



D3 Research Priorities

April 2024 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Dr. Nicole Watson
Presenters: (SSC only) Dr. Chris Siddon, Ali Whitman
Action Required: Recommend 5-year research priorities.

BACKGROUND

At this meeting, the SSC will recommend and the Council will adopt research priorities for the next 5 years. Consistent with the format that has been used for several years, the Council prioritizes critical ongoing monitoring research (e.g., surveys) as well as a “Top Ten” list of targeted research needs that are emphasized to encourage potential funding opportunities and to stress their importance. Resources available for review are included in the [eAgenda](#) including a comprehensive list of research priorities that have been organized by “Research ID” number. The SSC’s Top Ten list recommendations and any additional considerations will be developed from the comprehensive list and through discussion by the SSC at this meeting and provided to the Council through the SSC Report.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires that regional fishery management councils develop “multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes” (16 U.S.C. 1852(h)(7)). This includes research to support fishery management plans and associated regulations for fisheries requiring conservation and management to prevent overfishing, rebuild depleted fish stocks, and ensure sustainable fishing practices. The Council reviews its research priorities every three years.

The MSA identifies the intended audience for Council research priorities as the Secretary of Commerce and, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC), “for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets” for Alaska. This information is also provided to research and funding entities including universities, research boards, and other management agencies in the region, such as the University of Alaska, University of Washington, Oregon State University, North Pacific Research Board, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Alaska Ocean Observing System.

New research priorities were developed initially through a public input opportunity established early in the process to suggest new research priorities from July 1 – October 31, 2023. From November 2023 through January 2024, the Council’s Plan Teams and a subgroup of the SSC reviewed new and existing submissions, received public testimony on prioritization, and recommended their top 5 research priorities, a supplementary list and critical ongoing monitoring. These sources were compiled and presented to the SSC in February 2024.

Additional background information: Plan Team Reports can be found on the SSC’s February [eAgenda](#); the Research Priorities [webpage](#) contains additional links and information; a comprehensive list of all new research priority submissions from the public can be found [here](#); the Research Priorities Database can be accessed [here](#).