



Fish News

Aug. 3, 2010

NMFS Releases Biological Opinion

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has released the long-awaited draft 2010 Groundfish Biological Opinion. It is available online (see link below). The North Pacific Fishery Management Council plans to discuss it during the August 16 - 19, 2010 special meeting at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage.

The agency found jeopardy in the western and central Aleutian Islands reporting areas. The document includes a Reasonable and Prudent Alternative, a portion of which includes:

- **Area 543:** closure of the Atka mackerel and Pacific cod fishery.
- **Area 542:** 3-mile closure at Kanaga Island/Ship Rock for groundfish; 10-mile closure from critical habitat for fixed gear Pacific cod from January 1 to June 10; 20-mile closure from critical habitat for trawl cod year-round; no fishing in the area for Pacific cod between Nov. 1 - Dec. 31 by anyone. 20-mile closure from critical habitat year-round for Atka mackerel; Atka mackerel total allowable catch set at 47 %; eliminate HLA platoon system; change Atka mackerel seasons from January 20 - June 10 for A season and June 10 - November 1 for B season.



NMFS offers a proposed approach in an 800-plus-page draft biological opinion.

- **Area 541:** 10-mile closure for Pacific cod year round; 10 - 20-mile closure for fixed gear Pacific cod from January 1 - June 10; 10 - 20-mile closure for Pacific cod by trawl gear between June 10 - November 1; prohibit all Pacific cod harvest between November 1 - December 31.

For more information, visit the links below:

[**Draft Biological Opinion**](#)

[**NOAA press release and Map**](#)

[**Link to SeafoodNews.com editorial**](#)

[**NPFMC Special August 16 - 19, 2010 Meeting Agenda**](#)

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