



E Staff Tasking

April 2021 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: David Witherell, Diana Evans

Action Required:

1. Review Committees and Plan Teams
2. Provide direction on tasking priorities and scheduling

BACKGROUND

Committees and Plan Teams

Membership

Attached is the updated Council committee list reflecting changes since February 2021. In the February 2021 newsletter, the Council issued a call for nominations for a vacancy on the **Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (BS FEP) Climate Change Taskforce**. The Council Chair has appointed Todd Loomis to that taskforce. The Chair has also appointed Marissa Wilson to **Advisory Panel** on an interim basis until the end of the calendar year, to fill the vacancy left by Jamie O'Connor's resignation.

At this meeting, the Council may want to consider issuing a call for nominations for the reconstituted **Community Engagement Committee (CEC)**. Staff have drafted a revised Terms of Reference for that Committee (posted on eAgenda). In February 2021, the Council noted that all existing CEC members who are interested in continuing on could be reappointed, as well as to solicit up to an additional two members representative of small communities off the road system.

Also, the Council's **Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (FMAC)** co-Chairs have advised that there is a vacancy to replace Paul MacGregor as the pollock trawl CP representative on the Council's **Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (FMAC)**. The FMAC provides the Council with stakeholder advice and recommendations on the observer program and electronic monitoring.

Meeting status

Committee and Plan Team meetings that are currently anticipated through the spring, all occurring virtually, include:

- **Partial Coverage Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (PCFMAC)** – April 19, 2021
- **Ecosystem Committee** – April 20, 2021
- **Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team** – May 3 and May 24-25, 2021
- **BSAI Crab Plan Team** – May 17-21, 2021
- **EM Trawl Committee** – May 21, 2021
- **Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (FMAC)** – May 17, 2021
- **Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Climate Change Taskforce** – May 2021 (TBD)

While not a Council-sponsored meeting, the Pacific Sablefish Transboundary Assessment Team (PSTAT) is organizing a workshop on April 27-28, 2021, for stakeholders from the US and Canada to learn more

about their sablefish management strategy evaluation project and to provide feedback on the MSE goals and objectives. Please visit <https://www.pacificsablefishscience.org/> for more information.

Also, the Council's BS FEP Taskforce on Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence met on March 16-17 to continue developing protocols and onramps outlined in their Council-approved workplan. [Minutes](#) from the meeting are available on the Council's website. The Taskforce will not be convening again until October 2021, however the Taskforce co-Chairs will update the BS FEP Team in May, and will report back directly to the Council next year, unless an earlier briefing is requested.

Tasking and Scheduling

Posted on the eAgenda are updated versions of tasking documents that are normally included as background material for staff tasking: the 3-meeting outlook, Council staff responsibilities, groundfish workplan update, and status of Observer Program (last updated in September 2020; the Council should expect an updated version following PCFMAC and FMAC discussions in April and May) and IFQ projects (updated in March, also discussed by the IFQ Committee under D4).

Status of Community Engagement Committee recommendations

The Council's February 2021 [motion](#) related to community engagement included nine recommendations based on the Community Engagement Committee's (CEC) final report to enact processes that provide effective rural and Alaska Native community engagement. This update provides the Council an overview of started, ongoing, or completed work by Council staff related to community engagement and the Council's February 2021 motion more specifically.

Council staff have implemented several tools to improve outreach and communication based on early recommendations from the CEC. These include a presentation— "Introduction to the Council Process"— that provides a high-level overview of how the Council takes management actions, brief summaries of all Council meeting agenda items conveyed in conversational language, and one-page fliers that provide an overview of the Council process. Additionally, beginning at the April 2021 Council meeting, members of the public can select their preference to waive questions from Council members during public comment; staff are continuing to evaluate different options for remote testimony. Although not complete, Council administrative staff are working to redesign the Council's website for improved usability in 2021.

With the direction of the Council's February 2021 motion, Council staff have continued a dialogue with First Alaskans Institute (FAI) to provide Council staff and Council members a training. The April 2021 Executive Director's Report contains some points of consideration and feedback for the Council such as the Council's preference for an in-person or virtual training, the duration of the training, and corresponding scheduling considerations.

Responsibilities for a Rural Fisheries Community and Tribal Liaison role have been assigned to Dr. Kate Haapala with Council staff. It is envisioned that the staff member assigned liaison responsibilities will support the reconstituted CEC (the new Terms of Reference are solicitation process for new members is referenced above under Committees). It is also anticipated that the staff member assigned liaison responsibilities will work with NMFS to receive and understand the results of Tribal Consultation meetings as early in the process as possible. At this point, NMFS is continuing to work internally to improve their Tribal Consultation process and waiting for national guidance from the Department of Commerce about the application of the recent Presidential Memoranda.

Draft June 2021 agenda

A preliminary June 2021 agenda is posted to the eAgenda for your review. Please note that this draft is for the purpose of discussion and feedback, and it will be revised after this meeting. As discussed in February, our June meeting dates begin on Tuesday, June 1st for the SSC, which is the day after Memorial Day, and continue through the rest of the week. The AP will meet Thursday-Friday, June 3-4, and

continue Monday-Tuesday of the following week (June 7-8). The Council will begin on Wednesday June 9th through Friday June 11th, and resume the following Monday-Tuesday (June 15-16). We are planning for a slightly shorter meeting agenda, as the SSC and AP are both only scheduled for four days (noting that virtual meeting days are shorter than in-person).

Planning for in-person meetings

We intend to hold online Council and advisory group meetings through September 2021, but have initiated planning for an in-person Council meeting in October 2021, assuming that the pandemic situation would allow for an in-person meeting. To assist us with that effort, we are looking for Council input on some key elements that we will then factor into our planning, including whether and to what degree there will be an opportunity for remote participation (for example, testimony), and potential accommodations for COVID protocols. We have developed a staff discussion paper, attached on the eAgenda, with questions both about short term needs during an in-person meeting where COVID concerns are still a factor, and the Council's longer-term interest in changes to the in-person meeting format. At this stage we are trying to gather feedback from the Council and stakeholders, which we will then include in our detailed planning efforts.

Public Comment

Several written public comments have been submitted under this agenda item.