



The Joint Protocol Committee of the
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
and the
Alaska Board of Fisheries



Joint Protocol Committee Meeting

May 21, 2014, 9:00am – 5:00pm
Clarion Suites, 1110 8th Avenue, Heritage Room, Anchorage

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Participants

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

- Eric Olson, NPFMC Chair
- Ed Dersham
- Roy Hyder

North Pacific Fishery Management Council staff

- Chris Oliver, Executive Director
- Dave Witherell, Deputy Director
- Sam Cunningham, Economist
- Diana Stram, Plan Coordinator
- Jon McCracken, Economist

National Marine Fisheries Service

- Glenn Merrill, NOAA Sustainable Fisheries
- John Lepore, NOAA General Counsel

Alaska Department of Law

- Lance Nelson
- Mike Mitchell
- Cheryl Brookings

Others in attendance

- Beth Stewart, Peninsula Fishermen's Coalition
- Andy Varner, Sand Point
- Ernie Weiss, Aleutians East Borough
- Sam Cotten, Aleutians East Borough
- Martin Meigs, Alaska Sportfish Association
- Rachel Donkersloot, Alaska Marine Conservation Council
- Art Nelson, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association

Alaska Board of Fisheries

- John Jensen, Committee Chair
- Sue Jeffrey
- Karl Johnstone, BOF Chair

Alaska Department of Fish & Game staff

- Cora Campbell, Commissioner
- Kelly Hepler, Assistant Commissioner
- Glenn Haight, Executive Director
- Jeff Regnart, Director, Commercial Fisheries
- Nicole Kimball, Extended Jurisdiction Director
- Karla Bush, Fishery Biologist, Extended Jurisdiction
- Forrest Bowers, Deputy Director, Commercial Fisheries
- Tracy Lingnau, F&G Coordinator
- Tim Baker, F&G Coordinator
- Mark Stichert, Fisheries Biologist
- Trent Hartill, Fisheries Biologist

- Chuck McCallum, Lake & Peninsula Borough
- Vince O'Shea, Pacific Seafood Processors Association
- Linda Kozak, Golden King Crab Coalition
- Tom Evich, fisherman
- Molly Dirschner, Alaska Journal of Commerce
- Marty Owen, UAA student

Meeting Commencement

The Joint Protocol Committee (JPC) chair, John Jensen, called the meeting to order at 9:15am, May 21, 2014. JPC members in attendance from the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) included Sue Jeffrey and Karl Johnstone. Members Eric Olson, Roy Hyder, and Ed Dersham represented the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council). Board JPC member Tom Kluberton was unable to attend the meeting.

Staff Reports

Following introductions and an announcement of attendance sign-in and public testimony sheets, the JPC heard reports from Council, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), and the National Marine Fisheries Service staff.

Sam Cunningham provided an update on the Council's action on Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch management. The Council put forward a motion at the April 2014 meeting that contains several elements for a program in the Western Gulf, Central Gulf, and West Yakutat areas, including bycatch reduction, bycatch avoidance tools, cooperatives, community stability, transferability, and species to be included. (see Summary of Council Motion – April 2014) The motion is currently in a pre-analysis stage and a discussion paper evaluating the current motion will be reviewed by the Council in October or December 2014. If a formal analysis is initiated, the analytical process would take at least a year from Oct/Dec 2014, with final action possibly in late 2015 or early 2016. If a final action is taken, moving a proposed rule through the federal review process will take at least an additional year. In a best case scenario, a program could be implemented and operational no sooner than 2017.

Board of Fisheries pollock workgroup chair Ms. Jeffrey provided opening remarks on the workgroup's genesis through the Board's Proposal 44 and workgroup goals and objectives as described in meeting material. Nicole Kimball and Karla Bush provided staff comments on the April 16, 2014 meeting of workgroup participants. Ms. Bush provided a synopsis of the meeting summarized in a handout and in the meeting minutes. Mark Stichert briefly provided a report on ADF&G's efforts in establishing a seine test fishery for pollock around Kodiak. Despite several permits issued to date no one has attempted to conduct the fishery. Ms. Kimball closed with comments about necessary coordination between the BOF and Council and the complexities that exist when establishing a catch share program in federal waters adjacent to state waters. Under a catch share program as envisioned through the current Council trawl bycatch motion, some revisions to state management would be necessary, as the same existing parallel fisheries management is not feasible. Unless participants were held to fishing only in federal waters, the Board would need to take some action to either create a state waters fishery for trawl pollock or possibly modify existing regulations to accommodate a variation of the parallel fishery. (see Alaska Board of Fisheries CGOA Walleye Pollock Workgroup, Proposal 44, Pollock Workgroup Summary, Minutes from April 16, 2014 Pollock Workgroup meeting)

Jon McCracken discussed the recent federal management action that split the Bering Sea (BS) and Aleutian Island (AI) Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC). Previously the BS/AI TAC was managed as one, but is now managed separately. (see Update on BSAI Pacific cod TAC split, State-water GHL and parallel fisheries.)

Mr. Stichert provided an update on the recently created state-waters Pacific cod fishery currently referred to the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific cod fishery. The fishery GHL was almost completely harvested and relived pressure on state water Pacific cod fisheries in the South Alaska Peninsula and Chignik Management Areas. (see Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state waters P cod fishery)

Glenn Merrill spoke to a recent management issues related to Pacific cod in federal and parallel fisheries. After the <60' fixed gear cod allocation in the BS is closed, hook and line <60' vessels are moving to the state parallel cod fishery where they are not prohibited from continuing to fish because the federal hook-and-line CP fishery is still open (which results in the parallel fishery being open to hook-and-line gear) and the state does not recognize operational type in state waters. The excess Pacific cod they harvest has been covered by reallocations from other BS cod fisheries, but it might not be available in the future if this catch expands. These smaller vessels can also fish near Stellar Sea Lion rookeries and that could cause closure concerns over time. In the future, federal fisheries managers may request the Board establish a

regulatory mechanism to close the parallel cod fishery using hook and line gear in state waters after a federal closure. (see Interaction between BS Pacific Cod Fishery Federal and State of Alaska Parallel Fisheries)

Ms. Bush provided a recap of Board actions at the most recent March 2014 meeting on Statewide Shellfish issues. The Board changed the AI Golden King Crab season to start two weeks earlier (effective for the 2015/16 season to coordinate season dates in federal regulation), separated the AI red king crab Management Area into two Districts (Petrel Bank and Adak Districts west and east of 179° W long., respectively), and established management measures for the unrationalized Adak District.

Diana Stram discussed the Council's February 7, 2014 motion on BS/AI crab PSC limits. Among other aspects, the Council is seeking information on evaluating PSC by weight rather than numbers of crab. (see BSAI Crab PSC Limits, Motion 2-7-14)

Mr. McCracken closed with discussing Council action on a proposal to change when groundfish harvest possession and landing requirements may be reported. The Board received a similar proposal in March 2014 and knowing the Council was working on a similar proposal took no action in order to hear from and look at coordination on final action. (see Proposed Change to Groundfish Possession and Landing Requirements, and Proposal 370)

Public Testimony

During public testimony, the Committee heard from Tom Evich, commercial fishermen, Western Gulf trawler, Vince O'Shea, Pacific Seafood Processor Association, Linda Kozak, Alaska King Crab Research Center, and Sam Cotten, Aleutians East Borough.

- Tom Evich discussed fishing between state and federal waters and how tows are made and subsequently reported.
- Vince O'Shea spoke to the importance of processor considerations and control over bycatch in state waters.
- Linda Kozak noted a need to separate over fishing levels for the Adak and Petrel Bank Districts, or remove the Adak District from the Fishery Management Plan and allow state management.
- Sam Cotten spoke to the concern over leasing quota, tying harvesters to processors through cooperatives, and recommended there may be a different approach for catch shares for Western GOA versus Central GOA.

Committee discussion

Mr. Dersham stressed the Board's unquestioned control over state waters and the importance of working together to accomplish bycatch reduction objectives. He appreciated the Board's postponement of creating the pollock fishery and recognizes the differences between central and western Gulf.

Mr. Olson voiced support for continued JPC meetings and identifying ways to work together to reduce bycatch. He finds catch reporting and accounting to remain a significant mutual effort between the two regulatory bodies.

Determination of next JPC meeting or full meeting of the Council/Board

The JPC discussed the Board's schedule for the pollock workgroup to meet October 6, which is the first day of the Council's October meeting. Following the outcomes of those meeting, the Executive Directors will coordinate on future meetings. Mr. Dersham recommends a full board meeting at some point. Ms. Jeffrey agrees.

Other Business

There was no additional business.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourns at 12:06pm