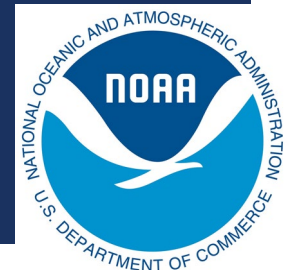

2022 EFH 5-Year Review Plan

Gretchen Harrington,
Habitat Conservation Division, NMFS Alaska Region

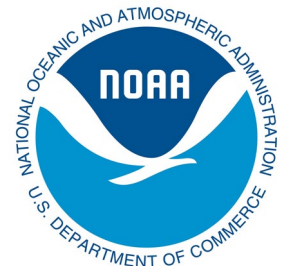


Council's EFH Roadmap - 10 Components

We have prioritized the six EFH components in bold:

- 1. EFH descriptions and identification (and MAPS!)**
- 2. Fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH**
3. Non-MSA fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH
- 4. Non-fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH**
5. Cumulative impacts analysis
- 6. EFH conservation and enhancement recommendations**
- 7. Prey species list and locations**
8. Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) identification
- 9. Research and information needs**
10. *Review EFH every 5 years.*

This information will be presented to the Council in a summary report in June 2022 (T). If the Council chooses to update its FMPs, FMP amendments will be prepared along with the appropriate analytical documents through the normal Council process.



1. EFH Descriptions and Identification

For the 2022 EFH Review, studies that have modernized the species distribution modeling approach from the 2017 Review with new data, methods, and tools will provide:

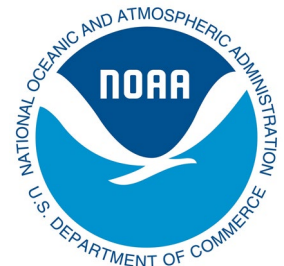
- New EFH descriptions and maps for life stages of groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands for the *GOA Groundfish FMP* and *BSAI Groundfish FMP*.
- New EFH descriptions and maps for pelagic early life history stages of sablefish and Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska for the *GOA Groundfish FMP*.
- New EFH descriptions and maps for life stages of crabs in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands for the *Crab FMP*.
- New EFH descriptions and maps for Arctic cod, saffron cod, and snow crab life history stages for the *Arctic FMP*.



2. Fishing Activities that may affect EFH

For the 2022 EFH Review

- Run the FE model using updated fishing effort data and metrics and new core area maps from Component 1.
- Stock assessment authors will use the 2017 FE assessment methodology to investigate the potential relationships between fishing effects and stock production.



4. Non-Fishing Activities that may affect EFH

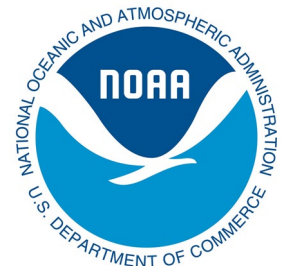
Impacts to Essential Fish Habitat from Non-Fishing Activities in Alaska: A Document Helping Mitigate and Reduce Impacts to EFH

The What

- Current understanding of how anthropogenic influences impact EFH.
- Substantially revise sections - Climate Change, Mining.
- Add several sections - Hydropower, Aquaculture, Vessel Scuttles.

The How

- Update all sections with current references/research that improve understating of impacts to EFH, and/or support **conservation recommendations**.
- The HCD review team is made of subject matter experts working in chapter groups to review, write and edit these updates.



7. Prey Species Habitat

Review and Update FMP Information

- Prey species are an important component of feeding habitat
- Review is focused on identifying prey species data gaps to target information development (e.g., nearshore prey species habitat)
- Stock assessment authors will have the opportunity to review and recommend revisions to prey species habitat information in the FMPs
- Improving prey habitat information in the FMPs will allow NMFS to make better informed habitat conservation recommendations in EFH consultations
- A framework for incorporating prey species habitat information in stock assessments (e.g., Ecosystem and Socioeconomic Profiles) as with component 1.



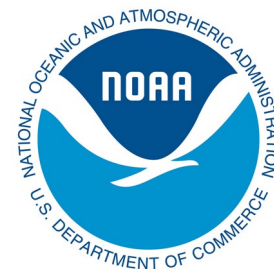
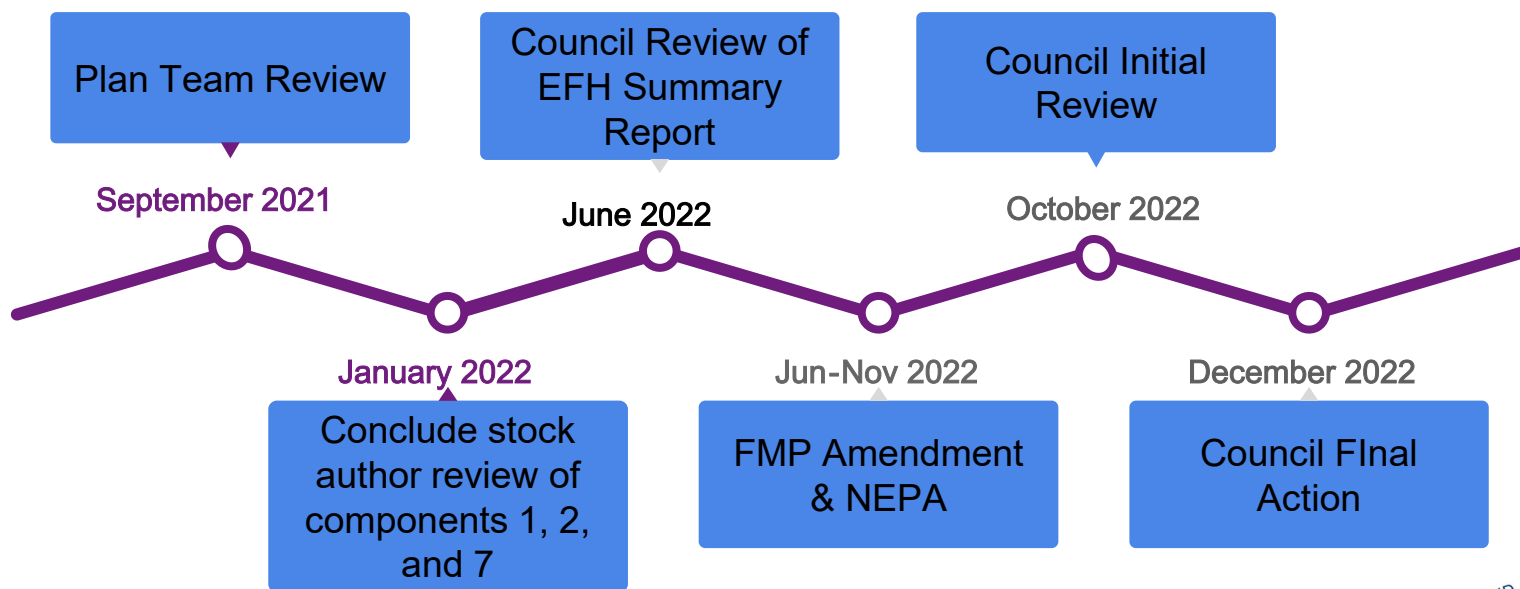
9. Research and Information Needs

Intended timeline to update the *Alaska EFH Research Plan*

- Habitat and Ecological Processes Research (HEPR) plans to lead a process to develop a new Alaska EFH Research Plan for 2023-2027.
- HEPR envisions inviting two participants from the AKRO and four from the AFSC with input from AFSC and AKRO.
- Write plan in 2022, intended by Oct. 2022 (for potential feedback from Council), and published as a Tech. Memo in 2023.
- We envision revisiting 5 long-term research goals, and identifying new emphasis areas.



Timeline - Future Planning



Council Action

We are seeking input on the components currently prioritized for review and revision:

- Develop and present new data, methods, SDM, maps, and habitat information (component 1);
- Run Fishing Effects model with updated fishing data and new maps (component 2);
- Update EFH conservation recommendations and analysis for non-fishing impacts to EFH (components 4 and 6);
- Refine prey habitat information in the groundfish FMPs (component 7);
- Update research priorities and information needs (component 9).

The Council may wish to identify priorities for HAPC consideration and request proposals for specific sites for HAPC inclusion (component 8).



EFH Consultations

Ongoing consultations

- IPOP gold mine near Nome
 - Exploration phase
 - Proposed mine: to dredge and discharge 5 million cubic yards of spoils from 173 acres of estuarine and stream habitat over a 5 year period.
- Aleutian Fiber Optic Cable
 - From Kodiak to Unalaska
 - The cable will lie on top of the sea floor except in areas where physical conditions or human activities could affect the line (e.g. areas with oil exploration, bottom contact fisheries, anchoring, etc.).
 - In these areas (exact locations to be determined), the fiber optic cable will be buried up to approximately 1.5 meter using a plow up to 4.6 m wide. No other anchors or structures will be needed.



Tools for EFH Consultations

Tools for EFH Consultations

- Alaska EFH Mapper
- Shorezone
- Nearshore Fish Atlas
- Impacts to EFH from Non-Fishing Activities in Alaska Report

NOAA Restoration Center

- Fish Habitat Partnerships received \$830,000 Federal funding for fish habitat restoration, education, and protection across the state.
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Recovery Implementation Task Force: Habitat Threats Management Committee
- Identify restoration options for 2019 oil spill in Buskin River

