



## Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Taskforce REPORT

March 2-3, 2023: 8:30am-4:30pm AKDT

Teleconference

### Taskforce members in attendance:

Kate Haapala (co-Chair, NPFMC), Sarah Wise (co-Chair, AFSC-NMFS), Toby Anungazuk Jr. (Golovin), Robert Murphy (APU), Julie Raymond-Yakoubian (Kawerak, Inc.), Richard Slats (Chevak), Darcy Peter (Beaver), and Simeon Swetzof (St. Paul), Rachel Donkersloot (Coastal Cultures Research) and Alida Trainor (ADF&G)

### Members absent:

Bridget Mansfield (NMFS)

### Others in attendance:

Molly Watson (NMFS office of GC), Amilee Wilson (NMFS), John Ross, Steve Marx, Jaylene Wheeler, Kristie Parsons, Rachel Baker, Mateo Paz Soldan, Mellisa Johnson, Morgan Urquia, Marissa Wilson.

## Introductions

The co-Chairs of the Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence (LKTKS) Taskforce opened the meeting with introductions and provided an overview of the agenda. **The purpose of this meeting was for the Taskforce to finalize the materials that will be presented to the Council at the April 2023 Council meeting, namely the LKTKS Protocol, the related LKTKS Policy statement, and onramp recommendations.** This meeting also provided members of the public an opportunity to weigh in on the finalization of materials, both in public testimony and through dialogue throughout the meeting.

## Overview of Taskforce work

Under this section of the agenda, Kate Haapala provided an overview of the work completed by the Taskforce over the last three years (2020-2023). The Council adopted two goals and five objectives for the LKTKS Taskforce at its February 2020 meeting in Seattle, WA, and the Taskforce has developed several products that directly respond to the Council's motion. These work products include the LKTKS search engine, LKTKS Protocol and related policy statement, LKTKS onramp recommendations including the analytical guidance template, and a finalized workplan and glossary of terms. Taskforce members appreciated this overview, noting it helped to contextualize the Taskforce's work in relation to the Council's goals.

## Overview of edits since December 2022

Kate Haapala provided an overview of the edits made to the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations since the Taskforce's December 2022 [meeting](#). While the Taskforce did meet in January 2023 for a short teleconference, none of the edits agreed to by members in December were incorporated into the materials posted to the January [eAgenda](#); the January 2023 meeting was an opportunity to reach consensus and increase equity in information access among Taskforce members and members of the public because of connectivity challenges and winter storms in December 2022.

The [presentation](#) from Day 1 of the March 2023 Taskforce meeting captures the full list of major edits to both the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations. One important change to draw attention to is the separation of the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations into two documents (the onramp recommendations were in Section 5 of the Protocol in the December 2022 draft). This change was made to be clear to the Council and members of the public that, should the Council adopt the LKTKS Protocol, it would not be adopting and initiating work on all 11 onramp recommendations. Rather, the Taskforce's intent is that the Council would consider each onramp recommendation individually to decide which onramps it would like to initiate work on.

## Finalization of materials

Prior to the meeting, and periodically throughout each day of the meeting, the co-Chairs reminded Taskforce members and members of the public that the purpose of reviewing the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations was for Taskforce members to reach consensus on the materials being presented to the Council at its April 2023 meeting. To achieve this goal, the Taskforce walked through each document – the LKTKS Protocol (Day 1) and the onramp recommendations (Day 2)— section by section to allow for in-meeting input, edits, and agreement on the content. The Council and the public can expect to see all in-meeting edits in the materials presented to the Council at its April 2023 meeting.

## Meeting recommendations

At this meeting, the Taskforce revisited outstanding questions and issues posed to the co-Chairs during their presentations to various advisory bodies and raised during public comments at this meeting and decided to make specific recommendations to the Council. Those recommendations are captured directly below in no order of priority.

**The Taskforce recommends it disband after the Council takes final action on the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations.** When the Council formed this Taskforce, the Council intended the body would last for a discrete time period to achieve its work. The Taskforce feels this continues to be an appropriate approach and discussed that several of the onramp recommendations would not require input from an advisory body such as the Taskforce. The onramp recommendations that could require more work from Council staff (e.g., a discussion paper evaluating a conceptual model for Council-Tribal engagement) would be tasked and presented through the Council's public process allowing for public engagement and input.

The Taskforce has twice reached consensus to recommend the Council release the materials presented at the April 2023 Council meeting for an extended public review period of 45 days to allow the Council and the public more time to engage with the finalized products (see the Taskforce's [December 2022](#) and [January 2023](#) meeting reports for more information). If the Council moves forward with this approach, it could expect to receive a report on the extended public comment period and presentation of any edits to the LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations at the October 2023 Council meeting, pending Council scheduling and other issues. **Under this approach, the Taskforce would disband in October 2023.**

Taskforce recommends the Council form an ad hoc review/advisory body to determine whether the LKTKS Protocol developed for the Bering Sea region could be applied to other regions, should the Council adopt the Protocol and be interested in identifying transferable elements. The Taskforce agreed that several elements of the LKTKS Protocol, including all eight guidelines, could be relevant and apply to other regions under the Council's jurisdiction (e.g., Gulf of Alaska or Arctic); however, if the Council wants to develop similar protocols for other regions, the Taskforce recommends the Council convene an ad hoc review/advisory body of knowledge holders, fishery stakeholders, and other experts from that region to review this LKTKS Protocol specific to the Bering Sea region and determine what elements are appropriate for that region and where preferences may differ. For example, whereas 'Traditional Knowledge' is the preferred term for Elders and knowledge holders in the Bering Sea region, in other regions, the preferred term may be 'Indigenous Knowledge' in the Arctic or Gulf of Alaska.

**The Taskforce recommends the Council initiate a 5-year periodic review period, should it adopt the LKTKS Protocol.** The purpose of this review period is to allow the Council, knowledge holders, and other members of the public to review and provide input on whether the LKTKS Protocol continues to capture the necessary context information pertinent to the Bering Sea region. A periodic review would also allow the Council, staff, and the public to reflect on specific onramps or other means used over time to identify, analyze, and incorporate LK, TK, and subsistence information into the Council process.

The Taskforce discussed several options for how a periodic review period could work. The Taskforce agreed that five years would be an appropriate interval to allow enough time to pass from adoption to implementation and allow time for reflection. To ease the burden on Council resources, the Taskforce would suggest that the Council release the adopted protocol for an extended public comment period prior to staff beginning work on the review, and to not require an advisory body be formed unless necessary to provide input to the review. A strawman periodic review period is provided below.

- February 2028: Council releases the adopted LKTKS Protocol for an extended public comment period of 60 days. This allows time for Tribes, knowledge holders, and other fishery stakeholders to review the protocol and provide their input on whether it continues to hold relevance, provide the necessary guidance to the Council, and address other issues.
- June 2028: Council staff could prepare a summary report on the comments received during the review period and present a workplan for addressing those comments. The Taskforce discussed that if there were a significant number of public comments submitted indicating a need for substantive changes to the protocol, staff may want to flag that for the Council so it can consider convening an ad hoc review/advisory body at that time to provide the required expertise; though the Taskforce is not anticipating this would be an issue at this time.
- October 2028: The Council would receive a presentation on a revised LKTKS Protocol for the Bering Sea region from staff.

## **Public testimony**

The LKTKS Taskforce did not receive written public comments in advance of the meeting, but did have three public testifiers in the meeting, Mr. Steve Marx, Mr. Jonathan Ross, and Ms. Jaylene Wheeler.