

April 6,2003 Essential Fish Habitat Agenda C-4

The Council directs the following modifications to the EFH EIS process:

Research priorities: Request that the research plan add elements which explore the potential benefits of EFH mitigation measure for productivity of FMP species.

The Council directs the EFH Committee to develop and recommend a HAPC process. The EFH committee shall report to the Council at the June Council meeting its recommended processes for identifying and evaluating potential HAPC areas. The evaluation shall include efficacy, scientific review and appropriate mitigation measures. The process developed to identify and implement HAPC=s will be incorporated in the EFH EIS. The Council intends to initiate the HAPC process prior to Nov. 2003, and to implement any HAPC=s on the same schedule as EFH FMP amendments.

Request that NMFS and NMFS enforcement provide information regarding an appropriate application of gear definitions to address the habitat protection goals of alternative 5B and allowing >pelagic trawls in off-bottom mode@.

Dinglebars should be added to gear excluded from closed areas in Alternative 6.