientists. Information on stock separation may come from a variety of sources. Genetics can provide the clearest scientific basis in cases where analyses demonstrate little gene flow among stocks. While genetics can demonstrate that stocks are different, it cannot prove that stocks are the same. Thus, other scientific evidence is important. There is a rich scientific literature on the use of other biological information for stock separation, including statistical differences in morphometrics (e.g., body shape), meristics (e.g., number of vertebrae), growth rates, size/age of maturity, recruitment patterns, spawning areas, and migration routes as evidenced by mark-recapture studies. These biological considerations are specified in the stock structure template, which has been previously reviewed and approved by the SSC. **The stock structure template is based on accepted findings and common practices used in the field of fisheries science. Thus the determination of stock structure is a scientific matter obtained from biological information and based on commonly accepted scientific best practices. Moreover, this issue is intimately tied to the SSC responsibility to recommend ABCs and OFLs that prevent overfishing of each underlying stock. The MSFCMA clearly directs the SSC to establish annual catch limits. These limits include an assessment of the evidence for stock delineation and the biological reference points associated with sustainable management of stocks. Therefore, the SSC suggests a modification of the approach recommended by the Plan Teams.**

The SSC feels that spatial stock management is a two-step process. The first step is the scientific matter of determining the stock structure. The second step is to determine the management response to these scientific findings. Ideally, separate ABCs and OFLs would be specified for each stock. However, this is not always necessary or practical. There are cases where ABCs and OFLs might be reasonably specified for a collection of stocks, while still achieving conservation and management goals. The SSC recognizes that the NPFMC has a variety of tools that could be utilized to achieve sustainable management of stocks and we encourage input on alternative approaches to maintaining catches at a sustainable level. As soon as preliminary scientific information reveals that further stock separation may be indicated, the stock assessment authors, Plan Teams, and SSC should advise the Council so that remedial actions can be considered to avert conservation problems.

In summary, the SSC does not see a current problem to be addressed in determining stock structure. The stock structure template represents a defensible scientific approach using accepted methods for establishing the biological basis for stock separation. The next step, determining appropriate Council action, is one where other economic and management considerations are brought into the decision-making process. These discussions are typically included in the stock assessments, but they could be highlighted in Plan Team and SSC minutes so that these new issues come to the full attention of the Council family while the science is still being finalized and vetted. **The SSC does not support Option 2 in the joint Groundfish Plan Team report that suggests that the Plan Team should consider economic and management issues in identifying stock structure, which instead should only be based on best science.** The Council always has the option to request further information/analysis (e.g., risk analyses) to evaluate the full range of potential impacts of proposed and alternative actions in formulating its preferred action. The SSC agrees with the Plan Teams that there is a need to address these issues on a case-by-case basis. Finally, the SSC encourages the Council to include the members of the Crab and Scallop Plan teams in future discussions on this topic. The underlying stock structure of weathervane scallops and crab (e.g., EBS snow crab, Adak red king crab) and the possibility of needing increased spatial management have been recurring recent topics of discussion by plan teams and the SSC.

C-4(c) Plan Team Report and Groundfish Harvest Specifications

The SSC received a presentation from Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC) and Diana Stram (NPFMC) on the proposed harvest specifications for groundfish in both the BSAI and the GOA for 2014 and 2015. There was no public testimony. **The SSC recommends approval of these specifications.**

For the most part, the SSC supports the GPT recommendations, but also had comments and additional recommendations on some of the items presented that are provided below.

BSAI and GOA Pacific cod models

The SSC received summaries from Diana Stram (NPFMC) for the Gulf of Alaska and Joint Plan Teams and from Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC) for the Eastern Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands on preliminary Pacific cod model explorations and Plan Team recommendations with regard to these models. Public testimony, primarily regarding the preliminary Aleutian Islands model, was provided by Chad See (Freezer Longliner Coalition) and Dave Fraser (Adak Community Development Corporation).

The SSC notes that all of the Pacific cod models are characterized by a large number of parameters and dome-shaped selectivities, features that were found to be associated with retrospective patterns and a higher risk of overfishing in the meta-analysis by Hanselman et al. (see separate section). The SSC has previously encouraged the authors to simplify the models when possible and appreciates the suggestion by Grant Thompson (AFSC) to consider omitting seasonal structure in one or more of these models in the future. With respect to this year's assessments, the SSC offers the following recommendations:

Gulf of Alaska

We agree with the Plan Team recommendations regarding the suite of models to bring forward in December. However, we note the large and increasing number of models and model variants being considered. While most of these models have a similar overall structure, the SSC cautions the analyst and Plan Team to carefully explore incremental changes to the model to evaluate their effects on model fits and reference points.

Eastern Bering Sea

The SSC agrees with Plan Team recommendations regarding models to bring forward in December. In addition to the recommended model configurations, the SSC would like to see a model or models that fix survey catchability at Q=1. We suggest presenting variants of model 2a (or 2b with mean Q= 1) and model 3a with Q=1. Our rationale for this request is based on the increasing evidence that catchability is higher and quite possibly much higher than the current standard assumption that selectivity in the 60-81 cm size range is 0.47, which is based on a limited study by Nichol (2007). Evidence from an unpublished study conducted in 2012 (Lauth) suggests that there is no difference in catchability between the low-opening (2.5 m) trawl used in the Bering Sea survey and the high opening (7 m) trawl used in the Gulf of Alaska survey. Moreover, observations of acoustic backscatter showed that Pacific cod tended to be near the bottom in the study area, consistent with a dive response to passing vessels commonly observed in other gadids. We note that the default assumption in most assessments is that survey catchability is 1, unless there is strong evidence to the contrary. The evidence to date consists of the vertical distribution of 11 tagged fish under undisturbed conditions over a period of one month (Nichol et al 2007).

Aleutian Islands

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team to drop Model 3 from consideration in the December assessment because of the unrealistic value for catchability estimated in the model. Hence, we recommend bringing forward results from models 1 and 2 (and any others at the authors discretion), as well as reference points based on Tier 5 considerations in the December assessment as the SSC has notified the Council that it intends to set separate ABCs for the Aleutians and the Eastern Bering Sea.

Flatfish models
The Groundfish Plan Team reviewed three white papers at their September meeting: (1) aggregate stock assessment for northern and southern rock sole, (2) a transition to a Stock Synthesis model (SS3) for Dover sole, and (3) a transition to SS3 for flathead sole.

For the rock sole model, the primary benefit of using the aggregate northern–southern model is the ability to use a longer time-series of data (back to the 1980s). There was some concern, however, that the SS model fit to the survey abundance index is worse than the 2012 platforms (northern rock sole). Moreover, species composition is not available for the early part of the series. The observer program may be able to help apply species composition ratios to the haul-level. The Plan Team made several recommendations to proceed for the November assessment including: continue to develop SS models for aggregate northern and southern species, investigate empirical weight-at-age data to simplify model structure, investigate data weighting and improve fits to survey data, and find a method to calculate ABC for the aggregate model. Also, there is a need to explore likelihood profiles for the natural mortality rate, derive a prior distribution for M based on plausible values from similar flatfish, and report the total likelihood and components of the total likelihood for alternative model structures.

A new assessment author has assumed assessment responsibilities for Dover sole and flathead sole. For both Dover sole and flathead sole, new SS models are being developed to replace the previous assessment platforms. The SS models are able to accommodate many of the previous issues identified by the SSC, and the models also appear to match the 2011 models for both species; however, there were some discrepancies in the Dover sole model due to how data are treated within SS3. **The SSC recommends that the previous stock assessment platforms be updated with the most current data for comparison to the new SS models before transition to the new SS platform. The SSC also endorses the Plan Team recommendations to list maturity studies as a research priority due to the large differences in maturity rates between studies in different regions. The SSC also agrees with Plan Team recommendations pertaining to survey expansion, and to disregarding composition data from earlier survey years that had incomplete spatial coverage.**

Retrospective analysis workgroup
The SSC commends the members of the working group for an excellent meta-analysis of retrospective patterns across 20 groundfish stocks, and appreciates the cooperation of all of the assessment authors who contributed. The analysis of patterns across stocks was very informative and suggested that models that are highly parameterized and use dome-shaped selectivities are associated with retrospective patterns that imply a higher risk. **We agree with the recommendations of the Plan Team that retrospective analyses extending back 10 years, and including Mohn's revised ρ, should routinely be presented in the assessments. Retrospective patterns should be taken into consideration when selecting a model and when communicating uncertainties associated with biomass estimates.** The SSC also notes that a strong retrospective bias should be one of the criteria considered when setting ABCs and could provide justification for recommending a higher or lower ABC.

Survey averaging workgroup
The SSC agrees with the Plan Teams' recommendation that authors should compare their method of survey averaging with the random effects approach.

Stock recruitment workgroup
Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC) reviewed the "Phase III" Report of the Joint Groundfish and Crab Plan Team/SSC Working Group on Assessment/Management Issues Related to Recruitment. The SSC appreciates the opportunity to review the stock recruitment working group report. This document will improve transparency

in decision making with respect to setting management tiers, recruitment time frames, and methods for estimating biological reference points.

The SSC discussed the strict criteria for determining reliability of the F_{MSY} pdf in topic B5, and questioned if currently Tier 1 stocks would meet these criteria. The SSC also emphasized that use of environmental variables to explain recruitment variability or in stock assessments need not be at the scale of regime shifts.

ACL II discussion

The Joint Plan Teams reviewed issues involved in implementing annual catch limits (ACLs) in the groundfish FMPs. The three main issues identified were:

1. Expanding/revising the role of scientific uncertainty in harvest control rules,
2. Establishing a numerical MSST; and
3. Accounting for total catch removals

The basis for the Joint Plan Team review was a report prepared by Grant Thompson in May 2011. Other information considered included the SSC review of the issue paper (June 2011), the Joint Plan Team's review of the document (August 2011, September 2012), excerpts from other SSC reports, as well as SSC comments on the Advance Notice of Public Rulemaking regarding NS1 guidelines. In their September 2013 meeting, the Joint Plan Teams provided new advice on issues 1 and 3, which the SSC supports. Regarding issue 3, the SSC continues to support steady progress toward full accounting of "other" removals. The Joint Plan Teams offered practical guidance in this regard. The SSC encourages further development of these analyses over a reasonable time frame.

GOA DSR

The SSC received the Plan Team report on the Southeast Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR) assessment. In light of the change in survey methodology from use of a submarine to use of a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) without the ability to do a side-by-side comparison, the SSC recommends authors review earlier comparisons of submarine and ROV equipment (O'Connell and Carlile 1994) for potential differences in coverage.

Moving non-Southeast DSR into Other Rockfish

The SSC agreed with the GPT and author recommendation that DSR remain in the Other Rockfish complex for areas of the GOA outside of the eastern Gulf. We also agree that for the November assessment the author should apply the survey averaging technique for smoothing survey biomass estimates in addition to the current method.

C-5 (a) Discussion paper on GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

The SSC received a presentation by Darrell Brannan (NPFMC consultant) and Sam Cunningham (NPFMC). Public testimony was provided by Rachel Donkersloot (Alaska Marine Conservation Council). The introduction to this paper sets out an ambitious task. Overall, the paper is nicely written, clear and concise, and it succeeds in presenting each promised element. However, the parts do not appear to comprise a coherent whole. The paper's title, GOA TRAWL BYCATCH MANAGEMENT is only partially and occasionally descriptive of the paper's content, partially because there are passages that address bycatch management and occasionally because the component chapters of the draft move from topic to topic without clear transitions and linkages. The SSC believes that we would have benefited from the initial staff discussion paper presented to the Council in June and the Council's comments/guidance based on that initial discussion paper. However, within the limits of the information presented to the SSC in the document under review, we offer the following observations.

The first substantive section (Section 2) provides a brief, recent, and selective literature review of the general subject area of "quota share-based" fisheries management. The review identifies several key elements of programmatic structures that are based upon apportioning catch-shares to stakeholders. Important observations and assertions about quota-share management, structural elements of several forms of shares management, and principal arguments and counter arguments pertaining to aspects of quota-share based programs within differing temporal and geo-political settings are highlighted by the authors. However, the SSC felt that this selective literature review only captured some aspects of quota-share based fishery management research contained in the contemporary literature and therefore did not provide adequate coverage of the subject.

The presenters informed the SSC that the literature review is unlikely to be edited and reviewed again even with our suggested changes to broaden the literature covered and to develop a stronger analysis of the pertinent findings. This is troubling because of inaccuracies and selective biases in the review. The suggestion that the review will be archived at this point effectively represents an explicit decision to memorialize these shortcomings (which otherwise could easily be addressed). In one example, the economic outcomes section treats fishing as a job with individuals weighing opportunity costs; this discussion ignores the range of cultural attachments, place-based identities, heritages, and many other elements that accompany the fisheries and for which there is an extensive peer-reviewed literature. Specific to catch shares, there is a broad literature on the effects on communities (e.g. Langdon, St. Martin, Macinko, McCay, Eythorsson, Lowe and Carothers, Hegelson and Palsson), however, in the current version, "sociocultural value on maintaining a fishing lifestyle" is only acknowledged in an unreferenced footnote.

The SSC believes this literature review needs to be broadened before releasing the document to the public. A detailed set of comments will be provided to the authors, but some of the SSCs concerns are elaborated below.

The review is supposedly confined to recent peer-reviewed literature and yet there are references to selected publications from as early as 2001 (e.g. Hartley and Fina, 2001; Copes and Palsson, 2001) and to non-peer-reviewed working papers (e.g., Grainger and Costello, 2012). Thus it is hard to determine by what process the vast body of potentially relevant literature was culled to produce the sample examined in the review. Further, it is frequently hard to tell when the authors are discussing assertions made by other authors and when they are presenting generally accepted findings or conclusions from world experience with catch share programs. More attention to phrasing could eliminate much of the potential confusion here (e.g., sentences that begin "authors X, Y, Z assert that…." or "authors in this camp generally conclude that…").

The review contains numerous references to efficiency, productivity, and profitability and sometimes these terms appear to be used interchangeably. These terms are not synonyms and "efficiency" in particular is susceptible to much misuse in public policy settings. The essay by Saraydar (1989) would be particularly helpful in sorting out the confusion on display in the review and in the fisheries economics literature. Older literature is not invalid or irrelevant simply by virtue of its publication date and should not have been excluded.

The discussion of resource rent is jumbled with economic rent and is misleading due to the confusion in the literature relied upon. Resource rent is not "society's opportunity cost of prosecuting the fishery" regardless of whether that phrase appeared in a publication. Here, the discussion in Bromley (2009) provides model clarity.

The problem of the truncated nature of the literature selected for review becomes glaring when the discussion turns to the so-called transitional gains trap. Here, the authoritative citation would be that of the originator of that phrase in the fisheries literature, Copes (1986), not the more recent works cited. Contrary to the

statement in the discussion paper (footnote 7), the transitional gains trap applies to all subsequent generations of purchasers (the gains are conferred on the initial recipients alone).

The discussion of stewardship effects ignores both established literature emphasizing the importance of the discount rate on personal conservation ethics (Clark, 1973) and recent experiences in the North Pacific involving high profile prosecutions of catch shareholders.

The suggestion that enforcement costs are lower under catch shares (p. 8) contradicts most world-wide experience.

The reference to MSA language defining catch shares as non-compensable privileges, not property, as a disclaimer is inappropriate and inaccurate. This language mirrors Congressional language in the Taylor Grazing Act regarding public lands grazing permits—in both cases Congress has gone to great lengths to be precise about what it is and isn't creating and such language is more than a disclaimer.

In general, the remainder of the discussion paper presents an initial look at several alternatives before the Council. These alternatives have been submitted by various stakeholders and are at various stages of development and specificity. At this early stage, the draft discussion paper does a good job at describing the policy choices inherent in many of the alternatives and these are beyond the scope of the SSC's responsibility or prerogative in the Council process. The procedural steps described appear appropriate as they pertain to what is identified as Tier 1, then Tier 2 level decision points. The eight proposals presented in Section 3 represent a commendable degree of effort, serious consideration, and investment on the part of the submitting stakeholder groups. Each provides useful, imaginative ideas. While no consensus could have been anticipated at this stage of the process, it is encouraging to see the active participation reflected in these thoughtful contributions to the Council process.

The proposals range from relatively complete and comprehensive concepts, to narrow, partial treatment of specific areas, fleets, or sectors. The systematic way in which each of the eight proposals is broken into key topics by the analysts is excellent and should facilitate meaningful Council comparisons. Each proposal is in the early stages of development, making a rigorous review of each by the SSC premature. However, **it would be extremely useful to see the authors apply the literature review to each of these proposals to highlight the potential positive and challenging elements they variously contain, informing further development of these proposals**. We again note the frequent misapplication of the terms bycatch and prohibited species catch. The error in this circumstance must be corrected because these two distinct categories of removal are actually proposed to be formally managed as discrete elements of the QS program (i.e., bycatch allocations and prohibited species catch allowances).

Section 4 is an extensive treatment of state-water fisheries management that may accompany any of several different structural forms a Federal groundfish quota shares program might take. The information contained in this section is excellent, although its immediate relevance to the topic of GOA Trawl Bycatch/PSC Management is unclear. Indeed, the tabular representations of various forms of State Water Management in the face of any given Federal QS program raises many questions specific to PSC accounting. There does not appear to be any treatment of trawl avoidance of PSC or groundfish bycatch; the state does not have PSC limits, but could consider creating them.

Section 5 is a treatment of the various forms of, and barriers to, the concept of one or more Community Fishing Associations (CFAs). This section presents both theoretic and case-study descriptions of how CFAs might participate in fishing activity to further inform consideration of one of the stakeholder proposals. This is excellent information, although many questions would have to be addressed before such an approach could be tailored to the GOA trawl fisheries.

Finally, the Appendix contains a very helpful table that contrasts a suite of programmatic performance elements as applies to the submitted proposals. However, this material is provided without further explanation or interpretation, both of which would enhance the presentation.

C-5 (c) Initial review of GOA Rockfish Chinook Cap Rollover

The SSC received a presentation on the initial draft EA/RIR by Sam Cunningham (NPFMC). There was no public comment. The document is a follow-on of the proposed GOA Amendment 97 Chinook Salmon PSC Avoidance action, evaluating an addendum that would address the concept of PSC rollovers. The June 2013 action serves as the analytical baseline against which the suite of alternatives in this supplement is contrasted. The document is clear, well written, and relatively concise.

The author has provided a succinct and helpful definition differentiating bycatch from PSC. However, application of this definition is not adhered to in the document. It is important to maintain this regulatory distinction throughout the document.

PSC is never to be utilized, but is to be " ... avoided to the extent practicable." An allowance is made to accommodate unavoidable interceptions. The analysis consistently makes the error of assigning use rights to PSC; it is an maximum allowance, not a property use right, and cannot therefore be said to be stranded. There are several places in the document where a rephrasing is necessary. The linguistic inclination adopted by the author (e.g., PSC is a tool to be used) dilutes the message that avoidance is essential to realizing the optimum yield objective of the MSA and the Council's efforts to manage on an ecosystem-wide basis. This critique extends to the interpretation of PSC removals under each of the alternative descriptions.

The characterization in the draft of the downstream effects of this action is limited to the groundfish sectors. There are, of course, downstream effects on users of the Chinook salmon lost to PSC. The document lacks identification of possible end users of Chinook salmon (commercial, subsistence, personal use, and sport) and at least a qualitative evaluation of the nature of impacts these users are likely to face. In particular, the impacts assessment section of the RIR needs a qualitative acknowledgment of what was/would be the value of the Chinook salmon savings. Numerous communities within Alaska and along the West Coast depend upon, and sustain uses and users in each of these categories, and these effects should be characterized in the rollover discussion, as well as in the larger document.

In the section reporting Chinook salmon PSC performance, it is relevant to note that GOA CVs have historically had low levels of observer coverage. This could bias interpretation of the PSC estimates. This should be reflected in the text and sector-attributed PSC performance tables. While mention is made in footnote 13, this point is critical to the readers' understanding of these reported PSC performance indicators. It should not be relegated to a footnote. The low level of observer coverage also speaks to the difficulty of obtaining the data necessary to manage the proposed PSC limits in the GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries. The document appears to presuppose more precision in the management system than seems reasonable, as for instance, in the discussion of rollovers.

Under the Alternative 4 Rollover discussion, "...without the uncertainty buffer incentive, the RP CV sector would be just as well off taking all of the 1,200 Chinook salmon that it is permitted, as it would be when limiting Chinook PSC to the greatest extent practicable." This is an important finding that should be highlighted for the reader and the Council.

The SSC recommends summarizing the positive and negative elements of the alternatives in the document. It would be useful to set out in a tabular form the major features of each alternative and the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives.

The SSC recommends integration of this Addendum (after the necessary corrections are made) into the main GOA Chinook PSC in the Non-Pollock Trawl Management document, at which point the Addendum will be ready for release to the public.

The SSC also had several specific comments and follow-up questions for the authors as follows. In the RIR treatment of groundfish harvest, the analysis employs economic indicators that present concerns for comparative performance between the CVs, CPs, and inshore processing sectors. CVs, by definition, do not process. Ex-vessel equivalent value has traditionally been the leveling measure because wholesale value is determined by a number of factors. The SSC recommends replacing these CV wholesale tables with those that show processor first wholesale value (or correctly labeling them) and supplement the report with ex-vessel value performance measures for the CV sector.

In the treatment of catch attribution, it might be worthwhile to more fully explain how trip target assignment can change based upon species-preponderance in the catch.

In the discussion of "Interaction with the uncertainty pool mechanism," on page 40, there seems to be a contradiction. Clarification is needed, as the mandate that " ... 160 fish must have been truly saved" and the suggestion that " ... some of the RP CV sector's avoided PSC ... are taken in the non-RP CV fall fisheries during Year " are discordant.

In 4.3.3 Alternative 3, "The Council chose to consider holding back precisely 160 Chinook salmon in the RP CV sector because that is the amount of Chinook in the sector's uncertainty buffer." Keeping those 160 Chinook allowances within the sector prevents a scenario where the PSC that is marked for possible "use" in case of high-PSC during the following year is, instead, caught by the non-RP CV sector in the fall. But what about the issue just cited regarding post-transfer overages?

Continuing with the Alternative 3 rollover, the draft asserts: "Consider the example where the RP CV sector takes 1,000 Chinook salmon before October 1. If all but 160 of the remaining 200 Chinook PSC allowances are rolled into the non-RP CV sector, the next Chinook recorded on a Rockfish Program trip would bring the sector's remaining PSC to 159. Catch accounting – and the agents responsible for administering the uncertainty pool – would have to track that this was, in fact, only the 1,001st Chinook salmon taken in the sector." What happens in this case? This is a critical question, left unanswered in the draft.

C-6 (b) BSAI Chinook Salmon Report

The SSC received a presentation from Diana Stram (NPFMC) on an updated analysis of BSAI Chinook salmon stock status, AEQ, and PSC rates. Public testimony was provided by Art Nelson (Bering Sea Fisherman's Association). This report was requested by the Council at its April 2013 meeting and largely updates analyses that were reported on at the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative Chinook Expert Panel symposium in 2012. The report also summarizes fishing and PSC performance by sectors as requested by the Council. The SSC had previously reviewed and approved the methodology for calculating AEQs and PSC rates so did not comment on this aspect of the report.

The SSC greatly appreciates the work of NMFS, Council, and ADF&G staff in bringing together disparate Chinook salmon run strength, AEQ, and PSC information into a single report that summarizes the impact of PSC on runs of Chinook salmon in western Alaska. The SSC had the following comments on the report:

- **The report does an excellent job of addressing the Council motion and request to review the status of Chinook salmon stocks in Alaska, update genetic stock identification efforts, and provide updated AEQ analysis and PSC harvest rates relative to actual PSC and relative to**

current cap levels. Summaries of vessel PSC rates were also found to be useful in confirming that efforts of IPAs to reduce PSC of Chinook salmon should be effective at the vessel level.

- We suggest that this type of report be produced periodically to update the SSC and Council on the performance of Chinook salmon stocks and on efforts to reduce PSC in the BSAI groundfish fisheries.
- While we applaud the inclusion of stock-specific run size information in the document, stock status information in the report could be improved in the future by adding information on harvests of Chinook salmon in the various state-managed terminal fisheries (subsistence, commercial, and recreational), as well as whether Amounts Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) are being met or not.
- Sufficiency of sampling of Chinook salmon PSC for lengths should be evaluated in light of the sampling design for genetics, and sampling rates for lengths be adjusted if necessary.

MOTION

Council Proposed BSAI OFL and ABC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

		2013				2014			2015		
Species	**Area**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**	**Catch**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**	**OFL**	**ABC**	**TAC**
Pollock	EBS	2,550,000	1,375,000	1,247,000	1,146,604	2,730,000	1,430,000	1,252,500	2,730,000	1,430,000	1,252,500
	AI	45,600	37,300	19,000	2,916	48,600	39,800	19,000	48,600	39,800	19,000
	Bogoslof	13,400	10,100	100	57	13,400	10,100	100	13,400	10,100	100
Pacific cod	BSAI	359,000	307,000	260,000	178,388	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	BS	n/a	n/a	n/a	169,840	352,470	300,390	245,000	352,470	300,390	245,000
	AI	n/a	n/a	n/a	8,548	22,500	16,900	7,381	22,500	16,900	7,381
Sablefish	BS	1,870	1,580	1,580	548	1,760	1,480	1,480	1,760	1,480	1,480
	AI	2,530	2,140	2,140	702	2,370	2,010	2,010	2,370	2,010	2,010
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	220,000	206,000	198,000	101,596	219,000	206,000	200,000	219,000	206,000	200,000
Greenland turbot	BSAI	2,540	2,060	2,060	1,097	3,270	2,650	2,060	3,270	2,650	2,060
	BS	n/a	1,610	1,610	818	n/a	2,070	1,610	n/a	2,070	1,610
	AI	n/a	450	450	279	n/a	580	450	n/a	580	450
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	186,000	152,000	25,000	18,515	186,000	152,000	25,000	186,000	152,000	25,000
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	16,300	12,200	10,000	7,500	8,300	7,100	7,100	8,300	7,100	7,100
Northern rock sole	BSAI	241,000	214,000	92,380	55,401	229,000	204,000	94,569	229,000	204,000	94,569
Flathead sole	BSAI	81,500	67,900	22,699	15,317	80,100	66,700	22,699	80,100	66,700	22,699
Alaska plaice	BSAI	67,000	55,200	20,000	19,982	60,200	55,800	23,700	60,200	55,800	23,700
Other flatfish	BSAI	17,800	13,300	3,500	1,467	17,800	13,300	3,500	17,800	13,300	3,500
Pacific Ocean perch	BSAI	41,900	35,100	35,100	26,460	39,500	33,100	33,100	39,500	33,100	33,100
	BS	n/a	8,130	8,130	1,573	n/a	7,680	7,680	n/a	7,680	7,680
	EAI	n/a	9,790	9,790	8,209	n/a	9,240	9,240	n/a	9,240	9,240
	CAI	n/a	6,980	6,980	6,614	n/a	6,590	6,590	n/a	6,590	6,590
	WAI	n/a	10,200	10,200	10,064	n/a	9,590	9,590	n/a	9,590	9,590
Northern rockfish	BSAI	12,200	9,850	3,000	1,892	12,000	9,320	3,000	12,000	9,320	3,000
Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish	BSAI	462	378	378	324	524	429	429	524	429	429
	EBS/EAI	n/a	169	169	173	n/a	189	189	n/a	189	189
	CAI/WAI	n/a	209	209	151	n/a	240	240	n/a	240	240
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	493	370	370	333	493	370	370	493	370	370
Other rockfish	BSAI	1,540	1,159	873	653	1,540	1,159	873	1,540	1,159	873
	BS	n/a	686	400	146	n/a	686	400	n/a	686	400
	AI	n/a	473	473	507	n/a	473	473	n/a	473	473
Atka mackerel	BSAI	57,700	50,000	25,920	16,031	56,500	48,900	25,379	56,500	48,900	25,379
	EAI/BS	n/a	16,900	16,900	8,899	n/a	16,500	16,500	n/a	16,500	16,500
	CAI	n/a	16,000	7,520	7,012	n/a	15,700	7,379	n/a	15,700	7,379
	WAI	n/a	17,100	1,500	120	n/a	16,700	1,500	n/a	16,700	1,500
Skates	BSAI	45,800	38,800	24,000	19,643	44,100	37,300	24,000	44,100	37,300	24,000
Sculpins	BSAI	56,400	42,300	5,600	4,323	56,400	42,300	5,600	56,400	42,300	5,600
Sharks	BSAI	1,360	1,020	100	100	1,360	1,020	150	1,360	1,020	150
Squids	BSAI	2,620	1,970	700	235	2,620	1,970	500	2,620	1,970	500
Octopuses	BSAI	3,450	2,590	500	132	3,450	2,590	500	3,450	2,590	500
Total	BSAI	4,028,465	2,639,317	2,000,000	1,620,216	4,193,257	2,686,688	2,000,000	4,193,257	2,686,688	2,000,000

Advisory Panel Proposed GOA OFL, ABC, and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

Species	Area	2013 OFL	2013 ABC	2013 TAC	2013 Catch	2014 OFL	2014 ABC	2014 TAC	2015 OFL	2015 ABC	2015 TAC
Pollock	W (61)		28,072	28,072	6,173		25,648	25,648		25,648	25,648
	C (62)		51,443	51,443	41,988		47,004	47,004		47,004	47,004
	C (63)		27,372	27,372	11,357		25,011	25,011		25,011	25,011
	WYAK		3,385	3,385	2,917		3,093	3,093		3,093	3,093
	Subtotal	150,817	110,272	110,272	62,435	138,610	100,756	100,756	138,610	100,756	100,756
	EYAK/SEO	14,366	10,774	10,774	0	14,366	10,774	10,774	14,366	10,774	10,774
	Total	165,183	121,046	121,046	62,435	152,976	111,530	111,530	152,976	111,530	111,530
Pacific Cod	W		28,280	21,210	13,587		29,470	22,103		29,470	22,103
	C		49,288	36,966	23,574		51,362	38,522		51,362	38,522
	E		3,232	2,424	313		3,368	2,526		3,368	2,526
	Total	97,200	80,800	60,600	37,474	101,100	84,200	63,150	101,100	84,200	63,150
Sablefish	W		1,750	1,750	1,003		1,641	1,641		1,641	1,641
	C		5,540	5,540	4,285		5,195	5,195		5,195	5,195
	WYAK		2,030	2,030	1,910		1,902	1,902		1,902	1,902
	SEO		3,190	3,190	2,593		2,993	2,993		2,993	2,993
	Total	14,780	12,510	12,510	9,791	13,871	11,731	11,731	13,871	11,731	11,731
Shallow-Water Flatfish	W		19,489	13,250	152		18,033	13,250		18,033	13,250
	C		20,168	18,000	2,962		18,660	18,000		18,660	18,000
	WYAK		4,647	4,647	1		4,299	4,299		4,299	4,299
	EYAK/SEO		1,180	1,180	2		1,092	1,092		1,092	1,092
	Total	55,680	45,484	37,077	3,117	51,580	42,084	36,641	51,580	42,084	36,641
Deep-Water Flatfish	W		176	176	22		176	176		176	176
	C		2,308	2,308	126		2,308	2,308		2,308	2,308
	WYAK		1,581	1,581	4		1,581	1,581		1,581	1,581
	EYAK/SEO		1,061	1,061	3		1,061	1,061		1,061	1,061
	Total	6,834	5,126	5,126	155	6,834	5,126	5,126	6,834	5,126	5,126
Rex Sole	W		1,300	1,300	98		1,287	1,287		1,287	1,287
	C		6,376	6,376	3,129		6,310	6,310		6,310	6,310
	WYAK		832	832	0		823	823		823	823
	EYAK/SEO		1,052	1,052	-		1,040	822		1,040	822
	Total	12,492	9,560	9,560	3,228	12,362	9,460	9,242	12,362	9,460	9,242
Arrowtooth Flounder	W		27,181	14,500	779		26,970	14,500		26,970	14,500
	C		141,527	75,000	13,164		140,424	75,000		140,424	75,000
	WYAK		20,917	6,900	49		20,754	6,900		20,754	6,900
	EYAK/SEO		20,826	6,900	68		20,663	6,900		20,663	6,900
	Total	247,196	210,451	103,300	14,060	245,262	208,811	103,300	245,262	208,811	103,300
Flathead Sole	W		15,729	8,650	569		16,063	8,650		16,063	8,650
	C		26,563	15,400	1,556		27,126	15,400		27,126	15,400
	WYAK		4,686	4,686	0		4,785	4,785		4,785	4,785
	EYAK/SEO		1,760	1,760	-		1,797	1,797		1,797	1,797
	Total	61,036	48,738	30,496	2,125	62,296	49,771	30,632	62,296	49,771	30,632

Advisory Panel Proposed GOA OFL, ABC, and TAC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2014 - 2015

Species	Area	2013 OFL	2013 ABC	2013 TAC	2013 Catch	2014 OFL	2014 ABC	2014 TAC	2015 OFL	2015 ABC	2015 TAC
Pacific Ocean Perch	W		2,040	2,040	436		2,005	2,005		2,005	2,005
	C		10,926	10,926	8,484		10,740	10,740		10,740	10,740
	WYAK		1,641	1,641	1,537		1,613	1,613		1,613	1,613
	W/C/WYAK	16,838				16,555			16,555		
	SEO	2,081	1,805	1,805	0	2,046	1,775	1,775	2,046	1,775	1,775
	E(subtotal)										
	Total	18,919	16,412	16,412	10,457	18,601	16,133	16,133	18,601	16,133	16,133
Northern Rockfish	W		2,008	2,008	2,164		1,899	1,899		1,899	1,899
	C		3,122	3,122	2,360		2,951	2,951		2,951	2,951
	E		-	-	-		-	-		-	-
	Total	6,124	5,130	5,130	4,524	5,791	4,850	4,850	5,791	4,850	4,850
Shortraker Rockfish	W		104	104	39		104	104		104	104
	C		452	452	376		452	452		452	452
	E		525	525	246		525	525		525	525
	Total	1,441	1,081	1,081	661	1,441	1,081	1,081	1,441	1,081	1,081
Dusky Rockfish	W		377	377	215		354	354		354	354
	C		3,533	3,533	2,597		3,317	3,317		3,317	3,317
	WYAK		495	495	3		465	465		465	465
	EYAK/SEO		295	295	7		277	277		277	277
	Total	5,746	4,700	4,700	2,822	5,395	4,413	4,413	5,395	4,413	4,413
Rougheye and Blackspotted Rockfish	W		81	81	20		83	83		83	83
	C		856	856	385		871	871		871	871
	E		295	295	188		300	300		300	300
	Total	1,482	1,232	1,232	593	1,508	1,254	1,254	1,508	1,254	1,254
Demersal shelf rockfish	Total	487	303	303	209	487	303	303	487	303	303
Thornyhead Rockfish	W		150	150	216		150	150		150	150
	C		766	766	449		766	766		766	766
	E		749	749	221		749	749		749	749
	Total	2,220	1,665	1,665	886	2,220	1,665	1,665	2,220	1,665	1,665
Other Rockfish (Other slope)	W		44	44	194		44	44		44	44
	C		606	606	425		606	606		606	606
	WYAK		230	230	65		230	230		230	230
	EYAK/SEO		3,165	200	44		3,165	200		3,165	200
	Total	5,305	4,045	1,080	728	5,305	4,045	1,080	5,305	4,045	1,080
Atka mackerel	Total	6,200	4,700	2,000	1,241	6,200	4,700	2,000	6,200	4,700	2,000
Big Skate	W		469	469	71		469	469		469	469
	C		1,793	1,793	1,807		1,793	1,793		1,793	1,793
	E		1,505	1,505	61		1,505	1,505		1,505	1,505
	Total	5,023	3,767	3,767	1,939	5,023	3,767	3,767	5,023	3,767	3,767
Longnose Skate	W		70	70	37		70	70		70	70
	C		1,879	1,879	972		1,879	1,879		1,879	1,879
	E		676	676	365		676	676		676	676
	Total	3,500	2,625	2,625	1,374	3,500	2,625	2,625	3,500	2,625	2,625
Other Skates	Total	2,706	2,030	2,030	1,409	2,706	2,030	2,030	2,706	2,030	2,030
Sculpins	GOA-wide	7,614	5,884	5,884	1,241	7,614	5,884	5,884	7,614	5,884	5,884
Sharks	GOA-wide	8,037	6,028	6,028	793	8,037	6,028	6,028	8,037	6,028	6,028
Squids	GOA-wide	1,530	1,148	1,148	147	1,530	1,148	1,148	1,530	1,148	1,148
Octopuses	GOA-wide	1,941	1,455	1,455	191	1,941	1,455	1,455	1,941	1,455	1,455
Total		738,676	595,920	436,255	161,600	723,580	584,094	427,068	723,580	584,094	427,068

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News & Notes

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

October 2013

Photo: Mark Fina

Council Elections and Appointments

The Council re-elected Eric Olson as Chairman, and John Henderschedt as vice-chair. Dr. Jim Balsiger administered the Oath of Office for new Council member Dave Long of Wasilla, AK, and for re-appointed member Duncan Fields, of Kodiak, AK. Long has participated in Alaska fisheries in a variety of gear types. Fields is serving his third 3 year term on the Council and is a fisherman and natural resources consultant.

Other Appointments

The Council announced two new additions to the Charter Halibut Management Implementation Committee, which will meet twice before the December Council meeting: Steve Zernia and Daniel Donich.

Upcoming Meetings

Charter Halibut Management Implementation Committee: October 25, 2013 1 pm teleconference (907 271-2986) with optional in-person meeting room: Council Conference Room 205, 605 W 4th Ave, Anchorage. December 9, 1 pm in-person meeting, Council Conference Room

Groundfish Plan Team: November 18-22, 2013, AFSC, Seattle

IFQ Implementation Committee: December 9, 2013, 8:30 am – noon (T), Council Conference Room 205, 605 W 4th, Anchorage

Crab Modeling Workshop January 14-17, 2014 Anchorage (Place TBD)

Scallop Plan Team: Teleconference in December, TBD; February 25-26, 2014 Homer (Place TBD)

Crab Plan Team May 5-7, 2014 Anchorage (Place TBD)

Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch

The Council received several reports related to salmon bycatch management measures in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. A report provided by the SeaShare food donation program describes the operation of the program and the voluntary donations of salmon and halibut PSC from the BSAI and GOA fisheries. The Council reviewed a staff discussion paper on the status of Alaskan Chinook salmon stocks, and an analysis of the impact of Chinook salmon adult equivalent (AEQ) bycatch on regional stocks of origin and vessel bycatch rates by sector in the pollock fishery. This was the first comprehensive analysis of impacts since the Council took action on the Amendment 91 Chinook salmon PSC management program in 2009. The Council's primary motivation in requesting this report (as well as separate reports from the IPAs on their incentive programs) was to consider bycatch management performance measures in the context of the ongoing actions to minimize salmon bycatch, and to evaluate this issue with updated information on directed salmon fisheries and with the most recent genetic information, AEQ analysis, and examination of individual vessel performance.

AEQ is a more accurate representation of the true impact to spawning salmon than the mortality in numbers of fish recorded in any one year due to the lagged effects of bycatch as salmon taken in the pollock fishery range in ages from 3-7 years and are not all returning to natal streams in that year. Results indicate that overall AEQ has declined considerably from the peak value in 2007. Furthermore, the estimated impact rates to western Alaska have declined in recent years from peaks in 2008 (for CWAK) and 2010 (for Upper Yukon). Currently aggregate impacts only can be estimated for western Alaska at the resolution of coastal western Alaska and Upper Yukon. Using these recent genetic data results in estimated AEQ to coastal western Alaska that is similar to previous estimates (considered by the Council in 2009). Estimated AEQ attributed to the Upper Yukon is higher than previously estimated.

Overall, the pollock fleet bycatch rate (in Chinook salmon per ton of pollock) has declined annually, although some sectors continue to have disproportionately higher rates in some months. Data suggest some consistency in the worst bycatch vessels across all years.

The Council also received reports from each sector's Incentive Program Agreement (IPA) representative on their incentive mechanisms in place and program results to date. Program representatives also provided the Council with a proposal for incorporation of chum salmon into the existing IPAs to better manage chum and Chinook bycatch concurrently.

Following extensive reports and discussion, the Council requested a discussion paper that evaluates the regulatory changes needed to incorporate Bering Sea chum salmon bycatch avoidance into the Chinook salmon IPAs, and to evaluate possible measures to refine Chinook salmon bycatch controls in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The Council requested consideration of explicit measures (either in regulation or within the IPAs) such as restrictions on vessels with consistently high Chinook bycatch rates, consideration of additional management measures in September and October, and requiring the use of salmon excluders when Chinook encounter rates are high.

To the extent possible, the Council will also consider additional outreach efforts as consideration of modifications to the program move forward in development. The full Council motion as well as the staff discussion paper are posted on the Council's website. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

Call for SSC Nominations

At its October meeting the Council reviewed nominations to replace Dr. Jim Murphy (UAA) whose other obligations precluded his continued participation on the SSC. The Council received two excellent nominations in the field of fisheries/resource economics, and decided to appoint both Dr. Matt Reimer (UAA) and Dr. Chris Anderson (UW) for 2014, as well as for the December 2013 SSC meeting. Because SSC appointments are for one year for all SSC members, the Council is also accepting nominations for all other areas of expertise (biology/stock assessment, marine mammals, statistics, sociology/anthropology, or other relevant disciplines). SSC members shall be federal employees, state employees, academicians, or independent experts not employed by advocacy or interest groups. SSC members serve one year terms but may be reappointed indefinitely. The SSC advises the Council on all aspects of the decision making process, including stock assessments and annual specifications, protected species interactions, and adequacy of analyses supporting various management actions. For consideration, please submit resume and cover letter to the Council offices, ATTENTION: Chris Oliver, by **December 4.** Any additional SSC appointments for 2014 will be determined by the Council at its December 2013 meeting in Anchorage.

GOA Trawl Bycatch Management

The Council reviewed a discussion paper that described the eight proposals presented during the June meeting, provided a literature review of recent work on catch share programs, described issues associated with linkages between State and Federal waters fisheries, and discussion of decision points that were considered as part of Community Fishing Association discussions in other regions. The Council proposed a general catch share program structure that provides a starting point for further stakeholder input. The motion requested that staff develop a new discussion paper reviewing that program framework. The specific feedback requested includes a discussion of how the fishery would operate under that design, how it meets the Council's stated goals and objectives, and identification of other decisions that may be needed to transform this concept into alternatives for analysis. The forthcoming paper will also include information on bycatch reductions that were achieved in other trawl catch share programs in the North Pacific and other regions. This discussion will focus on the magnitude of the reductions that were achieved, the structure of the fishery, and whether the reductions were mandated or achieved for other reasons.

The Council noted that, by focusing the discussion on this program design, it was not eliminating other program structures from consideration. Therefore, all proposals that have been presented to the Council are still available for consideration when it develops alternatives for analysis. Updated proposals are available on the Council's website.

The Council noted that its motion does not include a program structure for the trawl catcher/processor sector, as it did for the catcher vessels. A catcher/processor structure was not included because the proposal for that sector was just presented to the Council at this meeting, and the sector has not had time to determine if all members support that approach.

The Council's motion is available on the NPFMC website. The motion contains all the elements that staff are requested to consider in the discussion paper. That paper is scheduled to be presented at the April 2014 Council meeting in Anchorage.

The Council indicated an interest in holding a workshop session on Community Fishing Associations prior to the release of the requested discussion paper. Experts from other regions who have worked to develop CFA structures would be invited to share their experience with the public and the Council. This session is tentatively scheduled to take place during the February 2014 Council meeting in Seattle, WA. The final date, agenda, and list of presenters are yet to be determined. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

GOA Trawl Data Collection

The Council took final action on its preferred alternative to collect baseline economic and employment data to better understand the fishery before a catch share program is implemented. This action would collect employment data from catcher vessels and catcher/processors that harvest GOA groundfish using trawl gear. Catcher vessels would be required to submit annual data for the aggregate payments to harvesting crew and the aggregate payments to the captain(s). They would also be required to provide a list of the crew license numbers or CFEC permit numbers for each harvesting crew member that worked on the vessel. Cost data would be collected on fuel usage and cost, gear costs, and excluder purchases. Catcher/processors would be required to continue to submit the Amendment 80 EDR as well as crew identifiers for the harvesting crew on the vessel. Crew identifiers would not be required for employees that only work as processors. The Amendment 80 EDR would be required to be completed by all trawl catcher/processors that operate in the GOA. Finally, processors that take deliveries of trawl caught groundfish would be required to submit monthly data on the average number of groundfish processing positions, processing employee man-hours, and total processing labor payments. Annual aggregate data would be required for the payments to foremen, managers, and other non-processing employees at the plant. Processors would also be required to submit monthly data on water and electric utilities purchased from the community provider in Kodiak.

The Council also requested to be updated on the voluntary data collection program proposed by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center staff. This data collection program focuses on obtaining data that will help describe the impacts of the "Trawl Bycatch Management Program" on communities.

Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

The BSAI commercial crab fisheries will be delayed from the October 15th opening due to the government shutdown. CDQ fisheries will open as scheduled. Please check our website for updated information as it becomes available.

BSAI Crab Specifications

The Council received the final 2013 Crab Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report and the SSC's OFL and ABC recommendations on 6 crab stocks for 2013/14 fishing year. The SSC had previously recommended OFLs and ABCs for 4 other stocks in the spring. There are 10 crab stocks in the BSAI Crab FMP and all 10 must have annually established OFLs and ABCs. Four stocks (AI golden king crab, Norton Sound red king crab, Pribilof Island golden king crab and Adak red king crab) had OFLs and ABCs recommended in the spring. The remaining stocks have OFLs and ABCs recommended in the fall. While the intent was to shift the timing of the Norton Sound red king crab assessment to the fall for better alignment with fishery timing, due to issues with the assessment model the SSC did not recommended the use of that model for 2013/14 specifications in order to move the assessment cycle for that stock to coincide with the other 6 fall assessments. Instead the model will be revised to address concerns with weighting and data issues and will be presented again in June for specifications. Pending model evaluations at that time the assessment may be further revised to coincide with the fall 2014/15 assessment cycle. Stocks with current biomass levels estimated above the B_{MSY} target include EBS snow crab and Tanner crab while stocks below B_{MSY} (but above ½ B_{MSY}) are Bristol Bay red king crab, Pribilof Island red king crab, St. Matthew blue king crab and Norton Sound red king crab. The Pribilof Island blue king crab stock biomass remains well below it's minimum stock size threshold (MSST, defined as ½ B_{MSY}) and is still considered overfished. Stocks for which information is insufficient to determine their status include Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Pribilof Island golden king crab and Aleutian Island red king crab. Final specifications and the 2013 Crab SAFE report are posted on the Council's website. A technical modeling workshop will be held in January 2014 to further evaluate the future use of a generic modeling framework for BSAI crab models using Bristol Bay red king crab and Norton Sound red king crab models as candidates for comparison. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

AI Pacific cod Regional Delivery

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on a catcher vessel apportionment of AI Pacific cod (area 541/542) with a regionalized delivery requirement to AI shoreplants. The paper also provided information on a potential waiver to the delivery requirement along with some of the challenges of a waiver program. The paper also explored measures to prevent stranding of AI Pacific cod due to insufficient harvesting capacity, as well as some of the difficulties with those measures. Finally, the paper provided historical catch and processing distribution across the various sectors and provided information on the current processing capacity of the Adak and Atka facilities.

After reviewing the discussion paper, receiving recommendations from the Advisory Panel and testimony from the public, the Council postponed further action on this given the uncertainty regarding: 1) establishing separate OFLs and ABCs for Pacific cod in the BS and AI during the 2014 fishing season; 2) changes to the AI Pacific cod fishery from the Steller sea lion mitigation measures; and 3) Board of Fish proposal that would increase the State water GHL Pacific cod fishery from 3% to 4.5% of the federal harvest. By postponing further action on this issue until February 2014, the Council will likely have a better indication of the available Federal harvest of AI Pacific cod, as well as catch restrictions in the AI Pacific cod fishery that are the result of the Steller sea lion mitigation measures. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

Policy on Spatial Management

The Council recommended a process for determining spatial management of stocks and stock assemblages for groundfish, crabs and scallops.

1. As soon as preliminary scientific information indicates that further stock structure separation or other spatial management measures may be considered, the stock assessment authors, plan teams (groundfish, crab, scallop), and SSC should advise the Council of their findings and any associated conservation concerns.
2. With input from the agency, the public, and its advisory bodies, the Council (and NMFS) should identify the economic and management implications and potential options for management response to these findings and identify the suite of tools that could be used to achieve conservation and management goals. In the case of crab and scallop management, ADF&G needs to be part of this process.
3. To the extent practicable, further refinement of stock structure or other spatial conservation concerns and potential management responses should be discussed through the process described in recommendations 1 and 2 above.
4. Based on the best information available provided through this process, the SSC should continue to recommend OFLs and ABCs that prevent overfishing of stocks.

The Council motion is posted on the website. Contact Jane DiCosimo (BSAI groundfish) and Diana Stram (GOA groundfish, BSAI crab and Alaska Scallop) for more information.

Call for AP Nominations

The Council is calling for nominations to the Council's **Advisory Panel** (AP). The AP is composed of representatives of the fishing industry and others interested in the management of the North Pacific fisheries, and provides advice from those perspectives. Members of these panels are expected to attend up to five meetings, three to six days in length, each year. There are 6 AP seats which serve three-year terms, and one special one-year appointment for charter halibut issues. AP members whose terms expire at the end of this year include: Ruth Christiansen, Kurt Cochran, Tom Enlow, Alexus Kwachka, Brian Lynch, and Neil Rodriguez. Tim Evers served a one-year appointment, and nominations are being accepted for that seat.

Letters of interest or nomination, along with a resume of experience, for persons wishing to be considered for the AP should be sent to the NPFMC, 605 W. 4th Avenue, #306, Anchorage, AK 99501, by 5:00 pm on **December 4.** Appointments will be announced at the end of the next Council meeting the week of December 3 at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage and will become effective in January 2014. For more information, contact the Council office.

Steller Sea Lion EIS

Because NMFS staff were unavailable at this meeting due to the partial government shutdown, a presentation prepared by NMFS staff was presented by Council staff. The presentation included NMFS summary of their evaluation of the PPA forwarded by the Council in April, 2013, and a summary of the draft Comment Analysis Report (CAR). After the staff presentation and public comment, the Council approved a motion reiterating the selection of Alternative 5 (the PPA in the Draft EIS) as their Preferred Alternative for the final EIS. The motion also recommended that NMFS provide a draft Biological Opinion to the Council and the SSC for review and comment. The motion is available on the Council's website. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

Ecosystem Committee Workshop

The Council received a report on the Ecosystem Committee's recent workshop. The Council concurred with the Committee recommendation to develop an ecosystem vision statement, and tasked the Committee with further work to consider the relative merits of two options. The Council will consider either refining its current management practice into a cohesive ecosystem-based fishery management policy statement, or developing a more comprehensive ecosystem-based management statement, and the Committee will identify potential implementation plans for each approach. The Ecosystem Committee workshop report, and the Council motion, are posted on the website. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

Proposed Groundfish Harvest Specifications

The Council recommended proposed harvest specifications for the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish fisheries for 2014 and 2015. NMFS will publish proposed overfishing levels (OFLs), acceptable biological catches (ABCs), total allowable catches (TACs), and prohibited species catch (PSC) limits. The purpose of the proposed specifications is to allow the public an opportunity to review and comment on potential final specifications for those years that will be decided during the December 2013 meeting. The proposed harvest specifications for the next two years are based on rollovers of the harvest specifications currently in effect for the start of 2014, as no new information was available, with two exceptions for the BSAI. For Pacific cod, separate BS and AI specifications were recommended. For the EBS, 93 percent of the combined 2014 BSAI OFL and ABC published last year was used. For the AI, a Tier 5 estimate from last year's preliminary assessment was used as a placeholder, noting that a revised model will be considered in November 2013. For Kamchatka flounder the proposed 2014 OFL and ABC were obtained from the assessment author, using results from the preliminary Tier 3 assessment that was approved for use last year. In the GOA, changes to the apportionments for the Central and Western GOA other rockfish category as well as consideration of opening directed fisheries for octopus and skate species will be considered at final specifications. The Council also received numerous reports from the GOA and BSAI Groundfish Plan Teams on the results of research surveys, four working group reports, other research initiatives in support of stock assessments, and a plan for providing 5-year research priorities each year.

The Council also considered a proposal to revise management of sablefish quotas in order to harvest more of currently unharvested trawl apportionment. Recognizing this as primarily an IFQ use cap issue, the Council deferred consideration of this to the IFQ Implementation Committee.

The Groundfish Plan Team reports and Council recommendations for proposed harvest specifications for the BSAI and GOA are posted on the Council website. Contact Jane DiCosimo (BSAI) and Diana Stram (GOA) for more information.

2014 Observer Annual Deployment Plan

Following review, the Council expressed its support for the agency's draft 2014 Observer Annual Deployment Plan (ADP). As in 2013, the draft ADP sets a higher selection rate in the trip selection than the vessel selection pool, as a proxy for having a higher selection rate for PSC-limited fisheries; includes a provision to allow partial coverage vessels in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery to make an annual selection to have observers 100% of the time; and continues to reflect the Council's preferred policy of not requiring an observer to displace an IFQ crew member. The Council also endorses the alternative Chinook salmon sampling protocol that is proposed for 2014. The draft ADP is posted on the Council website.

The Council also received preliminary catch data under the new program (through August 30, 2013), and data on observer coverage. The Council requested that these tables be updated for the whole of 2013, and included in the June 2014 annual performance review with additional information. The Council discussed the need for a regulatory amendment to address tender activity in the GOA. This will be added to the previously-tasked regulatory amendment discussion paper, to scope out the main issues for analysis, including potential options and data quality implications. In addition, the Council is requesting further analysis of a proposal to exclude vessels from coverage if they have only a de minimus amount of IFQ quota remaining onboard, a) if they are going into a State fishery (ideally to be considered for the 2014 ADP), and/or b) as an overall tool to improve cost efficiency (to be reviewed as part of the annual performance review). Finally, the Council recognizes that the actual sampling rate in the vessel selection pool is a concern, and encourages further consideration of ways to redress the sampling rate.

The Council also reviewed a letter about the proposed design of the 2014 NMFS electronic monitoring (EM) pilot program, where NMFS intends to incentivize participation by moving fourteen participating vessels into the zero selection observer pool. The Council provided suggestions for the agency to consider regarding how to prioritize deployment of the fourteen cameras available. The Council's motion is available on the website. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

Pot Gear in GOA Sablefish IFQ Fishery

The Council reviewed recommendations from its Gulf of Alaska Sablefish Gear Committee on a range of issues to allow the use of pot gear in the GOA sablefish IFQ fishery. Options for area management (entire GOA or Southeast area only) and pot gear restrictions (single pots or pot longlines; gear configurations; gear markings) are under consideration. While many committee recommendations were unanimous (allow pot longline gear only in entire GOA), whether to require pot gear to be removed from the fishing grounds when not being fished requires additional consideration. The committee comments and recommendations will be incorporated into an expanded version of a May 2013 discussion paper, which also will address the status of the sablefish stock, halibut bycatch issues, whale depredation, acoustic deterrent devices, social/economic effects in the context of the original design of the program, and lessons learned from the use of pot gear in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, British Columbia, and the west coast. The Council requested that the expanded discussion paper be scheduled for review during its December 2013 meeting, after which the Council may identify a problem statement and alternatives for analysis.

Halibut Issues

The Council scheduled the next meeting of the **IFQ Implementation Committee** on Monday, December 9, 2013 (T) to 1) review a May 2013 discussion paper on increasing the use caps for sablefish "A" (freezer vessel) QS and identify other approaches to maximize use of all sablefish IFQs; 2) review two proposals previously submitted to the Council to revise Federal regulations to a) calculate maximum retainable allowances at the time of offload rather than during a fishing trip, as currently required, (submitted by the Petersburg Vessel Owners Association) and b) increase the halibut and sablefish IFQ vessel caps, as the amount of IFQs each vessel may harvest has declined over time under lower catch limits (submitted by Kodiak Vessel Owners Association); and 3) review a proposal to allow clean-up of IFQ trips in multiple regulatory areas as regulatory amendment to the observer program or the IFQ program based on NMFS advice.

The **Charter Halibut Management Implementation Committee** will convene on October 25 by teleconference to identify a range of management measures for analysis for implementation for 2014, under two management scenarios: 1) status quo Guideline Harvest Level (GHL) Program and 2) proposed Halibut Catch Sharing Plan (CSP).

A second in-person committee meeting in the Council conference room is scheduled for December 9, 2013 to 1) review an analysis of the proposed management measures from its October meeting and 2) make final recommendations for consideration. The Council recommendations would be considered by the IPHC in January 2014 for implementation under the IPHC annual management measures. It is uncertain at this date whether the GHL Program will remain in place in 2014 or be replaced by the CSP (the government shutdown makes implementation of the CSP more uncertain). The Council may recommend management measures for both scenarios.

Steve Zernia and Daniel Donich have been appointed to the committee to represent Area 3A. Also, the Council will seek nominations for a 1-year charter halibut sector seat for 2014. Tim Evers has stepped down from both Committees. The Council thanks him for his years of service. Contact Jane DiCosimo on halibut and sablefish issues.

GOA Rockfish Chinook Cap Rollover

The Council received an initial review of a trailing action to refine the preferred alternative for management of Chinook salmon PSC in the GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries. In June 2013, the Council considered (but did not advance) an option to allow unused Chinook salmon PSC apportioned to the CV sector of the Central GOA Rockfish Program to "roll over" to support other GOA CV fisheries in the fall. Staff analyzed three alternatives, focusing on whether or not a rollover might hinder the achievement of the objectives expressed in the existing preferred alternative. The Council also considered a No Action alternative for the trailing action, which would leave the preferred alternative unaltered.

The Council selected a preliminary preferred alternative, which combines elements of two of the analyzed alternatives. Under the PPA, either 50 or 100 of the unused Chinook salmon PSC in the Rockfish Program CV sector would roll over to other non-pollock CV fisheries on October 1. Any Chinook PSC remaining in the Rockfish Program sector would roll over when the Rockfish Program closes on November 15. The Rockfish Program CV sector would not be included in the Uncertainty Pool incentive program, as defined in the Council's preferred alternative from the June meeting. Upon final action, any alternative selected by the Council would be included with the existing preferred alternative for the final rulemaking package. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

Staff Tasking

In addition to discussing the relative priority of previously tasked projects, the Council initiated several new projects and clarified direction and tasking for its various committees. The Council tasked staff to do the following:

- hold a workshop, or set time during the February Council meeting, to receive presentations from other regions with experience working to develop Community Fishing Associations (CFAs);
- send a comment letter on the confidentiality of data collected by federal data collection programs, noting that the council is concerned with data quality and a cooperative approach to data collection, and potential ramifications relative to State laws on data confidentiality;
- prepare background materials on the license limitation program and participation in the Norton Sound red king crab fishery to evaluate the need for a recency requirement and elimination of the <32' exemption from the LLP program; and
- prepare a discussion paper on regulatory changes to encourage development of the CDQ Pacific cod fisheries in western Alaska.
- Prepare data tables showing participation in the GOA Pacific cod pot fishery in recent years.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 10/11/13

Dec 9 - 17, 2013 Anchorage, AK	Feb 2 - 10, 2014 Seattle, WA	April 7-15, 2014 Anchorage, AK
Safety report from NIOSH	Community Fishing Association 'workshop'	
Review IFQ proposals: ***IFQ Implementation Committee report***	VMS: Discussion paper/***Enf. Committee Recommendations***	
Observer Electronic Monitoring EFP: ***Review (T)***	Observer Program Regulatory Amendments: ***Discussion paper***	
Final 2014 annual deployment plan: Report		
GOA Pot Gear for Sablefish: ***Expanded Discussion Paper***	SSL EIS: ***Action as necessary***	
Review BOF scallop and pollock proposals	GOA Pcod pot sector participation: ***Discussion paper (T)*** Review BOF groundfish proposals	GOA Trawl Bycatch Management: ***Discussion paper***
Amendment 80 program 5-Year review: ***Develop Workplan***	AI P.cod CV allocation/delivery: ***Update/Discussion Paper***	
GOA Rockfish Chinook Cap rollover: ***Final Action***	BSAI Halibut PSC: ***Updated discussion paper***	
Charter Halibut Measures: ***Cttee report and action as necessary***	PSEIS SIR: ***Review Draft (T)***	
Definition of fishing guide: ***Final Action (T)***	BSAI Crab bycatch limits: ***Expanded discussion paper (T)***	
Round Island Transit: ***Initial Review***	Round Island Transit: ***Final Action (T)***	Bering Sea Chinook/chum salmon bycatch: ***Discussion paper (T)***
Co-op Reporting Requirements: ***Discussion Paper***	BS Canyons: ***AFSC report; Discussion Paper (T)***	Scallop SAFE: ***Plan Team report and OFL/ABC specifications***
BSAI Crab Cooperative reports; crew provisions, etc. BSAI Crab ROFR contract clarification: ***Discussion Paper***	CDQ Pacific cod fishery development: ***Discussion paper (T)***	
	GOA Tendering: Update/Discussion Paper	Salmon EFH revisons: ***Initial Review (T)***
Ecosystem Comittee report on EBFM/EBM Grenadier management: ***Initial Review***	Grenadier management: ***Final Action***	
EGOA skate fishery: ***Discussion paper; PT recommendation***	Bering Sea FEP: ***Discussion Paper***	ITEMS BELOW FOR FUTURE MEETINGS
GOA octopus fishery: ***Discussion paper; PT recommendaiton***		BSAI Crab PSC numbers to weight: ***Discussion paper***
Groundfish Harvest Specifications: ***Adopt final specifications***	Crab modeling workshop: ***Report (SSC Only)***	ROFR Aleutia PQS: ***Final Action***
	Chinook Salmon EDR: ***Report from AFSC (T)***	Greenland Turbot allocation: ***Initial Review***
		Electronic Monitoring Workgroup Report
	Groundfish and Crab Economic SAFE reports: ***SSC Review***	Charter Halibut Compensated Reallocation Pool: ***Disc Paper***
		Norton Sound RKC LLPs: ***Discussion paper (June)***

AI - Aleutian Islands
AFA - American Fisheries Act
BiOp - Biological Opinion
BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
BKC - Blue King Crab
BOF - Board of Fisheries
CQE - Community Quota Entity
CDQ - Community Development Quota
EDR - Economic Data Reporting
EFH - Essential Fish Habitat
EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
FLL - Freezer longliners
GOA - Gulf of Alaska
GKC - Golden King Crab
GHL - Guideline Harvest Level
HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
IBQ - Individual Bycatch Quota
MPA - Marine Protected Area
PSEIS - Programmatic Suplemental Impact Statement
PSC - Prohibited Species Catch
RKC - Red King Crab
ROFR - Right of First Refusal
SSC - Scientific and Statistical Committee
SAFE - Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation
SSL - Steller Sea Lion
TAC - Total Allowable Catch

Future Meeting Dates and Locations

December 9-17, 2013, Anchorage
February 2-10, 2014, Seattle
April 7-15, 2014, Anchorage
June 2-10, 2014, Nome
October 6-14, 2014 Anchorage
December 8-16, 2014, Anchorage
February 2-10, 2015, Seattle
April 6-14, 2015, Anchorage
June 1-9, 2015, Sitka
October 5-13, 2015 Anchorage
December 7-15, 2015, Anchorage

(T) = Tentative