

Inflation Reduction Act Funding for Climate Resiliency Planning: Update

February 2024

Since the summer of 2023, the Council has been exploring opportunities to develop a climate resiliency planning proposal under a grant opportunity provided by NMFS through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The funding is dedicated to Council fishery management and governance actions in support of the following objectives:

1. Implementation of fishery management measures necessary to advance climate ready fisheries by improving climate resiliency and responsiveness to climate impacts; and
2. Development and advancement of climate related fisheries management planning and implementation efforts in support of underserved communities¹.

The Council reviewed an initial [October 2023 staff paper](#) that laid out the recent history of Council and SSC climate resiliency discussions, activities, and potential opportunities, and the Council directed staff to focus a proposal on accelerating or expanding upon existing Council initiatives. The [December 2023 staff workplan](#) summarized the draft proposal. The funding would be used to hire a dedicated staff position for the duration of the grant, to serve as overall lead for the Council on the suite of Council climate readiness activities. The funding would also support the completion of the programmatic evaluation of and potential revision to the Council management policy and objectives, including adjustments to be adaptive to climate-driven marine ecosystem changes and to include new knowledge pathways and management tools (Council motion in June 2023). The funding would also support initiating tactical work on the science and management recommendations relating to assessment and climate science, as identified in the SSC's report on the February 2023 workshop on rapid environmental change. Finally, the proposal would also include funding for several workshops in support of IRA-funded projects, as a means to allow a more informal and open dialogue among Council, SSC, and AP members and stakeholders and Tribal entities as these projects develop.

Since December, staff have finalized and submitted grant applications totaling \$2.5 million, through a two-step procedure outlined by NMFS. An initial \$375,000 to support the first year of the dedicated staff position and the proposed June 2024 Climate Scenario workshop should be available to us shortly. By April or May, we should hear whether the remainder of the proposal has been approved for funding. We have hired Katie Latanich to be our Climate Program Manager, and she is focused on planning for the upcoming workshop as well as helping with coordination on other projects.

Katie has set up a [climate readiness webpage](#) on the Council website, where we will keep track of the Council's climate readiness activities and progress. The following tables list the funding objectives, milestones, and timeline as identified in the submitted proposal.

¹ In the North Pacific, many fishing communities that are substantially dependent on or engaged in the harvest and processing of fishery resources may also be underserved communities (see definitions in the [NOAA Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy](#), p.5). This paper considers support for "fishing communities" as opposed to "underserved communities" in line with National Standard 8 guidelines, and in recognition that communities are complex socioeconomic and cultural groups that may or may not identify themselves as underserved.

**NPFMC
Objective 1:**

*See below for
estimated
timeline*

Implement a new, adaptive ecosystem-based fishery management policy and objectives in all of the NPFMC fishery management plans (FMPs), to provide for climate resilient fisheries.

1. Council staff will complete a programmatic evaluation of the Alaska Federal fisheries, focused on identifying the current state of climate readiness for Alaska fisheries and tools, pathways, and management measures that will better align with the Council’s preferred approach to risk and uncertainty in the face of environmental change.
2. Council will approve and NMFS will implement FMP amendments that revise the Council’s management policy for each active Council FMP.
3. Council will develop and adopt a workplan and timeline for initiating future management measure analyses to bring Council fisheries in line with the revised management policy. Recommendations for of additional changes will occur under the Council’s standard operating grant.
4. Staff will develop plain language communication and outreach materials for explaining decisions related to climate-resilient fisheries management.

**NPFMC
Objective 2:**

*See below for
estimated
timeline*

Expand and refine onramps and opportunities to incorporate local knowledge (LK) and traditional knowledge (TK) into the Council management processes alongside western science.

1. Council will host a workshop with Tribes and stakeholders to identify how to extend Bering Sea recommendations to other Alaska regions and fisheries and develop recommendations for onramps and opportunities.
2. Council will implement revisions to NPFMC procedures based on workshop recommendations, including a template for how LKTK should be considered in Council amendment analyses.

**NPFMC
Objective 3:**

*See below for
estimated
timeline*

Develop and implement new tools for the harvest specifications process, to adapt to risk in the face of uncertainty due to climate-driven marine ecosystem changes.

1. Through Alaska regional case studies, NPFMC SSC will solicit national feedback on the potential added value of different risk adaptations.
2. Council will develop and implement procedures for non-FMP adjustments, such as reassessing time periods used to define productivity of crab and groundfish stocks, or metrics needed to modify (add or remove) FMP species as species distributions continue to change.
3. Council will develop and implement procedures for incorporating and reviewing economic and socioeconomic information as part of TAC-setting, for example through environmental and socioeconomic profiles (ESPs), ecosystem status reports (ESRs), or economic or fishing community engagement reports.
4. Council will develop and adopt a workplan for longer-term consideration of adjustments requiring a crab and/or groundfish FMP amendment, such as harvest control rules and changes to the tier system.

Table 1 Draft timeline and milestones for NPFMC climate work

Council meetings	Management policy amendments through a programmatic evaluation	Assessment and climate science amendments
2024 Feb Apr Jun (summer) Oct Dec	Council input on structure and alternatives for PEIS, questions for workshop	SSC identifies dynamic reference point or other case studies for SCS8
		SSC scopes contract work needed for sablefish MEY case study
	Council Climate Scenario Workshop	
	July: Issue Notice of Intent to Prepare a Programmatic EIS	August: SCS 8 national workshop
	Review scoping comments, workshop report, and refine alternatives	Discussion paper on potential for short- and long-term climate resilient adjustments (e.g. reference points, harvest control rules)
2025 (Feb) Apr Jun Oct Dec	Council Workshop on LKTK onramp opportunities, to inform PEIS	SSC Workshop to prioritize tools and procedures for FMP and non-FMP changes, and to develop an implementation workplan
	Draft PEIS	
	Final PEIS; Council adopts revised management policy and objectives	SSC and Council implement initial non-FMP amendment changes to groundfish harvest specifications process
2026 (Feb) Apr Jun Oct Dec	Council Workshop for future actions to further implement policy	
	Council develops workplan and initiates action for next steps	SSC and Council implement initial non-FMP amendment changes to BSAI crab harvest specifications process
	Tentative - Initial review(s)	
2027	Tentative - Final action(s)	Initial/Final Review of FMP analyses for harvest specification adjustments