

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Call for Nominations – AP, SSC, CQE seat on IFQ Committee

The Council is accepting nominations for its Scientific and Statistical Committee, and its Advisory Panel.

SSC nominees should have areas of expertise in biology/stock assessment, marine mammals, statistics, fisheries/resource economics, sociology/anthropology, or other relevant disciplines and 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. 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.

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. AP members serve for three-year terms, and may be reappointed for up to two subsequent consecutive terms. Members of the panel are expected to attend up to five meetings, four to six days in length, each year. Eight seats are open for nomination; note that no seats on the Advisory Panel are designated to a particular stakeholder group or geographical area, and the Council encourages all interested stakeholders to apply. Five AP members are up for re-appointment: Shannon Carroll, Carina Nichols, Jeff Stephan, Matt Upton, and Ernie Weiss. Three AP members have terms expiring: John Crowley, Jerry Downing, and Chuck McCallum. There is also one seat for which there will be a one-year appointment, replacing Art Nelson who resigned mid-term.

The Council is also soliciting a community quota entity (CQE) representative to join the IFQ Committee. The intent is to have a CQE representative who is able to attend the next IFQ Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for February 5, 2018 in Seattle.

Please send letters of interest and/or nominations to npfmc.comments@noaa.gov. **Nominations close December 1.**

Council Elections and Appointments

The Council re-elected Dan Hull as Chairman, and re-elected Bill Tweit as Vice-Chair for the upcoming year. The Council appointed **Dr. Amanda Bishop** of the Alaska Sea Life Center in Seward, Alaska, to the SSC through 2018. Bishop is currently serving as a postdoctoral researcher at the Sea Life Center and has a background in Coastal Environmental Management and Behavioral Ecology. **Dr. Dan Lew**, an economist from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, was appointed to the GOA Groundfish Plan Team. Lew has served on the BSAI Plan team in the past, and has expertise with the economics of the recreational fishing sector and IFQ markets.

Roy Hyder leaves Council; Welcome to Steve Marx

Roy Hyder, who has been the designee of the Director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife since October 2001, retired from the Council in August. The Council held an informal gathering/reception in the Hilton to celebrate him, and also presented him formally with a plaque honoring his service during the Council B reports. Council members and representatives of Oregon fishery stakeholders thanked him for his commitment to managing and conserving Alaskan fishery resources. Best wishes to he and his wife Holly in their future endeavors.

In his place, Mr. Steve Marx has been appointed to be the new representative from Oregon. Steve Marx has recently retired from the Oregon Department of Fish and Game where he served for 34 years, most recently as a manager of ODFW's West Region. He began his career as a district fish biologist and watershed manager and has been instrumental in developing partnerships among diverse constituents. We welcome him to the process.

B7 Northern Fur Seal Discussion Paper

The Council reviewed a discussion paper synthesizing information about the northern fur seal in Alaska. The paper, requested by the Council in June 2017, summarized historical and current population and management of northern fur seals in Alaska, feeding habits, winter movements, vital rate studies, habitat concerns, and conservation and management concerns. After review of the document and public comment, the Council, at Staff Tasking, passed a motion encouraging the Agency to revisit and update the Conservation Plan for the Eastern Pacific Stock of Northern Fur Seals, and requested that the Agency report to the Council's Ecosystem Committee on their plans to update the 2007 Conservation Plan. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

C1 Charter Halibut Permit Renewal Process

The Council recommended the release of a document for Public Review that considers implementing a charter halibut permit (CHP) annual renewal process. The Council established a preliminary preferred alternative that would require annual submission of CHP holder name, CHP number, registered address, phone number and/ or email address, and CHP ownership structure. Under the Council's preliminary preferred alternative, if a CHP is not registered with NMFS, the CHP would not be valid for use during the applicable fishing year.

The Council also included an option to consider adding questions into the renewal application that would gather information on CHP leasing practices. This option was not added into the preliminary preferred alternative, but will undergo further analysis and be considered in the Public Review draft that returns to the Council. Council staff is Sarah Marrinan.

C2 Mixing of Guided and Unguided Halibut

At this meeting, the Council reviewed an initial review analysis for limiting the mixing of guided and unguided halibut on a fishing vessel. Alternatives for consideration include: 1) no action; 2) prohibit the possession of guided and unguided halibut simultaneously on any vessel; and 3) if halibut harvested using sport fishing guide services is on a vessel with halibut harvested without using sport fishing guide services, in IPHC Area 2C or 3A, the IPHC annual management measures for guided sport fishing for that area apply to all halibut onboard the fishing vessel.

After reviewing the initial review analysis and recommendations from the Enforcement Committee and the Advisory Panel, the Council released the document for public review. The Council also revised the purpose and need statement to clarify that this action applies to fishing vessels and not floating lodges. The Council selected Alternative 3 as its preliminary preferred alternative, and recommended the analysis be revised to include the following additional information:

- Staff and Enforcement Committee revisions, except the recommendation to include a new suboption 2.1.
- Changes that led to an increase in multi-day and mothership operations, and increasing potential for mixing halibut.
- The regulatory history of current prohibitions on mixing halibut in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries.
- Description of mothership sport halibut operations in areas 2C and 3A.

Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

C3 BSAI Crab Specifications

The Council reviewed the final BSAI Crab Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report and received information on the status of the ten federally managed crab stocks. Based on this report, the SSC recommends overfishing levels (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) levels for 2017/18.

The SAFE report also reports on catch accruing towards OFL and ABC levels the previous year (see table below) and provides stock status in relation to status determination criteria. For stocks for which biomass information is available the current biomass in relation to its target managed stock size (B_{MSY}) is determined. EBS Tanner crab and Pribilof Island red king crab are estimated to be above B_{MSY} for 2017/18, while EBS snow crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, Saint Matthew blue king crab and Norton Sound red king crab have all declined since last year, and are estimated to be below B_{MSY} . Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock remains overfished and estimated to be well below its minimum stock size threshold (MSST). The SSC increased the buffer for St. Matthew blue king crab from 2016/17 due to concerns with steeply declining stock biomass.

The CPT and SSC review assessments on a staggered time frame with some stocks assessed on an annual basis while others are assessed less frequently. The OFL and ABC table below also shows when each stock will next be assessed. Stocks can be assessed more frequently on a case-by-case basis should data

indicate that it is necessary. The final SAFE report and Crab Plan Team report is available on the Council’s website. Staff contact for BSAI crab stocks is Diana Stram.

<i>Stock</i>	<i>OFL (1000t)</i>	<i>SSC recommended ABC (1000t)</i>	<i>Buffer %</i>	<i>Next assessment cycle</i>
<i>EBS snow crab</i>	28.41	22.70	20%	2018
<i>BB red king crab</i>	5.60	5.04	10%	2018
<i>EBS Tanner crab</i>	25.42	20.33	20%	2018
<i>Pribilof Islands red king crab</i>	0.48	0.36	25%	2019
<i>Pribilof Islands blue king crab</i>	0.00116	0.00087	25%	2020
<i>St. Matthew Island blue king crab</i>	0.12	0.09	25%	2018
<i>Norton Sound red king crab</i>	0.30	0.24	20%	2018
<i>AI golden king crab</i>	6.05	4.54	25%	2018
<i>Pribilof Islands golden king crab</i>	0.09	0.07	25%	2020
<i>Western AI red king crab</i>	0.06	0.01	75%	2020

C4 Groundfish Specifications

The SSC was presented with the Joint Groundfish Plan Teams Report that summarized the issues discussed and actions taken by the Plan Teams at their September meeting in Seattle, WA. Highlights of the Plan Team report included overviews of the various surveys conducted in support of stock assessments and ecosystem analyses, spatial management issues, as well as Team discussions with individual assessment authors. For proposed rulemaking for the 2018 and 2019 fishing years, the SSC and Council recommended OFLs and ABCs based on a rollover of existing 2018 specifications for all stocks except GOA and EBS Pacific cod. Reduced survey catches for those two stocks necessitated downward adjustment of proposed OFL/ABC by about 30% for GOA and 15% for EBS. Fully updated stock assessments for these two stocks and other BSAI/GOA groundfish will be reviewed by the Plan Teams at their upcoming November meeting. Consistent with SSC-recommended OFLs and ABCs, the Council recommended proposed TACs and PSC limits and adopted updated Halibut DMRs for 2018 and 2019.

The Council received a letter from ADF&G indicating that the combined, post-season sum of the three-river index (Upper Yukon, Unalakleet and Kuskokwim rivers) of Chinook salmon was above the defined threshold (250,000) for a low Chinook year, therefore the existing Chinook PSC limits for the EBS pollock fishery will remain in place for 2018.

Staff contact for BSAI groundfish is Diana Stram and for GOA groundfish is Jim Armstrong.

C5 Tendering Scoping Paper

The Council reviewed a scoping paper identifying the specific observer data concerns with respect to vessels engaged in tendering, and the OAC recommendations for developing short-term and long-term solutions. The Council agreed with the OAC recommendations, and initiated the following two projects. To address the issue of salmon monitoring and sampling in the GOA pollock fishery, the Council recommends the development of electronic monitoring for trawl vessels participating in the GOA

pollock fishery, to monitor for full retention and allow dockside monitoring of salmon during offload at the plant. For the data concern related to observer bias, the Council initiated an analysis to change the definition of a tender trip for the purpose of observer coverage, so that vessels would re-log trips for observer random selection on a more frequent basis when delivering to tender vessels. The analysis should also evaluate deploying observers directly from tender vessels. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

C5 Low Sampling Rates Discussion Paper

The Council reviewed a discussion paper that considered options for increasing partial coverage selection rates. The Council opted to initiate an analysis to consider increasing the observer fee, with the first steps of the analytical process to follow the Observer Advisory Committee recommendations to develop observer coverage reference points.

The paper was prepared by a subgroup of the OAC and endorsed by the OAC, and evaluated whether there are short-term options that can be addressed through changes to the Annual Deployment Plan or the Catch Accounting System, and longer-term solutions that may involve regulatory change. One of the short-term options, to secure Federal funding, has been achieved this year, which will increase selection rates for the next two years (2018-2019). Chris Oliver, NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator, noted in his address to the Council, however, that this additional Federal funding should be considered as a one-time reallocation, and is not a long-term solution for funding at-sea observer coverage. As such, the Council initiated an analysis to increase the fee, linked with the OAC's recommendation on next steps which call for refining the reference points by which to judge what level of sampling is sufficient, and optimization work that can be done through the Annual Deployment Plan, namely to revise the criteria for the zero-selection pool, and optimize the balance of vessels using Electronic Monitoring versus those in the human observer pools. While recognizing that the immediate next steps require agency staff work, the Council requested that the OAC subgroup continue to engage and interact with staff on developing these steps. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

C6 Draft 2018 ADP

The Council reviewed the Draft 2018 Observer Annual Deployment Plan (ADP), received a report from its Observer Advisory Committee (OAC) and its Electronic Monitoring Workgroup (EMWG), and provided recommendations to NMFS. The Council supports the ADP's continuing recommendation to deploy observers by gear type in 2018, for trawl, longline, and pot gear (regardless of vessel length), as well as having separate strata for trawl and pot vessels delivering to tenders. The Council does not support a separate stratum for hook-and-line vessels delivering to tenders, because there are so few instances of this activity.

The Council disagreed with the NMFS recommendation with respect to the observer deployment allocation scheme, as identified in the draft 2018 ADP. The Council prefers the use of the allocation scheme that was in place in 2017, which is full optimization based on discards and halibut PSC. Under the Council's preferred allocation scheme, selection rates for the pot strata would decrease substantially, and coverage in the hook and line and trawl strata would increase. The agency will take the Council's recommendation under advisement in its development of a final ADP, which will be reported to the Council in December 2017.

The Council agreed with the remainder of the provisions of the draft ADP for deployment in 2018, and provided recommendations for the 2017 Annual Report (which will be presented in June 2018) and for the 2019 ADP. These include development of a different allocation scheme that provides for minimum selection rates that are specific by gear type; and evaluation of the deployment into the sablefish pot

fishery; reporting of EM stratum information. The Council objected to the agency's statement of intent in the draft ADP that in 2019, the agency would require 100% coverage on EM boats in 2019 with selection of trips for video review occurring after the trip is completed. The Council requested that this change be fully evaluated to understand the cost and operational implications of such a change for vessels and EM service providers. An additional request was made to NMFS to undertake programming changes as necessary to allow vessels in future to be in the EM pool for fixed gear, and in the observer pool for trawl gear, in the same year. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

C6 Other Observer Issues

The Council reviewed the EMWG and the OAC recommendations on draft Statement of Work for the EM and observer service provider contracts for partial coverage, on which the NMFS Acquisition and Grants Office (AGO) is currently soliciting input. In staff tasking, the Council requested that the OAC, EMWG, and Advisory Panel comments be compiled and submitted to the AGO during the public comment period.

The Council also reviewed the status of regulatory amendments and other analytical projects affecting the Observer Program, and OAC recommendations regarding their relative priority. There are several new electronic monitoring (EM) projects that have been proposed now that the Council is completing its implementation of EM for the fixed gear fleets. The Council requested staff to provide descriptions of propose EM projects for a future meeting, to help the Council prioritize projects and determine whether and when an EM Workgroup should be appointed to shepherd new projects. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

C7 Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program Review

The Council reviewed the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program review and allocation policy review, and accepted the reviews as complete and final, once the analysts include to the extent practical, the minor additions requested by the SSC. These include additional information on processed products, crew and processing workers, and some revision to the existing language.

The Central GOA Rockfish Program review is required under Section 303A(c)(1)(G) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act. That provision states that all Limited Access Privilege Programs must include a formal and detailed 5-year program review after implementation of the program. The program review document presented at this meeting fulfilled those Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act requirements.

In addition, NOAA Fisheries created an allocation policy to provide a mechanism to ensure fisheries allocations are periodically evaluated to remain relevant to current conditions. The Council, during its June 2017 meeting, directed staff to include the required fishery allocation review as part of the overall Central GOA Rockfish Program review. After reviewing the Central GOA Rockfish Program review document, the Council determined that the document met the allocation review guidance requirements. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

C8 Salmon FMP

The Council received an update from staff on preliminary development of a Salmon FMP amendment that would extend federal management authority to three traditional net fishing areas that are located in federal waters, but are currently exempt from the FMP. The Council chose to sequence its action by focusing initially on Cook Inlet, and is requesting written proposals from the public on proposed management areas.

Progress thus far has been through information provided in two discussion papers. The initial paper (April 2017) laid out the history and scope of the issue for the Council to recommend preliminary alternatives, and the expanded discussion paper presented at the October 2017 meeting analyzed options under the alternative Federal/State or Federal only management approaches currently under consideration. The options addressed in the expanded discussion paper represent ways to address specific Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA) requirements for federal FMPs. The MSA requirements and corresponding options are summarized in Table ES 1-1 in the discussion paper's executive summary, and are addressed in further detail in Chapter 2 of the discussion paper.

As part of its decision to initiate the amendment, the Council indicated it would create a stakeholder workgroup to assist in development of options. An evening outreach meeting was held during the October Council meeting week to discuss the formation of the workgroup and the issues that it should consider. A summary of the meeting was provided to the Council, and the discussion provided a very useful picture of the range of public positions on the action.

After reviewing the expanded discussion paper, and informed by public testimony, the Council took action to solicit written proposals from the public to help further the development of the management measures for the FMP amendment. Additionally, the Council chose to limit the scope of the first amendment to only the traditional net fishing area in federal waters that is located in Cook Inlet. The amendment was originally going to comprehensively address all three traditional net areas in Prince William Sound and South Peninsula. The Council felt, however, that focusing on Cook Inlet in this action would 1) be consistent with instruction provided in the District Court's judgement, 2) directly address the area that has been at the center of the litigative history of this action, and 3) inform, and possibly streamline development of a future action that would apply to the other two traditional net areas.

Request for Written Proposals

The Council is amending the Salmon FMP to include the traditional net fishing area in Cook Inlet within the management unit (see figure below). The Council intends, at a future meeting, to form a Salmon Committee that will include stakeholders and will assist the development of the amendment by reviewing and recommending measures necessary to satisfy Section 303(a) of the MSA and related MSA provisions.

To develop the scope of work for the Salmon Committee, the Council is soliciting written proposals from the public to help the Council identify specific required conservation and management measures for the Salmon Committee to evaluate relevant to the development of options for a fishery management plan amendment. Further resources and reference materials can be found on the [Salmon FMP page](#) on the Council's website. PROPOSAL DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1, 2018, Please submit written proposals to james.armstrong@noaa.gov.

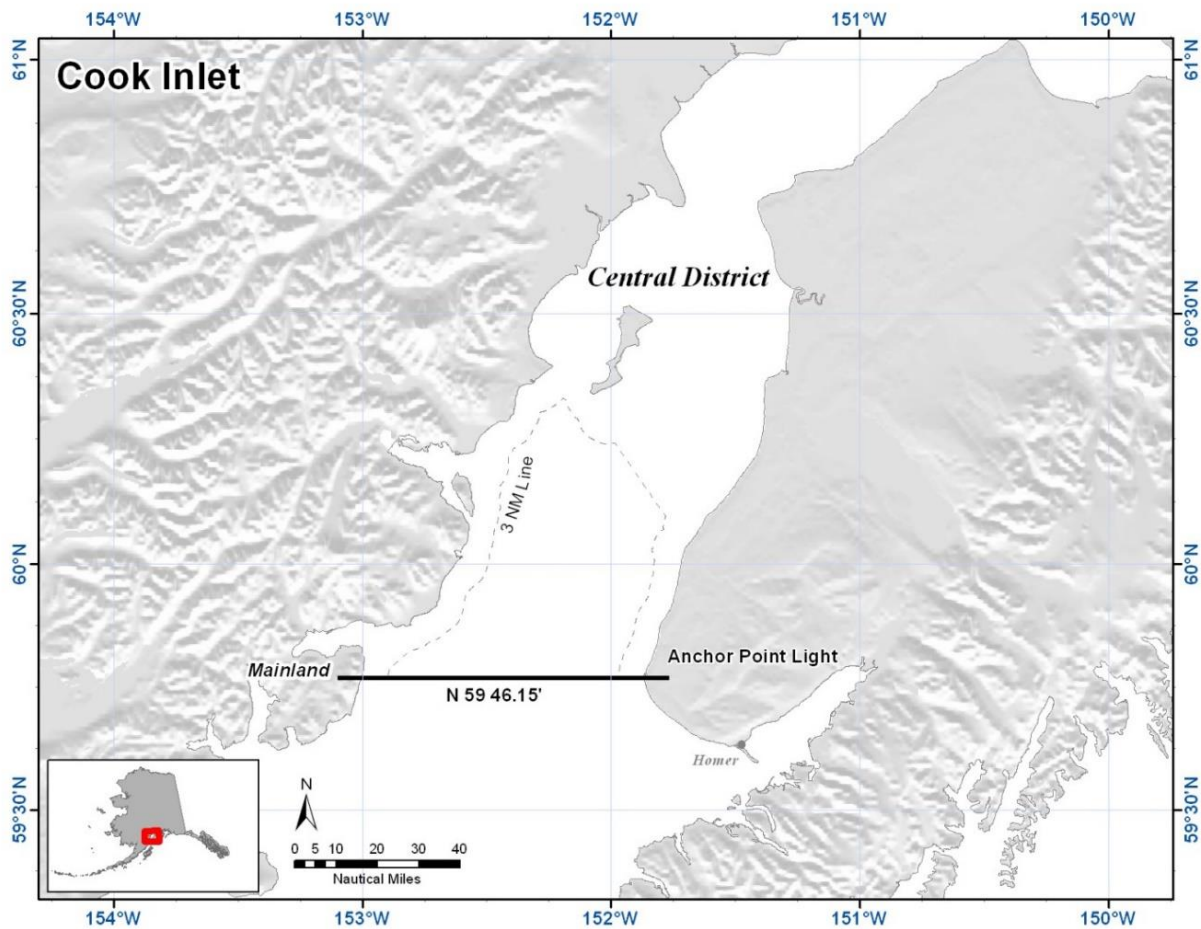


Figure 1. Traditional net fishing area in Cook Inlet

C9 BSAI Halibut Abundance-based PSC Management

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on the development of abundance based PSC limits for BSAI halibut prepared by an inter-agency workgroup of analysts from the Council, NMFS, and the IPHC. The paper compiled results from topic-specific discussion papers prepared for the Council over the last two years, and reviewed a range of potential indices to link halibut PSC to abundance in the Bering Sea, and for reviewing potential control rules to establish PSC limits based on the selected index or indices. Following review of the discussion paper, the Council concurred with the workgroup and SSC recommendations to move forward with two indices: the estimates of halibut biomass from the NMFS Eastern Bering Sea annual shelf trawl survey, and from the annual IPHC setline survey in Areas 4ABCDE.

The Council provided further direction on explicit elements and options to consider while developing control rules, including the shape of the control rule, a range of starting points for PSC limits (2,118 mt to 3,867 mt), and the maximum and minimum PSC limits under consideration. The control rule shapes being considered include linear (various slopes and stair-steps), multi-dimensional, and decision/“Lookup” tables for using multiple indices to set PSC limits. The Council tasked staff to develop a preliminary analysis using these specific elements and options, with a focus on providing additional description of these types of control rules. The working group will identify the control rule features that best meet the Council’s five stated objectives for this action, and provide a qualitative evaluation of the control rules and their performance at varying levels of abundance. The working group will evaluate the difference between establishing a PSC limit that is aggregated across all gear types and then allocated to

gears and sectors, as well as limits that are indexed separately by gear type to establish separate PSC limits. In either case, trawl PSC limits will be apportioned to sectors according to existing proportional allocations.

The Council also directed the NMFS to initiate scoping for preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for this action. It is anticipated that the scoping report from the agency will be available when the preliminary analysis comes back to the Council. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

D1 Deck Sorting and Halibut Genetic Sample EFPs

The Council reviewed and supports two exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications that were presented at the meeting. The first is to allow on-deck sorting of Pacific halibut on non-pelagic trawl catcher processor vessels, as a means of reducing halibut bycatch mortalities. The EFP would extend, through 2018 and 2019, a current EFP granted to the Alaska Seafood Cooperative and co-applicants, which expires at the end of 2017. Under the EFP, vessels are allowed to sort halibut removed from a codend on the deck, rather than routing halibut over the flow scale and below deck, and release those fish back into the water after sampling halibut for length and condition, using IPHC halibut mortality assessment methods. All groundfish and halibut harvested must be within existing allocations for groundfish and halibut mortality. It remains the intent of the Council that once this EFP extension is complete, a regulatory change will have been implemented to allow deck sorting.

The second EFP proposes to allow crew members to collect genetic samples from incidentally caught halibut on a hook-and-line vessel in the 2018 A season western Aleutian Islands Pacific cod fishery. The purpose of the experiment is to confirm or reject results of a previous genetic stock structure study which indicated that Pacific halibut in the western Aleutian Islands are genetically distinct from the remainder of the eastern Pacific population. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

D2 IFQ Committee

The Council reviewed the minutes of the IFQ Committee which met on Monday, October 2. The committee reviewed staff papers on: NMFS's cost recovery program, an action that would allow retention of halibut IFQ in BSAI pot gear, and a review of the first year of sablefish fishing with longline pot gear in the GOA. The committee and the Council requested supplementary information on the attribution of enforcement costs to the IFQ program be included NMFS's annual cost recovery reports. The committee recommended that the halibut retention action be moved forward as an analysis of alternatives that includes options for retention of both incidental and intentionally caught halibut (that action is covered in greater detail under the D3 Halibut Retention agenda item). Regarding the first year of longline pots in the GOA, the committee noted that effective gear-end marking has been a challenge; the chairman reminded the committee that the Council has encouraged vessels using pot gear to communicate with one another about lost gear and effective new marking technologies.

The committee held an expansive discussion about ways in which the IFQ Program is or is not working for the benefit of certain stakeholders who work on the water, or desire access to that work. That conversation centered around the high cost of quota, hired master use, and rural access to the fishery. The Council encouraged committee members to work on proposals for program revisions that would further the original objectives of the IFQ Program, and to vet such proposals at the next committee meeting.

The committee recommended that the Council seat a CQE representative on the IFQ Committee. The Council is currently soliciting nominations for a CQE representative to join the committee before its next

meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for February 5, 2018 in Seattle, WA, in conjunction with the February Council meeting.

Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

D3 Halibut Retention in Pot Gear

After reviewing a staff discussion paper, the Council initiated an analysis to allow vessels using pot gear in the BSAI to retain legal-size halibut if they possess the appropriate IFQ. The Council established a purpose and need statement that recognizes the challenge of whale depredation on longline gear and on halibut that must be discarded in the presence of whales because regulations do not allow them to be retained. Whale depredation causes unaccounted mortality on the sablefish and halibut resource, and hinders the ability of IFQ holders to prosecute the fishery in an effective manner. Noting that the IPHC recently revised its regulations to allow halibut retention in pot gear and that retention is currently allowed in the GOA, the Council seeks to align Federal retention regulations with the IPHC and apply them consistently throughout Alaska waters.

The Council will review analysis of a 'no action' alternative and one action alternative. The action alternative contains an element that would allow fishermen to deploy pots with a wider opening, which could lead to more effective harvest of legal-size halibut. The action alternative does not frame the catching of halibut with pot gear as "targeted/directed" or "incidental." Rather, the Council will analyze a measure that provides the fishery latitude to fish for IFQ in the manner that is most effective in the presence of depredating whales, and would review the effects of allowing halibut retention three years after implementation in accordance with the NPFMC and IPHC commitment to review retention in GOA longline pot gear subsequent to implementation of GOA Amendment 101. The Council will consider whether regulations that make pots a more effective gear for the harvest of halibut would introduce pots to new areas and increase the chance of gear conflict. To that effect, the action alternative includes an option that would require vessels that are participating in the fishery to tend their gear at least every five to ten days, and requires vessels fishing pot gear to complete logbooks and utilize VMS.

Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

E Staff Tasking

In addition to discussing the relative priority and scheduling of previously tasked projects, the Council took the following actions and clarified direction and tasking for its committees:

- Tasked staff to add a module to the BSAI cod allocation review outlining steps necessary to remove obstacles that impede achieving, on a continuing basis, the complete harvest of Pacific cod allocations in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and add a similar discussion when reviewing the allocations in the Gulf of Alaska.
- Requested the agency revisit and update the Conservation Plan for the Eastern Pacific stock of Northern Fur Seals, and report on plans to the Ecosystem Committee.
- Recommended that the Ecosystem Committee discuss deep-sea coral research priorities, ways for Bering Sea communities to provide input to the Council with ecosystem issues and concerns, and Ecosystem Committee membership with recommendations back to the Council.
- Agreed to hold an Ecosystem Research Workshop during the February Council meeting
- Requested that the Executive Director and the Chair explore ways to coordinate the December Council meeting with the Young Fishermen's Summit.
- Requested the agency work with NOAA Enforcement to resolve a question about when the starting time for a trawl tow begins.

- Requested an evening presentation on Alaska seafood markets from the McDowell Group during the December Council meeting.
- Approved the proposed allocation review schedule as identified in the Executive Director's Report.
- Extend the public comment deadline for future Council meetings to close-of-business on the Thursday before the meeting.
- Directed staff to send letters regarding: a) comments to Senator Sullivan on draft legislation; b) comments to the agency on reducing the GOA survey to only two vessels; c) thank you to the agency for providing additional funds to the Observer Program, and commenting on the draft 2018 ADP recommendation to require 100% coverage on EM boats in 2019 with post-trip selection; d) comments to the NOAA Acquisition and Grants Office on the observer and EM service provider statements of work; e) request that the Navy to report back on 2017 Northern Edge activities and plans for 2018; f) thank you to James Uthmeier for visiting the Council meeting, and comments on the regulatory reform process.

Motions are posted on the Council website. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Groundfish Plan Teams: November 13-17, AFSC, Seattle

Legislative Committee: December 5, 2017 (T), Anchorage, AK

Charter Halibut Management Committee: December __, 2017, Anchorage, AK

Crab Plan Team: January 9-11, 2018 Hilton, Anchorage, AK

IFQ Committee: February 5, 2018 Seattle, WA

Ecosystem Committee: February 6, 2018 Seattle, WA

Ecosystem research workshop: February 7, 2018 as part of the February Council meeting, Seattle, WA

Crab Plan Team, May 7-10, 2017, Anchorage, AK

EM Workgroup or OAC workgroup: May 15, 2018, AFSC, Seattle, WA

OAC meeting: May 16-17, 2018, AFSC, Seattle, WA

NPRB Request for Proposals

The North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) announced the release of its Core Program Request for Proposals (RFP). The 2018 RFP has an anticipated funding amount of \$4.45 million. Please consult the [2018 RFP](#) for further details on research priorities for this year. **Submission Deadline: December 15, 2017 (4PM AKST)**

Nominations sought for Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

NOAA Fisheries is seeking nominations, **through November 27, 2017**, to fill current and pending vacancies on the **Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC)** due to term limits. MAFAC advises the Secretary of Commerce on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce. The Committee draws on its members' expertise and other sources to evaluate and make recommendations to the Secretary and NOAA on the development and implementation of agency regulations, policies, and programs critical to the mission and goals of the NOAA Fisheries Service.

MAFAC members represent the wide spectrum of commercial, recreational, subsistence, and aquaculture fisheries interests; tribes; seafood industry; protected resources and habitat interests; environmental organizations; academic institutions; consumer groups; and other living marine resource interest groups.

Nominees should possess demonstrable expertise in one of these fields and be able to fulfill the time commitments required for two in-person annual meetings and between-meeting subcommittee work. Membership is balanced geographically across states and territories, ethnically, and on the basis of gender, in addition to the range of expertise and interests listed. Individuals serve for a term of three years. Members may serve a second consecutive term, if re-appointed.

A MAFAC member cannot be a Federal employee, a member of a Regional Fishery Management Council, a registered Federal lobbyist, or a State employee. Membership is voluntary, and except for reimbursable travel and related expenses, service is without pay. The committee functions solely as an advisory body (complying fully with the Federal Advisory Committee Act) which reports to the Secretary.

Full nomination instructions and guidelines are described in this [Federal Register notice](#).

For questions or more information, please contact Jennifer Lukens, Executive Director of MAFAC, jennifer.lukens@noaa.gov or Heidi Lovett, heidi.lovett@noaa.gov.

DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 10/17/2017

December 4-12, 2017 Anchorage, Alaska	February 5-12, 2018 Seattle, Washington	April 2-10, 2018 Anchorage, Alaska
IPHC Report Draft EM Policy directive: <i>Review and comment (T)</i> Final 2018 Observer Annual Deployment Plan: <i>NMFS Report</i> WGOA Pcod A season halibut PSC rates: Discussion Paper WGOA pollock C/D season timing Chinook PSC: Disc paper WGOA pollock trip limits: Discussion paper Stranded Cod in GOA Trawl B Season: Disc paper Small sideboards: Initial Review BSAI Groundfish Specifications: PT Report; Final Specs GOA Groundfish Specifications: PT Report; Final Specs 2018 Charter halibut management measures: Final Action RQE Charter Halibut Permit Ownership Caps: Disc paper Charter Halibut Permit Latent Capacity: Discussion paper Self-guided halibut rental boats: Discussion paper BS cod trawl CV participation: Discussion paper Fixed Gear CV Rockfish Retention: Discussion paper Chinook Salmon Excluder EFP: Consultation (T)	IPHC Report (T) Ecosystem Research Workshop Arctic Exploratory Fishing: Discussion paper Decksorting Regulatory Analysis: Update Small Sideboards: Final Action (T) BSAI Crab: Norton Sound RKC ACL: Final Specifications Crab Plan Team Report: Action as necessary GOA CV Chinook PSC limit adjustments: Initial Review Programmatic Groundfish Objectives: Review IFQ medical lease provision: Discussion Paper IFQ beneficiary designation provision: Discussion Paper IFQ Committee: Report on proposals BS Trawl CV EM Compliance EFP: Review and approve (T) Observer and EM Projects: Review and prioritize next steps (T)	Pollock ICA/IPA reports: Review Salmon genetics reports: Review Co-op Reports (AFA, A80, GOA Rockfish, BSAI Crab): Review Salmon FMP Cook Inlet: Review FMP measure proposals Scallop SAFE and catch specifications: Approve, PT report Halibut Abundance-based PSC limits: Preliminary analysis (T) Halibut retention in BSAI Sablefish pots: Initial Review BS FEP: <i>Preliminary Review</i> GOA CV Chinook PSC limit adjustments: <i>Final Action (T)</i> Charter Halibut Annual Permit Registration: Final Action Mixing of guided and unguided halibut: Final Action ITEMS BELOW NOT YET SCHEDULED GOA Tanner Crab observer/effort data - <i>Discussion paper</i> Bering Sea Snow Crab PSC Limits: <i>Initial Review</i> Observer Insurance Requirements: <i>Disc paper for Reg Am</i> Clarify LLP CV and CP Requirements (NMFS) Observer disembark location: <i>Initial Review</i> Reference points for partial coverage: <i>Discussion paper (T)</i> Raise the observer fee: <i>discuss after ref points analysis</i> Observer zero selection and EM optimization: <i>June 2018</i> Change the observer tender trip definition: <i>Initial Review</i> CGOA Rockfish Reauthorization: <i>Discussion paper in Oct 2018</i> BSAI cod allocation review: <i>2018</i>

ACL - Annual catch limits
 AI - Aleutian Islands
 AFA - American Fisheries Act
 BiOp - Biological Opinion
 BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands
 BKC - Blue King Crab
 CDQ - Community Development Quota
 CQE - Community Quota Entity
 CP - catcher processor
 CV - catcher vessel
 EM - Electronic monitoring
 EFH - Essential Fish Habitat
 EFP - Exempted Fishing Permit
 FEP - Fishery Ecosystem Plan
 FMP - Fishery Management Plan
 GOA - Gulf of Alaska

GKC - Golden King Crab
 HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
 IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota
 ICA - Inter-cooperative Agreements
 IPHC - International Pacific Halibut Commission
 LLP - Limited License Plan
 MRA - Maximum Retainable Allowance
 PSC - Prohibited Species Catch
 RKC - Red King Crab
 RQE - Recreational Quota Entity
 SSC - Scientific and Statistical Committee
 SAFE - Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation
 SSL - Steller Sea Lion
 TAC - Total Allowable Catch
 TLAS - Trawl Limited Access Sector
 WGOA - Western Gulf of Alaska

Future Meeting Dates and Locations
 December 4-12, Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 February 5-13, 2018, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Seattle
 April 2-10, 2018, Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 June 4-12, 2018, Best Western Convention Center, Kodiak
 October 1-9, 2018, Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 December 3-11, 2018, Hilton Hotel, Anchorage
 February 4-12, 2019, Benson Hotel, Portland
 April 1-9, 2019, Anchorage
 June 2-11, 2019 Sitka
 Sept 30-October 8, 2019, Homer
 December 2-10, 2019, Anchorage

(T) = Tentative