

FALSE PASS FISH & GAME ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
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September 27, 2013 at the False Pass City Office 10:00 am

- I. Call to Order : 10:02am**
- II. Members Present:** Tom Hoblet, Travis Hoblet, Ken Smith, Gilda Shelikoff (4 of the 5 members present, quorum established. Ken Parker absent)
- III. Staff and Guests in Attendance:** Susie Jenkins-Brito ADF&G, Mark Stichert ADF&G, Trent Hartill ADF&G, Chris Emrich, Rick Weber
- IV. Approval of the Agenda:** Travis Moves to Approve, Ken 2nd All in Favor
- V. Approval of the Minutes:** February 7, 2013 Ken Moves to Approve, Travis 2nd All in Favor
- VI. Pacific Cod Proposals Oct 18-22, 2013 Meeting**

Tom Hoblet would like to see the State regain more control of management and allocation of the Cod fishery; we have a lot of by catch and habitat issues. The trawl fishery is responsible for a lot of by catch with the pot fishery being one of the cleanest fisheries operated. *Mark out of Kodiak ADF&G commented there are a lot of discussions occurring now regarding interactions between State and Federal fisheries. He encouraged the AC to be active in both State and Federal policy issues.*

Proposals 1-15 Not specific to the AK Peninsula, AC will not comment.

South Alaska Peninsula Pacific Cod (13 proposals)

PROPOSAL 16– Ken Moves; Gilda 2nds

ACTION: Carries as Amended 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Modify boundary description of the South Alaska Peninsula groundfish area.

AMENDMENT: Move the proposed district boundary line from Scotch Cap east to Cape Lutke – Create a waiting period of 72 hours for boats that want to transfer between the proposed districts – Cap harvest for the area WEST of Cape Lutke at no more than 10% of the GHL.

DISCUSSION: *Mark addresses the intent/effect of the proposals. This proposal would divide the existing area in roughly half and create two separate districts with separate quotas.*

Tom states we have caught cod tagged from different areas. If this went through how would the Dept. determine quota for the western part of the fishery?

Mark: The board would need to decide although it may be helpful if the AC provide specific recommendations. The Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska cod stocks are two separate cod stocks. The department opposes reallocating cod from the Bering Sea to the Gulf of Alaska.

Instead of taking Bering Sea quota could they cap the quota west of the boundary line?

Mark: This occurs in a similar fashion in Kodiak based on boat length. You could ask the board to create two separate GHL's or establish harvest caps for the two separate areas.

Tom: is there more interest now West of Scotch Cap?

Mark: As of 2007 catch has increased west of Scotch Cap. The pace of the under 60 foot federal Bering Sea fishery has increased and now some boats are moving down into the Peninsula state-waters fishery after the Bering Sea federal fishery closes.

Tom asked would a super exclusive registration stop this from happening?

Mark: No. State registration requirements do not apply to parallel or federal fisheries.

Tom how would ADF&G base the cap?

Mark: That's really up to the public and board to decide. You could consider using average catch as a basis or choose a fixed percentage among other options. ADF&G is neutral and has no recommendation on how much catch should occur on either side of the line.

Tom, would anyone like to take action on this proposal?

Travis comments having a cap could be in the local fleets favor.

Tom again, if we were to cap that's where we could go to super exclusive if someone is fishing west when the cap is caught they cannot move east.

Mark if you created two separate districts within one area I don't know if there could be separate registration requirements. Susie details Nushagak example sub district for set netting.

Tom we would like to change the line from Scotch cap to Cape Lutke because it would be further from the line from Area O. False Pass AC considers King Cove AC's stance that they do not want to formally allocate additional quota for the area west of Scotch Cap.

Mark lets AC know the 10 year average catch west of the proposed Scotch Cap line is about 1.8 million lbs or about 13% of the GHL.

AC discusses what the two areas harvest caps should be. 10 year average is discussed also a fixed number or a percentage. Agree on a 10% cap to the area west of Cape Lutke and no cap to the east.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Gilda – Yes

Ken – Yes

Travis – Yes

Tom – Yes

PROPOSAL 17

ACTION: No Action due to Action taken on Proposal 16

DESCRIPTION: Modify boundary description of the South Alaska Peninsula groundfish area.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION:

PROPOSAL's 18 - 21 Travis Moves to Adopt; Ken 2nd ACTION: Carries as Amended 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Increase state-waters Pacific cod guideline harvest level (GHL) to 50 percent of the Western Gulf of Alaska acceptable biological catch (ABC).

AMENDMENT: Amendment to Proposal 21 to decrease GHL percentage increase to 50% in alignment with Proposals 18-20

DISCUSSION: AC discusses 18-21 as a block. Tom suggests AC discuss the 50% GHL since it is the more prevalent suggestion from proposals despite Proposal 21 asking for 55%.

Mark the last 10 year average catch inside state waters is about 47% of the ABC which is what the GHL is based on.

Tom the department comments have some pretty lengthy comments on how this can or cannot work?

Mark: We don't anticipate any major management concerns if the GHL increased to 50% of the ABC so the department is neutral although there could be some input from the Federal government regarding federal fishery management and sea lion concerns.

Tom any comments from AC or public present? Tom states that the justification for the increase in the pot fishery is because it is a cleaner type of fishery.

Rick Weber – this request to increase the GHL has come before the board numerous times in the past with no real attention paid but perhaps that will be different at this meeting. The Federal side will likely offer resistance but it is only fair that the State get what they need to keep the local economy going.

Tom we are trying to keep the locals participating in the fishery, we want to see the catch put back in the hands of the little guy so he can be profitable.

Gilda has seen more and more the bigger boats coming in and taking the smaller boats share, they can fish in rougher weather when small boats can't go out.

Tom the 58 ft limit is one size restriction but there is no limit in width and these large boats can fish in really rough weather even when the crab boats are on anchor. Last year we sat on the beach for over a month due to weather and last year's season was one of the shortest seasons.

Gilda moves to amend Proposal 21 to align with the requests of proposals 18-20 (decrease the percentage of the GHL to 50%), Ken 2nd

Roll Call Vote:

Gilda – yes

Travis – yes

Tom – yes

Ken - yes

PROPOSAL 22 – Gilda Moves to Adopt, Travis 2nd ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Change registration from exclusive to superexclusive.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: *Mark offers staff comments.*

Travis on the exclusive registration , the Bering Sea fishery with the under 60 ft. limit Federal Fishery the state water registration doesn't exclude boats who have fished any parallel or federal fisheries, correct?

Mark that's correct, state registration regulations do apply to federal fishery participants that also participate in the state water fisheries.

Travis states since only one boat has done this historically that this would make much of an impact but it would be better to be safe.

Tom, Chignik is super exclusive. If the season got bigger and longer it could draw interest from other vessels fishing in areas that wrap up first. Personally supports the proposal.

Roll Call Vote:

Ken – Yes

Travis – Yes

Gilda – Yes

Tom - Yes

PROPOSAL 23 – Gilda Moves to Adopt, Travis 2nd ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Change state-waters Pacific cod season opening date for pot gear.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: *False Pass AC Proposal, Mark gives staff comments.*

Tom currently we have to make multiple trips to get and drop off our gear, this proposal would save time, trips and money. Product quality could increase because early in the season the quality is better before fish are spawned out - if we could catch the cod early in the season we'd have better quality product. They now have to wait over a month between the end of the federal season and the start of the state season. It used to only be one week.

Ken agrees with Tom, as processor this would help the local processing plant with quality and for the fishermen this would be a beneficial change and the price of fuel is not declining.

Mark states the Department is neutral on the proposal it would not change how the fishery is managed.

Tom points out on Department comments from proposal 23 where they identify that quality is higher on the front end of the season. *Mark states that cod sampled by the department during the fishery are often spawned out by late March and referred to the graph in staff comments.*

Gilda Calls for the Question

Roll Call Vote:

Travis – Yes

Gilda – Yes

Ken – Yes

Tom – Yes

PROPOSAL 24 – Ken Moves to Adopt, Gilda 2nd

ACTION: Fails 0-4

DESCRIPTION: Change state-waters Pacific cod season opening date for pot gear to March 12 or seven days following closure of the federal Western Gulf season, whichever is later.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: *Mark gives Department comments.*

Tom asks for comments, same reasoning applies to Proposal 24 that were given in Proposal 23, personally opposed to this proposal.

Ken agrees with Tom's comments.

Ken calls the question.

Roll Call Vote:

Travis – No

Gilda – No

Ken – No

Tom – No

PROPOSAL 25 Travis Moves to Adopt, Ken 2nd

ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Clarify weather-delay criteria for opening the state-waters Pacific cod season

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: *Mark this is a Department proposal, housekeeping/clarifying type proposal, nothing would change how the regulation is implemented.*

Tom wants clarity on Department comments on the last paragraph 35 knots or higher, 39 MPH?

Mark says the weather service has changed their definition of a gale warning from 35 knots to a range of 34 to 47 knots and this proposal would align regulations with the new definition from weather service.

Gilda calls for the question.

Roll Call Vote:

Gilda – Yes

Travis – Yes

Ken – Yes

Tom - Yes

PROPOSAL 26 & 27 – Ken Moves to adopt, Gilda 2nd ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Modify preseason pot storage regulation for state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: *Mark gives Department comments and explanation of effects of proposal.*

AC members made general comments in support for these proposals.

Ken calls for question.

PROPOSAL 28 Ken Moves to adopt, Gilda 2nd

ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Close state-waters surrounding Caton and Sanak islands to nonpelagic trawl gear.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: Tom has noticed there is a lot of immature tanner crab in this area and is concerned about by catch levels. He is personally in support of this proposal and feels trawlers should have 100% observer coverage.

Travis agrees with Tom.

Mark states the Dept. references seeing Tanner crab in this area in their staff comments.

Travis asks about bottom trawling within the 3 miles, what's allowed?

Mark – most state waters are closed to bottom trawling but there are two areas in the peninsula where state waters are open to bottom trawl gear – Sanak Island and an area north of the Shumagin Islands by Sand Point.

Ken is in support of this proposal due to concern about potential tanner crab by catch.

Travis calls for the question

Roll Call Vote:

Gilda – Yes

Ken – Yes

Travis – Yes

Tom – Yes

*********Mark gives a brief overview of Proposals 29-37 prior to AC deciding whether or not they'd like to take action on any of these proposals.*

Bering Sea – Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod (8 proposals)

PROPOSAL 29 Travis Moves to Adopt, Ken 2nd

ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Increase Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod guideline harvest level (GHL) to 4.5 percent of the federal Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands acceptable biological catch (ABC).

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: Tom would like to reference his comments about seeing more fishing allowed within state water fisheries. Other voice general support

Gilda calls for the question.

PROPOSAL's 30-33

ACTION: No Action

DESCRIPTION: Clarify Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod guideline harvest level (GHL) rollover provision from A to B season

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION:

PROPOSAL 34 Ken Moves to Adopt, Gilda 2nd

ACTION: Fails 0-4

DESCRIPTION: Place moratorium on new or expanded state-waters Pacific cod fisheries in Area O.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: Based on actions taken on Proposals 35 and 36 the AC is opposed to this proposal.

Gilda calls for the question.

Roll Call Vote:

Travis – No

Gilda – No

Tom – No

Ken – No

PROPOSAL's 35 & 36 – Ken Moves to adopt, Travis 2nd

ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Establish a state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the Bering Sea portion of Area O.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: Tom asks for clarity from Mark.

Mark says this would create a new state-waters cod fishery in the Bering Sea. The proposals suggest that the regulations for the new Bering Sea fishery should be similar the regulations for the South Alaska Peninsula Area.

Tom is in favor of these proposals; yes, I'd like to see a fishery created inside of the three mile line in the Bering Sea.

Tom references cod caught outside of Scotch Cap.

Mark provides catch data for the Bering Sea.

These proposals are a little different in what they are asking for regarding legal gear types and percentages but the intent is to create a fishery that mirrors the Peninsula fisheries.

Mark if the new fishery were exclusive it would prevent boats from coming down to the Peninsula fishery if they already registered for the Bering Sea state-waters fishery.

Tom asks if anyone would like to make any amendments. No.

Tom references the AC's actions on Proposal 22 and its intent on preventing boats from other fisheries from fishing in the Peninsula.

Gilda calls for the question.

Roll Call Vote:

Travis – Yes

Gilda – Yes

Tom – Yes

Ken – Yes

Aleutian Islands Atka Mackerel (1 proposal)

PROPOSAL 37 – Travis Moves to Adopt, Gilda 2nd ACTION: Carries 4-0

DESCRIPTION: Establish state-waters Atka mackerel fishery.

AMENDMENT:

DISCUSSION: Travis supports creating this fishery if the resource and interest is there it would create an opportunity for fishermen.

Tom is also in support.

Ken is also in support of creating a local opportunity for small boats.

Travis calls for the question.

Roll Call Vote:

Travis – Yes

Gilda – Yes

Tom – Yes

Ken – Yes

Susie gives AC a brief overview of the upcoming Joint Board Meeting and the proposed regulatory changes that will be discussed. AC decides to review proposals individually.

Susie and AC members discuss representation of the AC at the P. Cod BOF meeting it is agreed either Ken Smith or Gilda Shelikoff will testify on behalf of the AC.

Adjournment 12:19 pm by consensus.

Minutes were compiled at the request of the AC by Susie Jenkins-Brito ADF&G Boards.