

HERRING INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD (HIAB)

MEETING RECORD – MAY 4, 2011

YWCA, 535 HORNBY ST., VANCOUVER

Purpose of the meeting: Post season review with DFO managers.

1. Jo Thomas DMP Report (Doug Tallman)

- 2011 Landings were approximately 7,234 tons, down from average annual landings of 28,800 tons from 1998 to 2006
- Hail line activity totaled 19 days in 2011, compared to 10 days in 2010.
- There were 13 Dockside observers trained in Vancouver, 3 in French Creek, and 3 in Prince Rupert.
- HIAB policy and rules related to the distribution of overage to pools that were not fished should be clarified.
- The number of registered pools increased significantly this year, particularly for Georgia Strait. Many of these pools didn't indicate any affiliation with known company pools (i.e. buyers) prior to the season. This resulted in substantial attention to determine pool assignment during the validation process. Accounting, allocating, and redistributing catch and overage becomes challenging with larger number of pools.
- A limited number of requests were made related to the offload of individual gillnets directly to a landing station (i.e. not delivering to a packer). Conditions of license are unclear around this and need to be resolved.
- Program savings may be possible with electronic monitoring. This should be investigated.

2. Summary of 2011 DFO and Industry Funded Test Programs (Lorena Hamer)

- The 2011 level of test fishing coverage in all areas was similar to 2010.
- Two funding sources for test fishing programs again in 2011: DFO *Larocque* funding for a stock assessment program, and industry funding for five seine test vessels in the St. of Georgia
- There was a shortage of approximately \$83,000 in the funds DFO provided for the stock assessment program. There was also a shortage of funds in the industry funded program.
- *Larocque* funding is currently available until March 31, 2012, and it's not clear what will happen after April 1st. DFO is developing other funding submissions.

2. Overview of DFO Stock Assessment Activities (Jake Schweigert)

- Jake Schweigert provided an overview of 2011 biological sampling collection and 2011 spawning. (At the time of this meeting, data analysis is still preliminary, so data summaries are not available.)
- Please see separate attachment with presentation highlights.

3. Review of Roe Herring Fisheries by Area

3 (a) St. of Georgia Seine – Brenda Spence

- A "good" recruitment was forecast for St. of Georgia, which resulted in a forecast of 75,934 tons. The combined roe herring seine and gillnet quota for the St. of Georgia was 15,186 tons.
- The maximum soundings were 125,000 to 145,000 tons on March 10. (Note that this does not represent all the stocks in the area.)
- At the first pool captains' meeting (March 4) DFO was advised by pool captains that the market required herring at least 90 gm weight, 26 gram roe, and 12% roe yield on a 50:50 male / female ratio. There were no sets made this season where the size of the fish met those criteria.
- On March 14 seine pool captains met and contracted DFO to recommend that the industry funded test program for seines be discontinued, and the focus of the industry test program would be to assess in support of the gillnet fishery,
- DFO identified that the number of pools in the St. of Georgia did not align with the maximum number of pools they had recommended for the area. This was an issue.
- The lack of preseason information regarding market standards for roe quality made fishery assessment and planning difficult.
- There was discussion about what would have happened if one of the pools had wanted to go fishing. Currently the decision rule (as recorded in the IFMP) reads: *"The opening time for seines will be decided by the on-grounds fishery managers in consultation with pools. If necessary, an opening will be determined by polling each pool captain. In this situation, each pool carries the weight of the number of licences in the pool."* Pool captains at the HIAB meeting confirmed that if one pool had wanted to go fishing in this year, the other pools would have agreed to let him fish, but under a set of rules. (e.g. the pool couldn't keep setting and releasing fish.) DFO is seeking feedback from HIAB on this decision rule.
- There was also discussion about how to maximize profits in the fishery. Indications are that the 2012 roe market will continue to be poor. In the past industry has chosen to catch fish for the roe market, because that was higher value. Now, marketing people are looking at developing new markets for food and bait.

3 (b) St. of Georgia Gillnet – Alistar Thomson

- The 2011 St. of Georgia gillnet quota was 5785 tons, and 4868 tons were caught (so approximately 907 tons under quota).
- There were 12 licensed pools with a combined total of 1,133 licenses, (a per license share of 5.106 tons)
- The fishery opened on March 13, and closed on March 22.
- The fishery was quite spread out, with primary harvest areas being Nanaimo and French Creek areas. Minor harvest occurred at Northwest Bay, Schooner Cove, and Hornby Island.
- The majority of fish was harvested between March 15th and 18th.
- There was good spawning throughout the fishing period.
- Most pools did not achieve their quota.
- The industry decision not to fish seines influenced the gillnet fishery. Most of the 84 gillnet licenses that were not leased prior to the fishery were leased after the fishery opened. The fishery manager was not aware that this was happening, which caused some confusion for him.

3 (c) Prince Rupert Seine – Corey Martens

- The quota for Kitkatla was 1,000 tons, and 972.8 tons were caught. The 10 licenses that chose the area formed a single industry pool.
- The area opened on March 25 in subarea 5-5, and portions of subareas 5-6, 5-7, and 5-8. With a small catcher fleet of 4 vessels and market demands requiring a quality product, the fishery proceeded at a slow pace with each set being sampled prior to pumping. Limited packing ability also contributed to a slow fishery.
- Fleet cooperation and communication was excellent.

3 (d) Prince Rupert Gillnet – Corey Martens

- The gillnet quota was 1,346 tons, and 1,392 tons were caught. The fishery opened on March 26 and closed on March 29, so was open for a total of four days.
- Open area was 4-5 to 4.9 and 4-14
- The main fishing area was off of Tree Bluff, from Trenham Point to just north of Slippery Rock. Secondary areas were the southern shore of Big Bay (Reeks and Simpson Pt), and from Slippery Rock to Swamp Island.
- The peak punt count was 14.

4. Other Area Summaries

4 (a) Haida Gwaii (QCI) – Peter Katinic

- As in 2010, test fishing coverage was from two seine test fishing charters, and one dive survey charter.
- There is no longer an aircraft company available to conduct spawn flights. A spawn reconnaissance charter vessel was hired (from DFO flying budget) to locate spawns. The charter worked quite well.
- 2W had 6500 tons sounded, similar to 2010.
- 2E stocks showed slight improvement.
- There was one FSC spawn on kelp operation (consisting of two closed ponds) in Island Bay. Estimated harvest is about 1,000 lbs.

4 (b) West Coast Vancouver Island – Brenda Spence

- In 2011, there was one seine test charter, and a combination seine test & dive charter. There were also three First Nation charter patrol charters paid for by DFO (Ahousat, Hesquiat, and Ucluelet).
- Peak soundings were 16,075 tons: Barkley Sound – 8,800 tons; Clayquot Sound - 2,600 tons, Nootka Sound – 2,000 tons; Esperanza – 2,675 tons. Stocks showed some improvement this year
- 37 km of spawn were observed. Ten spawn flights were conducted. Spawn coverage was improved this year because of better weather, and the combination seine test / dive survey vessel also worked well.
- A mix of anchovy and sardines were observed in some of the test sets in Barkley Sound. HIAB participants also noted that anchovy had been found offshore of WCVI, and in Nitnat Lake.

4 (c) Central Coast – Dan Wagner

- In 2011, there was one 26 day seine test charter, as well as a 14 day charter. Spawn surveys were conducted by a full 21 day charter, as well as a 12 day charter (split with St. of Georgia). There were also three Heltsiuk charter patrol charters paid for by DFO. Dive spawn survey vessels were staggered to provide optimum extended coverage.

- Peak Central Coast soundings were 18,000 tons, but some of the observed tonnage was juveniles. Stocks showed some improvement this year
- There were 80+ nautical miles of spawn were observed this year, compared to 50 miles in 2011. Thirty of the 80 miles of spawn were in Spiller Channel, where the spawns are quite narrow.
- Bella Bella and Kitasu each harvested 12,000 lbs of FSC spawn on kelp. The bulk of the product came from Kitasu Bay and Spiller Channel, and all product was from open ponding

5. 2010_11 Food & Bait Fishery, and Considerations for 2011_12

- In 2010_11 there was 50 tons (1 license) designated for Prince Rupert, and 300 tons (6 licenses) in St. of Georgia.
- 50 ton ZM license eligibilities were determined by lottery on Oct 28, 2010.
- The service provider was JO Thomas.
- There were no applications for the Prince Rupert license. In the St. of Georgia 6 licenses were issued.
- There were 9 fishing trips in January. All effort was below Dodd's Narrows – Yellow Point, Danger Reef (subareas 17-3; 17-4). 283 tons were landed, out of 300 tons issued.
- Management issues in this fishery: vessel safety (vessels should operate in pairs); harmonization of F&B monitoring program with Special Use herring monitoring program; pilot program for quota transfer – needs more quota in the fishery to be properly tested. A “best practices” code should be developed for the Food & Bait fishery.
- A subcommittee was formed to develop a proposal to integrate the Food & bait fishery with the roe herring fishery allocation. The goal of the pilot proposal would be to allow for greater market flexibility. It's recognized that planning must be done promptly if any changes are to be made in the fall.

6. Special Use Fishery

- A total of 7 vessels participated in the 2010_11 Special Use fishery to date: 1 in the ZX category; 4 in the ZY1 category; 1 in the ZY3 category; and 1 in the ZY4 category.
- One vessel in the ZY1 category had 23 licenses taken out.
- There are 503 tons landed in the Special Use category to date. This includes Walcan, Fjord / Seven Seas, and the aquarium license. (The season won't be complete until Oct 31st 2011.)
- There has been no progress made on developing “Best Management Practises” for this fishery yet, but it is still noted as a management issue. Other management concerns include: fishing activities (bycatch, drying up of sets, high grading); aligning monitoring requirements with ZM requirements, and exceeding quota.
- HIAB notes again that allowing processing at sea without any type of monitoring – cameras, observers, etc – is not consistent with monitoring requirements in other fisheries.

7. Operational Protocol for BC Ferries Proposed Cable Ferry in Baynes Sound

- Some HIAB members, DFO staff, and herring test fishermen had met with BC Ferries representatives in April 2011 to discuss an “operational protocol” with BC Ferries. A protocol was subsequently developed in conjunction with BC Ferries and HIAB. This

protocol was reviewed and accepted at this meeting and accepted. However, after the meeting BC Ferries changed the protocol that was agreed to, and the changes were unacceptable to HIAB. The protocol is currently under review.

8. Other Business

- Greg Taylor has resigned from HIAB, and from his position as Chair of the Board. (Thanks Greg – you will be missed!) Lorena Hamer will act as Chair until the fall session.

ATTENDANCE – MAY 4, 2011

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