



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:GF 17-078

Agenda Date12/4/2017

Agenda Number:C6

Dan Hull, Chairman
David Witherell, Executive Director

SUBJECT:

C6 Small Sideboards - Initial Review

STAFF CONTACT: Jon McCracken (NPFMC)

ACTION REQUIRED:

- Initial Review of AFA and Crab Rationalization Program Small Sideboard Elimination Analysis
- Decide whether to release analysis for public review

BACKGROUND:

In February 2017, the Council received a report on the American Fisheries Act (AFA) Program review. As part of the review, NMFS recommended revising regulations to prohibit directed fishing by non-exempt AFA vessels for species where the sideboard limits are not large enough to support a directed fishery. The Council requested a discussion paper to analyze this proposed action which was subsequently expanded to include analysis of small sideboards on GOA groundfish that apply to non-exempt crab vessels in the Crab Rationalization (CR) Program.

This initial review draft analyzes a proposed action to revise federal regulations to prohibit directed fishing for species (and future breakouts of a complex) with sideboard limits that are not large enough to support directed fishing by non-exempt AFA vessels and crab vessels in the CR Program in the Gulf of Alaska or for those species that are fully allocated to other programs (e.g., flathead sole, rock sole, Western Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel). NMFS would no longer publish AFA and CR Program sideboard amounts for those species in the annual harvest specifications. In addition, the proposed action would remove the sideboard limit on AFA catcher/processors for Central Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel because the sideboard limit under the AFA (11.5%) exceeds the allocation to the trawl limited access sector (10%) that was established by the Amendment 80 Program.