



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Alaska Fisheries Science Center  
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.  
Seattle, WA 98115-6349

Simon Kinneen, Chair  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
1007 W. 3rd Avenue  
Anchorage, AK 99501

September 12, 2022

Dear Mr. Kinneen,

I am pleased to nominate Dr. Ben Williams for your consideration to serve on the NPFMC Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Groundfish Plan Team (GPT). Dr. Williams has exceptionally strong quantitative skills and knowledge of stock assessments and has experience on the Team during his employment with ADFG. The breadth of his experience from his own stock assessment work ensures that he will be an asset to the Plan Team. His CV is enclosed for your consideration.

Currently, Dr. Williams leads development of MSE methodologies on fishery stock assessment modeling approaches, survey designs, and management objectives. His research focuses on sablefish, rockfish, and non-target stock assessment in support of ecosystem based fishery management. He is the lead author of Gulf of Alaska northern rockfish and dusky rockfish stock assessments.

Recent publications include incorporating expert knowledge into understanding changes in nearshore rockfish fisheries and optimizing transboundary management for the walleye pollock in the Gulf of Alaska.

Dr. Williams's appointment would fill recent vacancies and the ever-increasing demand placed on the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation preparations that are critical for advising management.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide scientists in support of the NPFMC plan teams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Foy".

Robert Foy  
Director



## Benjamin Williams

NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center  
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github: ben-williams & BenWilliams-NOAA

### EDUCATION

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Ph.D. Fisheries, 2018.  
University of Alaska Fairbanks, M.S., Fisheries, 2003.  
The Ohio State University, B.S., Natural Resources, Minor in Fisheries, 1996.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Research Fisheries Biologist**, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service, Juneau, AK, 2020 - present. *Responsibilities*: Lead in the development of methods to conduct MSEs on topics such as alternative fishery stock assessment modeling approaches, survey designs, and management objectives. Conduct research to improve sablefish, rockfish, and non-target stock assessment in support of ecosystem based fishery management. Lead best data practices of programming code used in stock assessment modeling analyses. Lead author of Gulf of Alaska northern rockfish and dusky rockfish fishery assessments.

**Groundfish Fisheries Scientist I**, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Juneau, AK, 2014 - 2020. *Responsibilities*: Lead and supervise the Commercial Fisheries Division's research program to support state and federal fishery management plans for groundfish and scallop fisheries. Supervise commercial fisheries biometrics staff.

**Doctoral Student**, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2011 - present. Thesis: Implications of variability in reproductive biology on management of the fishery for walleye pollock *Gadus chalcogrammus* in the Gulf of Alaska. Advisor Dr. Gordon Kruse.

**Internship**, North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK. 2012. Summarizing the BSAI and GOA Groundfish Fishery Management Plans.

**Senior Fisheries Biologist**, LGL Alaska Research Associates, Inc., Anchorage, AK 2004 - 2011. *Responsibilities*: Coordinate with NGOs, industry, federal, and state agencies to design, and implement fisheries research activities in support of area management or resource development. Develop operational plans, hire, train, and evaluate staff, prepare and monitor budgets, assess data quality, data analysis, report writing, and presentations to diverse stakeholder groups.

**Graduate Student**, University of Alaska Fairbanks, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, Juneau, AK 2000 - 2003. Thesis: Growth dynamics of juvenile yellowfin sole (*Pleuronectes asper*) and northern rock sole (*Lepidopsetta polyxystra*) in the eastern Bering Sea. Advisors: Dr. Terry Quinn II and Dr. Lewis Haldorson.

**Groundfish Observer**, National Marine Fisheries Service, Anchorage, AK 1999 - 2000. Observer – eastern Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, Gulf of Alaska.

**Fisheries Technician**, United States Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, Tunison Laboratory, Cortland, NY 1997 - 1999.

### GRADUATE STUDENTS

Jesse Gordon, Integrating local ecological knowledge and survey data to improve assessment and management of rockfishes in Alaska - Graduated 2021

**SERVICE**

North Pacific Fisheries Management Count, Gulf of Alaska Plan Team member. 2015 - 2020

Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center, Advisory Board Member. 2017 - 2020

**FELLOWSHIPS**

MESAS: Marine Ecosystem Sustainability in the Arctic and Subarctic a Integrative Graduate Education and Research Training (IGERT) National Science Foundation program - 2011

Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center - Variations in size of maturity of walleye pollock and implications on harvest strategies - 2012

Rasmuson Fisheries Research Center Graduate Student Fellowship Award - 2014

**RECENT REPORTS & PUBLICATIONS**

Gordon, J.Y., A.H. Beaudreau, B.C. Williams, and S.C. Meyer. 2022. Bridging expert knowledge and fishery data to examine changes in nearshore rockfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska over fifty years. *Fisheries Research*, 252, 106333. DOI: 10.1016/j.fishres.2022.106333

Williams, B.C., Criddle, K.R., and Kruse, G.H. 2021. An agent-based model to optimize trans-boundary management for the walleye pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*) fishery in the Gulf of Alaska. *Natural Resource Modeling*, 34, e12305. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nrm.12305>

Williams, B.C., Hulson, P.-J.F., Lunsford, C.R. and Fenske, K.H. 2021 Assessment of the Dusky Rockfish stock in the Gulf of Alaska. In: Stock assessment and fishery evaluation report for the groundfish resources of the Gulf of Alaska. North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK.

Williams, B.C., Hulson, P.-J.F., and Lunsford, C.R. 2021 Assessment of the Northern Rockfish stock in the Gulf of Alaska. In: Stock assessment and fishery evaluation report for the groundfish resources of the Gulf of Alaska. North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK.

Williams, B.C., Hulson, P.-J.F., Lunsford, C.R. and Cunningham, C.J. 2020 Assessment of the Northern Rockfish stock in the Gulf of Alaska. In: Stock assessment and fishery evaluation report for the groundfish resources of the Gulf of Alaska. North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK.

Beaudreau, A.H., E.J. Ward, R.E. Brenner, A.O. Shelton, J.T. Watson, J.C. Womack, S.C. Anderson, A.C. Haynie, K.N. Marshall, B.C. Williams. 2019. Thirty years of change and the future of Alaskan fisheries: Shifts in fishing participation and diversification in response to environmental, regulatory and economic pressures. *Fish and Fisheries*. 20: 601– 619. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12364>

Marshall, K. N., Duffy-Anderson, J. T., Ward, E. J., Anderson, S. C., Hunsicker, M. E., Williams, B. C. 2019. Long term trends in ichthyoplankton assemblage structure, biodiversity, and community synchrony in the Gulf of Alaska and their relationships to climate. *Progress in Oceanography*, 170: 134-145. doi.org/10.1016/j.pocean.2018.11.002

Ward, E.J., Anderson, S.C., Shelton, A.O., Brenner, R.E., Adkison, M.D., Beaudreau, A.H., Watson, J.T., Shriver, J.C., Haynie, A.C., Williams, B.C. 2018. Effects of increased specialization and hatchery production on revenue variability of Alaskan salmon fishers. *J Appl Ecol*. 55: 1082–1091. DOI: 10.1111/1365-2664.13058

Anderson, S.C., Ward, E.J., Shelton, A.O., Adkison, M.D., Beaudreau, A.H., Brenner, R.E., Haynie, A.C., Shriver, J.C., Watson, J.T., Williams, B.C. 2018. Benefits and risks of diversification for individual fishers. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 114 (40) 10797-10802.

[doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1702506114](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1702506114)

Shelton, A.O., Hunsicker, M.E., Ward, E.J., Feist, B.E., Blake, R., Ward, C.L., Williams, B.C., Duffy-Anderson, J.T., Hollowed, A.B., Haynie, A.C. 2017. Spatio-temporal models reveal subtle changes to demersal communities following the Exxon Valdez oil spill. ICES J Mar Sci fsx079. DOI: 10.1093/icesjms/fsx079

Williams, B.C., Kruse, G.H., and Dorn, M.W. 2016. Interannual and spatial variability in maturity of walleye pollock *gadus chalcogrammus* and implications for spawning stock biomass estimates in the Gulf of Alaska. PLOS ONE 11(10): e0164797. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0164797.

Hunt, G. L. Jr., P. Ressler, K. Aydin, G. Gibson, M. Sigler, A. DeRobertis, E. Lessard, B. Williams, A. Pinchuk, T. Buckley. 2016. Euphausiids in the eastern Bering Sea: A synthesis of recent studies of euphausiid production, consumption and population control, Deep Sea Research Part II: Topical Studies in Oceanography, Available online 12 November 2015, ISSN 0967-0645, DOI: 10.1016/j.dsr2.2015.10.007.

## RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Williams, B. (2022, March) Simulations and interpretations of skip spawning for fishery stock assessments. Maturity Assessment Reproductive Variability and Life History Strategies (MARVLS) NOAA working group

Williams, B. (2021-2022, bi-monthly) Building R packages and creating documents using R markdown. Teaching for NOAA staff.

Williams, B. (2015, October - two days) Dynamic Documents and Reproducible Research. Teaching Fish 627 class University of Alaska Fairbanks, Juneau School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.