



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Action Memo

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**David Witherell, Executive Director**

### SUBJECT:

Committees and Tasking - Review

STAFF CONTACT: Diana Evans (NPFMC)

### ACTION REQUIRED:

- Review Committees
- Provide direction for Tasking and Scheduling

### BACKGROUND:

#### Committees

Attached is the updated Council committee list reflecting Council changes in February 2018. Also at the February meeting, the Council solicited nominations for a reconstituted EM Workgroup that focuses on developing EM use on trawl catcher vessels. The current structure of the EM Workgroup includes both appointed members representing industry sectors and EM providers, and various member agencies (Council, NMFS Alaska Region, NMFS Observer Program, PSMFC, IPHC, etc.) who send representatives. The scheduled May 15<sup>th</sup> EMWG meeting will be a transition meeting including both outgoing fixed gear members and incoming trawl members. The Council received several nominations from representatives of trawl catcher vessels and EM providers, and the Chairman will appoint new members at this meeting.

The Enforcement Committee is meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, and there may be items from the balance of their minutes that they wish to present during this agenda item.

Additionally, the Pacific Northwest Crab Interagency Advisory Committee (PNCIAC) held their annual meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>, and the PNCIAC Chairman, Lance Farr, is here to present a report from that meeting. PNCIAC has also submitted two letters to the Council, which are attached to this agenda item.

Committee and Plan Team meetings that are currently anticipated between April and June include:

- Crab Plan Team meeting, May 7-10, AFSC, Seattle, WA
- Social Science Planning Team meeting, May 8-9, Anchorage, AK
- OAC subgroup teleconference, May 11, 9-noon (AK time)
- EM Workgroup meeting, May 15, AFSC, Seattle, WA
- Observer Advisory Committee, May 16-17, AFSC, Seattle, WA
- Ecosystem Committee, June 5, Kodiak, AK

#### Tasking and Scheduling

Also attached are various tasking documents. The Council may wish to discuss priorities for completing

ongoing projects, as well as any new tasks assigned during the course of this meeting.

- Three-meeting outlook
- Project and Staff Workload
- Observer Program projects
- Groundfish Workplan

### ***June meeting***

Looking ahead to the June meeting, we thought it might help to clarify expectations about what you will see in the BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV preliminary review.

BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV preliminary review: In December 2017, the Council was concerned about the impacts of the recent increase/potential future growth in offshore deliveries of BSAI Pacific cod to motherships, and the potential risk of latent LLP licenses, threatening the viability of the BSAI Pacific cod fishery. They initiated an analysis to address these concerns. Alternatives 2 and 3 would limit Amendment 80 C/Ps and non-Amendment 80 C/Ps from acting as a mothership to receive BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod deliveries from trawl CVs (Alternative 2) and limit the maximum of BSAI Pacific cod that could be delivered to qualified Amendment 80 motherships (Alternative 3). Alternative 4 would prohibit the use of any LLP licenses in the BSAI trawl Pacific cod fishery unless they have a directed BSAI trawl Pacific cod landing during a qualifying period selected by the Council (Alternative 4). In June, staff will bring back the following analysis:

- discussion to allow the Council to clarify how the different alternatives and options interact, for initial review analysis. Some of these clarifications include:
  - inconsistencies between Alternative 2 and 3
  - how to analyze Alternative 3 given confidential data limitations
  - how the term “directed BSAI trawl cod landing” should be interpreted
- preliminary analysis of the number of Amendment 80 C/Ps and non-Amendment 80 vessels that would be allowed to act as a mothership for BSAI CV trawl Pacific cod deliveries (Alternative 2)
- preliminary analysis of the number of LLP licenses that may qualify to be used to harvest BSAI Pacific cod by the trawl CV sector and those LLP licenses that would not qualify (Alternative 4)
- Staff does not intend to provide estimates of the sector allocations under Alternative 3, due to confidential data issues, until the Council has provided further direction concerning staff clarifications.

### ***Batter's box***

Also, we periodically report to you on the status of items in the ‘batter’s box’ (the ‘items below not yet scheduled’ section of the three-meeting outlook), and the following provides a short outline of the what is the requested analysis and what is influencing the timeline for each item.

Bering Sea snow crab PSC limits: In February 2016, the Council initiated an analysis to revise the snow crab PSC limit. Currently, sector-specific PSC limits are established each year for groundfish trawl fisheries, as a proportion of the total estimate of snow crab abundance from the eastern Bering Sea trawl survey. Only snow crab PSC that is caught within the *Chionoecetes opilio* Bycatch Limitation Zone (COBLZ) accrues to the PSC limit, and when a sector reaches the PSC limit, COBLZ is closed and the sector must fish outside of COBLZ for the remainder of the year. The analysis will evaluate using the total population estimate from the snow crab assessment (instead of only the model-estimated abundance from the survey) to calculate the PSC limit, as well as options to reduce the PSC limit or remove maximum and minimum limits. Staff have recently been assigned to work on this project and will bring back an initial review draft later this year.

Observer analyses: There are several items in the batter’s box that address aspects of the observer program; more detail on all observer items can also be found in the ‘Status of observer program projects’ attachment.

- An initial review draft of the partial coverage **observer fee analysis**, for which the Council adopted a purpose and need statement and alternatives in February 2018, is scheduled to come back in December 2018.
- The Council has previously noted, and NMFS has agreed, that the Alaska regulations about the **observer provider insurance requirements** are out of date, and some requirements should be removed. This amendment package is on hold until the National Observer Program provides clarification about what the replacement insurance requirements should be for providers.
- The Council has initiated initial review analyses for two observer actions for which staff are not yet available. The first is a relatively discrete action to allow vessels to **disembark observers** at a port even if there is not a resident FPP-holding processor. The second is a major analytical project, to change the **tender 'fishing trip' definition** for purposes of observer coverage when a vessel is delivering to a tender. The action would limit the number of tender deliveries a vessel can make before relogging into ODDS. The Council has requested this action analyze the option for observers to meet the vessel out on the fishing grounds.

CGOA Rockfish Reauthorization: The current CGOA Rockfish Program is authorized for 10 years from January 1, 2012, until December 31, 2021. Without Council action, the Rockfish Program will expire after the 2021 fishing season. In consideration of the timeline required for analyzing and implementing a reauthorized Rockfish Program, including any potential changes to the program if desired, staff will present a workplan for the analysis at the December 2018 meeting. Absent Council input on the desired elements of the workplan, staff will bring back a draft purpose and need statement based on the Council's previous purpose and need statement, and a brief discussion of two alternatives: no action, where the program sunsets and the fishery reverts to management under the License Limitation Program, and an alternative that reauthorizes the rockfish program in a configuration identical to the current program.

BSAI cod allocation review: Based on the adopted 10-year time frame, the BSAI Pacific cod allocations review is scheduled for 2019. Staff intends to present a workplan for that review at the December 2018 Council meeting. The workplan will also accommodate the October 2017 Council request to identify steps to remove obstacles that impede achieving, on a continuing basis, the complete harvest of Pacific cod allocation in the BSAI.

IFQ changes: There are two IFQ projects that the Council has requested, but to which staff has not yet been assigned. The timeline for discussion papers for these issues is tentatively set for late 2018 or early 2019.

- The **QS holder eligibility requirements** discussion paper will scope the idea of an *ongoing* sea-time requirement for eligibility to hold halibut and sablefish quota share, replacing the existing Transfer Eligibility Certificate that is granted in perpetuity once an individual logs 150 sea-days in his or her lifetime. The Council is interested in promoting the objective of an owner-operator fleet and is concerned that some current arrangements allow economic benefits from the resource to accrue to individuals who are not actively engaged in the fishery.
- The **hired master use** discussion paper will provide data to support deliberation on whether regulations that allow individual halibut and sablefish quota share holders to use hired masters fishery should be revised. The Council notes that increasing use of hired masters might not align with the objective of an owner-operator fleet but recognizes that some applications of the hired master provision are effective and beneficial. In addition to data on hired master use, the paper will characterize the variety of hired master arrangements.

## Public Comment

There are also four public comment letters for your review and consideration. The following summarizes the proposals contained therein:

- Request the Council prohibit trawling incrementally over a four-year period and give trawl vessels the opportunity to convert to pot gear.
- Request the Council change charter, recreational, and subsistence halibut limits to a consistent rule across the state of one fish per person per day, no exceptions.
- Two letters that address a potential trailing amendment for BSAI Amendment 113 (which established a 5,000 mt Pacific cod set aside for catcher vessels delivering to shore-based processors in Aleutian Islands communities), and identify specific issues the Council should consider if the Council initiates such an amendment .

Recall also that there are other public comment letters submitted under the B reports requesting the Council fine-tune the landing requirements implemented under BSAI Amendment 113 for the AI Pacific cod set aside.