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To: Erin Reinders, Michele Price, JR Pierson

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: November Fishery Activities, and Fishery Articles,

I attend the Alaska Fishing Communities Bycatch Meeting via Zoom on Monday; the following topics below were discussed, the minutes of the meeting are attached below.

- 1. Halibut ABM** – Lots to do before April Council meeting with another initial review draft and possible PPA (final action tentatively for Oct 2021). CBSFA going to hire an economist. Economics likely a big factor going forward. Choices are numbers kinder to Amendment 80 (AM 80) versus directed halibut users. Comment that AK Governor's office had an economic analysis done on Bristol bay salmon (processed v unprocessed) about 20 years ago. In Oct 2020 Council analysis, looked at ex-vessel price for halibut versus price of finished frozen product coming off AM 80 fleet. Need a better economic comparison. Revised purpose and need statement took out pieces that led to management strategy evaluation and model results, and instead focused it on AM80 fishery and its regulation along with potential protection of the resource and directed fishery. Comment about bringing bycatch of other species in for more comprehensive look at impacts. Could be done from a "cumulative effects" perspective which is required in NEPA analyses.
- 2. Cod trawl LAPP from bycatch perspective** – Initial review analysis available for review on the Council's website for the Dec Council meeting (final action tentatively set for April). AFC cod LAPP group meeting Nov 5. This action supposed to address other sector's halibut bycatch while halibut ABM now focused on Am80. Range for halibut bycatch reduction limited at 10-25% in the new BSAI Pacific Cod Trawl CV Cooperative Program Initial Review Draft and may signal the intent of the state. AFC may want to push for bigger range and see if state

willing. Only 40% of Halibut bycatch amount is being dealt with through Halibut ABM, how much could be addressed through this action? Not sure yet. Just know around 900,000 lbs. of halibut go to this trawl sector (TLAS). Should ABM approach be considered for this sector under this action, too? Worth considering and might make sense to bring it up as part of this regarding bycatch reduction - could be a follow-up action. In the draft analysis, PSC discussed on p.325. May want to comment.

3. **NMFS HQ bycatch** – Jamie updated the group on a meeting she had with NMFS staff at HQ last Aug/Sep. There is a National Bycatch Reduction Strategy (last updated in 2016), along with an Implementation Plan for 2020-2024 and a National Bycatch Report. Tied with all of this is also the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP) which provides grants for bycatch reduction work, a possible opportunity this group. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international/bycatch/national-bycatch-reduction-strategy>
4. **Crab PSC** – Coming up on Council agenda in Feb for initial review. In planning stages now for what needs to happen leading up to Feb. Meeting with Council staff later this week to check in on status of analysis. How state feel about it? Not sure, will check in with them.
5. **Sablefish** – Letter from Alaska Longline Fishermen’s Association and North Pacific Fishing Association to Chris Oliver highlighting what is occurring with overages in 2019 and 2020. In 2020, 400+% over, letter emphasizes MSA and requirements for action. Identified 4 accountability measures, which points out Council has not acted on this other than to watching it. Concludes that NOAA needs to act considering hard caps, etc. Several groups signed on to letter.
6. **Recommendations** - Workgroup needs to do homework on national HQ topics and on cod LAPP from a bycatch perspective, develop a recommendation, and bring to larger group. Familiarize yourselves with National Bycatch Reduction Strategy and Implementation Plan (posted on shared drive). Review and comment on LAPP.

7. **Next meeting** – Nov 16 at 11am AST, 12 PST

8. **Future topics to consider** – Potential bycatch page on AFC webpage, look to other fisheries that use ABM approaches for common threads, Discuss closed area management & habitat protections (nursery grounds, EFH)

Attachments:

1. Fishery News Articles

Regards

Frank Kelty



