

Workgroup Meeting Summary-Halibut
Pribilof Islands Collaborative
July 14, 2004 1:30PM Alaska time

Present: Larry Cotter, Bruce Robson, Astrid Scholz, Ed Luttrell, Heather McCarty, Patience Mercurieff, Paul MacGregor, Karen Pletnikoff, Claire LeClair.

Agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Review/revise/adopt Agenda
3. Review meeting notes of June 30, 2004
4. Review revised "Halibut Workgroup Notes"
5. Review revised problem statement
6. Review various research projects
7. Other
8. Next meeting date/adjourn

Summary:

2. Agenda: added review and discussion of letter and attachments Thorn Smith sent out.
3. No comments on notes for June 30, 2004 meeting.
4. Review revised "Halibut Workgroup Notes"
 - brief review, since many on the call did not have a copy of the draft review dated July 14 that Heather prepared and sent out;
 - Heather made changes that group agreed on at last meeting and then did some re-formatting to the notes;
 - removed all reference to CDQ group as agreed upon at last meeting;
 - last heading "Fishery Management Techniques and Experiments", unknown whether group could agree on all these items, many of which are fishery closures;
 - changes made to the notes will still be reviewed by larger group;
 - do we even need to re-write the notes, really need to address the questions raised by the full group which are contained within the notes;
 - difficult to proceed with only one participant from Pribilofs on call, suggest group move on to problem statement instead;
 - Need to figure out what the role of this workgroup is--to consider fishery closures?
 - not before information reviewed that would help group reach some conclusions;
 - not enough people on call to approve or make changes to this re-draft of the notes.
5. Review revised problem statement
 - Larry changed the problem to a problem/goal statement as suggested for all the groups at the April meeting and took the emphasis off CPUE and placed it on "halibut abundance"

- Larry will combine the “Why do we care” section of the problem statement with the “Stakeholder concerns”;
- re: section “Speculation about why the problems exist”, what about directed fishery?
- Quota for directed fishery increased several years ago but catches have been declining in recent years;
- suggest adding this language to ‘speculation’ section: “Harvest levels and quotas for directed halibut fishery may be greater than can be sustained in Area 4C.
- These goals discussed and agreed upon:
 1. Develop prioritized list of necessary research;
 2. Determine whether prioritized management techniques/actions/experiments are necessary and
 3. Maintain and enhance the biological health of the halibut resource in and around the central Bering Sea in order for viable commercial and subsistence fisheries to proceed in a sustainable way.
 4. Support the proposal before NPFMC to allow 4C CDQ and IFQ quotas to be harvested in 4D.
- use of the word “enhance” in the 3rd goal does not refer to fish farming;
- these are recommendations from the workgroup, will still have to be put before whole PIC group for review/approval.

6. Review various research projects

- Astrid prepared a digest of projects on halibut bycatch in the Bering sea, she noted that people are asking similar questions, but with differences in mainly in resolution, or size of area/data;
- the studies look complementary and there are ways to use data without compromising the proprietary portions of that data;
- Bruce: he went for a higher resolution on observer data in order to keep scale with trawl survey data;
- since no observer data for directed halibut fishery, are numbers available for halibut removal within the PIHCA? (notetaker’s question: did someone have the answer to this question and if so, what was it? Astrid’s response: if nobody has the answer, she can follow up on this before the next meeting)
- Jack Tagart’s study is looking at whether the size of halibut taken as bycatch is different than the size of halibut taken in the directed fishery and whether the decline in halibut CPUE is a result of a decline in biomass or in numbers of fish;
- discussion of proposed APICDA and Ecotrust project using OceanLogic software: can collect observer data and input both geographic and temporal points (much better than working with grid data);
- OceanLogic cannot use manual logbook records but can use electronic logbook records; about 30 pollock catcher vessels using electronic logbooks and 30-40 ? vessel in GOA using them;

- Manual logbooks could be transcribed and made usable electronically, so OceanLogic could be used for manual records;
- Tim Lohrer's project in the Pribilofs can provide three years of point data from a few boats in the St. Paul fleet and three boats from the St. George fleet will be added this year to the project.

7. Other

- Karen Pletnikoff asked that a discussion of sublegal halibut retention for subsistence use be added to next meeting's agenda.

8. Next meeting: **Friday, July 30 1:30PM Alaska Time**