



## Agenda Topics

Council Meeting, February 6-13, 2023

In-person in Seattle, Washington, with remote participation opportunities

### **A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Council Chair will welcome everyone to the meeting and Council members will approve the agenda.

### **B. REPORTS – *David Witherell***

In this section of the meeting, each agency represented on the Council provides a written and/or verbal management report. After all the reports, the public has a chance to provide comment, and the Council will discuss action they need to take, either at this point or at the end of the meeting.

#### **C1 Snow Crab Rebuilding Analysis - *Jon McCracken***

The Council was notified in Oct 2021 that snow crab in Eastern Bering Sea is overfished. They must create a rebuilding plan within 2 years, with a maximum 10-year rebuilding time. In Dec 2022, they selected a preferred alternative to allow a directed fishery while the stock rebuilds.

#### **C2 BSAI Crab – Norton Sound Red King Crab Specifications, CPT Report (including conservation priorities) – *Sarah Rheinsmith***

A team of technical experts (the Crab Plan Team) met in January to discuss the status and appropriate harvest level for Norton Sound red king crab as well as to review scientific information on Alaska crab stocks. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee and the Council will review the report and recommendations of the Plan Team and will set harvest limits based on that information. The team also prioritized among management actions that may affect crab conservation, at the Council's request.

#### **C3 Area 4 Vessel Use Cap Interim Measures – *Anna Henry***

The Council is considering removing limitations on the amount of halibut that fishing vessels can catch in Areas 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D for the next five years. This change is an interim measure while the Council thinks about a long-term solution to the issue. The Council wants to make sure fishing companies have consistency while they work out a more balanced solution that takes everyone's opinions into account.

#### **C4 EFH 5-year review Summary Report – Ecosystem Committee Report, NOAA Coral/Sponge Research Program Update– *Sarah Rheinsmith***

The Council will hear two reports. The first is about research on deep sea coral, and the second is a review of the essential fish habitat (EFH). The review is done every 5 years to see if any changes are needed in how fishing affects the fish habitat. Based on new research, the Council may need to make changes to update the location of habitat that is essential.

#### **C5 BSAI Pot CP Monitoring Adjustments – *Sam Cunningham***

In 2022, the Council discussed plans to reduce the risk of losing data collected by observers in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries. The plans include having participants carry an observer and follow pre-meeting notifications, as well as using monitoring options like observer sampling stations or extra observers. The Council will review updated plans and decide on the best option to recommend to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

**D1 AIGKC Facility Use Caps Discussion Paper –Sarah Marrinan**

Currently, a regulation limits the amount of Eastern Aleutian Islands golden king crab that can be received at one processing plant. The Council is discussing removing these restrictions to provide more market opportunity.

**D2 PSEIS Discussion Paper, Ecosystem Committee Report – Sara Cleaver**

The Council is looking to reevaluate the Programmatic Groundfish Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS) to better address the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems and people who rely on them. The original PSEIS was created in 2004 and was last evaluated in 2015, but due to increased ecological changes in the North Pacific, stakeholders and the Council's Ecosystem Committee believe it is time to reevaluate the analysis.

**D3 Groundfish Stock Prioritization Proposal, Joint Groundfish Plan Team Report – Sara Cleaver**

The Council will review recommendations from the AFSC to continue improving the efficiency of the stock assessment process while maintaining its quality. Thirteen groundfish stocks are being considered for reduced stock assessment frequency along with new guidelines and definitions.

**D4 Trawl EM Committee Report – Anna Henry**

A group of industry experts and stakeholders met to discuss the trawl Electronic Monitoring (EM) program, and the status of current and potential future EM projects. Their recommendations will be presented to the Council at this meeting.

**D5 Universal Data Collection Discussion Paper on crew, lease cost collection – Mike Fey**

The Council tasked staff to evaluate the implementation of a program to collect crew license data, crew compensation, crew positions, and quota lease costs across all Alaska fisheries. The paper evaluates the scale of data to be collected, the collection mechanism, cost/burden, and analytical value. The Council will review this paper, and take action if they choose.

**D6 Climate Change Taskforce Climate Resiliency Synthesis (SSC only) – Diana Stram**

The Climate Change Taskforce has drafted a Climate Readiness Synthesis to help the Council assess the current management system's "climate readiness". The synthesis looks at whether the management tools, assessments, and information take into account long-term climate change.

**D7 GOA Groundfish bottom trawl survey changes (SSC only) – Diana Stram**

The AFSC is planning to transition to a new design for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish survey with implementation set for 2025. Scientists used simulation models and genetic algorithms to optimize the

new design. Results showed improved accuracy of abundance estimates while requiring similar resources as the current design. The SSC will review and provide feedback on the new design.

**E      Staff Tasking** – *Diana Evans, David Witherell*

The Council will listen to public testimony about existing and new management measures that the public may be interested in and will provide feedback to staff and the Council Chair about how to prioritize staff work on existing and new projects. The Council may also consider whether to cancel a previous request for staff to evaluate changing how halibut catch is divided between the charter and commercial halibut sectors.

The Council will also review its committee membership and identify agendas for any upcoming committee meetings.