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New England Fishery Management Council
Draft Amendment 19 to the Multispecies FMP
 (Small-mesh Multispecies)
 Hilton Garden Inn – Lakewood, NJ

DRAFT Meeting Summary
 April 9, 2012

Purpose of meeting: Take public comments on Draft Amendment 19 alternatives.

Attendance: David Goethel (chair), Andrew Applegate (staff), and two whiting fishermen: Jim Lovgren, Dennis Lovgren

Summary

Mr. Goethel opened the public hearing at 5:15 pm with a brief introduction. Mr. Applegate presented an outline of alternatives proposed by Amendment 19 and answered questions. Most of the questions regarded clarification of the alternatives. Mr. Applegate explained the how the specifications would be monitored by stock area boundaries and how the proposed accountability measures would apply by exemption area boundaries from the maps in the public hearing document.

Both fishermen supported the following alternatives:

- 400 lbs. red hake incidental possession limit
- 2000 lbs. southern whiting incidental possession limit (the Council's preferred alternatives) because it would not create as much discards and have the intended effect on the directed fishery
- The Council's preferred alternative for post-season accountability measures, which would reduce the TAL trigger rather than a pound for pound ACL reduction
- The Council's preferred alternative for quarterly TAL allocations when landings exceed 2/3rds of the annual TAL, rather than a single stock-wide annual TAL.
- The Council's preferred alternative for weekly VTR reporting requirements to monitor the TAL by stock area. Many vessels are already required to make weekly VTR reports due to their fishing permits for large mesh multispecies and other species.

After hearing that there were no research on red hake size selectivity with mesh size in response to his question, Jim Lovgren said that the original reason for the silver hake possession limit by mesh size was to reduce silver hake catches in the squid fishery (there were silver hake selectivity research results by mesh when the silver hake possession limits were implemented, but this was not brought up). He said that the silver hake limits for vessels using trawls less than 2.5 inches were to address differences in catch rates by vessel size (smaller vessels using the

small mesh trawls). He thought that the Council should consider setting a 1000 lbs. red hake possession limit for vessels using less than 2.5 inch mesh trawls, as the final alternative.

Jim Lovgren requested that when the Council evaluates allocation options and limited access, that it summarize the landings by state going back to 1970, when the NJ fishery was much more active. He said that the whiting stocks in the Mid-Atlantic had not recovered, but that they should not be excluded from fishing if stocks recover again in the southern part of the range.

Jim Lovgren also reported a lack of representation on the Advisory Panel (AP). One fisherman on the AP was not aware he had been appointed until recently and had not attended any meetings. The other advisor from NJ is an academic researcher, who recently passed away. Mr. Lovgren thought that the advisors need to show up at meetings and it would help to have some meetings further south.

Both fishermen also supported the Council developing limited access rules for the whiting fishery.

No further comments were offered on Amendment 19 or other whiting fishery issues and Mr. Goethel closed the hearing at 6:30.

New England Fishery Management Council
Draft Amendment 19 to the Multispecies FMP
(Small-mesh Multispecies)
Hotel Indigo – Riverhead, NY

DRAFT Meeting Summary
April 10, 2012

Purpose of meeting: Take public comments on Draft Amendment 19 alternatives.

Attendance: David Goethel (chair), Andrew Applegate (staff), and one whiting fisherman: Dan Farnham

Summary

Mr. Goethel started the meeting at 5:30 in case there were any people arriving late. Since Mr. Farnham was an advisor and familiar with the FMP, the presentation was skipped over and the hearing started with questions about the amendment and analyses, followed by comments on the alternatives.

To start out, Mr. Goethel asked for comment on the incidental possession limit. Mr. Farnham replied that the 400 lbs. red hake and the 2000 lbs. silver hake incidental possession limit would be the best choice. The limits would reduce landings and also could cause small-mesh vessels to reduce their catches of red hake when targeting whiting.

Mr. Farnham and other fishermen in the area that fished the Cultivator Shoals Area were concerned that red hake will be the choke species for the silver hake fishery. Mr. Farnham asked how the data in Table 7 were analyzed.

Mr. Applegate answered that they were developed from 2004-2010 data derived from vessel trip reports, using the Center's area allocation tables. Most of the trips in these tables were matched by VTR serial number, or when that was not possible by an approved procedure that assigned landings to statistical area and gear based on the vessel number, port, and month. Using these data, the location and gear data were derived from the VTR reports, which were combined with dealer landings to estimate the proportion of landings coming from the Cultivator Shoals Area, the inshore small-mesh exemption areas, and from other parts of the northern stock area by vessels using other gears (e.g. large mesh trawls).

Mr. Farnham supported using the VTR data in combination with dealer reports to allocate landings, but more evaluation of the accuracy of the data would be helpful. He indicated that his dealer data has been off by millions of pounds and had to be corrected. Errors may exist in dealer data for other vessels but have not been corrected, he said,

Mr. Goethel added that the Regional Office reported that it would be difficult to monitor landings by exemption area in real time. Mr. Farnham asked what would happen if the Cultivator Shoals Area fishery landed 80% of the red hake. Mr. Goethel answered that the other

exemption areas would be open for a very short period of time before the incidental possession limit would drop to 400 lbs., reducing opportunity to fish in the inshore exemption areas.

Mr. Farnham asked if there were consideration of a red hake year round possession limit for the Cultivator Shoals Area (not just for the entire stock area). Mr. Farnham agreed with the results in the table on page 15 (percent of trips affected and impact on landings and discards). He said that the results would be representative of trips in the Cultivator Shoals Area. He thought that some people may target red hake in the southern area, but this is currently rare because red hake aren't worth as much (as whiting and other species). Having a possession limit might not create more of a discard problem as people might expect, Mr. Farnham said. Mr. Goethel added that the Oversight Committee had some concern about more restrictive possession limits applied to trips fishing in both areas on the same trip. Mr. Farnham didn't think this would be a significant problem, but would think about it when he submits written comments.

Asked about the post-season AM by Mr. Goethel, Mr. Farnham said he will consider the results in the analyses and provide written comments. He thought that the table in the amendment and public hearing document was very helpful

Mr. Goethel took comments on other whiting issues, such as limited access. Mr. Farnham hopes that the Council will follow through (with promises) and put whiting limited access on the agenda soon. This issue has been on the back burner for years, since the Regional Office disapproved an earlier limited access amendment quite a few years ago. All it would take is an increase in the whiting market to set off new participants in the fishery and rapidly increase catch.

Responding to changes in the fishery and high fuel prices, Mr. Farnham suggested that the Council consider increasing the possession limit (as a weekly limit) to counter the increasing fuel price, especially since the silver hake stocks appear to be in a healthy condition. One option that should be considered is allowing a 30,000 lbs possession limit as a double limit (60,000 lbs.) as a weekly limit to reduce fuel costs from steaming (on one trip, rather than two).

No further comments were offered and Mr. Goethel closed the meeting at 6:30.

New England Fishery Management Council
Draft Amendment 19 to the Multispecies FMP
(Small-mesh Multispecies)
Radisson Hotel – Plymouth, MA

DRAFT Meeting Summary
April 11, 2012

Purpose of meeting: Take public comments on Draft Amendment 19 alternatives.

Attendance: David Goethel (chair) and Andrew Applegate (staff). No public attended the hearing.

Summary

The meeting was officially closed at 6 pm. No recording was made.

New England Fishery Management Council
Draft Amendment 19 to the Multispecies FMP
(Small-mesh Multispecies)
Sheraton Hotel – Portsmouth, NH

DRAFT Meeting Summary
April 12, 2012

Purpose of meeting: Take public comments on Draft Amendment 19 alternatives.

Attendance: David Goethel (chair) and Andrew Applegate (staff). No public attended the hearing.

Summary

The meeting was officially closed at 6:15 pm. No recording was made.

New England Fishery Management Council
Draft Amendment 19 to the Multispecies FMP
(Small-mesh Multispecies)
Hotel Providence– Providence, RI

Meeting Summary
April 16, 2012

Purpose of meeting: Take public comments on Draft Amendment 19 alternatives.

Attendance: David Goethel (chair), Mark Alexander, and Andrew Applegate (staff). No public attended the hearing.

Summary

The meeting was officially closed at 6:30 pm. No recording was made.