



REPORT FROM THE PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETING June 22 - 28, 2016 Tacoma Washington

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT

D.4. Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications Including Management Reference Points and Management Measures

Chapter 5 in the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) describes the biennial management cycle. Under this process, Council decision-making occurs at the June, September, and November Council meetings to establish or adjust harvest specifications and management measures for a two-year period that begins on April 1 of the following year—the start of the next fishing year. This agenda item commences the sixth biennial management cycle since FMP implementation, with any regulations proposed by the Council becoming effective on or after April 1, 2017. Such regulations continue in effect for at least two years unless subsequently modified through the Council process. For this period, the Council tasked the HMS Management Team (HMSMT) to:

1. Make “housekeeping” changes to the HMS FMP to update or correct dated information including a number of items that have changed since the FMP was adopted.
2. Clarify maximum sustainable yield (MSY), optimum yield (OY), and status determination criteria for management unit species in the HMS FMP and publish up-to-date values for these reference points in the Stock Assessment Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) document. This process would dovetail with NMFS’ stock status determination process. Further, it could align the process of notifying the Council of stock status findings that trigger action under Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) sections 304(e) and 304(i) (describing Council obligations relative to overfishing and overfished determinations) with the Council’s biennial management cycle. The SAFE would also include updated fishery management unit species descriptions, including identifying both the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) swordfish stock and the Western and Central North Pacific Ocean stock to reflect the most recent (2014) stock assessment and distribution information for those two stocks.
3. Respond to the requests contained in the Center for Biological Diversity’s (CBD) petition for additional domestic actions regarding Pacific bluefin tuna that NMFS referred to the Council for further consideration. The HMSMT proposes to evaluate NMFS response to the CBD’s requests, including summaries of public comment, and make recommendations to the Council in subsequent meetings during this biennial cycle. The HMSMT regards its proposal to clarify descriptions of reference points in the HMS FMP and the SAFE as integral to its evaluation, and also requested scheduling flexibility.

The HMSMT will produce a draft HMS SAFE Report, mark-ups to the HMS FMP, a plan for aligning the biennial management process and NMFS’ status determination process, and draft recommendations for a Council response to the CBD bluefin petition for initial consideration at the September Council meeting.



D.5. Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permit Update

The Council tasked its HMSMT to:

1. Develop a range of alternatives for Federal large mesh drift gillnet gear permitting to include the following:
 - a. As soon as possible after Council final action, only fishers authorized to fish with large-mesh drift gillnet gear under state law would be entitled to a NMFS commercial HMS permit endorsed for drift gillnet.
 - b. Status quo.
2. Develop special conditions for a deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) program for Council consideration at the September 2016 Council meeting, focusing on three areas:
 - a. Schedule consideration of new buoy gear EFPs for any future Council meetings that HMS is otherwise scheduled.
 - b. Develop a list of key data gaps and research needs with regard to DSBG to inform future permit program conditions. The list should also be useful to aid prospective EFP applicants in developing applications. Many of these needs have been identified in HMSMT, HMS Advisory Subpanel, Enforcement Consultant, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) statements and public comments in March and June 2016.
 - c. Outline alternatives to provide incentives for EFP participation including, but not limited to, prioritized eligibility of EFP participants in potential future DSBG permit program.

The Council clarified that the emphasis on continuing development of a DSBG fishery by issuing EFPs does not replace its intent to develop a range of alternatives to authorize the fishery under the HMS FMP consistent with its guidance in March 2016. The intent is to allow a smooth transition from exempted fishing to an authorized DSBG fishery.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

G.1. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Report

NMFS Near-Term Priorities

NMFS maintains attention to routine actions (e.g. groundfish, whiting, halibut specifications, and inseason actions) and several actions already at various stages of implementation (e.g., electronic monitoring, ecosystem/Amendment 25, sablefish, widow reallocation, and Essential Fish Habitat/Rockfish Conservation Areas).

In addition to rulemakings and responding to litigation, NMFS has the following near-term priorities:

- Salmon ESA Section 7 Consultation for Groundfish FMP.
- Eulachon ESA Section 7 Consultation for Groundfish FMP.
- ESA Section 7 Consultation on Pacific Halibut Fisheries and Catch Sharing Plan.



Rulemaking Plan for 2016 Groundfish and Halibut

In addition to a list of groundfish and halibut actions that have published in 2016, NMFS provided a list of rulemakings that are currently in progress.

Published

1. Final Rule for comprehensive ecosystem-based amendment 1 (81 FR 19054, 4/05/2016).
2. Final Rule to revise scale requirements (81 FR 27006, 5/05/2016).
3. Final Rule for Pacific whiting for 2016 (81 FR 30203, 5/12/2016). Reapportionment of Tribal Whiting (81 FR 183, 1/5/2016)

In Progress (Table 1)

	Rule	Timing (Tentative)	Sectors Affected
1	Midwater Recreational Fishery off Oregon	Proposed rule – summer/fall 2016 Final rule – winter/spring 2017	Oregon Recreational
2	Sablefish Rule Includes: Registering a LE trawl and fixed gear permit to a vessel at same time (joint registration), sablefish- endorsed LE fixed gear ownership issues, electronic fish tickets	Proposed rule – May 2016 Final rule – late summer 2016 Effective January 1, 2017	LE Trawl (IFQ), LE fixed gear, OA
3	Gear Modifications	Proposed rule – summer 2016 Final rule – fall 2016	LE Trawl (IFQ/MS/CP)
4	Electronic monitoring	Proposed rule – summer 2016 Final rule – fall 2016	LE Trawl (IFQ)
5	Widow reallocation	Proposed rule – June 2016 Final rule – fall 2016	LE Trawl
6	Tribal U&A boundary modifications	Final rule – June 2016	Tribal
7	2017-2018 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures	Proposed rule – fall 2016 Final rule – January 1, 2017	LE, OA, Tribal, Recreational
8	Vessel Movement Monitoring	Proposed rule – fall 2016 Final rule – January 1, 2017	LE and OA

G.2. Amendment 21 At-Sea Sector Allocation Revisions

Approved in 2010, Amendment 21 established:

- Long-term allocations between the trawl and nontrawl sectors of the groundfish fishery;
- A short term allocational split between the shoreside whiting and nonwhiting fishery;
- Darkblotched rockfish, Pacific Ocean perch (POP) and widow rockfish allocations among the trawl at-sea and trawl shoreside sectors;
- The need for and initial set asides for the at-sea trawl sectors; and,
- A Pacific halibut bycatch allowance to be provided to the trawl fishery in the form of individual bycatch quota (established through Amendment 20).

The At-sea whiting sectors (i.e. catcher processors (CP) and motherships (MS)) are managed in a system of sector-specific harvest cooperatives. Each at-sea whiting sector manages their bycatch of canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, POP, and widow rockfish using sector-specific total catch limits. Initial allocation of these four species was made to the four existing LE trawl sectors before initial allocation of quota shares under Amendment 20. For canary rockfish, initial sector allocation was decided in the biennial harvest specification and management measures process immediately preceding implementation of Amendments 20 and 21. The initial sector allocation of the three other trawl-dominant overfished species under Amendment 21 is as follows:

Darkblotched Rockfish; Allocate 9% or 25 mt, whichever is greater, of the total LE Trawl allocation to the whiting fisheries (at-sea and shoreside combined).

Pacific Ocean Perch; Allocate 17% or 30 mt, whichever is greater, of the total LE Trawl allocation to the whiting fisheries (at-sea and shoreside combined).

Widow Rockfish; Allocate 52% of the total LE trawl allocation to the whiting sectors if the stock is under rebuilding or 10% of the total LE trawl allocation or 500 mt of the trawl allocation to the whiting sectors, whichever is greater, if the stock is rebuilt. If the stock is overfished when the initial allocation is implemented, the latter allocation scheme automatically kicks in when it is declared rebuilt.

The distribution of the whiting trawl allocation of darkblotched rockfish, POP, and widow rockfish to individual whiting sectors (i.e. CP and MS) is pro rata relative to the sectors' whiting allocation.

Due to successful efforts to rebuild these species (widow and canary are currently rebuilt), bycatch encounters have significantly increased. In October 2014, the at-sea MS fishery experienced a sudden and unexpected closure due to attainment of the darkblotched bycatch cap. In September 2015, the Council took inseason action to make up to 5 mt of darkblotched available to the MS sector to prevent interruption of the fishery in the event the bycatch cap was reached.

September 2015; Representatives from the whiting MS Cooperative informed the Council that despite the unprecedented bycatch avoidance measures implemented by the MS Cooperative, including voluntary area closures and strict vessel movement requirements, the low amounts of bycatch have forced the fishery into exigent circumstances and made the fishery operationally impractical.

In addition, MS Cooperative representatives proposed an action to proactively address the problem and avoid additional crises management. This action, initially referred to as the 'Transfer Concept' and subsequently as the 'At-Sea Trawl Buyback Movement', would allow MS endorsed permit holders to voluntarily transfer limited amounts of four bycatch species between their Shoreside IFQ accounts and the MS Cooperative.

November 2015; The Council adopted the 'At-Sea Trawl Buyback Movement' proposal for further analysis, provided however, that the action be characterized as an interim approach and

that the provision of the action is subject to the five-year review of the Catch Sharing Plan, and that the analysis be limited to a five-year outlook.

April 2016; The Council adopted a motion that specified amounts (as a main priority) of darkblotched rockfish and POP as annual set-asides (which is preferred, if possible), or allocations, for each of the at-sea sectors for 2017 and 2018; and, strongly urge[d] the NMFS to explore any and every possible mechanism to make the adjustments proposed happen to the maximum extent possible.

June 2016; Council and NMFS staff determined that the proposed April action should be considered separately from the 2017-2018 management measures, in its own agenda item. Changing these allocations or specifying these two species as set-aside species for these sectors requires an amendment to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) since these species were formally allocated to these sectors under Amendment 21. Such an action compels a three-meeting process to decide a change.

The Council adopted a Purpose and Need Statement for the proposed action (for revised Amendment 21 At-Sea Allocations) that is intended to substantially reduce the risk of the at-sea sectors (MS and CP) not attaining their respective whiting allocations based on the incidental catch of darkblotched rockfish or POP. The proposed action is intended to be an interim solution to address the immediate needs of the at-sea sectors, and during the upcoming five year review of the Trawl Rationalization Program, it is the intention to review these allocations (among the other IFQ species) and determine what more appropriate (i.e., fair and equitable) allocations are for each of the sectors as well as consider other long-term solutions. In addition, the Council focused the analysis within the proposed Range of Alternatives on Options A (allocations (status quo)) and B (set-asides) for darkblotched rockfish and POP, and confirmed Option B as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative. The Council is scheduled to take final action on this initiative in September 2016 with the intent to implement the action by the start of the 2017 primary whiting season on May 15, 2017.

G.3. Final Exempted Fishing Permit Approval for 2017/2018

At its November 2015 meeting, the Council considered four exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications. At that time, the Council approved one EFP for public review—sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to test pot gear for selective harvest of lingcod off of Washington and Oregon. Subsequently, at its March 2016 meeting, the Council approved, for public review, the renewal of the commercial jig fishing EFP sponsored by the San Francisco Community Fishing Association (SFCFA), and Mr. Dan Platt. To accommodate the SFCFA/Platt EFP the Council adopted set-asides as specified for 2015-16, and reduced the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife research set aside for yelloweye by the amount needed for this EFP (0.03 mt).

The Council approved both EFP applications with the following additional conditions:

TNC Pot Gear EFP

- Limit activity to those waters westward of a line approximating the 75 fathom depth contour.

- Set Asides; None (“The EFP applicants and participants will cover all quota needs, research and observer costs, and fishing participants).

SFCFA/Platt Commercial Jig EFP

- For monitoring, 30% observer coverage supplemented by the EFP participants collecting data on the remaining trips.
- Extend the southern boundary for the EFP to Point Conception.
- Add up to three additional vessels to the EFP.
- Set Asides; Amounts similar to previous EFP cycles, but with an increase in the chilipepper set aside from 10 mt to 30 mt and 10 mt of bocaccio, to cover the extension of the southern boundary of the EFP.

G.4. Final Action to Adopt Management Measures for 2017/2018 Fisheries

At the April 2016 meeting the Council selected a Final Preferred Alternative for 2017 and 2018 Harvest Specifications for all stocks and stock complexes.

Under Agenda Item G.2, NMFS provided options to address the concerns of the at-sea sectors with regards to their harvest amounts of darkblotched rockfish and POP. Below are two options NMFS explored to address the darkblotched rockfish and POP allocations. There are two basic mechanisms to increase the amount of these species available to the at-sea sectors. The Council could consider:

- 1) Increasing Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), making more fish available to all the fisheries, thereby increasing the amounts available to the at-sea sectors; or,
- 2) Changing allocations and take fish from the Shorebased IFQ Program to increase the amounts available to the at-sea sectors.

Per the discussion under Agenda Item G.2, NMFS noted that changes to Amendment 21 allocations (option 2) will not meet the Council’s desired timelines. However, increasing ACLs to the maximum extent practical can be done in the 2017-2018 harvest specifications rulemaking by January 1, 2017, but comes with restrictions, as the ACL cannot exceed the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) or the ACL from the rebuilding plan.

To address this, the Council amended the Final Preferred Alternative for 2017 and 2018 Harvest Specifications as follows:

- Darkblotched Rockfish: Specify the ACL to be equal to the ABC with a P* of 0.45. The ACL values would be 641mt for 2017 and 653mt for 2018. Specify an additional 50mt to the off-the-top deduction as an emergency buffer that may occur in any sector. The remaining yield after the other off-the-top deductions are deducted from the ACL will be allocated to sectors as specified under the FMP Amendment 21 framework.
- POP: Specify ACLs of 281mt for 2017 and 2018, and adjust the ABCs consistent with a P* of 0.45, as appropriate. Specify an additional 25mt to the off-the-top deduction as an emergency buffer for unforeseen catch events that may occur in any sector. The remaining yield after the other off-the-top deductions are deducted from the ACL will be allocated to sectors as specified under the FMP Amendment 21 framework.

- Canary Rockfish: Specify the ACL to be equal to the ABC with a P*of 0.45. The ACL values would be 1,714mt for 2017 and 1,526mt for 2018. Establish a buffer from the ACL to account for unforeseen events consistent with Buffer Option 1 (ACL Dependent Buffer) as described in Agenda Item G.4.a, Supplemental GMT Report 2, Table 3. The buffer amounts would be 188mt in 2017 and 0mt in 2018.

The Council adopted 2017 and 2018 Tribal management measures and also confirmed all the preliminary preferred management measures adopted in April with the following changes (the numbers correspond with the items in the action item checklist):

- #1 (Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) coordinates) - add Enforcement Consultants recommendation for modifications to RCA lines around Noon Day Rock (Agenda Item G.4.a, Supplemental EC Report);
- #2 (Off-the-top deductions) - include modifications to EFP set-asides for chilipepper and bocaccio for the Emley/Platt commercial jig gear EFP (Agenda Item G.3, Attachment 2);
- #11 (Non-nearshore) - Open Access Sablefish North of 36° N lat. – 300 lbs/day, or one landing per week up to 1,200 lbs, not to exceed 2,400 lbs bimonthly;
- #12 (Nearshore) - increase shallow rockfish and deeper nearshore rockfish trip limits south of 40° 10' N lat. to 1,200 lb/2 months (shallow) and 1,000 lb/2 months (deeper); and,
- #23 (Hotspots) - remove yelloweye rockfish hot spot closures in California.

The Council also adopted amended language for the Groundfish FMP (Amendment 27). This FMP Amendment establishes three framework procedures through which the Council is able to recommend the establishment and adjustment of specific management measures for the Pacific Coast groundfish fishery. The *points of concern framework* allows the Council to develop management measures that respond to resource conservation issues; the *socioeconomic framework* allows the Council to develop management measures in response to social, economic, and ecological issues that affect fishing communities. The *habitat conservation framework* allows the Council to modify the number, extent, and location of areas closed to bottom trawling in order to protect EFH. Criteria associated with each framework form the basis for Council recommendations, and Council recommendations will be consistent with them. The process for developing and implementing management measures normally will occur over the span of at least two Council meetings, with an exception that provides for more timely Council consideration under certain specific conditions.

G.5. Preliminary Plans for Review of the West Coast Trawl Catch Share Program and Intersector Allocations Including Comments on Draft Guidance for Catch Share Program Reviews

Review Calendars (Catch Shares and Intersector Allocation)

Under Amendment 20 (trawl rationalization/catch shares), the Council committed to the required review of the catch share program, and under Amendment 21 (intersector allocation), it committed to a concurrent review of the intersector allocations that underlie the catch share program. Resources have been identified for a two year catch share review process commencing in June 2016, but not the intersector allocations. Pending Council approval, the

catch share and intersector allocation issues will be scoped together, including at public hearings, this coming September, however, additional work on the intersector allocation review will depend on the identification of additional resources.

The Council endorsed the staff comments on the NMFS “Draft Guidance for Conducting Reviews of Catch Share Programs” (Agenda Item, G.5, Supplemental Attachment 3).

A calendar was developed and is provided in Table 2. The speed with which the review can be completed depends on the scope of the review -- particularly on the nature of Council requests for more detailed analyses and the degree to which additional elaborations are requested after initial results become available. This calendar would be subject to revision at any point if work products are completed ahead of schedule.

Table 2. Overview of Draft Calendar for Catch Share and Intersector Allocation Review

DATES	EVENT	ACTIVITY
Aug 31 – Sept 29, 2016	Public Hearings in Coastal Ports	Public provides comments on experiences & concerns
Sept 15 – 20 2016	Council Meeting – Boise, ID (public comment deadline Aug 18)	Council provides guidance on development of plans (“blueprint”) for review document and appointment of Community Advisory Board.
Late Oct/Early Nov	Community Advisory Board Meeting	Community Advisory Board develops comments for Council.
Nov 16 – 21, 2016	Council Meeting – Garden Grove, CA (public comment deadline Oct 18)	Council finalizes blueprint for review document.
2017 – Spring 2018	Further Council & Advisory Body Meetings a/	Catch share review continues to completion. Further work on intersector allocation depends on issues identified and workload priorities.

a/ The review will next be addressed at either the April or June 2017 Council meeting, at which time a first preliminary draft of the review will be presented.

Table 3. Public Hearings Schedule

Date (Start Time 7 PM)	Hearing Location	Address & Contact Information
Weds – Aug 31	San Luis Obispo	Marriott Courtyard, San Luis Obispo Room 1605 Calle Joaquin Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405 Phone: 805-786-4200
Thurs – Sept 1	Half Moon Bay	Half Moon Bay Lodge, Club Room 2400 Cabrillo Hwy. South, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019 Phone: 650-726-9000
Tues – Sept 6	Fort Bragg	City of Fort Bragg, Town Hall 363 N. Main Street, Fort Bragg, CA 95437 Phone: 707-961-2823
Weds – Sept 7	Eureka	Red Lion Eureka, Evergreen Room 1929 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501 Phone: 707-445-0844
Thurs – Sept 8	Coos Bay	Red Lion Coos Bay, South Umpqua Room 1313 North Bayshore Drive, Coos Bay, OR 97420 Phone: 541-267-4141
Mon – Sept 12	Westport	Chateau Westport, Beach Room 710 West Hancock, Westport, WA 98595

		Phone: 360-268-9101
Tues – Sept 13	Seattle	Sheraton Seattle Hotel, Diamond Room 1400 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 Phone: 206-621-9000
Weds – Sept 28	Astoria	Comfort Inn and Suites, Meeting Room 3420 Leif Erickson Drive, Astoria, OR 97103 Phone: 503-325-2000
Thurs – Sept 29	Newport	Agate Beach Inn, Jasper Room 3019 N. Coast Hwy, Newport, OR 97365 Phone: 541-265-9411

Catch Share Review Project Coordination Team (PCT) and Analytical Effort

The overall project and analytical effort will be coordinated by NMFS and Council staff. The following have been identified as the project coordination team.

- Ms. Abigail Harley - WCR Staff
- Dr. Lisa Pfeiffer - NWFSC Staff
- Mr. Jim Seger - Council Staff

The Council determined to not create a special ad hoc analytical team and instead will rely on the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to provide analytical and scientific review of the project. Two special joint meetings of the SSC groundfish and economics subcommittees will be scheduled to ensure that there is adequate time for thorough review. One of these meetings will occur in November 2016, to ensure that the plans for the review are sound, and another toward the end of the process (currently September 2017), to review the quality of the analyses.

Community Advisory Board

To help address community concerns, Amendment 20 called for the appointment of a Community Advisory Board (CAB) to advise the Council on its review of program performance. The Council determined the charge for the CAB will be to focus on fishing communities and discussion of improvements for the program. During the course of the review (through June 2018), the CAB is expected to meet 4 or 5 times, of which at least two meetings will be via webinar. The first meeting will be a two-day in-person meeting in Portland Oregon, to be scheduled for the latter half of October or early November 2016.

The Council issued a Request for Nominations for the Ad Hoc Community Advisory Board. Nominations are sought for the following positions (number of individuals to be appointed to each position in parenthesis):

- Shoreside Trawl, Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program Participants –
 - Washington (1)
 - Oregon (2)
 - California (2)
- Shoreside Nontrawl, IFQ Program Participant (Gear Switched) (1)
- At-sea Co-op Participants
 - Catcher-Processor (1)
 - Mothership Processor (1)

- Mothership Catcher Vessel (1)
- Shoreside Buyers/Processors (3)
- At-large (3)
 - At-large seats may represent a variety of perspectives, including: service providers, local governmentalities, retailers, crew members, non-governmental organizations, or other interests (including fishermen that do not participate in the trawl catch share program).

G.6. Omnibus Groundfish Workload Planning

Council Operating Procedure 9 specifies that in June of the even-numbered years (e.g., 2016) the Council will adopt a draft schedule and prioritized list of new management measures (those for which the environmental impacts have not been previously analyzed and/or have not been previously implemented in regulations) to be analyzed outside of the harvest specifications and management measures process. The prioritization and implementation process, referred to as the omnibus, is intended to control workload during the biennial process and increase the probability that harvest specifications will be implemented January 1. Consideration and prioritization of trawl trailing actions are also included in the omnibus process to allow for a more holistic evaluation of groundfish priorities and workload.

The Council moved the following measures forward as “near term” omnibus priorities. The omnibus priorities identified by the Council are provided in Table 4. Schedules and contingencies for each item are provided under “Suggested Approach.”

Table 4. Omnibus priorities currently identified by the Council in June 2016 with potential schedules and staffing

Omnibus Item	Suggested Titles	Suggested Approach	Lead
71 + Ramp-Up	Greenlight Policy & Harvest Policy Ramp-Up /a	The ramp-up policy brings up some difficult legal questions which need to be explored and may slow the package. <i>Develop the greenlight policy through a three Council meeting process starting September of this year for implementation in 2018. Request a legal analysis of the ramp-up policy for the September meeting</i>	Council
63, 66, 69 /b	Recreational and Commercial Discard Survival Rates and Sablefish/Lingcod IFQ Discard Credit	Discard mortalities for GMT projection models can be adjusted without a regulatory process. Sablefish/Lingcod IFQ Discard Credit would require regulation and infrastructure changes. <i>Separate the mortality rate issue from the survival credit issue. Assign the discard mortality task to the GMT as their schedule allows. Initiate regulatory action (possible FMP amendment) on the survival credit for IFQ program, starting in June 2017.</i>	Council
57, 58, 59 /c	Year-Round Coastwide Nonwhiting Midwater Trawl Fishery	The salmon biop needs to be completed before this action is taken, and data collection will likely be required before a regulatory change is implemented, as previously indicated by NMFS. <i>Consider an out-of-cycle EFP at the June and September 2017 meetings for issuance by NMFS mid-year in 2018.</i>	NMFS

54, 55 /d	Allow Between Trawl Sector Trading of Quota Pounds (all quota species except whiting)	<p>NMFS approval by June of an odd numbered year would be required to implement the change for the following biennial management period.</p> <p><i>Scope this in September 2016 for additional clarity with further Council process starting in June 2017, completion of the Council process in the fall of 2018, and NMFS approval by June 2019 in time for the 2021-2022 biennium.</i></p>	TBD
47, 60 /e	Multi-year Average Catch Policy and Resolution of Long-term Non-Whiting Surplus Carryover Provision	<p>The new draft National Standard One guidelines include adjustments that may allow consideration of the multi-year approach. Work should wait until final guidelines are published. NMFS approval in the first half of an odd numbered year would be required to implement the change for the following biennial management period.</p> <p><i>No action at this time. Schedule once National Standard Guidelines are approved. Tentatively schedule the start of the Council process for June 2017 with completion in the fall of 2018. Earliest implementation would be for the 2021-2022 management cycle.</i></p>	TBD

- a/ Would allow mid-biennium increases to an ACL due to improved stock assessment results and a harvest policy ramp-up when a stock is rebuilding.
- b/ The items that have been combined are: Discard Survival Credit for Lingcod and Sablefish (specific to IFQ); Discard Mortality Rates for Commercial Nearshore Fisheries; and Discard Mortality Rates for the Recreational Fisheries.
- c/ The items that have been combined are: Year Round Whiting Season and Other Season Date Modifications; Remove Certain Midwater Area-Management Restrictions; and Remove Certain Restrictions on Trawl Gear Configuration (Gear Regs Update II).
- d/ The items that have been combined are: Allow Between Sector Transfer of Unneeded Overfished Species; and, Allow Between Sector Transfer of Rockfish from IFQ to MS.
- e/ The items that have been combined are: Analysis of a Multi-Year Average Catch Policy; Resolve Long-term Non-Whiting Surplus Carryover Provision.

G.7. Final Action on Inseason Adjustments

The Council adopted landing limits for the open access sablefish daily trip limit fishery north of 36° N. latitude of 300 lbs. per day, or one landing per week up to 750 lbs., not to exceed 1,500 lbs. bimonthly, starting Period 5 (September 1) through the end of the year. The Council also adopted landing limits in California north of 40° 10' N. latitude for periods 5 and 6 for minor nearshore rockfish and black rockfish of 7,000 lb/2 months, of which no more than 1,200 lb of which may be species other than black rockfish.

The Council also recommended that NMFS monitor the progress of the at-sea whiting fishery and, taking into account other relevant factors, make any Pacific ocean perch (POP) projected to remain uncaught in the research off-the-top deduction available to either at-sea sector that is projected to reach their POP allocation prior to attainment of their whiting allocation. As part of NMFS' consideration of whether the full off-the-top amount of POP will be taken, the Council recommended NMFS take into account current research catch rates in comparison to recent year's catches during the same time period and recent year's total research catches of POP.

G.8. Final Action on Stock Assessment Plans and Terms of Reference (TOR) for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species

The Council adopted the 2017 stock assessment priorities, modifications to the three TOR considered under this agenda item, and the stock assessment review (STAR) panel schedule recommended by the SSC, with the addition of blackgill rockfish as an update assessment. The assessments will inform management decisions beginning with the 2019 - 2020 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures process.

Full Assessments (Grouped as follows for 3 STAR panels):

- ❖ Yelloweye rockfish, lingcod
- ❖ Blue rockfish and deacon rockfish; California scorpionfish
- ❖ Pacific ocean perch, yellowtail rockfish

Update Assessments

- ❖ Darkblotched rockfish
- ❖ Bocaccio rockfish
- ❖ Arrowtooth flounder
- ❖ Blackgill rockfish

Catch Reports

- ❖ Cowcod rockfish

G.9. Final Action on Trawl Catch Share Program Gear Use Regulations

The Council approved an option that would allow fishing with trawl gear in multiple IFQ management areas on the same trip. In order to account for catch from different IFQ management areas, each area fished would be reported on a different electronic fish ticket. To deduct quota pounds from vessel accounts, each IFQ species would have to be evaluated by area. For species where QS is issued separately on either side of the management line, the quota pounds would be deducted from the management area pro rata on the number of hauls.

The Council affirmed that the FMP amendment language and housekeeping changes of Agenda Item G.9, Attachment 1, comports with the actions taken by the Council under this agenda item and the trawl gear package approved at the March 2016 Council meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

F.5. Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

The Council elected Mr. Herb Pollard as the Council Chair and Mr. Phil Anderson as the Council Vice Chair for the August 11, 2016 through August 10, 2017 term.

The Council announced the appointment by the Secretary of Commerce of Mr. Marc M. Gorelnik (from California) to the Council's at-large seat, replacing Mr. Dan Wolford, who has served the maximum allowable three consecutive three year terms. Mr. Gorelnik's appointment will be effective August 11, 2016.

F.6. Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for September 12 - 20, 2016 at the Riverside Hotel, 2900 Chinden Blvd., Boise, Idaho. Written public comments received by 5 p.m. Thursday, August 18, 2016 will be included in the briefing materials mailed to Council members prior to the meeting. Comments received after August 18 but by 5 p.m. September 6, 2016 will be distributed to Council members at the onset of the meeting.

The Proposed Agenda is available on the Council's website.

- ✿ This report is provided to the Central Coast Community in 2016 via a grant from the Central California Joint Cable Fisheries Liaison Committee. Any interested parties may request an email copy of future reports (as long as funding continues) by contacting Christopher Kubiak at, ckub@sbcglobal.net



Prepared August 16, 2016
By: Christopher Kubiak
Fishery Consulting Services
*The Power of Being First With
Innovation*