



Fish News

Dec. 5, 2008

SNOPAC EXPLORES SAND POINT SEAFOOD PLANT PROPOSAL

This summer, Snopac Products changed the dynamics of the Sand Point fishery with the arrival of the *M/V Snopac Innovator*. The added processing capacity created an economic upturn and an alternate revenue source for fishermen and for the community. Snopac's goal was to create fair market conditions for the fishermen and to develop the idea of a permanent facility based in Sand Point.

The community and fishermen's interest and enthusiasm for Snopac's



The M/V Snopac Innovator created quite a splash in Sand Point when the floating processor based itself near Sand Point. Snopac Products is currently exploring the idea of building a permanent facility in Sand Point.

involvement last summer has highlighted the need for a permanent shore-based plant where fishermen, the community and Snopac would share in the direction and oversight of the plant, and more importantly, in the financial benefits. The City of Sand Point supports this endeavor and is considering making dock space and land available.

Fishermen have contacted Snopac to commit both their money to build the plant and their catch to make it sustainable. Snopac is currently working on the permit process, finalizing the details of the plant design, and working on grants to help defray some of the initial start-up costs. The target is a February 2010 start up. Greg Blakey, president of Snopac, is pleased with the fishermen's response to the proposal.

"This is a win-win situation for all," Blakey said. "Fishermen now have a chance to own their future and help create a company that serves their best interests with this business model of fishermen ownership. This concept makes individual fishermen vertically integrated from the sea to the final product."

For information on how to invest, questions, or updates on the Sand Point plant proposal, contact (206) 764-9230 in Seattle or call Tiffany Jackson (in Sand Point) at (907) 386-1015. You can also email Snopac owners Nancy and Greg Blakey at nblakey@snopac.net or gblakey@snowpac.net.

[Link to Snopac's Web site](#)

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council Takes Up Pacific Cod Sector Split and LLP Recency Proposals Next Week



Pacific cod

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council begins its December meeting at the Anchorage Hilton next week. One of the main issues scheduled for discussion is the Pacific cod (P. cod) sector split. The Gulf of Alaska (GOA) P. cod fisheries have the largest number of participants of any Alaska groundfish fisheries. No division between gear types or between catch vessels or catcher

processor vessels exists. As a result, there's an intense race for fish between sectors (jig, longline, pot, trawl, catcher vessels and catcher processors). When all sectors fish at the same time, gear conflicts occur. The proposal could base sector allocations on historic dependence, catch history and other socio-economic factors. Allocating P. cod would provide the sectors with additional flexibility to address management needs.

The LLP (limited license program) Recency will also be considered. The proposal includes eliminating latent licenses. Benefits include less competition. However, removing LLPs from coastal communities also prevents fishermen from using them in the future. One option being proposed is exempting licenses for fishermen with vessels under 60 feet. Final actions may be taken on the LLP Recency proposal and the P. cod sector split in February or April of 2009.

[NPFMC meeting agenda - Dec. 10 - 16, 2008 - Anchorage Hilton Hotel](#)

Alaska Board of Fisheries Accepting Proposed Regulation Changes until April 10, 2009

The Alaska Board of Fisheries plans to solicit proposed changes in the Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands and statewide finfish fishery regulations. The deadline for submitting proposals is 5 p.m. on Friday, April 10, 2009. Bristol Bay and AYK proposals are also on this schedule. Local Fish and Game Advisory Committees should plan to set up meetings so they can draft proposals well in advance of this deadline. As always, AEB staff members are available to help.

Halibut Commission Issues Catch Recommendations

The scientific staff from the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) has issued its recommended catch limits for 2009. The outlook for commercial fishermen along the Alaska Peninsula (Area 3B), is faring much



Pacific Halibut

better than other areas across the state. The overall limit for all regulatory areas from the West Coast to the Bering Sea is 54 million pounds. That's a 10 percent decrease from this year. The commission has recommended a seven percent increase to 11.7 million pounds for Area 3B for 2009. Other areas could be struggling. The recommended catch limit for fishermen in Southeast (Area 2C) is about 4.5 million pounds. That's a 28 percent cut from this year. It's also less than half the 2006 limit of 10.63 million pounds. The proposed catch limit for Southcentral (Area 3A) is 22.5 million pounds, a seven percent decrease. The IPHC will determine the final numbers during its January meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia.

[Link to IPHC catch recommendations](#)

AEB Assembly Passes Fisheries Resolutions to Protect Local Fishermen



The AEB Assembly passed resolutions on Dec. 4, 2008 to protect the interests of local fishermen in the Borough.

The Aleutians East Borough (AEB) Assembly unanimously passed three fisheries resolutions at its Dec. 4, 2008 meeting, to protect the interests of local fishermen in the Gulf of Alaska. Resolution 09-10 supports the expansion of the fish processing industry and welcomes new processors to the area. It also formalizes the Borough's objections to processor quota shares (PQS) or any program that restricts or limits processors from coming into the AEB.

Resolution 09-11 opposes the expansion of CDQ (Community Development Quota) operations into the Gulf of Alaska. The resolution was brought forward because some of the CDQ groups (excluding APICDA) are using their financial resources to build vessels that now compete with local fishermen in the Gulf. Fishermen in Sand Point and King Cove, who are not beneficiaries of the BSAI (Bering Sea Aleutian Islands) CDQ

program, are currently at a disadvantage with their smaller boats and lack of financial resources. The resolution would essentially keep CDQ operations in the Bering Sea. The Borough will work through the NPFMC to curtail and prevent CDQ-based fisheries from participating in the Gulf of Alaska fisheries.

Resolution 09-12 calls upon the NPFMC to limit the longliner quota of Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska based upon several factors. Those factors include catch reductions, lessening prohibited species catch mortality and positive social impacts to the fisheries-dependent communities. The Borough formulated this resolution because catcher/processor and catch vessel longline fleets have been taking an increasing share of the Western Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod allocation. For the full text of each resolution, visit the links below.

[Link to Resolution 09-10](#)

[Link to Resolution 09-11](#)

[Link to Resolution 09-12](#)

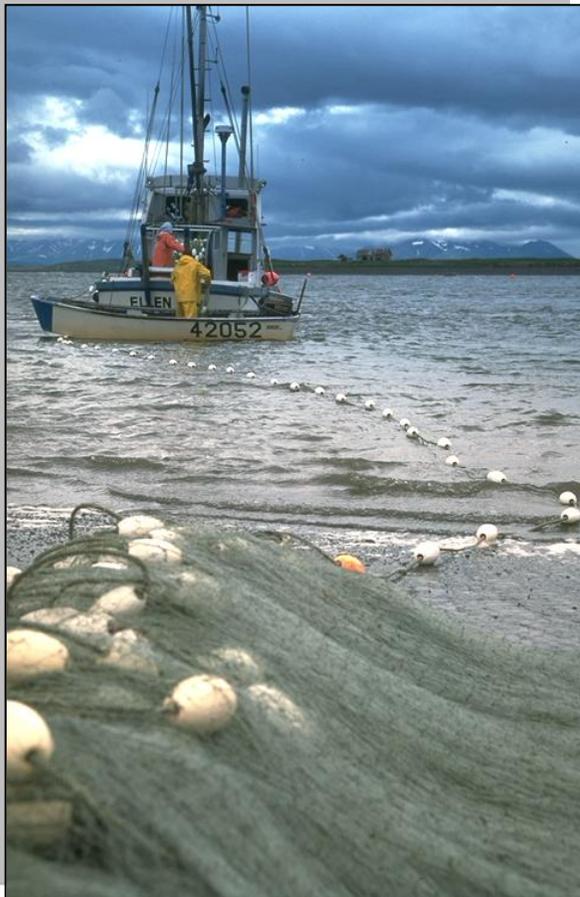
AEB Staff, Consultants Work Diligently to Create Strong Mitigation Measures Protecting Fisheries

For the past several months, Borough staff and consultants have been hammering away to formulate stringent mitigation measures to protect fishermen and AEB residents in preparation for possible offshore oil and gas exploration in the North Aleutian Basin, (NAB), adjacent to Nelson Lagoon. The Borough is a



Nelson Lagoon is “ground zero” for possible offshore oil and gas development.

cooperating agency in this process. The AEB is working side-by-side with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) in anticipation of a scheduled 2011 lease sale. The Borough is supportive of oil and gas exploration in the NAB as long as numerous mitigation measures are formulated.



As long as the energy industry adheres to the Borough's proposed mitigation measures, which protect fishermen and all renewable resources, the AEB is in favor of oil and gas development in the North Aleutian Basin.

Currently the AEB is drafting fisheries protection mitigation measures. The draft includes the AEB's proposals for:

- A requirement to implement a comprehensive scientific review of all commercial, subsistence and sports fisheries literature to identify baseline data and information gaps.
 - Once the baseline data assessment has been completed, it will be used as a basis of comparison to compensate fishermen for decreased harvest values, decreases in fisheries stock and/or displacement or loss of work due to a catastrophic event (e.g., oil spill).
 - A requirement that a lease-related use must be restricted in order to prevent conflicts with local commercial, subsistence and sport harvest activities.
 - Fishermen should not be displaced or precluded from access to fishing areas, unless they are adequately compensated for displacement.
 - Fishermen should not be precluded from participating in designated fishing seasons, unless they are adequately compensated for the lost season(s).
- Fishermen should be timely compensated for damage to fishing equipment, vessels, gear and decreased harvest value from OCS operations.
 - Established patterns of navigation and shipping for commercial fishermen should not be interrupted.
 - A requirement that no permits would be issued by local, state and federal agencies unless the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has determined that there will be no adverse impact to commercial, subsistence and sport fisheries.

- A requirement that all exploration, construction and operation activities should be coordinated with commercial, subsistence and sports fishermen in order to maximize communication, ensure public participation and avoid conflicts.
- Developing an oil and gas industry/fishing communication and coordination model funded by the lessees for the North Aleutian Basin.

So far, drafts of mitigation measures that have been completed include transportation, utility corridors and infrastructure siting, air pollution and cultural and historical site protection. The next meeting between the Borough and the Minerals Management Service is scheduled for Dec. 17, 2008 from 1 – 4 p.m. in Anchorage. At that time, two or three mitigation measures will be discussed, which may include Zero Discharge from drilling (with EPA involvement), Fisheries, Coastal Habitat Protection, Local Hire and Training, Marine Mammals and Essential Habitat, Social Systems, Seismic Design and Non-indigenous Species. Once the drafts are finalized, they will be posted on AEB's Web site. Fish News will keep you posted.

Borough Listens to Fishermen's Concerns, Discusses Recommended 2009 Acceptable Biological Catch for Cod, Pollock

Published in In the Loop on Nov. 26, 2008



The recommended 2009 ABC for Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska is approximately 55,300 metric tons.

Borough Fisheries Resources Director Beth Stewart met with fishermen in Seattle on Nov. 20, 2008 to share information about the recommended 2009 acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Pacific cod and pollock in the Gulf of Alaska. Stewart received the 2009 recommendations after meeting with Plan Team members from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). The 2009 recommended ABC for Pacific cod is approximately 55,300 metric tons. That's 88 percent of the previous year's number, which totaled 66,000 metric tons. Thirty-nine percent goes to the western and central Gulf. Four percent goes to the eastern Gulf and ten percent goes to catcher processors. Twenty-five percent goes to the state waters fishery.

If the Borough obtains a survey in 2009 and the survey confirms the anticipated increase in cod, the ABC for 2010 is expected to be 103,700.

A tagging study is expected to start up this winter during the pot fishery. The goal is to approximate real time, so it syncs with the actual fishing season. Stewart said a study using Sand Point Fisherman Melvin Larsen's year-round vessel is a good start.



The recommended 2009 ABC for pollock in the Gulf of Alaska is approximately 50,770 metric tons.

The winter apportionment for pollock switched, based on survey results. The recommended 2009 ABC for pollock is expected to be approximately 50,770 metric tons. According to the pollock model, that amount should increase slightly in 2010.

The pollock and Pacific cod ABC numbers will be presented to the NPFMC's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) during the council's December meeting. The Plan Teams and the SSC usually agree on the ABCs. The council's Advisory Panel then recommends the TACs (total allowable catch) and apportionments for the following year.



The Pacific Marine Expo is the largest commercial marine trade show on the West Coast.

Pacific Marine Expo Was a Success

*Published in In the Loop
on Nov. 26, 2008*

Turnout at the Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle November 20 – 22, 2008 was even better than anticipated. The consensus is, Expo was a success. The event, held at the Qwest Field Center, attracted a large crowd, including many people from the Aleutians East Borough. The AEB's new 2009 calendars were a big crowd pleaser.

By the afternoon of the second day, there were no calendars left. The AEB pens were also a popular give-away. Flyers featuring the communities' harbors and the recently-completed Cold Bay Terminal Building were on display and available for Expo attendees to take home with them. Aleutians East Borough Mayor Stanley Mack, AEB Administrator Bob Juetner, AEB Fisheries Consultant Sam Cotten, Borough Public Information Officer Laura Tanis, AEB Finance Director Roxann Newman, King Cove Mayor Ernest Weiss, King Cove Administrator Gary Hennigh, King Cove Administrative Manager Bonnie Folz and King Cove Harbormaster Dave Bash were on hand at the Borough's booth to help answer questions.



AEB Finance Director Roxann Newman points out some of the features of the Borough's harbors.

Greenpeace Uses Scare Tactics in its Television Ads about Pollock Stock Declines

You may have already seen the television commercial of a dejected-looking fisherman donning a yellow rain slicker, similar to the image portrayed on the Gorton's fish stick meals. The commercial shows him walking around with a big sign that claims the crash of the Bering Sea fishery has left him jobless. The environmental group, Greenpeace, started airing its TV ad this week in Alaska and in Seattle, Washington. In reality, Alaska's \$1-billion dollar pollock industry hasn't actually taken such an extreme dive. But the substantial population decline of the bottom-dwelling fish hasn't gone unnoticed by Greenpeace. The international environmental group claims in the ad that Bering Sea pollock are being overfished. Federal scientists agree that there are fewer fish but argue that the accusation of overfishing is completely untrue. The pollock industry has come to the same conclusion as the federal scientists and adds that **the population decline was not unexpected**. Federal scientists are recommending limiting the Pollock harvest to 815,000 tons, the lowest amount in more than three decades. Greenpeace is pushing for even less -- just over half of that amount.

[Read more](#)

Environmentalists Claim Sound Pollution Threatens the Survival of Whales



Environmentalists say sound pollution, including commercial shipping, may be threatening the survival of whales throughout the world. Courtesy: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

An environmental group says the sounds that whales and dolphins use to communicate and navigate are getting lost in the din of human-caused noises in the world's oceans. Mark Simmonds, director of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, a British non-governmental agency, claims sound pollution, including commercial shipping, seismic surveys and military sonar, is confusing the

mammals and may even be threatening the survival of endangered animals. Representatives of more than 100 government agencies gathered in Rome this week for a meeting of the United Nations-backed Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

Simmonds says environmental groups claim a growing number of cases of beached whales and dolphins can be connected to sound pollution. He says marine mammals are showing up on beaches around the world with tissue damage, similar to that found in divers suffering from decompression sickness. Simmonds claims the use of military sonar or seismic testing may have scared the animals into diving and surfacing beyond their physical limits. However, scientists say climate change may be an indirect source of noise pollution, which is altering the chemistry of the oceans and causing sound to travel

farther through sea water. A spokesman for the U.N. Environment program says the conference is discussing a resolution that would obligate countries to reduce sound pollution.

[Read more](#)

Calendar of Fish Meetings

North Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting:

Week of Dec. 8, 2008 - Anchorage Hilton Hotel

Week of Feb. 2, 2009 - Seattle

[Details on NPFMC Meetings](#)



International Pacific Halibut Commission Annual Meeting:

Jan. 13 – 16, 2009 Vancouver, B.C.

[Details on IPHC Meeting](#)



Alaska Department of Fish & Game Board Meeting: Jan. 21 - 27, 2009

Petersburg

[Details on ADF&G Board Meeting](#)

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