



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

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Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
Co-op Reports (AFA, Am80, GOA Rockfish, BSAI Crab)

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ACTION REQUIRED:
Review Cooperative Reports

BACKGROUND:

In the last decade or more, the Council has developed several cooperative programs as components in larger catch share programs. As part of these programs, cooperatives have been required or requested to provide an annual report. These reports are intended to be a resource for the Council to track the effectiveness of the cooperative and their ability to meet the Council's goal for the programs. Additionally, they are a tool for the cooperatives to provide feedback on the programs to the Council. In general, these reports are often presented by cooperative managers during the April meeting. **Attachment A** provides an overview of mandatory and voluntary elements of the different cooperative reports. This matrix was updated from discussion paper presented at the December 2013 Council meeting. **Attachment B** is a list of active cooperatives and the status of their 2017 cooperative report.

Just a reminder that for any requests, deletions, and/or clarifications of information provided in the cooperative reports (voluntary or otherwise), the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requires Federal agencies (1) to seek public comment on proposed collections and (2) to submit proposed collections for review and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB reviews agency information collection requests for approval and disapproval. The PRA should not discourage the Council from making requests for voluntary cooperative information to be included in future cooperative reports. Rather, this guidance advises the Council to pursue voluntary information requests in a more deliberative manner, providing clear explanation of the objective of the new information. Council and NMFS staff will be required to track these Council information requests and submit the necessary PRA paperwork to OMB, so a clear explanation for requests is helpful.

(a) AFA Co-op reports

In 1998, Congress established the American Fisheries Act specifically for the pollock fishery in the BSAI management area. Among other things, the AFA encouraged domestic enterprise in Alaskan fisheries and established provisions for the creation of fishery cooperatives in three sectors: at sea catcher processors, mothership, and inshore vessels. Cooperatives are given exclusive allocation of pollock based on their members' historical catch. For a list of AFA cooperative reports and Council presentations at this meeting, see Attachment B.

(b) Amendment 80 Co-op reports

Implemented in 2008, the Amendment 80 Program is a limited access privilege program (LAPP) that allocates a portion of total allowable catch (TAC) for Atka mackerel, Pacific ocean perch, and 3 flatfish species (yellowfin

sole, rock sole, and flathead sole), along with an allocation of prohibited species catch (PSC) quota for halibut and crab, in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI), to the Amendment 80 sector. For a list of Amendment 80 cooperative reports and Council presentations at this meeting, see Attachment B.

For clarification, the Amendment 80 cooperatives also provided halibut bycatch management plans to the Council at the December meeting. That request originated from the Council during the June 2015 meeting.

(c) CGOA Rockfish Co-op reports

In 2007, the Central GOA Pilot Rockfish Program was implemented. The program was intended to enhance resource conservation and improve economic efficiency for harvesters and processors who participated in the program. Allocations of the primary rockfish species (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and pelagic rockfish) and important incidental catch species (i.e., sablefish, Pacific cod, shortraker and rougheye rockfish, and thornyhead rockfish) are divided between the catcher vessel sector and the catcher processor sector. In addition, each sector is allocated halibut PSC limits based on historic catch of halibut in the target rockfish fisheries. As part of reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in 2007, the Pilot Program was extended until December 31, 2011. During that time, the Council completed action on Amendment 88 to the GOA Fishery Management Plan that revised the Rockfish Program and the amendment was implemented in 2012. For a list of Rockfish Program cooperative reports and Council presentations at this meeting, see attachment B.

(d) BSAI Crab reports

The BSAI Crab rationalization program was implemented in 2005 without a pre-established reporting requirement for cooperatives. In 2013, the Council reviewed an analysis evaluating the Council's management options for promoting active participation among lease holders. This consideration for a regulatory amendment was presented at the same time as a discussion paper that considered addressing lease rates, crew compensation, and active participation through flexible cooperative management. After hearing these presentations from Council staff as well as public testimony from the cooperatives, the Council chose no immediate regulatory action on these issues. Instead the Council stated its desire for the crab fisheries and requested that the industry use non-regulatory methods to address the Council's concerns. This analysis suggested the utility of an annual cooperative report in providing feedback on the effectiveness of non-regulatory measures. The Council sent a letter to each of the cooperatives requesting that they voluntarily report on measures they are taking to:

- Ensure QS transfers to active participant and crew members
- Address high lease rates
- Address low crew compensation rates

The letter calls for any additional information or data the cooperatives wish to provide demonstrating the effectiveness of the current measures and the level of participation in cooperative established measures. It informs the BSAI crab cooperatives that these reports will help determine if the Council will take regulatory action in the future.

The reports were moved from October to an annual April reporting cycle. Further Council discussion recommended using the seven question/response format, as has been employed by many of the groups in the past, as their preferred reporting structure. April 2017 is the fourth round of crab cooperative reports. For a list of BSAI Crab cooperative reports and Council presentations at this meeting, see Attachment B.