

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## Meeting Summary

239<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
June 4 - 11, 2018  
Kodiak Convention Center, Kodiak, Alaska

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### Attachments

1) Time Log

2) Newsletter

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met Wednesday, June 6, 2018 through Monday, June 11, 2018, at the Best Western Kodiak Convention Center, Kodiak, Alaska. The following Council, NPFMC staff, SSC, and AP members attended the meetings.

**Council Members**

Balsiger, Jim	Marx, Steve	Peterson, Theresa
Cotten, Sam	Kinneen, Simon	LCDR Corrie Sergeant
Cross, Craig	Laukitis, Buck	Smoker, Lauren (GC)
Down, Kenny	Lepore, John (GC)	Tweit, Bill (Vice Chair)
Hanson, Dave	Merrill, Glenn (Alt for Balsiger)	
Hartill, Trent (Alt for Cotten)	Mezirow, Andy	
Hull, Dan (Chair)		

**NPFMC Staff**

Armstrong, Jim	Kircher, Peggy	Shawback, Maria
Cunningham, Sam	MacLean, Steve	Schmidt, Nicole
Evans, Diana (DD)	Marrinan, Sarah	Stram, Diana
Fey, Mike (AKFIN)	McCracken, Jon	Witherell, Dave (ED)
Gleason, Shannon	Cleaver, Sara	

**Scientific and Statistical Committee**

The SSC met from June 4 - 6, 2018 at the Best Western Hotel, Kodiak, AK.

Members present were:

Gordon Kruse, Co-Chair <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Sherri Dressel, Vice Chair <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>	Chris Anderson <i>University of Washington</i>
Amy Bishop <i>Alaska Sea Life Center</i>	Mike Downs <i>Northern Economics</i>	Jason Gasper <i>NOAA Fisheries – Alaska Region</i>
Dana Hanselman <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	George Hunt <i>University of Washington</i>	Dayv Lowry <i>Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>
Franz Mueter <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Kate Reedy <i>Idaho State University Pocatello</i>	Matt Reimer <i>University of Alaska Anchorage</i>
Heather Renner <i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	Ian Stewart <i>Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission</i>	Alison Whitman <i>Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>

Members absent were:

Robert Clark <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>	Brad Harris <i>Alaska Pacific University</i>	Anne Hollowed, Co-Chair <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>
Terry Quinn <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>		

## Advisory Panel

The AP met Tuesday, June 5, through Friday, June 8, 2018 at the Elks Lodge, Kodiak, Alaska. Members present were (absent members are ~~stricken~~):

Carroll, Shannon	<del>Kauffman, Jeff</del>	Upton, Matt (Co-Vice Chair)
Christiansen, Ruth	Kwachka, Alexis	Vanderhoeven, Anne
<del>Cochran, Kurt</del>	Lowenberg, Craig	Weinstein, Samantha
<del>Donich, Daniel</del>	Nichols, Carina	Weiss, Ernie (Chair)
Drobnica, Angel (Co-Vice Chair)	O'Donnell, Paddy	Wilt, Sinclair
Gruver, John	Peterson, Joel	
Hayden, Natasha	Scoblic, John	
<del>Johnson, Jim</del>	Stevens, Ben	

## **B REPORTS**

The following reports were given and discussed. Actions were deferred to staff tasking.

### **B1 Executive Director's Report** – David Witherell

- Turning of the Tide Presentation – Dr. Courtney Carothers and Dr. Rachel Donkersloot
- Ecosystem Workshop Report – Katie Latanich

### **B2 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill

- Update on NMFS Surveys – Jeremy Rusin
- Report on Deck Sorting – Dr. Anne Marie Eich and Scott Miller
- In-Season Management Report – Josh Keaton
- EFH Report – Gretchen Harrington
- Update on Aquaculture – Sam Rauch

### **B3 NOAA GC Report** – John Lepore

### **B4 NOAA Enforcement Report** – Will Ellis

### **B5 ADF&G Report** – Trent Hartill

### **B6 USCG Report** – LT Yvonne Yang

### **B7 USFWS** – No Report Given

### **B8 Protected Species Report** - Steve MacLean

## **C1 2017 OBSERVER ANNUAL REPORT AND OAC REPORT**

The Council heard the 2017 Observer Program Annual Review from Jennifer Ferdinand, Dr. Craig Faunce, and Dr. Phil Ganz of AFSC, the Enforcement Report on Observer coverage from Jaclyn Smith of NOAA Enforcement, EM Cost Allocation Procedural Directive from Jennifer Mondragon and Jennifer Ferdinand of NMFS, and the OAC Report from NPFMC staff, Dr. Elizabeth Figus. The following action was taken:

### **Mr. Merrill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Laukitis:**

1. The Council supports the NMFS recommendations for the draft 2019 Annual Deployment Plan that are listed in section 7.1 (pg. 102) of the 2017 Annual Report.
2. Based on input from the OAC and AP, the Council also recommends the following:

- In the draft 2019 ADP, include an evaluation of a gear-specific hurdle that reduces the impact of NMFS regulatory areas with low fishing effort in determining the observer coverage rates for the hurdle.
  - For the EM selection pool in 2019, the Council recommends:
    - If funds are available, expand the EM selection pool up to a maximum of 165 vessels.
    - Continue to implement a 30% trip-selection rate, using the pre-trip selection method.
  - In the 2018 Annual Report (to be presented in June, 2019), the Council recommends that NMFS:
    - Include an evaluation of observer effects at finer resolution than gear-level strata, so that observer effects in pelagic and non-pelagic trawl can be investigated.
    - Continue to provide details on EM in Chapter 4 and also include information in the report about the number of EM trips selected, the number monitored, and the number reviewed, for clarification.
    - Add an appendix that describes details of cost calculations for EM and observer days over time.
  - The Council also recommends that NMFS communicate with the OAC on the results from the proposed ODDS agency subgroup.
3. The Council supports the continued participation of the OAC Subgroup in the development of the fee analysis, including the opportunity for OAC review of the analysis before Initial Review at the Council.
  4. The Council appreciates the preliminary survey report from OLE and acknowledges the evidence of disparate work environment for female and male observers. The Council encourages efforts to further understand these work conditions and develop solutions.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously June 7, 2018, at 2:14 p.m.

## **C2 ELECTRONIC MONITORING WORKGROUP REPORT**

The Council heard the EMWG report from NPFMC staff Dr. Elizabeth Figus. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Tweit made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Laukitis:**

1. The Council supports the recommendations from the Fixed Gear EM Workgroup that the OAC consider fixed gear EM implementation issues at their future meetings and provide implementation recommendations to the Council.
2. The Council adopts the preliminary monitoring objectives for developing EM on trawl vessels that were composed by the trawl EM Workgroup and also the initial focus on using EM for compliance purposes. The Council recommends that the group develop a cooperative research plan for 2019 and supports the group's proposed work schedule. The Council encourages EMWG members to obtain external funding to support field work in 2019.

3. The Council recommends addition of a representative of the processing sector to the EM Workgroup.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously June 7, 2018, at 2:48 p.m.

## **D5 BSAI HALIBUT O26 PERFORMANCE STANDARD**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Hartill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council moves to take no further action on this agenda item.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with one objection (Ms. Peterson) on June 7, 2018, at 5:30 p.m.

## **C3 ABC/OFL SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALEUTIAN ISLANDS GKC**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram and ADF&G, Ben Daly (the CPT vice-chair). The following action was taken:

**Mr. Hartill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council accepts the 2018 AIGKC SAFE and adopts the OFL of 12.16 million lbs. and the ABC of 9.12 million lbs. for the 2018/19 fishing season as recommended by the Crab Plan Team, AP and SSC.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously (Mr. Cross absent from vote) on June 8, 2018, at 9 a.m.

## **C4 FIXED GEAR CV ROCKFISH RETENTION**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken and NMFS staff, Josh Keaton. The following action was taken:

**Dr. Balsiger made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Tweit:**

The Council recommends releasing the analysis for public review after making the following revisions to the purpose and need, alternatives, and analysis. The preliminary preferred alternative is shown in bold; new language underlined, and removed language in strikethrough.

### Purpose and Need

*Fixed-gear CVs in the BSAI and GOA discard ~~much a~~ **proportion** of their incidental catch of rockfish (*Sebastes* and *Sebastes* spp.). The greatest amount of discarded rockfish occurs in the GOA hook-and-line fisheries. Requiring the full retention of rockfish ~~could benefit vessel operators by improving~~ **would improve** identification of species **catch composition** when CVs are subject to electronic monitoring, improve data collection by providing more accurate estimates of **total** catch, reduce incentives to discard rockfish, **may** reduce waste, reduce overall enforcement burden, **and provide more***

*consistency in regulations. ~~promote more consistent management between State of Alaska and Federal fisheries.~~*

#### Alternatives

Alternative 1. Status quo

**Alternative 2: Require full retention of rockfish species by all fixed gear CVs (hook-and-line, pot, and jig) in the BSAI and GOA.**

Alternative 3: Require full retention of rockfish species by hook-and-line CVs in the GOA.

**Option under Alternatives 2 and 3: Require full retention of rockfish even if the species is on prohibited species status but prohibit these retained rockfish from entering commerce.**

**Option under Alternatives 2 and 3: Establish a maximum commerce allowance (MCA) of 10% or 15%.**

The Council recommends that the analysis be revised to include the revisions suggested by staff and the SSC as practical.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection on June 8, 2018, at 11:30 a.m.

## **C5 HALIBUT RETENTION IN BSAI POTS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sarah Marrinan, and Sara Cleaver, and NMFS staff, Stephanie Warpinski. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Laukitis made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council adopts the following purpose and need statement and suite of alternatives for public review. Staff should consider and address comments from the AP to the extent practicable. The preliminary preferred alternative is shown in **bold**; new language is underlined.

#### **Purpose and Need Statement:**

Interactions with whales throughout the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) affect the ability of sablefish and halibut QS holders to harvest their IFQ by reducing catch per unit of effort and increasing fishing costs. Whale depredation is increasing for vessels fishing halibut IFQ with longline gear, and for halibut discarded when using pot gear to fish sablefish IFQ in the BSAI. The purpose of this action is to address whale depredation on discarded halibut and to allow for more efficient harvest of halibut in areas with whale depredation. Research into developing technological solutions to deter whales and changes in fishing strategies have not resolved this problem. The problem may be addressed by revisions to current regulations that authorize pot gear as legal gear to retain halibut in the BSAI. Allowing retention of halibut caught in pot gear in the BSAI could address the negative impacts of whale depredation on QS holders. This action seeks to reduce the problems associated with whale depredation, including unobserved halibut mortality, while minimizing gear conflicts. In the event that there is conservation concern for a shellfish or groundfish species, NMFS would have the authority to close the directed longline and pot halibut fisheries in both the BSAI and the Gulf of Alaska.

The Council recommends the following revised alternatives, elements, and options to allow halibut retention in pot gear in the BSAI.

Alternative 1: No action (status quo).

**Alternative 2: Allow retention of legal-sized halibut in single or longline pot gear used to fish for halibut or sablefish IFQ/CDQ in the BSAI provided the IFQ/CDQ holder holds sufficient halibut IFQ/CDQ for that IFQ regulatory area. The Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone will be closed to all fishing with pot gear.**

**Element 1: Gear retrieval**

Option 1: No gear tending requirements (status quo)

Option 2: A vessel cannot leave gear on the grounds untended for more than (sub-options 5-10 days)

**Element 2: Limit of a 9-inch maximum width of tunnel opening does not apply when vessel has unfished halibut IFQ/CDQ onboard.**

**Element 3: All vessels using pot gear to fish IFQ/CDQ are required to use logbooks and VMS.**

Element 4: Require escape mechanisms in the mesh panels of pots.

Option 1: No escape mechanism requirement for crab (status quo)

Option 2: Require escape mechanism for crab

**Element 5: Establish regulations that would allow NMFS to close IFQ fishing for halibut if an OFL is approached for a groundfish or shellfish species consistent with regulations in place for groundfish.**

The Council requests that NMFS include BSAI IFQ pot gear effort in its annual inseason management report to the Council. The Council intends to review the effects of allowing retention of halibut in pot gear three years after implementation.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection on June 8, 2018, at 4:50 p.m.

## **C6 BSAI PACIFIC COD TRAWL CV ANALYSIS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken and Darrell Brannan (NPFMC contractor). The following action was taken:

**Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Cross:**

The Council adopts the following revisions to the Purpose and Need Statement and alternatives. Additions are shown in **bold and underline**.

*During development of Amendment 80 to the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Fishery Management Plan, and associated rule making, the Council was silent on the ability of catcher processors defined in Amendment 80 to act as motherships in limited access fisheries. Recent increases of Amendment 80 catcher processors acting as motherships has resulted in an increase in the amount of Pacific cod delivered to Amendment 80 catcher processors, an increase in the number of catcher vessels delivering Pacific cod to motherships, and a decrease in the amount of Pacific cod delivered to shoreside processing facilities. The Council is concerned about the impacts of the recent increases and potential for future growth in offshore deliveries of Pacific cod to Amendment 80 vessels or other vessels operating as motherships,*

and the potential impacts those increases could have on shoreside processors, communities, and participating catcher vessels. The Council intends to address the activity of vessels acting as motherships.

In addition, there are **both AFA and non-AFA** ~~108~~ licenses endorsed to fish in the BSAI trawl cod fishery including ~~76~~ exempt and non-exempt AFA vessels. Information shows a large number of AFA endorsed vessels are not participating, but whose catch history contributes to the AFA Pacific cod sideboard in the Bering Sea trawl cod fishery. ~~These AFA endorsed vessels that are not participating also benefit from secure allocation of pollock.~~ Despite a high level of latency, the pace of the fishery has increased shortening the season, resulting in decreased ability to maximize the value of the fishery and negatively impacting fishery participants. Additional entrants could exacerbate these issues and threaten the viability of the fishery. The Council is considering **options to improve** the prosecution of the fishery, with the intent of **promoting safety and** increasing the value of the fishery. ~~by considering limiting entry of vessels that have not participated, or have not participated recently.~~

Alternative 1. No action

Alternative 2. A catcher-processor may take **directed fishery** deliveries of Pacific cod from catcher vessels participating in the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands (BSAI) non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl fishery if the catcher processor acted as a mothership and received **targeted** Pacific cod deliveries as follows:

Option 1: Amendment 80 catcher processors acting as motherships during 2015-2017

Sub-option 1.1: in any year

Sub-option 1.2: in any two years

Sub-option 1.3: in any three years

Option 2: Non Amendment 80 vessels acting as motherships during 2015-2017

Alternative 3. The total amount of **Bering Sea subarea** ~~BSAI~~ non-CDQ Pacific cod catcher vessel trawl sector **A season (Option: A and B season)** allocation that can be delivered to ~~Amendment 80 vessels~~ **catcher-processors limited by this action** acting as a mothership is equal to the percentage of trawl catcher vessel sector's **Bering Sea subarea** ~~BSAI~~ Pacific cod delivered to catcher processors acting as motherships relative to the total ~~BSAI~~ **Bering Sea subarea** catcher vessels trawl catch between:

Option 1: 2015-2017

Option 2: 2016-2017

Option 3: 2008-2017

**Option 4: 2008-2014**

**Only the catch of vessels delivering to qualified catcher-processors during the selected Alternative 3 qualifying period would be used as the numerator to determine the catcher-processor's mothership sideboard percentage.**

**Sub-option 1: A catcher processor that received deliveries from the BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel sector allocation in 7 or more years during 2008-2017 is not subject to the limitations on receiving deliveries under Alternative 3. Any history of vessels that qualify for this suboption will not count toward any limitation created under Alternative 3.**

Alternative 4: Prohibit use of LLP licenses in the BSAI trawl **Pacific** cod fishery that are not attributed a ~~directed~~ **targeted (using fish ticket information)** BSAI trawl cod landing between:

Option 1: 2010-2017

Option 2: 2012-2017

Option 3: 2010-2015

Option 4: 2012-2015



**The eight severable Aleutian Islands trawl licenses awarded under Amendment 92 are exempt from prohibitions selected in Alternative 4.**

**Alternative 5: Establish AFA and non-AFA sector allocations for the BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel A season.**

- **The AFA sector will include AFA-exempt licenses.**
- **Allocations will be made after considering historical distribution of catch between AFA and non-AFA vessels and other possible considerations**
- **AFA and non-AFA catcher vessel sector allocations are applicable in the Bering Sea-subarea when the Bering Sea Sector Limitation is implemented, and BSAI-wide when the Bering Sea Sector Limitation is not implemented. Halibut and crab PSC is allocated pro rata to Pacific cod between AFA and non-AFA catcher vessels annually.**
- **Include a discussion on how the non-AFA cod fishery may also be able to have a cooperative fishing structure and what changes or tools may be necessary.**
- **Include considerations of how an AFA non-AFA split will address concerns identified in the second paragraph of the purpose and need statement.**

**Alternative 6: All Amendment 80 vessels not designated on:**

**(1) An Amendment 80 QS permit and an Amendment 80 LLP license; or**

**(2) An Amendment 80 LLP/QS license will be prohibited from receiving Pacific cod harvested in the Pacific cod directed fishery in the BSAI and GOA.**

The Council establishes a control date of December 31, 2017 that may be used as a reference date for a future management action to limit catcher processor vessels from acting as motherships in the BSAI trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 9, 2018, at 3:06 p.m.

## **C7 GOA POLLOCK, COD SEASONS/ALLOCATIONS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Peterson:**

The Council adopts the following purpose and need statement and suite of alternatives:

Purpose and Need Statement:

Evaluation of the pollock and Pacific cod trawl fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska indicates the seasonal distribution of pollock and cod may create inefficiencies for participants and there may be opportunities to improve management of the fisheries. Modifying the seasons or seasonal allocations of pollock and cod could increase fishery yield, particularly for roe quality and quantity of pollock, management flexibility and potentially decrease prohibited species catch. The Council intends to improve prosecution of these fisheries while not re-distributing allocations of pollock or cod between management areas or participants. The Council understand that this action may have implications for Steller sea lion management measures and would be reviewed consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Alternative 1. Status quo

Alternative 2. Combine the A and B season into a single season, and combine the C and D season

into a single season and allocate pollock among a combined A/B and C/D seasons 50% to the A/B season and 50% to the C/D season. This change is applicable to areas 610, 620, and 630.

Option: Increase the amount of unharvested pollock that may be reallocated from one season to the following season, or among areas, from 20% to:

Sub-option 1: 25%

Sub-option 2: 30%

Alternative 3. Modify the Western and Central Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod allocation for trawl catcher vessels among the existing A and B seasons as follows:

Option 1: A Season: 65%; B Season: 35%

Option 2: A Season: 70%; B Season: 30%

Option 3: A Season: 75%; B Season: 25%

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection on June 9, 2018, at 4:52 p.m.

## **C8 GOA TANNER CRAB OBSERVER/EFFORT DATA**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and NMFS staff, Cathy Tide. The following action was taken:

**Ms. Peterson made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Tweit:**

The Council recommends no further action at this time.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 10, 2018, at 11:31 a.m.

## **D6 RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR 2018**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Tweit made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council adopts the SSC's recommendations on research priorities, and directs staff to communicate the priorities to the Secretary of Commerce, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, in accordance with MSA mandates. The Council further directs staff to communicate the priorities with funding agencies and universities typically notified of research priority updates.

In anticipation of the allocation review of the Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, scheduled for 2021, the Council recommends two additional research priorities, categorized as Urgent:

- Develop comparable measures of net value, total value, and economic impacts for the Area 2C and 3A charter and commercial halibut fisheries.
- Conduct ethnographic research and collect information on the indirect effects of the Area 2C and 3A charter and commercial halibut fishing.

These priorities are described in D6 Research Priorities Supplement: Catch Sharing Plan Review.

The Council recognizes the continued importance of research priorities identified as *Critical Ongoing Monitoring*, and directs staff to post on the NPFMC website and include in the communication to the Secretary of Commerce the preamble developed by the SSC:

*Research priorities designated as Critical Ongoing Monitoring are of the highest priority level for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. These priorities create and maintain indispensable data that substantially contribute to our understanding and management of fish populations, fisheries, and the communities dependent upon those fisheries. Discontinuation or diminishment of the research that provides these datasets would leave a significant gap in the science needed to support sustainable and successful fisheries management in the North Pacific. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council and its Science and Statistical Committee continues to provide the utmost support for these priorities.*

The Council directs the Research Priorities Workgroup to explore ways to improve the Council and SSC's research priority review process. Improvements could include alternative review frequency, scheduled review of subsets of the priorities, less frequent review of "strategic" priorities. The workgroup should consider and recommend improvements in coordinating priorities with the NPRB.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 10, 2018, at 2:16 p.m.

## **D1 SOCIAL SCIENCE PLANNING TEAM**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sarah Marrinan. The following action was taken:

**Ms. Peterson made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

I move that the Council expands SSPT membership by a seat or two to include individuals with expertise in local and traditional knowledge and initiate a call for nominations with the intent of appointment during the October Council meeting.

In addition, the Council requests the SSPT consider comments provided by the SSC at their next teleconference or meeting.

The Council requests that the SSPT consider drafting terms of reference and review whether other fishery management council have bodies similar to a Social Science Plan team to incorporate social and economic information into decision making.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 10, 2018, at 3:58 p.m.

## **D2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DRAFT COMMITTEE SCOPE & IDEAS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Kinneen made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Peterson:**

The Council establishes an ad hoc Community Engagement Committee, and solicits nominations for this committee. Committee membership should primarily be comprised of rural and tribal representatives and people with necessary expertise to accomplish the committee's goals. This committee will assist the Council in further developing successful engagement and outreach tools and processes to facilitate improved communication between rural communities and tribes and the Council, but not develop specific policy recommendations. This committee should provide recommendations to augment, not replace, the Council's existing community outreach efforts.

The Council adopts the following charter for the Committee:

*The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee is established to identify and recommend strategies for the Council and Council staff to enact processes that provide effective community engagement with rural and Alaska Native communities. Effective community engagement may involve two-way communication between the Council and communities at additional stages of the Council process or a project and allow for community concerns, information, perspectives and priorities to be shared clearly with the Council, whether part of an active Council action or not.*

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with one objection (Mr. Cross) on June 10, 2018, at 5:19 p.m.

## **D3 KUSKOKWIM RIVER MODEL REVIEW FOR 3 RIVER INDEX**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram and ADF&G, Dr. Kathrine Howard and Dr. Zach Liller. The following action was taken:

**Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council approves use of the revised Kuskokwim River model for the purpose of the 3-river index under BSAI Am 110, per the SSC recommendations.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 11, 2018, at 11:00 a.m.

## **E1 STAFF TASKING**

Executive Director, David Witherell presented a list of items for discussion at staff tasking from the B reports and other items during the meeting and other staff tasking materials. In addition to discussing the relative priority of previously tasked projects, the Council initiated new actions and letters and clarified direction and tasking for its various committees. The following actions were taken:

### **Ecosystem Workshop**

**Ms. Peterson made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Tweit:**

The Council recognizes the success of the Ecosystem Workshop held in February 2018 in Seattle. The Council is interested in continuing the inclusive and informative dialogue with stakeholders and experts in multiple aspects of the Council's fishery management arena. The Council, therefore, directs staff to prepare a report on the potential for periodic (biennial, opportunistic) forums to address ecosystem science or other topics that would benefit from a public dialogue. Potential topics for an ecosystem science forum could include:

- Ecosystem indicators (both biological and socioeconomic) and their use as early warning signs for environmental change
- Shifting stock distributions (and increased variability in distributions), and how ongoing changes occurring in the ecosystem may affect harvesters and communities.

### Rationale/Talking Points

- The ecosystem workshop was a tremendous success – the Ecosystem Committee, SSC and AP all recommended that we continue this type of dialogue.

- Including a wide range of stakeholders, and having opportunity for conversation, is a key part to success of this model.
- Tribal and community engagement, as well as incorporation of traditional knowledge remains key. Tribal and community engagement specifically was addressed under agenda item D-2. Incorporating traditional knowledge into Council processes continues to be a priority, and will be advanced through the community engagement committee and the Bering Sea FEP. For instance, some of the ecosystem indicators could be drawn from TLK sources.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 11, 2018, at 1:41 p.m.

## IFQ Program

**Ms. Peterson made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council requests that staff develop a discussion paper in response to community access and entry opportunity challenges identified in the 20-year review of the halibut and sablefish IFQ program and related public testimony. This paper would review existing programs that facilitate access opportunities for rural communities and new entrants within limited access fisheries.

The discussion paper should include an evaluation of Norway's Recruitment Quota as a program example, though analysis need not be limited to this specific example.

The discussion paper should address the following three objectives: (1) Review overall efficacy of program in providing fisheries access, as well as general successes and failures, (2) Analyze potential functionality, strengths and weaknesses of such a program within the North Pacific management framework, and (3) Review ways in which the program does or could potentially interface and comply with standards under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act.

**Mr. Tweit made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

(New language is shown in **bold**; deletions are shown in ~~strikethrough~~)

The discussion paper should address the following three objectives: (1) Review overall efficacy of program in providing fisheries access, as well as general successes and failures, (2) ~~Analyze~~ **Provide an overview of** potential functionality, strengths and weaknesses of such a program within the North Pacific management framework, and (3) Review ways in which the program does or could potentially interface and comply with standards under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection on June 11, 2018, at 2:35 p.m.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 11, 2018, at 2:39 p.m.

**Mr. Laukitis made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Peterson:**

The Council requests that staff develop a discussion paper for review by the IFQ Committee in response to community access and entry opportunity challenges identified in the 20-year review of the Halibut and Sablefish IFQ program and related public testimony.

\*This paper would discuss both regulatory and non-regulatory changes that would promote transfers of QS between persons using hired masters to crew members and hired skippers.

\*The paper should discuss the potential use of ROFO (Right of First Offer) concepts in the halibut/sablefish IFQ program.

\*The paper should discuss potential improvements to the Federal Financing loan program that may promote community access and entry level opportunities.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on June 11, 2018, at 2:45 p.m.

## Appointments

### SSC

Dr. Ron Felthoven was appointed on an interim basis for the remainder of the year to replace Dr. Matt Reimer.

### Plan Teams

- Lisa Hillier, WDFW, for BS and GOA Groundfish Plan Team
- Dr. Steven Barbeaux, AFSC, for BSAI Groundfish Plan Team
- Dr. Kalei Shotwell, AFSC for BSAI Groundfish Plan Team
- Jane Sullivan, ADF&G for BSAI Groundfish Plan Team
- Dr. Peter Hulson, AFSC for GOA Groundfish Plan Team
- Dr. Cody Szuwalski, AFSC for BSAI Crab Plan Team

### Salmon FMP Committee

The Council appointed members of the newly formed Salmon FMP Committee: Erik Huebsch, Dan Anderson, Dino Sutherland, Hanna Heimbuch, and Mike Casseri.

**THE COUNCIL ADJOURNED ON MONDAY June 11, 2018 AT 3:06 P.M.**

**TIME LOG**  
**North Pacific Fishery Management Council**  
**Meeting held in Kodiak, Alaska**  
**Best Western Convention Center**  
**June 6 – 11, 2018**

**WEDNESDAY June 6, 2018**

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06/06/2018 08:05:48 AM Call to Order  
06/06/2018 08:07:04 AM Approval of Agenda

**B1 REPORTS**

06/06/2018 08:10:19 AM **B1 Executive Director's Report** – David Witherell  
06/06/2018 09:00:27 AM Turning of the Tide Presentation – Dr. Courtney Carothers & Dr. Rachel Donkersloot  
06/06/2018 09:15:34 AM Ecosystem Workshop Report – Katie Latanich  
06/06/2018 09:41:13 AM **B2 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill  
06/06/2018 09:42:09 AM Update on NMFS Surveys - Jeremy Rusin, AFSC  
06/06/2018 10:05:46 AM Break  
06/06/2018 10:38:12 AM Report on Deck Sorting – NMFS's staff, Anne Marie Eich and Scott Miller  
06/06/2018 11:13:08 AM **B2 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill  
06/06/2018 11:12:25 AM NMFS In-Season Management Report – Josh Keaton  
06/06/2018 12:38:39 PM EFH Report – Gretchen Harrington  
06/06/2018 12:00:40 PM Lunch Break  
06/06/2018 01:06:54 PM Update on Aquaculture - Sam Rauch  
06/06/2018 01:25:39 PM **B3 NOAA GC Report** – John Lepore  
06/06/2018 01:30:32 PM **B4 NOAA Enforcement Report** – Will Ellis  
06/06/2018 01:48:12 PM **B5 ADF&G Report** – Trent Hartill  
06/06/2018 02:04:07 PM **B6 USCG Report** – LT Yvonne Yang  
06/06/2018 02:11:28 PM **B8 Protected Species Report** – Steve MacLean  
06/06/2018 02:20:26 PM SSC Report – Gordon Kruse  
06/06/2018 02:36:24 PM AP Report – Matt Upton  
06/06/2018 02:37:53 PM Ecosystem Report on Ecosystem Workshop – Steve MacLean  
06/06/2018 02:43:56 PM Enforcement Committee Report on Deck Sorting – Steve Marx  
06/06/2018 02:46:45 PM **B Public Testimony**  
06/06/2018 02:47:11 PM Danielle Ringer  
06/06/2018 02:58:40 PM Darius Kasprzak  
06/06/2018 03:04:02 PM Break  
06/06/2018 03:22:55 PM Denise May  
06/06/2018 03:30:59 PM Tom Panamaroff  
06/06/2018 03:37:33 PM Natasha Hayden  
06/06/2018 03:47:28 PM Al Cratty

06/06/2018 03:52:13 PM	Mark Fina
06/06/2018 03:53:56 PM	John Gauvin
06/06/2018 03:59:46 PM	Craig Rose
06/06/2018 04:04:27 PM	Dave Fraser
06/06/2018 04:12:15 PM	Roberta Townsend Vennel
06/06/2018 04:19:16 PM	Brent Paine
06/06/2018 04:31:58 PM	Rose Fosdick
06/06/2018 04:44:20 PM	Freddie Christiansa
06/06/2018 04:54:20 PM	Duncan Fields
06/06/2018 05:00:20 PM	Recess

\*No presentations for B7 but the report can be found on the [Agenda](#)

## **THURSDAY June 7, 2018**

### **C1 2017 OBSERVER ANNUAL REPORT AND OAC REPORT**

06/07/2018 08:09:47 AM	Call to Order
06/07/2018 08:17:23 AM	<b>C1 Presentations</b>
06/07/2018 08:18:34 AM	Observer Program Annual Review 2017 – Jennifer Ferdinand
06/07/2018 08:34:41 AM	Craig Faunce and Phil Ganz
06/07/2018 09:46:49 AM	Enforcement Report on Observer Coverage - Jackie Smith
06/07/2018 10:05:45 AM	Break
06/07/2018 10:27:49 AM	EM Cost Allocation Procedural Directive - Jennifer Mondragon and Jennifer Ferdinand
06/07/2018 11:05:46 AM	OAC Report - Elizabeth Figus
06/07/2018 11:17:43 AM	SSC Report – Gordon Kruse
06/07/2018 11:39:16 AM	AP Report – Angel Drobica
06/07/2018 11:41:03 AM	<b>C1 Public Testimony</b>
06/07/2018 11:41:52 AM	Joe Macinko
06/07/2018 11:46:54 AM	Bob Alverson
06/07/2018 12:02:25 PM	Lunch Break
06/07/2018 01:18:29 PM	Molly Zaleski and Jon Warrenchuk
06/07/2018 01:37:22 PM	Alexus Kwachka
06/07/2018 01:42:08 PM	Julie Bonney
06/07/2018 01:49:46 PM	Nicole Kimball
06/07/2018 01:56:19 PM	<b>C1 Mr. Merrill Motion</b>

### **C2 ELECTRONIC MONITORING WORKGROUP REPORT**

06/07/2018 02:15:01 PM	<b>C2 EMWG Report</b> - NPFMC staff Dr. Elizabeth Figus
06/07/2018 02:30:05 PM	AP Report – Angel Drobica
06/07/2018 02:30:16 PM	<b>C2 Public Comment</b>
06/07/2018 02:30:57 PM	Tom Evich
06/07/2018 02:35:18 PM	Julie Bonney



06/07/2018 02:42:39 PM **C2 Mr. Tweit Motion**  
06/07/2018 03:00:41 PM Break

### **D5 BSAI HALIBUT 026 PERFORMANCE STANDARD**

06/07/2018 03:10:54 PM **D5 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram  
06/07/2018 03:57:22 PM SSC Report – Gordon Kruse  
06/07/2018 04:16:53 PM AP Report – Angel Drobnica  
06/07/2018 04:25:18 PM **D5 Public Testimony**  
06/07/2018 04:25:32 PM Peggy Parker  
06/07/2018 04:35:23 PM Gerry Merrigan  
06/07/2018 04:45:19 PM John Gauvin  
06/07/2018 05:01:55 PM Heather McCarty  
06/07/2018 05:10:39 PM Simeon Swetsof  
06/07/2018 05:16:55 PM **D5 Mr. Hartill Motion**  
06/07/2018 05:30:37 PM Recess

### **FRIDAY June 8, 2018**

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06/08/2018 08:07:07 AM Call to Order

### **C3 ABC/OFL SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALEUTIAN ISLANDS GKC AND CPT REPORT**

06/08/2018 08:09:25 AM **C3 Presentation** –NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram and ADF&G,  
Ben Daly  
06/08/2018 08:49:32 AM SSC Presentation – Gordon Kruse  
06/08/2018 08:57:43 AM AP Report – Matt Upton  
06/08/2018 08:58:20 AM **C3 Public Testimony**  
06/08/2018 08:58:30 AM Steve Minor  
06/08/2018 09:00:30 AM **C3 Mr. Hartill Motion**

### **C4 FIXED GEAR CV ROCKFISH RETENTION**

06/08/2018 09:04:27 AM **C4 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken and NMFS  
staff, Josh Keaton  
6/8/2018 10:54:28 AM Break  
6/8/2018 11:15:02 AM SSC Report – Gordon Kruse  
6/8/2018 11:24:38 AM AP Report – Matt Upton  
6/8/2018 11:28:41 AM **C4 Mr. Balsiger Motion**  
6/8/2018 11:35:15 AM Break for lunch  
6/8/2018 1:09:55 PM SSC Full Report – Gordon Kruse

*\*No public testimony was taken on this agenda item.*

## **C5 HALIBUT RETENTION IN BSAI POTS**

06/08/2018 02:34:55 PM **C5 Presentation** – Sarah Marrinan, Sara Cleaver, Stephanie Warpinski  
06/08/2018 04:03:56 PM Break  
06/08/2018 04:04:00 PM Enforcement Committee Report – Jon McCracken  
06/08/2018 04:11:19 PM AP Report – Angel Drobnica  
06/08/2018 04:20:11 PM **C5 Public Testimony**  
06/08/2018 04:20:26 PM Mike Sharrah  
06/08/2018 04:26:11 PM Matt Robinson  
06/08/2018 04:38:33 PM Heather McCarty and Simeon Swetzof  
06/08/2018 04:51:18 PM **C5 Mr. Laukitis Motion**

## **SATURDAY June 9, 2018**

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## **C6 BSAI PACIFIC COD TRAWL CV ANALYSIS**

06/09/2018 08:37:40 AM **C6 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken and Darrell Brannan  
06/09/2018 10:00:06 AM Break  
06/09/2018 10:19:22 AM AP Motion – Angel Drobnica  
06/09/2018 10:44:18 AM **C6 Public Testimony**  
06/09/2018 10:44:43 AM Omar Allinson  
06/09/2018 10:50:37 AM Steve Beard  
06/09/2018 10:59:04 AM Mark Cooper  
06/09/2018 11:04:37 AM Brent Paine  
06/09/2018 11:21:13 AM Nicole Kimball  
06/09/2018 11:34:07 AM Caitlin Yeager  
06/09/2018 11:39:07 AM Tom Evich  
06/09/2018 11:43:19 AM Jason Chandler  
06/09/2018 11:46:01 AM Justin Johnson  
06/09/2018 11:48:43 AM Hannah Himbush  
06/09/2018 11:50:46 PM Frank Kelty, Jim Fitch, Dave Gregory  
06/09/2018 12:00:08 PM Lunch Break  
06/09/2018 01:05:05 PM Steve Minor  
06/09/2018 01:06:15 PM Matt Upton  
06/09/2018 01:17:55 PM Bert Ashley  
06/09/2018 01:20:39 PM John Gruver  
06/09/2018 01:26:07 PM Todd Loomis  
06/09/2018 01:29:25 PM Dave Fraser  
06/09/2018 01:33:35 PM Paddy O'Donnell  
06/09/2018 01:36:57 PM Heather Mann  
06/09/2018 01:42:17 PM Chris Woodley  
06/09/2018 01:51:30 PM Mike Hyde

06/09/2018 01:55:05 PM Break  
06/09/2018 02:26:18 PM **C6 Mr. Cotten Motion**

### **C7 GOA POLLOCK, COD SEASONS/ALLOCATIONS**

06/09/2018 03:18:21 PM **C8 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham  
06/09/2018 04:18:04 PM AP Report – Matt Upton  
06/09/2018 04:23:19 PM **C7 Public Testimony**  
06/09/2018 04:23:34 PM Julie Bonney  
06/09/2018 04:31:11 PM Rebecca Skinner  
06/09/2018 04:33:52 PM Paul Grundholt  
06/09/2018 04:35:16 PM Break  
06/09/2018 04:48:48 PM **C7 Mr. Cotten Motion**  
06/09/2018 05:00:48 PM Recess

### **SUNDAY June 10, 2018**

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06/10/2018 08:45:09 AM Call to Order

### **C8 GOA TANNER CRAB OBSERVER/EFFORT DATA**

06/10/2018 08:45:15 AM **C8 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and Cathy Tide  
06/10/2018 09:44:57 AM AP Report – Matt Upton  
06/10/2018 09:46:06 AM **C8 Public Testimony**  
06/10/2018 09:46:46 AM Darius Kasprzak  
06/10/2018 10:00:24 AM Alexis Kwachka  
06/10/2018 10:17:16 AM Peter Lowrrich  
06/10/2018 10:27:43 AM Julie Bonney  
06/10/2018 10:40:33 AM Break  
06/10/2018 10:58:46 AM Luke Lester  
06/10/2018 11:12:47 AM Danielle Riwhel  
06/10/2018 11:15:47 AM Natasha Hayden  
06/10/2018 11:18:48 AM Rebecca Skinner and Patrick O'Donnell  
06/10/2018 11:27:15 AM **C8 Ms. Peterson Motion**

### **D6 RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR 2018**

06/10/2018 11:32:48 AM **D6 Presentation** – Jim Armstrong  
06/10/2018 12:00:21 PM Lunch Break  
06/10/2018 01:16:38 PM D6 Presentation Continued  
06/10/2018 01:51:47 PM AP Report – Matt Upton  
06/10/2018 01:52:10 PM **D2 AP Report** – Matt Upton  
06/10/2018 01:54:36 PM **D6 Public Testimony**  
06/10/2018 01:54:46 PM Beth Stewart  
06/10/2018 02:04:40 PM **D6 Mr. Tweit Motion**

## **D1 SOCIAL SCIENCE PLANNING TEAM**

06/10/2018 02:17:14 PM **D1 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sarah Marrinan  
06/10/2018 03:11:58 PM **D1 Public Comment**  
06/10/2018 03:12:06 PM Natasha Hayden  
06/10/2018 03:30:11 PM Break  
06/10/2018 03:54:01 PM **D1 Ms. Peterson Motion**

## **D2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DRAFT COMMITTEE SCOPE FOR RFP**

06/10/2018 04:19:49 PM **D2 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean  
06/10/2018 04:27:12 PM **D2 Public Comment**  
06/10/2018 04:27:29 PM Becca Robbins Gisclair  
06/10/2018 04:40:57 PM Natasha Hayden  
06/10/2018 04:51:05 PM Rebecca Skinner  
06/10/2018 04:57:54 PM **D2 Mr. Kinneen Motion**  
06/10/2018 05:20:23 PM Recess

## **MONDAY June 11, 2018**

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06/11/2018 08:08:15 AM Call to Order

## **D3 KUSKOKWIM RIVER MODEL REVIEW FOR 3 RIVER INDEX**

06/11/2018 08:15:25 AM **D3 Presentation** ADF&G staff, Dr. Howard and Dr. Zach Liller  
06/11/2018 09:55:32 AM Break  
06/11/2018 10:15:48 AM **D3 Public Comment**  
06/11/2018 10:17:23 AM Steve Martell  
06/11/2018 10:34:14 AM Stephanie Madsen  
06/11/2018 10:57:17 AM **D3 Mr. Cotten Motion**

## **E1 STAFF TASKING**

06/11/2018 11:03:04 AM IFQ Outreach Meeting Report – NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham  
06/11/2018 11:29:05 AM Ecosystem Committee Report – NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean  
06/11/2018 11:39:38 AM ABM Expectation Update – NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram  
06/11/2018 11:58:16 AM Update on AM116 TLAS Rule – NMFS staff, Glenn Merrill  
06/11/2018 12:00:39 PM Lunch Break  
06/11/2018 01:12:23 PM **E1 Public Testimony**  
06/11/2018 01:12:47 PM Paul Grundholdt  
06/11/2018 01:13:57 PM Danielle Ringer  
06/11/2018 01:16:39 PM Tom Panamaroff  
06/11/2018 01:19:02 PM Stephanie Madsen  
06/11/2018 01:19:55 PM Hannah Heimbuch  
06/11/2018 01:23:00 PM Freddi Christiansen  
06/11/2018 01:23:57 PM Nicole Kimball

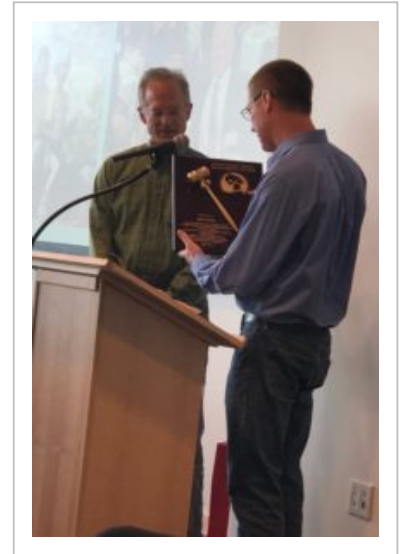
06/11/2018 01:27:23 PM Julie Bonney  
06/11/2018 01:28:40 PM Beth Stewart  
06/11/2018 01:31:56 PM Jeff Stephen  
06/11/2018 01:36:20 PM Terry Haines  
06/11/2018 01:40:53 PM **E1 Ms. Peterson Motion** – Ecosystem Workshop  
06/11/2018 02:00:25 PM **E1 Ms. Peterson Motion** – IFQ Program  
06/11/2018 02:43:07 PM **E1 Mr. Laukitis Motion** – IFQ Program  
06/11/2018 03:06:02 PM Dan Hull Farewell  
06/11/2018 03:06:44 PM Meeting Adjourned

# June 2018 Newsletter

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## Chairman Hull Leaves Council

After serving 3 full terms – 9 years – Dan Hull chaired his last Council meeting in Kodiak, Alaska. Mr. Hull has served as Council chairman for the past 4 years and during his tenure on the Council has chaired the Halibut and Sablefish IFQ Committee, the Observer Advisory Committee, the EM Work Group, and the Executive, Finance, and Legislative Committees. He has also served as an alternative commissioner to the IPHC and currently serves as alternate commissioner to the North Pacific Fish Commission. The public was given a chance to roast and toast Mr. Hull at a reception in his honor at the Afognak building during the meeting. Many thanks to the organizations that donated seafood! Mr. Hull thanked current and past council members, staff, and others in the process, and noted that while he may taking a much needed break following this meeting, he still intends to stay involved with Alaska fisheries issues.



**David Witherell presents Dan Hull with a plaque commemorating his service to fisheries.**

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## Appointments

### SSC

**Dr. Ron Felthoven** (AFSC) was appointed on an interim basis for the remainder of the year to replace Dr. Matt Reimer, who will be on sabbatical. Dr. Felthoven's appointment, conditional on confirmation by the Council in October, will continue through December, at which time the position will revert to the regular nomination process.

### Plan Teams

The Council appointed **Ms. Lisa Hillier** (WDFW) to serve on both the Bering Sea and Gulf Groundfish Plan Teams, with her time participating on those two bodies based on the issues under consideration by each team. Ms. Hillier is a scientist in the WDFW Marine Fish Science Unit with a background in population assessment for both groundfish and shellfish management, and ecosystem investigations. Her experience includes work with trawl and ROV surveys.

Also appointed to the BSAI Plan Team is **Dr. Steven Barbeaux, Dr. Kalei Shotwell, and Ms. Jane Sullivan**. Dr. Barbeaux (AFSC) has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of flatfish, pollock, and Pacific cod, population dynamics. In addition, he has authored stock assessments for Greenland turbot, Aleutian Island pollock, and GOA Pacific and publications on fisheries dependent sampling, spatial modeling and acoustics. Dr. Kalei Shotwell, (AFSC), will replace Dr. Dana Hanselman who is now on the SSC. Dr. Shotwell has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of stock assessment and has authored and co-authored numerous rockfish SAFE chapters for over ten years and has recently worked on integrating ecosystem and socio-economic considerations with stock assessment through the development of Ecosystem and Socio-economic Profiles (ESP) is a major step to bring ecosystem-based science to the NPFMC. Ms. Sullivan, (ADF&G), has been participating in a temporary role on the Plan Team since Dave Barnard's retirement. Jane is currently a biometrician responsible for various groundfish stock assessments and is assisting in developing an age-structured Pacific herring model.

The Council appointed **Dr. Peter Hulson** (AFSC) serve on the NPFMC Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team to replace Dr. Jon Heifetz who is retiring. Dr. Hulson has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of rockfish population dynamics, and has authored rockfish SAFE chapters, and other publications on spatial modeling, tagging data, and age composition sampling. Pete also has extensive at-sea fieldwork experience having participated in AFSC longline and acoustic surveys as well as working directly with the rockfish trawl industry.

**Dr. Cody Szuwalski** (AFSC) is appointed to serve on the NPFMC Bering Sea Crab Plan Team. Dr. Szuwalski has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of crab life history, spatial modeling, snow crab stock assessment, fish and shellfish population dynamics. He recently authored the Bering Sea snow crab SAFE chapter, and has published papers on climate ready fisheries management, trophic cascades, spatial models and next generation stock assessment techniques.

## Committees

The Council appointed members of the newly formed Salmon FMP Committee: **Erik Huebsch, Dan Anderson, Dino Sutherland, Hanna Heimbuch, and Mike Casseri**. The Council Chair will appoint a Council member to Chair the committee before their first scheduled meeting. The Chairman provided a statement explaining **his choice of committee composition**. The rationale for his initial appointments was spoken into the record and is provided below and on the Council website.

*In October last year the Council decided to form a Salmon FMP Committee to assist in the development of measures necessary to satisfy Section 303(a) of the MSA and related MSA provisions. At this time, the focus of the analytical and technical work to revise the Salmon FMP is on Cook Inlet only. The detailed structure of the analysis has not been developed: The Alternatives are very generally identified as 1. No Action; 2. Cooperative management with the State; and 3. Federal management.*

*My selection of this initial group of Salmon FMP Committee members focuses on the primary affected stakeholders, the Cook Inlet drift gillnet permit holders, who fish in the EEZ waters of Cook Inlet. The tasking that the NPFMC has given to the Salmon FMP Committee is also primarily focused on measures related to management of the drift gillnet salmon fisheries in the EEZ. I recognize that these management measures may affect other stakeholder groups and that there is strong interest from a wide range of those groups to join the Salmon FMP Committee. I*

*expect that at a future date the Council could determine, based on the progress of FMP development, that additional tasks for the Committee warrant selection of representatives from other stakeholder groups. The analysis, scheduled for December, could provide the impetus for those selections. Until that time, all interested stakeholder groups are welcome and encouraged to attend the Committee meetings, these meetings are open to the public. Members of the public can participate and engage with the Committee consistent with our established processes for Council committees. One of the main goals at the first Committee meeting, which would occur sometime prior to the December Council meeting will be to orient the Committee members to the federal fisheries management process, especially those who are new to it.*

*Finally, I expect to discuss appointment of a Committee Chair with Council members over the next few months and may be able to make that appointment before my term ends in early August.*

*This selection of Committee members is consistent with standard Council practice and Council SOPPs, which is to solicit names from the public for appointment by the Council Chairman. Appointments to committees and other subsidiary bodies are always announced at the end of Council meetings. Selection of the initial Committee members at the June Council meeting gives them time to prepare for review of the initial FMP analysis.*

Staff contact is Jim Armstrong.

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## Call for Nominations

### Trawl EM Committee (formerly Workgroup) – processing representative

In April 2018, the Council reconstituted the [EM Workgroup](#), which provides a forum for collaboration on EM development between industry, agencies, and EM service providers, to focus on trawl EM implementation. The group met in May, but is currently lacking a representative from the processing sector, and dockside monitoring may be an important component of the development of a trawl EM program. The trawl EM Workgroup's next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 13-14, in Seattle. **If you are interested in joining the trawl EM Workgroup as a representative from the processing sector, please send a letter of interest to Elizabeth Figus at the Council office by noon on July 13, 2018** ([elizabeth.figus@noaa.gov](mailto:elizabeth.figus@noaa.gov); 907-271-2801).

### Social Science Planning Team – expertise in local and traditional knowledge

The Council is seeking nominations for additional membership for the SSPT to add expertise in Local and Traditional Knowledge and those who work directly with rural and Alaska Native coastal villages and/or tribal organizations in the fields of anthropology, human geography, and sociology. The purpose of the SSPT is to provide inter-agency support to improve the quality and application of social science data that informs



management decision-making and program evaluation, and to strategize medium- and long-term improvements in data collection and analytical methodology. As described in the SSPT [charter proposal](#), membership shall generally be limited to affiliates of public organizations and academic institutions. **A resumé or curriculum vitae and letter of intent should be submitted to Sarah Marrinan at the Council office by noon Alaska time, September 28, 2018.** The Council's intent is to review applications and make appointments at the October Council meeting. More information on the Social Science Planning Team, and its current membership, can be found [here](#).



## Community Engagement Committee

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is soliciting nominations for membership on the newly-formed Community Engagement Committee. The Committee's goals are to assist the Council in developing successful engagement and outreach tools and processes, to facilitate improved communication and understanding between rural communities and tribes and the Council. The committee will not develop specific policy recommendations. The Committee's charter is:

*The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee is established to identify and recommend strategies for the Council and Council staff to enact processes that provide effective community engagement with rural and Alaska Native Communities. Effective community engagement may involve two-way communication between the Council and communities at additional stages of the Council process or a project and allow for community concerns, information, perspectives, and priorities to be shared clearly with the Council, whether part of an active Council action or not.*

Nominations are encouraged from full-time residents of rural or tribal communities and those with specific expertise in rural and tribal communications. **To submit a nomination, please send a letter of interest and brief resume to [Steve MacLean \(steve.maclean@noaa.gov\)](mailto:steve.maclean@noaa.gov) at the Council office. Nominations will be accepted until September 28, 2018 at noon (12:00 PM).** Committee members will be appointed by the Council chair at the October Council meeting in Anchorage, AK, with the first meeting tentatively sometime in the fall.

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## Deck Sorting Analysis Updates

In Kodiak, the Council received an update from NMFS staff concerning an ongoing deck sorting analysis. NMFS is developing a proposed regulatory amendment to implement voluntary halibut deck sorting on trawl catcher processors when operating in non-pollock groundfish fisheries off Alaska. The proposed amendment is derived from the exempted fishing permits (EFPs) issued by NMFS to Alaska Seafood Cooperative (formerly

Best Use Cooperative) from 2009-2019 to test handling methods (deck sorting) for reducing halibut mortality in non-pollock groundfish fisheries.

The deck sorting analysis is being completed internally at NMFS and is in a draft Regulatory Impact Review stage. At the Kodiak meeting, NMFS consulted with the Council about the draft deck sorting analysis to provide an opportunity for Council members and the public to identify questions or other areas of concern with the work. The agency described plans to formulate annual monitoring plans with help from interested stakeholders, to allow maximum flexibility for the deck sorting program over time. The Council is not taking action on this draft analysis and may receive updates at future meetings about the analysis, including the annual monitoring plan. Staff contact is Elizabeth Figus.

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## Observer Issues: 2017 Annual Report

The Council received a presentation about the Observer Program Annual Report for 2017 and a report from the Observer Advisory Committee (the OAC, which will in future be renamed the Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee). The Annual Report provides a scientific evaluation of the deployment of observers in 2017, to assess whether the objectives of the Observer Program were met that year. The report also includes information describing the program, enforcement trends, outreach efforts, and agency recommendations for developing the 2019 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP). The Council commends the agency on the Annual Report, and the ability it provides to adjust and improve the program.

The Council supports NMFS' **recommendations for the 2019 ADP** listed in section 7.1 of the Annual Report, including keeping the same 2018 deployment strata for 2019 (i.e., trawl, hook-and-line, pot, tender trawl, tender pot, electronic monitoring (EM)). If funds are available, the Council recommends expanding the EM selection pool to a maximum of 165 vessels in 2019, and continuing the 30% trip selection rate. Additionally, the Council requests that the draft 2019 ADP include an evaluation of a new approach to determine observer coverage rates—referred to during the meetings as a 'weighted gear-specific hurdle' approach—that provides a minimum base level of coverage in each gear stratum (the gear-specific hurdle), and then optimizes any remaining coverage among the strata based on discards, catch of prohibited species, and a new element: the degree to which a regulatory area has low fishing effort. This evaluation will allow the Council and the agency to consider, in October, different approaches for how to best optimize funds in the program, while continuing to meet the standards of the existing program sampling design (e.g., collecting data for catch accounting, stock assessment, etc.).

The Council also provided specific **recommendations for next year's Annual Report**. Given the strong interest in understanding Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) in trawl fisheries, the Council continues to request that the next Annual Report distinguish pelagic and non-pelagic trawl trips when reviewing performance metrics to monitor for an observer effect. Also, the next report should include more details about EM implementation, including comparing the



cost per day of EM and observers over time. The Council encourages continued engagement of the industry in EM development and implementation.

In the Annual Report presentation on **enforcement**, the Council learned that there were fewer statements received by the Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) during 2017 than in prior years, suggesting overall improvement, perhaps creditable to an increased number of officers in the field. At the same time, it was noted that some issues, especially sexual violence, are known to go unreported or be reported late. The Council appreciates and acknowledges preliminary results from survey work on un(der)-reported issues, which suggest a disparate work environment for female and male observers. The Council encourages efforts to further understand work conditions so that solutions might be developed.

The Council acknowledges and supports the continued involvement of a subgroup of the OAC in the ongoing analysis to adjust the partial coverage observer fee, as described in the OAC report. An Initial Review Draft of the **fee analysis** is anticipated in December. Staff contact for observer issues is Elizabeth Figus.

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## Electronic Monitoring

In Kodiak, the Council received an update about fixed gear and trawl EM development from the Electronic Monitoring Workgroup (which has now been renamed the EM Committee) and endorsed preliminary monitoring objectives for trawl EM development.

In April 2018, the Council reconstituted membership on the EM Workgroup to reflect a transition from the development and recent implementation of EM for fixed gear, to a new focus on developing EM systems on trawl catcher vessels in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. The old and new memberships held a joint transition meeting in May. During the portion of the meeting devoted to fixed gear, the group developed a **list** of remaining fixed gear EM implementation topics to handover to the OAC (now renamed as the Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee), which will now regularly advise on the integrated observer and EM program.

To guide the development of an EM program for trawl catcher vessels, the Council adopted the following preliminary monitoring objectives as recommended by the trawl EM Workgroup (now EM Committee):

- improve salmon accounting;
- reduce monitoring costs; and,
- improve the quality of monitoring data.



The Council appreciates these are preliminary objectives which may be amended or added to in the future. The Council endorsed the group's initial focus on developing a program to use EM on trawl vessels for

compliance purposes, in conjunction with a full retention requirement, and directed the trawl EM Committee to develop a cooperative research plan for 2019.

The Council appreciated the rigorous schedule outlined by the trawl group to develop the cooperative research plan, and expects that progress on developing a trawl EM program may proceed more rapidly than occurred with fixed gear. This is due partly to the ability to build on the methods developed for the fixed gear approach, and also because there may be models from compliance-based trawl EM models in other regions (e.g., the west coast whiting fishery). Rapid progress is dependent on securing external funding for the earliest stages of trawl EM development, as revenue from the partial coverage observer fee can only be used to support EM once a program is implemented. The Council encourages trawl EM Workgroup members to apply for grants to support field work in 2019. Without such funding, some areas (e.g., the western GOA) may be delayed by a year in EM implementation. Staff contact is Elizabeth Figus.

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## Crab Management – AI GKC Harvest Specifications

The Council approved the SSC's OFL and ABC recommendations for the Aleutian Island Golden King Crab stock, and received recommendations from the SSC and the Crab Plan Team on model scenarios and other items taken up at their Spring 2018 Crab Plan Team (CPT) meeting.

For AI Golden King Crab, the Council adopted the OFL of 12.16 million lbs. and the ABC of 9.12 million lbs. for the 2018/19 fishing season as recommended by the Crab Plan Team, AP and SSC.

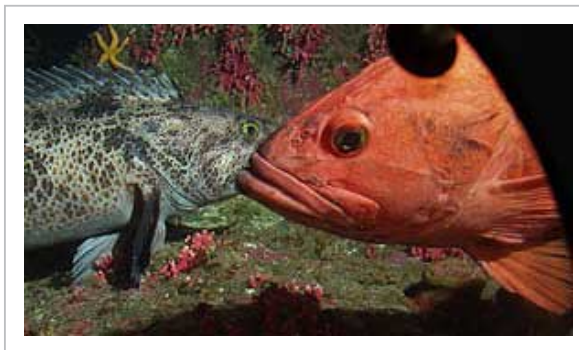
The SSC and CPT also reviewed and made recommendations on model scenarios for snow crab, Bristol Bay Red King Crab, EBS snow crab, and Tanner crab. Final specifications for five remaining BSAI crab stocks will be made in October following incorporation of summer survey data. The [SAFE chapter](#) for the Aleutian Island Golden King Crab stock as well as the [Crab Plan Team report](#) are available on the Council's website. Staff contact is Diana Stram.



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## Full Retention of Rockfish

At the June 2018 meeting, the Council completed an initial review of the draft Regulatory Impact Review (RIR) that would require full retention of all rockfish species for fixed gear catcher vessels (CVs) in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA). After reviewing the RIR, the Council released the document for public review. Requiring full retention of rockfish by fixed gear CVs would improve identification of species catch composition when CVs are subject to electronic monitoring; improve data collection by





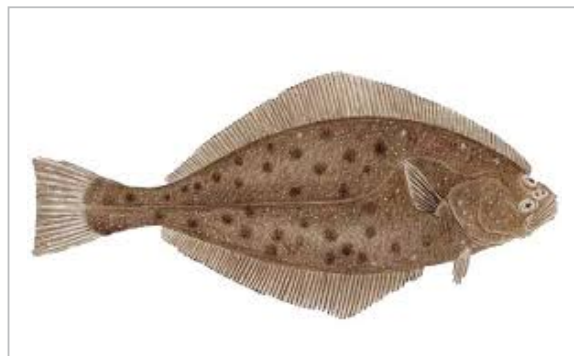
providing more accurate estimates of total catch; reduce incentives to discard rockfish; may reduce waste; reduce overall enforcement burden; and provide more consistency in regulations.

The Council, at this meeting, also selected a preliminary preferred alternative. The alternative selected would require full retention of rockfish species by all fixed gear CVs (hook-and-line, pot, and jig) in the BSAI and GOA. The preliminary preferred alternative also includes two options. The first option would require full retention of rockfish even if the rockfish species is on prohibited species status, but would prohibit these retained rockfish from entering commerce. The second option would establish a maximum commerce allowance (MCA) of 10% or 15%. The purpose of the MCA is to constrain vessels from increasing rockfish incidental catch under a full retention regulation, while allowing vessel operators to sell most of the rockfish catch that is truly incidental. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

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## BSAI Halibut in Pots

After reviewing the initial review analysis for halibut retention in pots in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI), the Council revised its purpose and need statement and chose a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA). The preliminary preferred alternative would allow retention of halibut in pots in the BSAI, if participants have sufficient halibut IFQ or CDQ for the appropriate regulatory area. The Council recommended the analysis be released for public review pending certain changes and additions.



Elements identified in the PPA include: an exemption to the 9-inch maximum width of tunnel opening, VMS and logbook requirements for all vessels using pot gear to fish IFQ/CDQ, and in the event that the overfishing limit for a shellfish or groundfish species is being approached, regulations would allow NMFS to close IFQ fishing for halibut in the BSAI or GOA as necessary. NMFS would use the current in-season management process to establish specific closures by fishery, gear type, and/or areas of concern that are interacting with the stock nearing its OFL. Additionally, under the PPA, the Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone would be closed to all fishing with pot gear.

The Council requested that prior to releasing a new draft, staff address changes to the current motion and incorporate the Council's comments, including a discussion of how gear retrieval and storage requirements would impact the existing BSAI sablefish pot fishery. Due to concerns over bycatch, particularly Pribilof Islands Blue King Crab, the Council also asked staff to further explore potential crab escapement mechanisms in halibut pots. Additionally, the Council requested that staff develop a list of potential topics to review regarding the effects of allowing retention of halibut in pot gear, which would be reviewed by the Council three years after implementation of a halibut pot fishery in the BSAI.

Staff contact is Sara Cleaver.

## BSAI Pcod Mothership Limitation and Trawl CV Allocation

The Council reviewed a preliminary document for evaluating changes to management of the BSAI catcher vessel (CV) non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl fishery. In the document, staff had requested clarification on several components of the Council's December 2018 motion. In June, the Council modified the problem statement and provided clarification on all the issues identified in the document. Those clarifications included:

- Changing the language to state that qualification for catcher processors to act as a mothership would be based on targeted Pacific cod landings (Alternative 2).
- The sideboard limit (Alternative 3) will be set for the BS "A" season or "A" and "B" season and apply to all catcher processors limited by the action; staff had interpreted the original motion to have applied to the BSAI and for the entire year.
- A sub-option was added to Alternative 3 that would exempt any catcher processor from the sideboard limit if it had received deliveries in 7 or more years from the BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl CV fishery and the catch delivered to those catcher processors would not accrue to any sideboard limit established for catcher processors that a limited when acting as a mothership.
- Alternative 4 was modified to clarify that both the catch accounting system (CAS) target definition and the fish ticket target definition would be considered for determining which catcher vessels would be eligible to deliver BSAI Pacific cod in the future.
- An option was also added to exempt the 8 severable Aleutian Islands trawl endorsements on LLP licenses, established under BSAI Amendment 92, from the proposed BSAI landings requirements for trawl CVs.

The Council also added two new alternatives in addition to the four previously identified.

- Alternative 5 would establish AFA and non-AFA sector allocations for the BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl CV "A" season. Elements of the alternative do not yet define specific allocation percentages or years to consider when dividing the allocation between the two sectors. Staff will provide information in the next iteration of the document to aid the Council in identifying specific options for dividing that component of the BS TAC among the AFA and non-AFA sectors. Staff was also asked to provide information on actions that would be necessary for the non-AFA sector to develop a cooperative or cooperatives to fish their Pacific cod allocation.
- Alternative 6 was added to the document to ensure that Amendment 80 catcher processor vessels that have been replaced and no longer have an Amendment 80 quota share permit or an Amendment 80 LLP license would be prohibited from acting as a mothership for Pacific cod in the future. The restriction would apply to both the BSAI and GOA.

The Council also clarified that the BSAI CV non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl participation amendment and the AI Pacific cod set-aside amendment should not be combined into a single amendment package. Combining the two proposed amendments would likely delay implementation of the AI Pacific cod set-aside amendment, which is scheduled for initial review during the October 2018 meeting.

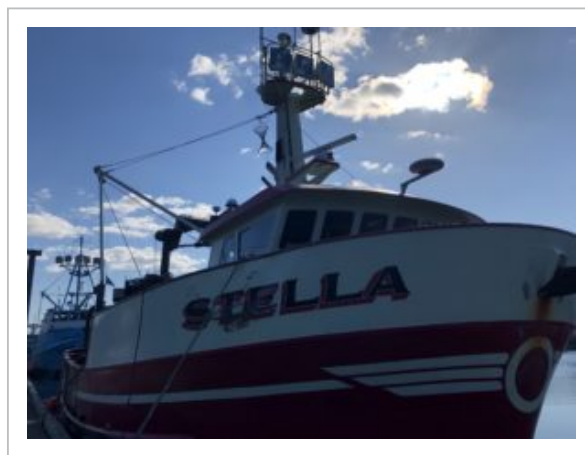
The revised problem statement and list of Alternatives and options are available on the [Council's website](#) under the [C-6 June agenda item](#). Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

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## GOA Pollock and Pacific Cod Season Allocations

The Council initiated an analysis of alternatives to modify the existing four-season structure of the Western and Central GOA pollock fishery and the relative allocation of the trawl CV sector's annual Pacific cod TAC across A and B seasons. For pollock, the Council will consider combining the existing A and B seasons into a single season that runs from January 20 through May 31 and combining the C and D seasons into a single season that runs from August 25 through November 1. The Council could also increase the 20% limit on inter-season rollovers of uncaught pollock TAC to 25% or 30%. For Pacific cod, options could result in as much as a 15% shift of trawl CV TAC from the B season to the A season relative to status quo.

The Council articulated the purpose and need for such an action, noting that the existing seasonal allocation of pollock and Pacific cod TAC sometimes results in inefficiencies such as unharvested groundfish and the need to fish during times when encounter rates with prohibited species – halibut and Chinook salmon – are known to be higher. Given the many existing challenges in managing and prosecuting these limited access trawl fisheries, the Council is seeking small changes that improve fishery outcomes without causing unintended redistribution of fishing opportunities across management areas or gear sectors. To the latter point, the Council considered options that would have shifted pollock TAC to the earlier part of the calendar year, but those options were not carried forward for analysis because they would have resulted in a net shift of annual TAC to one of the three affected management areas.



The Council recognized that the existing seasonal allocations were implemented as Steller sea lion (SSL) protection measures, and that modification requires analysis of potential effects on SSLs and consultation with NMFS Protected Resources division once a preferred action has been recommended. The need to consult on SSL effects does not affect the Council's timeline for developing a preferred alternative. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

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## Fishery Effort and Observer Coverage Relative to Tanner Crab Distribution in the CGOA

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on nonpelagic trawl and pot cod effort and observer coverage in two ADF&G statistical areas around Kodiak Island as well as in Chiniak Gulley (see Figure), and chose to take no further action. The discussion paper was a targeted follow up to a 2017 discussion paper on the protections afforded to Tanner crab in the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA), given concerns about whether the recovery of

Tanner crab in the CGOA is constrained by mortality associated with groundfish fisheries. Tanner crab in the CGOA are under State management, and the distribution of Tanner crab overlaps, in part, with the Federally-managed CGOA groundfish fisheries. The 2017 paper concluded that the factors constraining Tanner crab stock recovery in the CGOA are complicated and are likely to include multiple environmental factors whose relative impact is not well understood.



Tanner Crab

The discussion paper showed that nonpelagic trawl and pot cod effort has generally declined since 2011-2012 in the statistical areas of concern. A possible exception is the arrowtooth flounder trawl fishery that appears to have increased effort in 2016 and 2017. Effort in those years, as measured in the discussion paper, was greater than in all years except 2011. Nevertheless, the variation in Tanner crab PSC in groundfish fisheries appears to be most strongly related to the ADF&G estimates of Tanner crab abundance, rather than fishery effort.

The paper also reported on observer coverage. Observer coverage in the areas of concern has been proportional to coverage in other areas in the CGOA. While it was discussed at the meeting whether to consider increasing observer coverage in these statistical areas, such an action would negatively impact observer coverage in the GOA as a whole, and would also upset the statistical basis for the deployment of observers.

The Council chose to take no further action on this issue at this time. Developing an electronic monitoring program for trawl CVs in the CGOA, which is a Council objective **underway** through the Trawl EM Committee, should help improve the precision of current Tanner PSC estimates, and also assist in determining if observer effects are a consideration for this issue. Staff contact is Jim Armstrong.

## Social Science Planning Team

The Council heard a report from the newly formed Social Science Planning team (SSPT), which hosted its first in-person meeting May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the SSPT is to provide inter-agency support to improve the quality and application of social science data that informs management decision-making and program evaluation, and to strategize medium- and long-term improvements in data collection and analytical methodology. The SSC provided feedback on the meeting report, and the Council asked SSPT members to review and consider SSC comments at their interim teleconference (likely in November). For instance, the SSC suggested the SSPT refine and clarify its scope and meeting goals, consider and define its policy on making recommendations (i.e., voting or consensus-based), and incorporation of public testimony. The Council also tasked SSPT members to develop a term of reference for operations and additionally review whether other





Regional Fishery Management Councils have bodies that work to incorporate social and economic information into decision-making.

The Council is seeking nominations for additional membership for the SSPT to add expertise in Local and Traditional Knowledge and those who work directly with rural and Alaska Native coastal villages and/or tribal organizations in the fields of anthropology, human geography, and sociology. Additional information is described on [Call for Nominations](#).

Staff contact is Sarah Marrinan.

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## Community Engagement

In June 2018, the Council established an ad-hoc Community Engagement Committee and is soliciting nominations for the new committee. The Council took action after reviewing a staff discussion paper requested in April 2018, which presented considerations for how the Council could foster engagement with rural and Alaska Native communities. The paper presented a series of questions to the Council regarding potential scope, membership, and role of a Community Engagement Committee.



The Council established the Committee, and adopted the following charter:

*The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee is established to identify and recommend strategies for the Council and Council staff to enact processes that provide effective community engagement with rural and Alaska Native Communities. Effective community engagement may involve two-way communication between the Council and communities at additional stages of the Council process or a project and allow for community concerns, information, perspectives, and priorities to be shared clearly with the Council, whether part of an active Council action or not.*

The Council **is seeking nominations** from rural and tribal representatives and people with necessary expertise to accomplish the committee's goals of assisting the Council in developing successful engagement and outreach tools and processes to facilitate improved communication and understanding between rural communities and tribes and the Council. The committee will not develop specific policy recommendations. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.

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## 3-River Index and Kuskokwim Model Review

At this meeting, the SSC and the Council reviewed a new ADF&G model for assessing the postseason abundance estimates for Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim River, which is a contributing factor in the specification of the Chinook salmon PSC limit for the Bering Sea pollock fishery each fall.

Amendment 110, implemented in July 2016, modified the Chinook and chum salmon bycatch avoidance program in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. In addition to other measures, this amendment identified additional management actions that would be taken when a three-river index of Western Alaska inriver run abundance (Unalakleet River, Upper Yukon River, and Kuskokwim River) falls below a 250,000 Chinook salmon threshold, based on the State of Alaska's post-season inriver Chinook salmon run size assessment.



Since 2015, ADF&G has generated postseason abundance estimates for the three rivers that comprise the index using methods consistent with the analysis for Amendment 110. This year, ADF&G has recommended changes to the data and model used to estimate total inriver abundance of Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon. The changes to the Kuskokwim River run reconstruction model were developed, in part, to address changing harvest patterns that resulted when significant harvest restrictions were implemented. Between 2014 and 2017, annual Chinook salmon harvest in the Kuskokwim River was among the lowest on record in this river. The previous model overestimated the total Chinook salmon runs in those years. For purposes of use in the 3-river index, ADF&G has indicated that any modification to the methodology for estimating these post season abundance estimates would be reviewed in the Council process before being adopted for the index.

The SSC and Council reviewed this new model for assessing the Kuskokwim River by the ADF&G. The SSC appreciated the time and effort that has gone in to model improvements and indicated that it represents an improvement over the previous model. The model is scheduled to be used both for in-river management in 2018 as well as for contribution to the 3-river index for federal management of the Chinook salmon bycatch limit for 2019 specifications. A companion document was provided for understanding the implications of the model revisions on the relationship of the three-river index to western Alaskan AEQ, which was the basis for the 250,000 fish threshold that was set in Amendment 110. The new scaling of the model using more recent mark recapture data results in much lower estimates of the total run than the previous model. New estimates of the adult equivalency (AEQ) for Coastal West Alaska (CWAK) genetic stock grouping were compared against those available when the Council took final action on Amendment 110 to establish the 3 River index as well as with the updated model used to assess the Kuskokwim contribution to the 3 River index. When this index is below the threshold, it results in lower PSC cap (45,000) and performance standard (33,371) for the pollock fishery for the following fishing year. The determination for 2019 will be made in October during the Council's action to establish proposed specifications for groundfish. The Council had extensive discussion of the utility of a knife-edge threshold such as status quo as compared to a more dynamic biological reference point for determination of low Chinook abundance resulting in the move to a lower cap level. The Council will continue to consider whether to revisit this threshold analysis in the future, but took no action to do so at this time. Modification of the threshold requires an FMP amendment. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

## Halibut Abundance-Based Management (ABM)

Two items related to the Council's initiative on halibut abundance-based management (ABM) were addressed at this meeting. The SSC reviewed a discussion paper on proposed methodological approaches for the broader ABM EIS analysis and a proposed sub-set of the alternative set for preliminary analysis in October 2018. Of the three approaches proposed, the SSC recommended moving forward with Approach 2: a two-area halibut model framework for estimating PSC limits and their impacts on groundfish and halibut fisheries. This model is under development, and more information will be available for the next SSC review. The empirical approach for addressing impacts to groundfish fisheries will be developed by analysts for further input from the SSC. The SSC made a number of suggested changes to the simplifying assumptions proposed, and provided input for the ABM staff working group to consider in model development. The SSC endorsed the proposed subset of alternatives for preliminary analysis with the addition of another starting point option under Element 2 for contrast (Option 2: 2017 use (1,917t)). Preliminary analysis of alternatives to further assist the Council in refining the alternative set will be available for the October 2018 Council meeting. The analysts noted that under the current frameworked plan for analysis, initial review would occur no sooner than October 2019.



The Council also considered a discussion paper on data limitations associated with the use of size-based data for halibut PSC, specifically halibut over 26 inches (O26) as an approximation of legal-size halibut which would be taken by the directed fishery. The paper was requested as the Council was considering whether data would be sufficiently representative for creation of an O26 performance standard in conjunction with the ABM alternatives. As noted in the paper, due to sampling changes resulting from recent years of deck sorting experimental fishing permits, representative data on the fraction of O26 in the groundfish halibut PSC, by sector, is lacking. Beginning in 2018, these sampling issues have been modified to better reflect representative sampling both on deck and in the factory. After considering the various modifications to sampling in recent years as well as issues with data biases as a result of deck sorting the Council chose to take no further action on this concept at this time. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

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## Research Priorities

In accordance with Council procedures, the SSC and Council review research priorities each year at the Council's June meeting. Prior to Council review, the Council's GOA and BSAI Groundfish, BSAI Crab, and Scallop Plan Teams review existing research priorities and make recommendations for modifications or additions, as needed. Following the June meeting, the updated five-year research priorities are provided to the Secretary of Commerce, the Alaska Fishery Science Center, as well as research and funding entities.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council’s research priorities cover a wide range of topics and are organized and managed within a publicly accessible database (<https://research.psmfc.org/>). Ranking of research topics is done using four priority categories that are defined to emphasize the correspondence of research to the Council’s time horizon of management concerns. The current list of Council research priorities, as identified at the June 2018 Council meeting, is on the Council’s website ([www.npfmc.org](http://www.npfmc.org)).



Following last year’s review, the Council expressed a desire to streamline its annual review process, and as a part of that, the Council’s Plan Teams identified a small number of projects to raise to consideration for a “top ten” list. The SSC reviewed and proposed an amalgamated “top ten” list, which the Council reviewed and endorsed. The SSC also provided the Council with a preamble that emphasizes the importance of research categorized as “critical ongoing monitoring” so that the “top ten” do not overshadow the projects that are required for the Council to fulfill its mission.

Staff also reported on progress related to the coordination of Council and NPRB supported research. The NPRB and the Council will be modifying their databases in order to synchronize records by research topic and also provide access to funding and reporting relative to the progress on and completion of specific research projects.

Finally, the Council adopted new research priorities intended to develop a framework of the types of social/economic data that could be helpful when conducting the 2021 allocation review for the Halibut Catch Sharing Plan. The Council’s two additional research priorities, categorized as Urgent, are:

- Develop comparable measures of net value, total value, and economic impacts for the Area 2C and 3A charter and commercial halibut fisheries.
- Conduct ethnographic research and collect information on the indirect effects of the Area 2C and 3A charter and commercial halibut fishing.

Staff contact is Jim Armstrong.

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## IFQ Outreach

The Council hosted an evening outreach/listening session in Kodiak on Tuesday, June 5. More than 50 stakeholders – including Council members – attended to comment on opportunities to help the halibut and sablefish IFQ fishery continue to address the program’s objectives. The session was specifically focused on entry-level opportunities and rural participation. The Council received an in-meeting report on the themes and proposals that emerged from the session and initiated two staff discussion papers that will be reviewed by the IFQ Committee then forwarded to the Council with recommendations. The topics of those discussion papers are described below.



The emergent theme of the listening session was that stakeholders perceive a dramatic reduction in opportunities to participate in the fishery that has occurred in the course of a single generation. Both entry-level fishermen and residents of remote Kodiak Island communities identified the following barriers to entry: high quota prices, high investment risk given trends in halibut stock abundance, an unfavorable lending environment, and a low-volume quota share (QS) market. As a result, young fishermen have little incentive to work or invest in the fishery relative to other opportunities, thus reducing the ready supply of physical capital (gear) and human capital (experience) when opportunities to enter the fishery do emerge. Three of the potential avenues for action identified in the [meeting summary](#) include: taxing QS transfers to create a quota pool for qualified participants; breaking up “blocks” of QS to make more small lots available on the transfer market; and establishing mechanisms to promote intergenerational transfer of QS within rural communities. Those and other proposals are further described in the aforementioned meeting summary, including rationale in opposition.



**Kodiak boats on a sunny day.**

The first discussion paper tasked by the Council will scope mechanisms to promote the transfer of QS from initial QS issues (those who use hired masters) to skippers/crew. The mechanisms to explore include, but are not limited to, a right of first offer (ROFO) similar to the one in place for Bering Sea crab cooperatives and possible modifications to the Federal loan program. The second discussion paper will review existing program outside of the North Pacific that facilitate fishery access. One example of such a program is Norway's Recruitment Quota program. The paper will consider such program's efficacy in their own context as well as their applicability to the North Pacific. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

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## NMFS Survey Planning

At the June 2018 meeting, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center requested input from the SSC and the Council on longer-term planning for BSAI and GOA surveys. In order to complete the full complement of surveys conducted with chartered vessels, the agency needs funding for 5 vessels. It is likely that due to budget constraints and other maintenance obligations, the survey program will only be able to afford 4 or even 3 charter vessels in 2019 and 2020. Given this reality, the agency is requesting the SSC and the Council provide input on Council priorities as the agency considers how to allocate vessels among survey needs. The Council endorsed work by an SSC subgroup to meet with AFSC staff over the summer, and to report back to the SSC and Council in October. The Council is interested in exploring how industry vessel platforms could help supplement the data that will be forgone through the reduced availability of chartered survey vessels, and encourages the SSC subgroup and the AFSC to discuss opportunities for cooperative research.

Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## Ecosystem Workshop Report

The Council received a **summary report** on the one-day ecosystem research workshop held on February 7th, in conjunction with the February Council meeting. The workshop was intended to engage the broader Council community, including Council members, scientific and industry advisors, and stakeholders, in a discussion about how the growing body of ecosystem knowledge can be incorporated into the Council process. Fisheries Forum, who helped facilitate the workshop for the Council, prepared a Summary Report which synthesizes the major themes of workshop discussions. Additionally, they worked with the workshop Steering Committee (which includes representatives of Council and AFSC staff, and Council, AP, and SSC members) to develop a short discussion document to frame the Council's conversation about next steps.



**Ecosystem Workshop held in February at the Renaissance Hotel in Seattle, WA**

The Council recognized the success of the Ecosystem Workshop, and is interested in continuing the inclusive and informative dialogue among stakeholders and experts on ecosystem science and other topics within the Council's fishery management arena. The Council directed staff to **prepare a short report** on ways to incorporate other such periodic forums into the Council process, and potential topics that could be useful. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

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## June 2018 Newsletter

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### Staff Tasking

In addition to discussing the relative priority and scheduling of previously tasked projects, the Council took the following actions and clarified direction and tasking for its committees:

- Initiated two discussion papers to related to **IFQ community access and entry opportunities**, one addressing lessons for the Alaska IFQ program from other global programs including Norway's Recruitment Quota Program, and an exploration of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms for transfer of quota share to hired masters and crew.



- Directed staff to submit comments to NMFS on the draft EM cost allocation procedural directive incorporating recommended comments from the Observer Advisory Committee.
- Endorsed the recommendations from the NOAA Report to Congress on Aleutian Islands Pollock, including that NMFS should assist Adak with an exempted fishing permit to allow fishing in specific areas of the AI currently closed to directed fishing to determine the distribution and stock composition of AI pollock, and that NMFS should provide the test fishing results to the Council and explore whether revisions to existing regulations are warranted by the test fishing results.
- Directed staff to track national legislative bills relating to aquaculture, and to develop a consensus positions as per the Legislative Committee’s recommendations.
- Directed staff to write a letters to the AFSC thanking them for supporting the valuable bathymetry work as presented to the Ecosystem Committee, and noting how the work helps Council consideration especially with respect to EFH and the Bering Sea canyons.
- Directed staff to write a letter supporting potential trawl grant proposals for EM development in 2019, by communicating the Council’s preliminary trawl monitoring objectives as identified at this meeting.
- Appointed a **Cook Inlet Salmon Committee**.
- Changed the names of the following committees: the Observer Advisory Committee is renamed as the Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee, and the EM Workgroup is renamed as the Trawl EM Committee.

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## Upcoming Meetings

### **Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team subgroup on objectives:**

June 14, AFSC, Seattle, WA

**Assessment Modeling Workshop:** June 27-28, AFSC Seattle

**Ecosystem Committee:** July 24, Anchorage, AK

**Trawl EM Workgroup:** August 23-24, AFSC, Seattle, WA

**Crab Plan Team:** September 10-13, AFSC Seattle

**Observer Advisory Committee:** September 13-14, Seattle.

**BSAI and GOA Groundfish Plan Teams:** September 17-21, AFSC Seattle



