



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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William Tweit, Interim Chair
David Witherell, Executive Director

Executive Director's Report (including report on ideas for public forums and SSC survey workgroup report)

New Council Members

We have several new Council members joining us.

Mr. John Jensen is a commercial fisherman and owner-operator of Jensen's Boat Rentals for self-guided, recreational boating adventures based in Petersburg, Alaska. John's career in commercial fishing began in 1966, long-lining for halibut in the Gulf of Alaska and salmon seining in Southeast Alaska, and he has participated in twenty different commercial fisheries as permit and vessel owner/operator, and as crew. John was appointed to the Alaska Board of Fish in 2001 and has been a member of the board ever since then. John is also an advisory member to the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission.

Captain Allison J. Caputo is the Chief of Maritime Law Enforcement for the Seventeenth Coast Guard District. Captain Caputo holds a Master's Degree in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island. She has over 11 years of sea service aboard cutters in both the Atlantic and Pacific Areas, including over 100 boardings as a fisheries law enforcement officer in Alaska. While based in Honolulu, HI, she served as the USCG representative to the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council. Captain Caputo also served as Chief of Living Marine Resources Enforcement at Coast Guard Headquarters where she implemented the Port States Measures Agreement to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Ms. Karla Bush, has returned to the Council as the official designee for Commissioner Cotton, taking over for

Trent Hartill who left ADF&G to take another position.

Mr. Ivan Weinstein, who has succeeded Colin Brinkman as Foreign Affairs Officer with the Office of Marine Conservation, will be attending and sitting in the State Department seat for this Council meeting.

Mr. Chris Oliver, the NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator, has been named to be an official designee of Dr. Balsiger in his absence, along with Mr. Merrill.

Welcome aboard to all of you!

Staff News

I am pleased to announce that Ms. Sarah La Belle has been hired on as an Administrative Assistant to take over the duties of Peggy Kircher as she approaches a pending retirement date next spring. Sarah has a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Technology Leadership, is a Senior Airman with the Air National Guard, and has experience as an Administrative Assistant and a Customer Service Agent. Welcome to the staff Sarah!

New Agenda Management and Record keeping software

In an effort to streamline the processes we use to get information online and to provide a more user-friendly experience, the Council will be hosting its own meeting materials, thanks to the programming assistance of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Alaska Fisheries Information Network. The October 2018 meeting will be the initial test run for the **Agenda Management App** which is an extension of the public comments application. We will still host our meeting on the prior platform (Granicus) for this meeting only, with the anticipation of being fully on the new Agenda Management App for December's meeting. New features and functions are expected to be added throughout the meeting as we adapt it to our needs. Your input is appreciated during this testing process, with the goal of the Council's agenda being an easily understandable, fully functional, searchable, host for all Council-related documents and issues, now and in the future. Please contact Maria or Peggy if you have any questions, comments or concerns with the new Agenda Management App.

Social Science Planning Team Nominations

In June, the Council announced a call for nominations for additional membership on the Social Science Planning Team 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 <<https://npfmc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5198603&GUID=4ABD1EB4-4664-4320-86CB-A52018AE5815>>, membership shall generally be limited to affiliates of public organizations and academic institutions. The SSC will review the candidates and assess which are qualified to join the team, conform with the intent of the charter proposal, and meet the Council's intent regarding additional expertise. The Council will be discuss the Planning Team nominations in Executive Session on Friday. The following candidates have submitted their names:

- Dr. Davin Holen is the coastal community resilience specialist for Alaska Sea Grant and the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy, and formally worked at ADF&G conducting social science research and managing subsistence fisheries. He is also a member of the Bering Sea FEP writing team, and has a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.
- Mr. Phil Zavadil was the co-director of the St. Paul Island's Ecosystem Conservation Office, and is currently serving as City Manager. Mr. Zavadil holds a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies and Economics from the University of California, Santa Cruz. A nomination letter is **attached**.
- Ms. Catherine Moncreiff is an anthropologist for the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association and

has experience working with Yukon River fishing families, documenting traditional ecological knowledge, and facilitating communication between managers and fisheries. She holds a Master's degree in Applied Cultural Anthropology from the University of Alaska, Anchorage. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.

- Mr. Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian is the principal and owner of Sandhill.Culture.Craft, a social science research and consulting firm. He holds a Master's degree in Anthropology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and is currently pursuing a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Chicago. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.
- Ms. Erica McCall Valentine is a social scientist working with Tribes, agencies, universities and non-profits to conduct co-produced social science research. She has a Master's Degree in Environmental Science from The Australian National University, and is currently pursuing a PhD from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.
- Ms. Lauren Sill is a subsistence resource specialist with ADF&G Division of Subsistence. She has a Master's Degree in Environmental Policy from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.
- Dr. Courtney Carothers is an environmental anthropologist and Associate Professor at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. She has a Ph.D. in Environmental Anthropology from the University of Washington. A nomination letter and CV are **attached**.

SSC Subgroup on NMFS surveys

The SSC survey subgroup (Gordon Kruse, George Hunt, Anne Hollowed, Dayv Lowry, Alison Whitman, and Dana Hanselman) met in Seattle to discuss and draft advice to the AFSC on planning for upcoming surveys, and contingency plans should funding fall short for a full complement of surveys or survey vessels. A summary of the subgroup meeting is **attached**. The SSC as a whole is reviewing the subgroup's draft recommendations and will provide further guidance to the Council later this week.

Status Report on Salmon FMP

At the June 2018 meeting, Chairman Dan Hull announced his appointments to the Cook Inlet Salmon Committee. The appointed members are Erik Huebsch, Dan Anderson, Dino Sutherland, Hanna Heimbuch, and Mike Casseri. The appointment of a Chair to the Salmon Committee is expected to be announced during the October Council meeting. The Committee will provide recommendations to the Council relative to development of an amendment to the Salmon FMP that will add Federal waters in Cook Inlet to the FMP. The Committee's primary functions will be to (1) review and provide comments on specific, Council-identified issues; (2) develop options for fishery management measures for specific, Council-identified management needs, and (3) provide perspectives on potential social and economic impacts of proposed fishery management measures.

Since June, the Salmon FMP workgroup (consisting of Council, NMFS, ADF&G staff) has been working on the next version of the discussion paper to support the amendment process. Specifically, the workgroup is addressing how MSA mandates on status determination criteria (SDC) will be met under Alternatives 2 (cooperative State and federal management) and 3 (fully-federal management). Alternative 2, as currently developed, defers much of the management of Cook Inlet Salmon to the State of Alaska in a manner similar to the division of management responsibilities in the Crab FMP. Under Alternative 3, management of Cook Inlet salmon would be done more like it is for groundfish stocks and would include an annual Plan Team review of information on stock status.

The Alternative 2 subgroup is developing SDC under a tier system based on the level of information for affected salmon stocks, and the Alternative 3 subgroup is continuing to develop federal SDC and is providing comparison of the envisioned federal process with the West Coast Region SDC process.

The workgroup is also planning to prepare other sections for the analysis. An over-escapement analysis is being developed as a stand-alone analysis that will be added as an appendix. Sport fishery management is being added to the fishery impact statement since it is an important component of overall salmon harvest,

even though it is not a significant contributor to EEZ harvest. A section on the management of invasive species is also being developed.

Updates to the discussion paper and the process going forward will be the focus of the Cook Inlet Salmon Committee at its first meeting (the Monday or Tuesday of the December Council meeting week are good possibilities). The updated discussion paper will be distributed to allow sufficient time for Committee members to review the document before the meeting. The Committee Chair and staff will work together on scheduling and developing the agenda for the Committee meeting, and that information will be posted on our website.

Response to Council motion on public workshops

In June 2018, the Council received a final report on the Ecosystem Workshop held in February 2018. Feedback from Council members, advisory groups, and stakeholders on the workshop were uniformly positive, especially in relation to the opportunity the workshop provided for inclusive and informative dialogue between stakeholders, experts, and Council participants. As such, the Council asked staff to report on the potential for the Council to hold periodic forums to address ecosystem science or other topics that would benefit from public dialogue. **Attached** is a short discussion of how forums (including but not limited to workshops) could be organized in order to achieve the benefits that the Council identified, and potential topics that could be of interest to the Council in future.

Save the Date

Plans are underway for Alaska SeaLife Center's Marine Gala which is scheduled for **February 16, 2019**, at the Dena'ina Center. I have reserved one table (10 seats) for the North Pacific Council. Please let me know if you are interested in attending.

Planning for the Homer Meeting

We have started planning for the October 2019 Council meeting in Homer, Alaska. Shannon made an advance trip to Homer in August to scout out potential meeting locations and other details. At this point, I am planning on having the SSC meet in the Land's End Resort (at the end of the Homer Spit) from Monday-Wednesday and delay the start of the Council meeting until Thursday so the Council can utilize the same meeting space (the Quarter Deck). I am planning on having the AP meet (and stay) at the Best Western Bidarka Inn, which is about 6 miles from the Land's End Resort. There is regular flight service to Homer (through Ravn Alaska), and I plan on authorizing rental cars from Anchorage for Council members that may choose to drive rather than fly (it is a scenic 4 hour drive). In Homer, taxi service is available to facilitate travel among the two meetings locations, and to get to restaurants around town. Car rentals are limited in Homer, but I may authorize rental cars for the chair and vice chairs of the SSC, AP, and Council so that each group has some means of transportation. I will provide additional details as we get closer to the meeting.

Legislative Update

On July 11, H.R. 200, the Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act, passed the House of Representatives this evening by a vote of 222-193. The bill, as passed by the House and a section-by-section analysis, are **attached**.

Several important revisions were made to this bill since the North Pacific Council provided comments in March, and the CCC provided comments in May. All materials and council comments on MSA legislation can be accessed on the regional fishery management councils website.

[<http://www.fisherycouncils.org/msa-reauthorization/>](http://www.fisherycouncils.org/msa-reauthorization/)

From my standpoint, notable revisions include:

- The bill stripped out the section that would have required each plan, amendment, or regulatory change contain a fishery impact statement to assess the likely effects and impacts of the proposed actions on the environment (in addition to existing NEPA/RIR requirements).
- The bill modified the section that would have required onerous analytical requirements and certifications prior to approval of an Exempted Fishing Permit, and the 12 month duration limit. In its

place, there is an added requirement that councils will review EFPs after 12 months to determine whether any unintended negative impacts had occurred that would warrant discontinuation of the permit. This section now mirrors S.B. 1520.

- The bill stripped out the section that would have clarified that MSA would be the controlling management authority in case of conflict within marine sanctuaries and other areas designated under the Antiquities Act. Additionally, this section would have required that fishery management restrictions necessary to implement a recovery plan under ESA, should be implemented through MSA.
- A new section was added that would change the voting requirement for the CDQ Administrative Panel from the current requirement of a unanimous vote, to five of the six members on the Panel.

Sections of H.R. 200 that remain unchanged, and of concern to the Council are: 1) the requirement that the Secretary perform surveys and stock assessments within two years for those stocks that do not have peer reviewed stock assessments; 2) the requirement for audio, video or written transcripts for SSC meetings.

National Bycatch Report

NOAA Fisheries has requested feedback on the NOAA Fisheries National Bycatch Report. NOAA Fisheries produced the National Bycatch Report in 2011, and updates in 2014 (Update 1) and 2016 (Update 2), to provide bycatch estimates at the fishery and species level. The most recent updates to the National Bycatch Report can be found [here <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-2>](https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/first-edition-update-2). The Report and its Updates provide a compilation of bycatch information and national and regional overviews to help monitor bycatch trends and set fishery monitoring priorities. NOAA Fisheries released the National Bycatch Reduction Strategy in 2016 and a Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology rule in 2017, and the Service is now conducting a review to evaluate whether and how to improve the National Bycatch Report. Responses to the following questions have been requested:

- How have you or your organization used the fish or invertebrate estimates of bycatch in the National Bycatch Report and/or its updates?
- How have you or your organization used other sections of the National Bycatch Report that pertain to fish or invertebrates (e.g., bycatch estimation improvement plans, performance metrics, Tier Classification System)?
- Have you or your organization used fish or invertebrate bycatch estimates from other sources? If yes, how do these other estimates relate to or differ from the estimates in the National Bycatch Report? How have you used those estimates, and why have you chosen that source instead of the National Bycatch Report?
- Do you have suggestions for improving how the National Bycatch Report can better depict fish and invertebrate bycatch trends or help set fishery monitoring priorities?
- Do you have suggestions for improving the estimates of fish and invertebrate bycatch in the National Bycatch Report?
- What is the most useful way to disseminate bycatch information (e.g., paper report, website, data query tool, etc.)?

The Council's comments on the 2011 version of the report are **attached**. I would note that many of the issues we raised have yet to be addressed.

Pending Council direction, my intent would be to prepare a comment letter reiterating our concerns with the report. Specifically, my comments would be that the Report, while very interesting, is not used by the Council for management purposes because the information is out of date (latest data is 2013) and we have relatively easy access to more recent data; the report has a number of data issues (e.g. GOA deepwater flatfish trawl bycatch is only grenadiers); it does not categorize many target fisheries in a way that would be useful for management purposes (e.g. GOA sablefish trawl); and fails to include critical information needed for management action (e.g., retention data are not reported). Comments are due October 31, 2018.

Also, note that NMFS is currently developing an implementation plan for the National Bycatch Reduction

Strategy which will be out for Council review later this year, and we have a task in the batter's box on the three-meeting outlook to ensure that our Council FMPs are in compliance with the SBRM final rule.

Recent Staff/Council activities

Mr. Tweit represented the Council Coordination Committee as a member of the US delegation to the 33rd meeting of the Committee on Fisheries held in Rome in August. His report to the CCC on this meeting is **attached**.

Mr. Cotten represented the Council at the 29th session of the U.S./Russia bilateral Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on Fisheries (ICC) meeting held in Kazan Russia on August 20-22, along with Dr. Jason Gasper (NMFS, SSC member) and other members of the Bering Sea Fisheries Advisory Board. The 'Protocol', or meeting summary, is **attached**.

Several Council staff members (Jon McCracken, Sarah Marrinan, Elizabeth Figus, and Sam Cunningham) participated in a series of joint Management Workshops with AFSC social scientists over the summer. The objective of these meetings is to provide better communication between the agencies (Council staff, AKRO staff and AFSC staff) on current projects and to highlight opportunities for integration of work when possible. A short summary is **attached**.

I participated as a panelist at a NOAA town hall event in Juneau on August 31. Acting NOAA Administrator RDML Gallaudet and NOAA Fisheries Administrator Chris Oliver hosted a town-hall event to solicit stakeholder input regarding implementation of the Department of Commerce 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, and discuss opportunities for NOAA to promote fisheries and the blue economy. My remarks are **attached**.

The North Pacific Research Board met in Anchorage on September 18-19. Mr. Dan Hull attended and Chaired the fall NPRB meeting as the NPFMC representative. Mr. Hull's summary of the meeting is **attached**. I gave an invited presentation to the NPRB on the Council's research priorities, and provided views on ways the board could better focus on important research questions.

Council staff member Sarah Marrinan, together with Marysia Szymkowiak (AFSC) presented at the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova, AK for their Tuesday Night Talk series on September 25th. Sarah and Marysia presented commentary on rural access and entry opportunities in the halibut and sablefish IFQ fisheries. While in Cordova, Sara and Marysia hosted a Fishing Families workshop on Sept 26th. This workshop is a continuation of research to examine how families in Gulf of Alaska communities are affected by and respond to changes in fishing conditions in Alaska. The objective of these workshops is to understand major themes of the predominant stressors that fishing families have had to respond to, effects of those stressors on fishing families, and the strategies they have employed to deal with them. Workshops have been hosted in Juneau, Homer, Anchorage, Sitka, Kodiak, and recently Petersburg as well.

Dr. Diana Stram recently co-authored a [paper](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X17307510) <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X17307510>> published in Marine Policy, titled "Implementing Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management: Lessons from Chile's experience." This is one of several publications in the works stemming from her Fulbright Scholarship research in Chile. Kudos Diana!

We held our annual staff "retreat" in Anchorage at the end of August to discuss general administrative and operational issues, as well as foster and strengthen staff collaboration and teambuilding. We also discussed some modifications to improve our Council meetings and office procedures. Some new initiatives coming out of that meeting include: rollout of our new agenda platform that replaces Granicus, a new more modern Council letterhead, standardized templates for Council minutes and agendas, improvements to digital archiving of Council records, and continued emphasis on frontloading and effective working relationships with the NMFS regional office staff. We have also digitalized the existing travel claim form. Auto calculation and other features will make completion and processing of this form easier for everyone. As always, the form will be provided prior to the meeting via email. You can complete the form, e-sign and return with scanned copies

or photos of receipts to Nicole.Schmidt@noaa.gov <mailto:Nicole.Schmidt@noaa.gov>. Alternatively, you can continue to use a pen to fill out the form, and submit it (along with receipts) by US Mail.

Committee Meetings

Ecosystem Committee meetings - The Ecosystem Committee has met several times since June to provide input into the development of the Bering Sea FEP and prepare comments on NOAA Fisheries Alaska EBFM Implementation Plan. You will receive the Committee reports under Agenda Item C-5.

Assessment Methods Workshop - Plan Team and SSC members and stock assessment authors held a 2-day workshop in June to review and evaluate ensemble stock assessment modeling, and to discuss considerations for potentially reducing an ABC from its maximum value. Details will be provided in the Groundfish Plan Team report (Agenda Item C-2).

Electronic Monitoring Committee - The EM Committee met August 23-24 in Seattle to review a cooperative research approach and develop a workplan for adapting and implementing EM for trawl fisheries. You will receive the Committee report under Agenda Item C-3.

Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee - The FMAC (formerly known as the OAC) met September 13-14 in Seattle to review the 2019 Draft Annual Deployment Plan (ADP) and other observer updates. You will receive the Committee report under Agenda Item C-3.

Joint Protocol Committee - The Council/Alaska Board of Fisheries Joint Protocol Committee will meet in the Egan Center on October 17 to discuss issues of joint concern regarding salmon and Bering Sea cod management. A draft agenda is **attached**. Council members on the Joint Protocol Committee are Mr. Mezirow, Mr. Laukitis, and a yet-to-be-appointed council member to fill the position previously occupied by Dan Hull.

Events this week

On Tuesday, the Ecosystem Committee will meet from 1-5 pm to make a final review and provide recommendations on the Bering Sea FEP.

On Friday at 4 pm, we have an Executive Session to review appointments to the SSPT and address other administrative issues.

PHOTO FINISH

We are planning to take group photographs of the Council, SSC, AP and Staff at this meeting. Pictures will be taken at the **Top of the World, Floor 15 - Hilton Hotel**, to take advantage of natural lighting. We have set the following schedule for pictures:

SSC - Tuesday right after breaking for lunch

AP - Wednesday right after breaking for lunch

Council & staff - Thursday right after breaking for lunch