

PROCESSOR ADVISORY BOARD

January 25, 2017

TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

IPHC 93rd Annual Meeting - Victoria, B.C.

CHAIR: Blake Tipton, S.M. Products

CO-CHAIR: John Woodruff, Icicle Seafoods

The Processors Advisory Group convened at 1:30 on Tuesday, January 24, 2017. HANA president Blake Tipton opened the meeting with a call to order and introduction of all present. There were 17 companies in attendance on the first day and 19 on the second day. The first day had 7 Canadian companies and 10 U.S.; on the second day we had 7 Canadian with one proxy and 12 companies from the U.S.

The PAB reviewed the changes made to our Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure and concurred.

As required in the PAB Rules of Procedure, when the PAB convenes in Canada, the chairperson is a resident of Canada and the vice chair is a resident of the United States. A nomination and election process was held shortly after the introductions. Blake Tipton was elected Chair and John Woodruff Vice-Chair.

The PAB wants to thank several individuals who responded to our request for further information and explanation on a variety of subjects. Thank you to:

Dr. Ian Stewart, Dr. Allan Hicks, Jamie Goen, Tim Loher, Lara Erikson, Lauri Sadorus and Jaelee Vanidestine from the IPHC staff

Rachel Baker from the NMFS

Martin Paish, Sports Fish Institute

Mark Fina from the Alaska Seafood Coop

Robert Jones from the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Robert Marvell from NMFS Office of Law Enforcement

Season Dates:

The PAG approved by a 14-1 vote to recommend an opening date of noon on 18 March, 2017 and a closing date of noon 1 November 2017.

It has been the tradition of the PAG to support a Saturday opening so that fresh fish can arrive in the market for weekend sales. These dates of the third Saturday in March have perfect tides for an opening.

We have traditionally supported an earlier closing, and do again this year, for Wednesday November 1. We have said before and continue to express the significant drop in market interest when quantities go down at the end of the season. That coupled with deterioration of the weather in most areas, and increased problems with quality, support our recommendation. Finally, we strongly support that closure date so that the IPHC can collect and process data for the stock assessment in a timely manner.

IPHC Secretariat Proposals

Proposal A -- Head-on landed weight requirement, including removal of 24" head-off minimum size limit.

The PAB voted 13 in favor, 1 opposed to recommend that the Commission support Proposal A with an exemption of the frozen-at-sea fisheries in all areas. That exemption will allow halibut to be landed head-off and will adhere to the current minimum 24" regulation.

Proposal B -- IPHC closed area - Removal.

The PAB voted unanimously to support the proposal.

Proposal C -- Fishing in multiple regulatory areas.

The PAB voted unanimously to support the proposal.

Proposals D, E, F, G, H, I, L, M, and N.

The PAB voted unanimously to recommend that the Commission follow the staff advice on Proposals D, E, F, G, H, I, L, M, and N.

Proposals J and K -- Elimination of Law Requiring Skin to be Left on Halibut Fillets, and Allow Filleted Halibut in Sports Fishery

The PAG voted unanimously to recommend that the Commission not support either of these proposals. We see no merit in either proposal and recognize that it will be difficult for enforcement agencies.

Proposal O - Clarification of use or possession of pot gear while fishing for halibut.

The PAG on a vote of 15-1 voted to recommend that the Commission support Part 1 of the proposal which is clarification as to whether halibut may be targeted with pots, but we take no position on Part 2.

Proposal P - Size limit clarification

The PAG addressed this in Proposal A.

Catch Limits

The PAG approved a total amount for catch limits in 2017 of 32.225 million pounds. This breakdown in regulatory areas is as follows:

Area 2A	1.33 million pounds
Area 2B	7.50 million pounds
Area 2C	5.30 million pounds
Area 3A	10.225 million pounds
Area 3B	3.53 million pounds
Area 4A	1.43 million pounds
Area 4B	1.25 million pounds
Area 4CDE	1.66 million pounds
	<hr/>
TOTAL	32.225 million pounds

The PAG supports these numbers in Area 2 because there's been a steady long term increase in both survey and commercial CPUEs, there are **many** anecdotal reports of good fish abundance and well beyond what's shown in the surveys. These harvest rates are similar to those applied last year and it appears that the biomass is responding properly. We think there's work to be done relative to survey CPUE because the numbers are so disparate between survey and commercial reporting.

We believe that transitioning to the SPR approach will have a positive impact on the spawning biomass in all halibut management areas.

The PAB also wants to offer feedback that this year's Bluebook was not as comprehensive and helpful as it has been in the past. Much of the narrative refers to tables, charts, and graphs that are not in the Bluebook but in the RARA which most people don't have access to at these meetings. For instance, it would be helpful to have the full set of CPUE trends by regulatory area, the graph on page 394 of the RARA, which shows 3-year projections, and Table 4 from the RARA, page 189.

The PAB would like to thank the IPHC staff who helped in minute taking, contacting other IPHC staff for questions, and fielding questions themselves. That change to the process is a good one that every member of the PAG appreciated.

The PAG adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

ATTENDEES AT THE PROCESSORS ADVISORY BOARD 2017:

U.S.

THE AUCTION BLOCK CO.
BELLINGHAM COLD STORAGE
DANA F. BESECKER COMPANY
CENTRAL BERING SEA FISHERIES ASSN.
HART SALES
ICICLE SEAFOODS
INTERNATIONAL SEAFOODS OF ALASKA
NORTHPORT SEAFOODS
PACIFIC SEAFOOD GROUP
PETER PAN SEAFOODS
SEAFOOD PRODUCERS COOP
YAKUTAT SEAFOODS

CANADA

AERO TRADING CO. LTD.
CANADIAN FISHING CO.
COLDFISH SEAFOODS CO. INC.
COLDFISH SEAFOODS INC.
FAS SEAFOOD PRODUCERS LTD.
FRENCH CREEK SEAFOODS LTD.
7 SEAS FISH COMPANY LTD.
S.M.PRODUCTS (BC) LTD.
SCARLETT POINT SEAFOOD LTD.